

SAFEGUARDING NEWS — July 2021

WELCOME to the fourteenth issue of the newsletter which brings the latest updates from the Safeguarding Team to all churches and chaplaincies in the Diocese of St Albans.

This issue introduces;

- Safeguarding Sunday
- The Parish Safeguarding Dashboard
- Safeguarding training updates
- Safer Recruitment and People Management
- Central Beds Building Resilience in Families (BRIF) – from Linda Bulled
- Mental Health and Safeguarding in Churches training - thank you

Introduction by Susan Pope, Diocesan Secretary

Thank you to all those of you who have continued to ensure our churches meet the needs of the vulnerable in our communities, especially during the challenges of the last 16 months.

As restrictions are eased and activities which could not take place, or could only take place online, begin to start up again, new and updated resources are available to help, and details are set out in this newsletter.

In particular I draw your attention to Safeguarding Sunday on 10th October which is an opportunity to raise awareness of the importance we place on safeguarding, and to thank all those who undertake the work of making our churches safe and welcoming throughout the year.

And the Safeguarding Dashboard is a useful tool to check whether your policies and procedures are up-to-date, where you are complying with the latest guidance or where there is further work to be done. The Safeguarding Team are always ready to help if you have any questions or need support in meeting your safeguarding responsibilities.



Safeguarding Sunday

Safeguarding Sunday in October is a simple way both to celebrate and highlight all the constructive safeguarding work that goes on in our local churches every day of the year. We know how easy it is to forget this with all the other demands on our time.

The Church of England is supporting this year's Safeguarding Sunday on 10 October 2021, encouraging local churches to use their regular Sunday service to explore together what safer places look like, and to acknowledge those working behind the scenes to make our churches safer for all.

The initiative comes from safeguarding charity Thirtyone:eight who provide bespoke resources including films and animations, prayers, preaching notes, children's activity sheets, hymns and songs and a safeguarding pledge.

These can be found at <https://thirtyoneeight.org/news-and-events/safeguarding-sunday/>

[This flyer](#) may also be of use – it does not have a date to allow for churches who mark Safeguarding Sunday on other days, but the main push will be for October 10th.

A short sermon for use on the day will be provided by Bishop Jonathan Gibbs, the Church of England's lead safeguarding bishop, who will be speaking about Safeguarding Sunday in his General Synod presentation next month. Whether churches can give just a few minutes or dedicate their whole service, Safeguarding Sunday is a really helpful and important way of focusing on all the work that goes on 365 days a year in our churches to make them safe places. Protecting vulnerable people is at the heart of the Christian message.



The Parish Safeguarding Dashboard

The dashboard developer, in conjunction with the 24 dioceses who are using this software, are working to decide how the Learning and Development Framework 2021 and Safer Recruitment People Management Guidance 2021 are best incorporated within the dashboard. If you notice that some things don't quite 'fit' in this respect, then please be patient as we work to ensure any changes are considered fully before the software is updated.

The Archdeacons Articles of Enquiry include a question about whether your parish is using the safeguarding dashboard. If you are not, then please could it be included as an item on your PCC agenda at the next meeting for consideration. 67% of parishes in our diocese are now using it.

Reminder:

For those who have not registered and wish to do so, please contact safeguarding@stalbans.anglican.org and we will facilitate this.

If anyone has used the dashboard previously but can't find it, please go to www.parishdashboards.org.uk where you can continue. There is a password reset button there should you need it.

Clearly Simpler, the dashboard developer, has launched a new website to support the dashboard. It is mainly aimed at parish users and can be found at www.safeguardingdashboards.org.uk.

The 'Help' link at the bottom left of the Parish Dashboard menu now links to this support website.

The Learning and Development Practice Guidance 2021

The Learning and Development Practice Guidance 2021 means there will be some significant changes, which we are aiming to fully implement by the start of 2022.

The guidance can be found at

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-06/SafeguardingLearningAndDevelopmentFramework2021.pdf>

The modules are now referred to as 'Safeguarding Learning Pathways'.

The national church has made a shift in its relationship with safeguarding training with this new framework.

The safeguarding learning pathways are intended to support participants in developing and maintaining the necessary values, beliefs, knowledge, and skills to safeguard and protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults as outlined in the 'Promoting a Safer Church' House of Bishops policy statement 2017.

The core learning pathways to be implemented by 2022 are;

- Basic Awareness (was referred to as module C0) [Online](#)
- Foundation (was referred to as module C1) [Online](#)
- Leadership (was referred to as module C2, and C3 before that) [Diocesan delivered](#)

Further learning pathways are;

- Domestic Abuse. [Online – awaits, expected later in 2021](#)
- Safer Recruitment People Management. [Online – available as of now, see below](#)
- Permission to Officiate (inc. readers with PtO). [Diocesan delivered](#)
- Parish Safeguarding Officer induction. [Diocesan delivered](#)

Online courses can be found at [Safeguarding Training Portal \(cofeportal.org\)](http://safeguardingtrainingportal.cofeportal.org)

Please note;

For those holding the Bishop's licence, commission, authorisation, or permission, and also Parish Safeguarding Officers, there will be some leadership pathway courses in the autumn to ensure you are up-to-date. You will be contacted by the diocese if you are due this training before the end of the year.

Refresher learning should be completed at a three-yearly interval in order to keep knowledge and skills up-to-date.

It should be undertaken at the highest required level (as per safeguarding training in the statutory sector) for core pathways.

Additional pathways should now also be refreshed on a three-yearly cycle, as opposed to one off training.

National learning pathways will be updated as required by changes in practice.

Please bear with us while we implement what is in effect a significant change. A safeguarding training newsletter will be published towards the end of this year to explain how the changes will be implemented in 2022.

Safer Recruitment & People Management online training

I am pleased to announce that the online learning module for Safer Recruitment and People Management is now live on the safeguarding training portal.

[Safeguarding Training Portal \(cofeportal.org\)](https://www.cofeportal.org)

This course is a required (essential) module for:

- Line managers and anyone involved in the recruitment of Church Officers (including employees, elected members and volunteers)
- Those with responsibility for administering DBS (Lead Recruiters or Recruiters)
- Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSOs)

Building Resilience in Families in Central Bedfordshire

Is your Church in Central Bedfordshire?

Do you support vulnerable families?

If you have answered yes to these questions the following information might be useful for you.

Building Resilience in Families (BRIF) is a service offered by Central Bedfordshire Early Help. Specifically designed for giving help to families when they most need it, at that early stage when things are just becoming difficult and there are issues that are hard to manage. The PSO or a member of your pastoral team can contact the Community Partners listed below for your area, see the **CBC Localities Map** to decide which contact you need. They will give you advice on how to help your family, this might include taking the issue to the BRIF panel so other professionals can also give their input on how to support your family. For more detailed information on how this service works **BRIF Leaflet**. Community Partners contact details are listed below.

[Click here for BRIF Leaflet](#)

[Click here for CBC Localities Map](#)

If you would like to talk to someone who uses this service please contact:

- Linda Bulled PSO Lidlington Church and St Albans Diocese Safeguarding Trainer
07752 677622 or linda.bulled1810@gmail.com
- Kerry Nielow – Ivel Valley
kerry.nielow@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
- Amanda McDonald – Leighton Buzzard
Amanda.McDonald@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
- Katie Jeeves – Dunstable
katie.jeeves@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
- Amy Staton – Houghton Regis
amy.staton@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
- Natalie Good – West Mid Beds
natalie.good@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Safer Recruitment & People Management Guidance (SRPM)

This guidance was published on 28th June 2021 and must be implemented by 4th January 2022.

SRPM has been developed to replace the existing Safer Recruitment Practice Guidance 2016. The revisions made to the guidance intend to offer clarity and detail on key areas which have been consistently raised as areas of concern and confusion such as DBS eligibility criteria, reference checking requirements and to whom this guidance applies.

The guidance includes a toolkit consisting of a number of forms designed to help you, as well as an assessment tool to help review and understand current safer recruitment and people management practices and procedures, and easily identify where there may be gaps in processes. It is written in two parts – ‘Requirements’ (in blue boxes) and ‘Good Practice’ explaining how to achieve the Requirements.

This guidance can be found on the Church of England’s new e-manual. All other guidance will be transferred from the national website to the e-manual in due course. The e-manual can be found at;
www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual

The Requirements in this guidance must be followed for the appointment of all roles within a Church body that involve, as a general rule, substantial contact with children and/or vulnerable adults. The guidance also applies to relevant roles that are performed outside of England, for example where individuals belonging to a Church body participate in overseas/link work. It will also apply to those from other countries who are coming to work in a relevant role and includes exchange programmes.

It should be noted that the Requirements outlined within this guidance serve as a minimum requirement.

Even where roles are not identified as having “substantial” contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults, bodies may still wish to implement aspects of safer recruitment practices where an element of safeguarding risk is identified or if individuals hold a position that shapes and influences the culture of a church.

Please note in particular: DBS checks are to be renewed every three years instead of every five years. Parishes must plan for and fully implement this particular change by January 2024 at the latest. Other than this, the guidance must be implemented by January 2022.

For anyone whose DBS check is completed by the diocese, please do not contact the diocese with enquiries. A separate communication will be sent out to you in regard to how the changes will be rolled out.

Mental Health/Safeguarding in Churches

Rev Richard Allen, Spiritual Care Manager for Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, and Jez Hirst, DSA, would like to thank everyone who attended the mental health/safeguarding training for church leaders in the diocese.

We are hopeful that this training will be cascaded throughout our deaneries to help equip us for the increase in mental health cases in churches as we come out of lockdown.

The training is aimed at ensuring that members of the church community who are struggling with poor mental health are supported appropriately, especially when they might put others at risk of harm, or be at risk of harming themselves.

General enquiries

The safeguarding team are currently short staffed as Mandy Davies will not be at work for some time. During the summer, there will likely only be one adviser, either Jez Hirst or Martyn Hedley available at any time due to leave.

Could I remind you to visit the safeguarding pages of the website which were updated earlier this year where you can find most of the information that we receive questions about. These can be found at

<https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/safeguarding/>

For enquiries relating to DBS matters please see the March 2021 newsletter for directions and information at

<https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/Newsletter-No.-13-March-2021.pdf>.

Please do not contact the safeguarding team in the first instance.



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