

SAFEGUARDING NEWS — May 2019

WELCOME to the ninth 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 recent House of Bishops documents including a link to FAQs for Reporting Safeguarding Serious Incidents.

There is also an introduction to the forthcoming Parish Safeguarding Dashboard.

Also included is an extremely useful link to information regarding mental health in our churches.

The outcome of the survey completed by those in Hertfordshire for the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board is a positive story for the diocese.

Introduction by Archdeacon Dave

Thank you to everyone in our churches and chaplaincies who works so hard to ensure that we provide a safe and secure environment in our ministries; clergy, parish safeguarding officers, churchwardens, diocesan safeguarding team, and more.

We all know that we must fulfil our Safeguarding obligations legally and morally. But I wonder if you've ever reflected upon the theological reason for safeguarding processes and procedures.

Unsurprisingly the word 'safeguarding' does not appear in the bible, however throughout scripture we clearly see God's heart for the vulnerable. Proverbs 31:8 reads "Speak out on behalf of the voiceless, and for the rights of all who are vulnerable".

In a turbulent and troubled world, where power and position are often abused, putting vulnerable people at risk, God's love is a haven, a place of safety. As God's people we are called to replicate this in our dealing with those we come in contact with. We pray 'thy kingdom come' and we're called to seek to build that kingdom here and now.

In Christ's interaction with the vulnerable and the outcasts in society we see this model for our dealing with others. Jesus warns his disciples (Matt 18:6) "Whoever causes these little ones to trip ...", and where he uses the term 'little ones' he meant not only children but all who are vulnerable.

Thank you again to those who lead on safeguarding in our diocese, churches, and chaplaincies, but safeguarding is the responsibility of us all. That responsibility is a legal and moral responsibility, but also our theology of safeguarding should be based on God's heart for the protecting and giving a voice to the vulnerable in our society, as modelled by Christ himself.



New House of Bishops Documents

Responding to Serious Concerns that relate to Children, Young Persons and Vulnerable Adults Guidance

This practice guidance is for use by all those who have a role with children, young people and vulnerable adults. This includes diocesan, cathedral and provincial safeguarding advisers, members of the national safeguarding team, archbishops, bishops, deans and their senior staff.

It includes information that applies to parishes but, for ease of reference, this is also covered in the Parish Safeguarding Handbook.

<https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/Responding-to-Safeguarding-Concerns-or-Allegations-that-relate-to-Children-Young-People-and-Vulnerable-Adults.pdf>

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New House of Bishops Documents (continued)

Reporting Safeguarding Serious Incidents to the Charity Commission.

All PCCs, DBFs and most Religious Communities are charities and their trustees are required to report any Serious Incidents, both safeguarding and non-safeguarding, to the Charity Commission.

Following recent high-profile safeguarding-related incidents in the charity sector, the Charity Commission updated its guidance on Serious Incident Reporting in October 2018, with a particular focus on the reporting of SAFEGUARDING Serious Incidents. The Church has worked with the Charity Commission to agree bespoke guidance for PCCs, DBFs and Religious Communities on how to identify and report a Serious Incident.

PCCs, DBFs and Religious Communities were already required to report any Serious Incident to the Charity Commission. However, from 1 January 2019, they should do so in accordance with this new guidance.

Identifying and Reporting Safeguarding Serious Incidents to the Charity Commission. Guidance for PCCs, DBFs and Religious Communities

<https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/Safeguarding-SIR-Guidance-FINAL-1-Jan-2019.pdf>

Practical guidance: How to make a Safeguarding Serious Incident report to the Charity Commission

<https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/SIR-Safeguarding-Practical-Guidance-FINAL-1-Jan-2019.pdf>

PCC Template Delegations (as a Word document)

https://stalbandsdiocese.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/ETBjWdgGjw5NqmlI12sUsaYBz6xK7Hqk3_tEWAIFBCwvOA?e=aTMqXg

Frequently Asked Questions

<https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/FAQs-FINAL-1-April-2019.pdf>

Parish Safeguarding Dashboard

I would like to give you early notice of the new Safeguarding Dashboard, which will be free of charge to parishes.

The dashboard is a way of keeping all your safeguarding records together, at a glance, with an easy system that tells you whether you are compliant with the many House of Bishops' safeguarding requirements.

This is **not** over and above what you already do, but puts all your records together in one place.

This is already being piloted in St Albans Diocese and is being used with great effect in ten other dioceses. We will be rolling this software out to all parishes, in stages, through this year.

It is easy to use and has been extremely well received by all parishes in other dioceses.

Please see the attached below and watch the short video at <https://vimeo.com/315725141>

Not only will this give you the chance to monitor all your safeguarding responsibilities in one place, but it will enable the diocesan safeguarding team to have oversight of all the parishes that participate and help us identify and support those who may struggle.

It is not compulsory for parishes but I think you will find it an extremely useful safeguarding tool.

We hope that every parish will eventually use this.

An email will later be sent to Parish Safeguarding Officers inviting you to participate.

<https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2019-03-Safeguarding-Dashboards.pdf>

Information regarding Mental Health in Churches

We would like to share the following link, which gives access to information regarding mental health which may help you to engage more effectively with mental health issues.

<http://www.mentalhealthaccesspack.org/about/>

This is a free resource which comes from a partnership between [Livability](#), [The Mind and Soul Foundation](#) and [Premier Life](#).

The Mind and Soul Foundation educates, encourages and enables the church on mental health issues. Premier Life covers a wide range of issues on health and life. Liveability works with disabled and disadvantaged people and communities across the UK. Together they created this site in response to help and support church leaders and those who attend church, with mental health issues.

Their intention is to offer the church a reliable, Christian-based resource which presents the facts on key mental health issues – all in one place. The site also points you to other trusted organisations, including Christian charities working in this field.



Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board (HSCB) Safeguarding Audit Results

Thank you to those from Hertfordshire who contributed to the survey promoted in the last newsletter. There were over three hundred people who took part on behalf of the Church, from a wide variety of roles and with differing lengths of service.

The report received in response to the survey gives the data results for all of the agencies who were part of the third wave of this survey along with the Church of England data so the figures can be used for comparison.

<https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/HSCP-SI1-survey-Church-of-England.docx>

The result is really positive.

From 2017 to the end of 2019, approximately 5000 people will have received face to face safeguarding training within the diocese. I see this as one of the key drivers for such a positive response from this survey. Thanks as always to our volunteer trainers.

The Diocese (Herts) often scored a higher percentage score than the other Wave 3 agencies and on the very few when they have not, they are only marginally under the high scores from all the agencies.

Having reviewed the raw text data I am pleased to see a lot of sensible comments that people know who to contact in the various scenarios, know where to find safeguarding information and are finding training useful.

The survey overall shows a confidence, with the skills and knowledge of how to react in the circumstances given.

Although we are pleased with the survey results, there will be no room for complacency.

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