



To: Incumbents, PCC Secretaries and Parish Safeguarding Officers

Important Safeguarding update

Dear friends,

Thank you so much for your partnership in helping to develop and sustain good safeguarding across all our parishes. Following on from our correspondence last week about the [Future of Safeguarding in the Church of England](#), I write with two further important pieces of news.

Closure of Safeguarding on-call services

Firstly, after considering the priorities and capacity of our Safeguarding team, I have taken the decision to close our out-of-hours on-call service. This is not a decision that has been taken lightly, but it has become clear that it is simply not possible to provide a reliable and high-quality on-call service with the resources presently available to us. Our safeguarding provision is not an emergency service, and we have made this decision on the advice of the Church of England's National Safeguarding Team and their advice that the majority of dioceses do not provide such a service.

It will allow our team to focus their efforts on providing high-quality support to survivors and parishes alongside casework, training and other necessary casework.

The office will still be able to take calls and answer queries throughout the working week (Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm (with last calls being taken at 4.30pm) as usual. For those wishing to make referrals remotely or outside of working hours, the Safeguarding team can be emailed directly via safeguarding@southwark.anglican.org.

If you suspect you or someone else is at risk of immediate harm, please don't hesitate to contact the police via 999. Additional contact details for out-of-hours support are listed separately at the bottom of this letter and [available on our website](#). As always, while not in any way replacing the safeguarding team, archdeacons are available to provide support and reassurance to clergy and parishes including out of hours if needed.

All efforts have been made to update all areas of the website to reflect these changes, but I would be grateful if you could please let us know if you notice that an area has been missed, so that we can rectify this as soon as possible. **Please forward this note to anyone who you think should be aware of this and print the Safeguarding contacts section below for sharing on your church's noticeboard. Please also ensure that your parish or church website is updated accordingly, too.**

New Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel Chair

Secondly, I am delighted to share with you the news that Bishop Christopher has appointed a new Independent Chair for our Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel (DSAP): Janet Ayoola. Janet has over 15 years' worth of experience in social work, predominantly in children's services. She is a qualified social worker, committed to safeguarding and with extensive experience in statutory services, independent consultancy and safeguarding advisory roles. Her expertise

spans statutory child protection, independent social work and advisory roles in the third sector, where she has worked to empower charities and voluntary organisations to strengthen their safeguarding practices. She succeeds Chris Smart in this role and began her work on Monday 24 March. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to Chris, who has served us so wisely and well in this role - and look forward to working with Janet to continue to improve Safeguarding across our diocese. You can view to formal announcement [here](#).

My thanks to each one of you for all your endeavours in helping our churches to become safer, more welcoming places for all.

With thanks and best wishes,

Nicola Thomas
Diocesan Secretary

25 March 2025



**Diocese of Southwark
Safeguarding Team contact details**

The Southwark Diocesan Safeguarding Team is available Monday to Friday 9am-5pm (with last calls being taken at 4.30pm) (excluding bank holidays), and can be contacted for advice and support via the following routes during these hours:

Safeguarding referrals/general enquiries:

safeguarding@southwark.anglican.org / Telephone: 0207 939 9441

Safeguarding training enquiries:

safeguardingtraining@southwark.anglican.org / Telephone: 0207 939 9476

Admin and DBS enquiries:

safeguardingadmin@southwark.anglican.org / Telephone: 020 7939 9478

Emergencies:

If you suspect you or someone is at risk of immediate harm, phone 999.

For safeguarding advice outside of office hours please see the following options:

- If someone is at risk of immediate harm contact the police on 999.
- For non-urgent enquires email or call the Diocesan Safeguarding Team who will respond as soon as possible during office hours.
- For urgent safeguarding advice contact your local social services, provided by local authorities, out of hours contacts can be found below:

Croydon Episcopal Area	Kingston Episcopal Area	Woolwich Episcopal Area
Bromley: 0300 303 8671	Kingston: 0208 770 5000	Bexley: 0208 303 7777 or 0208 303 7171
Croydon: 0208 726 6400	Lambeth: 0207 926 5555	Bromley: 0300 303 8671
Sutton: 0208 770 5000	Merton: 0208 770 5000	Lambeth: 0207 926 5555
Surrey: 01483 517 898	Richmond: 0208 744 2442 (Adults) or 0208 770 5000 (children)	Lewisham: 0208 314 6000 (children) or 0208 314 7766 (adults)
	Wandsworth: 0208 871 6000	Royal Greenwich: 0208 854 8888
		Southwark: 0207 525 5000

Local support services

Hub of Hope is the UK's leading support database, bringing local, national, peer, community, charity, private and NHS services together in one place for the first time. A wide range of local support can be accessed by inputting your postcode online [here](#).