

ST ALBANS DIOCESAN SYNOD

19 OCTOBER 2019

QUESTIONS – SECOND NOTICE PAPER

- 1) Mr Anthony Archer (General Synod) to ask the Bishop of St Albans as President of the Diocesan Synod:

“What steps are being taken as a diocese to ensure that all church officers are aware of safeguarding policy and guidance and are trained appropriately for their roles, and does the evidence from records captured by the Safeguarding Training Portal and other sources suggest that PCC members in all churches have in fact undertaken the required training?”

The Bishop of St Albans will respond:

I thank Anthony Archer for his question.

It is timely that, some three years after this Synod affirmed its commitment to safeguarding all God’s people, we take note of how that is reflected in practice.

Firstly, with regard to the steps that are being taken to ensure that all church officers are aware of safeguarding policy and guidance, a wide range of measures have been put in place:

- The website carries all House of Bishops’ guidance alongside good practice guidance for children and adults.
- A newsletter is sent out 2 or 3 times a year to clergy, Readers, PCC secretaries, churchwardens and Parish Safeguarding Officers highlighting new policies and practice guidance, training requirements and sources of information.
- These have been followed up with emails to further promote safeguarding training.
- The Diocese of St Albans has launched a Parish Safeguarding Dashboard which is gradually being rolled out to parishes to enable them to see how well they are doing in complying with safeguarding policies and practice. So far, the Diocese have a 38% take up which is second highest from all the dioceses using it.
- This year’s archdeacons’ visitation questionnaire included a major section on safeguarding covering the training that has been undertaken in parishes, adoption of and compliance with policies, reporting of safeguarding incidents and correct display of policies and information.

Secondly, as far as training is concerned, in addition to the archdeacons’ questionnaire:

- The online training portal shows that over 3600 people have completed the CO module and over 900 people have completed the C1 module.
- 12 volunteer trainers have been recruited to help make training available across the Diocese of St Albans.

- New guidance will be issued in 2020 in response to the new training framework which has been developed nationally to build on the work which has already been done.

It is the responsibility of parishes themselves to ensure that PCC members and parish staff who should undertake safeguarding training have done so, but the figures show that many people have undertaken training. The Diocese will continue, with all the means outlined above, to ensure that our churches are safe and seen to be safe.”

- 2) Mr Anthony Archer (General Synod) to ask the Bishop of Hertford as Chair of the Diocesan Board for Mission and Ministry:

“What proportion of time in the job descriptions for the Church Growth Officers is devoted to stewardship and what evidence is there that mission resources such as the Parish Giving Scheme are being fully utilised throughout the diocese?”

The Bishop of Hertford will respond to Question 2 orally.