



*Dear Parish Safeguarding Officers,*

*This newsletter aims to give you some updates on some of the safeguarding work which has been happening over the last year as well as letting you know about some new developments. Having been with the Diocese for a year, I have now had contact with many of you and continue to be hugely impressed and very grateful for the levels of commitment shown to keeping safe those who are the most vulnerable in our communities.*

*Thank you all for your ongoing work.*

*Kate Singleton (Diocesan  
Safeguarding Adviser)*

### **Safeguarding training**

In 2014 over 1260 people took part in safeguarding training across the Diocese. This includes those people who attended diocese-wide sessions for volunteers and staff as well as an increased number of people attending training sessions delivered in the parishes. We are extremely grateful to the group of volunteers who deliver different parts of the programme. Thank you also to all those in the parishes who have helped co-ordinate these events. We continue to evaluate and adapt our training based on the feedback provided by those who attend.

We have added some new elements to the training programme in the last year, including a course for administrators which ran in January. We are working with some other dioceses and the Church of England National Team piloting some new materials and also thinking about whether we might make use of e-learning in the future.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer trainer, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact Christine Flowerdew on the contact details shown at the end of the newsletter by the end of March.

### **DBS update**

In 2014, more than 2220 applications were submitted to the Disclosure and Barring Service for volunteers, staff, clergy and authorised lay ministers. This is an enormous number and an increase on the 2013 figure. As you know, we continue to use a paper based system here in the Diocese and feedback from the parishes has clearly indicated that in some cases, there are very long delays between an application form being completed and a disclosure certificate being seen by the PSO. So, I've been working with David Loft, the Director of HR and Linda Craven, our DBS administrator, to explore whether online arrangements for DBS checks may provide an improved alternative for parishes. We are currently piloting online arrangements with some specific groups, at the Cathedral and with a small number of parishes to see how online arrangements would work with one of the umbrella organisations who provide this service. We expect to be able to give you more news shortly.

In the meantime, please refer all your DBS enquiries to Linda whose contact details are shown overleaf.

## **Safeguarding Reference Group**

We've welcomed some new members to the Safeguarding Reference Group which oversees safeguarding policies, procedures and practice across the Diocese of Southwark. We've recently been joined by Steve Hall (Local Authority Designated Officer for Croydon Council), Tim Goode (Diocesan Disability Adviser and Team Vicar for Caterham Team Ministry, Susan Robinson (PSO, St Michael and All Angels, Abbey Wood) and Adam Rylett (Assistant Curate, Emmanuel Croydon). Our new members bring additional experience and skills to the group as well as some new perspectives. We are in the process of recruiting a new independent chair for the group as our current chair, Judy Wright has decided to stand down this year following many years of service. Thanks to Judy and all those who have and are now serving on the group.

## **Resources**

Many of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards and Safeguarding Adults Boards which operate in different parts of the Diocese offer training programmes which are open to those working in faith settings in their areas. These programmes can include online courses on specific topics, for example Child Sexual Exploitation. Many of the courses are free and you can find out more by looking at the web pages for your local board.

We've developed some guidelines for what should be included in safeguarding briefings for new incumbents – please see overleaf.

The NSPCC have developed Share Aware – advice for parents to help their children to stay safe on social networks:

<http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/share-aware/>

## **Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (for all concerns of harm to children or vulnerable adults):**

Kate Singleton  
Trinity House,  
4 Chapel Court,  
London SE1 1HW  
kate.singleton@  
southwark.anglican.org  
W 020 7939 9423  
M 07982 279713.

## **Assistant Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser:**

Steve Short  
c/o Trinity House (as above)  
steve.short@  
southwark.anglican.org  
W 020 7939 9423  
M 07982 279713.

## **Safeguarding Administrator:**

Christine Flowerdew  
Trinity House (as above)  
christine.flowerdew@  
southwark.anglican.org  
W 020 7939 9476.

## **Diocesan Disclosure and Barring Service Administrator (for management of DBS vetting process):**

Linda Craven  
Trinity House (as above)  
linda.craven@  
southwark.anglican.org  
W 020 7939 9402.

## **Diocesan website link:**

<http://www.southwark.anglican.org/wat/safeguarding-people>

## **Parish safeguarding self-audits**

The next parish safeguarding self audit will take place at the end of 2015. Audits have been completed for the past two years by the majority of parishes and are a really important way to check on what's working well locally as well as thinking about areas of safeguarding practice which might need more attention. The action plans provide a focus for PSOs to have conversations with PCCs about shared responsibilities for safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults in our churches. We are likely to revise the audit tool slightly before we issue it with further instructions in the late autumn.

## Guidelines on briefing new incumbents

The following guidelines have been developed for those parishes who have been in a vacancy and are welcoming a new incumbent.

It is important that any new incumbent is provided with a thorough and accurate safeguarding briefing on his or her arrival in the parish in order that they can undertake their safeguarding responsibilities as set out in *A Safe Church (ASC) 3-6*.

The responsibility for ensuring that this face-to-face briefing is provided, lies with the Churchwardens and Parish Safeguarding Officer(s), although the new incumbent and his/her Archdeacon should seek to ensure that he/she is briefed as soon as possible after arrival.

Discretion will be required as to the level of detail which should be shared, how far past safeguarding matters are included and how the briefing is delivered. Those involved need to consider the usual parameters in relation to the sharing and subsequent storage of confidential information (*ASC 6-17 to 6-19*).

Each parish will differ but it is advised that the following types of information be shared with an incumbent as part of their safeguarding briefing:

- Details of any offender management agreements currently in place within the parish (*ASC 8-1 to 8-4*)
- Details of any current matters which are considered to be a “serious safeguarding situation relating to church officers and other individuals,” (as set out in the Church of England Practice Guidance, 2014) including those which involve an ongoing Diocesan Core Group process as set out in *ASC 6-11 to 6-15*
- Details of any known individuals within the congregation where the statutory authorities have advised/confirmed that there are ongoing child protection or adult safeguarding concerns
- Details of significant historical safeguarding issues which may have substantial ongoing implications for the parish
- Details of any past or current safeguarding matters which relate to any member of the ministry team

If necessary, the DSA is available to give advice to Churchwardens, PSOs, outgoing incumbents and Archdeacons as to whether details of specific matters should be shared with any new incumbent.

In addition, the meeting should ensure that the new incumbent is provided with:

- Details of the most recent parish self-audit, resulting action plan and discussions at PCC meetings, including any particular responsibilities assigned to them as an individual
- Details of where parish safeguarding records are held, access arrangements, etc.
- Arrangements for ensuring the safe recruitment of paid staff and volunteers within the parish
- Location of *A Safe Church* and a list of key parish and Diocesan safeguarding personnel
- Details of the current Diocesan safeguarding training programme and any upcoming parish/deanery safeguarding training
- Details of all church activities relating to children, young people and vulnerable adults