



Dear Parish Safeguarding Officers and Incumbents,

In recent days I have been presenting the 2017 Annual Safeguarding Review to various audiences in the diocese. What is clear from looking back at our activity last year is that the extent of activity to promote safeguarding, prevent harm and respond to those in need increased enormously during 2017. Over 350 new matters were referred into the Diocesan Safeguarding Team last year, mainly from our parishes. We believe that a very significant increase in the amount of safeguarding training delivered has contributed to this increase in contact between parishes and the Diocesan Safeguarding Team as we continue to raise awareness of child and adult protection issues in our churches. I am extremely grateful to all of those who are involved in delivering our training courses (to over 3000 people last year!) and to the work done at parish level to organise these events and promote local attendance.

This newsletter contains details of some online training now available including an e-learning C1 course. We also hear how one of our parishes promote safeguarding locally and there is some information on a new theological resource available to you. Uzma Osinibi, our Safeguarding Administrator has provided some DBS updates for you.

In recent months there have been a number of new policies and pieces of practice guidance agreed nationally by the House of Bishops and these are all listed on the safeguarding pages of the Church of England website:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/safeguarding>

In order to support parishes in understanding and fulfilling their responsibilities arising from the recent changes, we have commissioned a revision of A Safe Church (ASC) so that the relevant information and resources you need to promote safeguarding, prevent harm and respond well are current and available to you. We hope to publish the revised version of ASC in the summer. In the meantime, pages 19 to 25 of “Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies Practice Guidance” is a helpful reference document. It is available at:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-12/Roles%20and%20Responsibilities%20Practice%20Guidance%20V2.pdf>

Finally, we have received some queries from parishes about the next parish safeguarding self-audit – we will be asking parishes to complete an audit later in the year so will update you in the next newsletter about that.

Thank you for all you do.

Kate Singleton
(Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser)

Update - Online Safeguarding Training – New Courses Available

There are now two e-learning safeguarding courses available. These have been devised by the Church of England National Safeguarding Team:

The **C0 Safeguarding: Basic Awareness** course is recommended for anyone who needs a basic level of safeguarding awareness training.

The course is designed as a **pre-requisite for other safeguarding courses** which we deliver on a face to face basis. It gives an introduction to safeguarding in the church context, helps people recognise safeguarding concerns and raises awareness of how to respond well to information, including who to inform. It also touches on recording and the boundaries of confidentiality.

An online version of **C1 Safeguarding: Foundations** has also now been made available. This is offered as an alternative to the directly delivered C1 course we provide locally. Whilst we believe there are many advantages to people attending a face-to-face course, it is hoped that providing an online learning option for C1 enables more people to be trained efficiently to an appropriate standard, particularly when face-to-face training is impractical.

Please note that you'll need to register for the online system before you sit down and complete either of the courses. The sign up email may take a couple of days to then arrive – instructions are shown below.

Online Safeguarding Training Instructions <https://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org/>

Clicking on the link takes you to the Church of England training portal. Click on the picture under the heading '*Online Courses*'. This will take you to the registration and login page.

On the right hand side, please read the introduction under '*Is This your first time here?*', then click on '*Create new account*' and enter your details.

When you enter your parish details, please put the parish as well as your church's name, e.g. St Mary, **Brixton**, as we need to distinguish between different churches of the same name.

Once you have completed the registration information you will receive an email to the email address you have used to sign up. **Please note, that this may take a couple of days to arrive.**

It will contain a link which you follow to confirm your registration. It will take you back to the main page and will ask you to log in. You then see a series of pictures, select '*Online courses*' then select '*Safeguarding: Basic Awareness C0*' or '*Safeguarding: Foundations C1*'.

Herne Hill's Safeguarding Month - how to spread the word

We are shining a spotlight on the parish of Herne Hill who launched a Safeguarding Month last September. The parish Safeguarding team chose that time of year as it is when parents/carers are asked to complete consent forms for Children's Church, Youth Group etc. and the church welcomes a new influx of volunteers who need DBS checks. The PSOs felt "*it would be helpful to remind everyone why Safeguarding is so vital and that it's not just red tape for the sake of it! We read out a notice in both churches [on] Sunday with bullet points highlighting the need for and importance of Safeguarding in a church setting, with a flyer at the back for people to take away if they wished. Sharon Calderbank, my fellow PSO, and I also took this opportunity to remind people of who we are and what we do, and how to contact us*". Katie McKenna, PSO at Herne Hill.

At the end of the month, they found it had been very successful in terms of form completion etc. This is a good example of a parish using their own initiative and resources to highlight the importance of good safeguarding practice in their congregation.

DBS Updates

Basic level DBS checks for those living in England and Wales are now being administered by the Disclosure and Barring Service through our online check provider APCS. **Parishes need to simply add a “b” on the end of their user id number to request a basic check.** Questions are asked on where the applicant will be working and the application is submitted by APCS. Some examples of positions where a basic check would be appropriate include parish caretaker, vergers, servers, bell ringers and refreshment helpers.

The ID checking guidance changes for basic disclosures is different than that for Enhanced or Standard DBS checks – please follow the link: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/responsible-organisations> for detailed advice.

The costs for a Basic Disclosure is £25 - unfortunately the DBS do not waive the fee for volunteers having a basic level check as they do for Standard and Enhanced Checks.

External ID checking services are no longer provided by APCS as the DBS have confirmed that an external ID vetting service can't be used in lieu of seeing the original documents from the applicant.

Portability – A lot of parish queries are around the issue of portability of DBS certificates. Please refer to page 12 of National Church Guidance on Safer Recruitment – https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2552006/safer_recruitment_practice_guidance_2016.pdf
To summarise, a DBS check is portable within the same Diocese provided it is clear, does not need renewing, and is for the same/higher level of check as required for the new role.

Portability of a check does **not** apply to a person moving into a role in the Church of England from another diocese, an external organisation e.g. a volunteer with a charity, a local authority, school, hospital etc. or a person moving roles to work with a different workforce e.g. from working with adults to working with children. If the level of check required changes to a higher level (e.g. in the new role a person is eligible for an enhanced plus barred list check; but in the previous role the person was only eligible for an enhanced check without a check of the barred list), then portability does not apply.

DBS Update Service – if an individual applying for a new role in the parish is registered with the DBS update service, their certificate can be portable from outside the diocese provided it is clear, does not need renewing and is for the same/higher level of check and workforce as required for their new role. Details will need to be sent to the Diocesan DBS administrator to check the certificate online and the certificate will need to be scanned or shown in person to the parish DBS administrator.

Net aware – new app from NSCPCC

To help us stay up to date with the content children are using in the digital world, the NSPCC have produced a guide, also available to download as an app. The search engine allows you to find particular sites, games or apps and gives you information such as the minimum age, what you need to know and feedback from children and adults. <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>

Clewer Initiative and the Fight Against Modern Day Slavery

More than 200 years after the abolition of the slave trade there are still an estimated 45.8 million men, women and children trapped in modern slavery, up to 11,700 potential victims in the UK alone.

The Clewer Initiative is a 3 year project to enable Church of England dioceses and wider Church networks to develop strategies to detect modern slavery in their communities and help provide victim support and care. It involves working with the Church locally, identifying resources that can be utilised, developing partnerships with others, and creating a wider network of advocates seeking to end modern slavery together. Nationally, it involves developing a network of practitioners committed to sharing models of best practice and providing evidenced based data to resource the Church's national engagement with statutory and non-statutory bodies.

The initiative forms part of the Church of England's approach to eradicating modern slavery. For more information visit <https://www.theclewerinitiative.org/>

Request for more venues for safeguarding training

We are currently looking for new venues in the Kingston and Croydon area in which to host our increasingly popular safeguarding training events.

Key requirements of the venue include:

- Seating capacity for around 40 people
- Digital projector, screen and laptop available for use on site
- Availability to book weekday evenings and Saturday mornings
- Access to refreshments area where attendees can make tea/coffee themselves

If you feel your church building would be able to host a training event, then please do contact Christine Daly, our safeguarding training and data administrator.

Faith and Order Commission Publication - Forgiveness and Reconciliation in the Aftermath of Abuse

Is forgiveness something the church should be talking about when abuse has taken place? This key question is addressed in a recent publication by the Faith and Order Commission, *Forgiveness and Reconciliation in the Aftermath of Abuse*. This is a House of Bishops commended document and has been released by Church House Publishing.

This theological and pastoral resource addresses specific challenges to the Church as it seeks to speak in the aftermath of abuse, and provides material to help parishes and dioceses facing the complex realities of such issues.

One of the key conclusions of the document is that while forgiveness matters in the aftermath of abuse that does not mean it should be the immediate focus of what the church says and does. Forgiveness needs to be seen in relation to justice, healing and repentance. The publication is now available via:

https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/forgivenessandreconciliation_0.pdf

Safe Record Keeping and New Data Protection Guidelines

As many of you are increasingly aware, the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) comes into force on the 25th of May 2018. This has understandably raised concerns from parishes about how to store sensitive data and information relating to DBS checks, recruitment files and safeguarding concerns.

The Diocese are currently working on detailed guidance for Parishes ahead of the new regulations coming into force in May and will be sending something out at the end of this month. This guidance will include a checklist for action and an audit questionnaire. The Diocese will also be running some training sessions for parishes and dates for these will be published at the same time.

In the meantime, the national church has produced some initial guidance which can be found here <http://www.parishresources.org.uk/gdpr/> and which will give you some background to the new rules.

The first step for all organisations implementing GDPR is to review the data they currently hold on individuals, where it is held and for what purpose. The Diocese advises at the moment that parishes think about this initial task and if you have any immediate queries, please direct your queries to the dedicated email data@southwark.anglican.org

Pass It On

Clergy, parish safeguarding officers and lay leaders are reminded to pass on any safeguarding allegations, disclosures or concerns they receive about church officers to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser or one of the Assistant Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers as soon as possible and ideally, within 24 hours.

Our contact details are shown within this newsletter. Please remember that we are available for consultation and advice on any safeguarding matter relevant to your church. Please do be in touch with us!

Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser:

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