

SAFEGUARDING NEWS — July 2023

WELCOME to the eighteenth 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:

- * Trevor Devamanikkam Review
- * Stand up to domestic abuse
- * Safeguarding training update
- * Safeguarding Hub stage 2
- * Zoom Drop-In for Parish Safeguarding Officers

Foreword by Archdeacon Charles

The concept of sanctuary is so central to the Gospel. Through faith in Christ, we find refuge from our sins, even in some sense, from ourselves. The waters of our baptism point to this, echoing Israel's deliverance through the Red



Sea, ultimately into the Promised Land: 'My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest'. The Eucharist has as its backdrop the Passover meal and the protection God's people found from the plagues upon Pharaoh. And, in our own experiences of faith, many of us will have found in God a place of sanctuary in the storms of life: 'The Lord is my refuge and my strength, an ever-present help in trouble.'

That's why safeguarding failures, particularly when they touch the most vulnerable among us, are so devastating not just to those who suffer abuse, but also to our whole understanding of ourselves as the church and our mission. Having only recently moved from parish ministry, I am acutely aware of how onerous the demands of our safeguarding guidance are, but they are vital to ensuring that all can find sanctuary in our churches and, ultimately, in God. Therefore, please do persevere in your efforts, including in staying up-to-date with all the safeguarding training requirements that apply to you, and please do play your part in encouraging others to do the same. We hugely value all that you do in ensuring that our churches are safe places for all who worship in them.

Trevor Devamanikkam Review

The independent lessons learnt review ([Click here to access the review on the CofE website](#)) into the Church of England's handling of allegations against the late Revd Trevor Devamanikkam was published on 11th May 2023.

Trevor Devamanikkam was due to appear in court in June 2017, charged with six counts of sexual abuse in the 1980s, against a 16-yearold. However, he did not arrive for the hearing and was found dead at his home later that day.

An inquest found that he had died by suicide. In 2012 and 2013, the survivor, himself a member of clergy at the time, alleged he made a number of disclosures of non-recent abuse to senior clergy, and they failed to act on them.

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The review was commissioned by the National Safeguarding Team, NST, and carried out by Jane Humphreys, a Senior Social Care Consultant, and previous Director of Children's and Adult's Services with a career spanning more than 30 years.

Its purpose is to identify both good practice and failings in the Church of England's handling of the allegations, including its safeguarding practice, in order that the Church can take steps to enhance and improve its response to allegations of abuse and thereby ensure a safer environment for all.

Stand Up To Domestic Abuse

We have been asked by the National Safeguarding Team (NST) for our support across the diocese and cathedral in assessing our culture surrounding domestic abuse, to aid their work in responding to recommendation 26 of the Past Cases Review 2 report and ultimately changing behaviour in the church surrounding domestic abuse. When domestic abuse occurs in a church setting, there are additional complexities which can prevent resolution of the situation.

To stand up to domestic abuse we first need to understand our culture, behaviours, knowledge, and skills in terms of recognising and responding to domestic abuse. A baseline survey has been developed which will allow further understanding of our current culture, behaviour, skills, and knowledge in terms of recognising and responding to domestic abuse.

The link [Domestic abuse: What are our behaviours, attitudes and cultures](#), will provide you access to the survey, which is open to all to complete from senior leaders to members of the congregation.

Please do share this with your church community.

The survey is constructed around 15 multiple choice questions and takes 10-15 minutes to complete, with no personal identifying information required.

It is recognised that you are being approached at a time of increased pressure in parishes, but we need to get our culture and responses to domestic abuse right, and the NST want to offer you the opportunity to help shape their understanding further.

For those who are happy to help with the survey, please note that it must be completed by the end of July.

Safeguarding Training

There has been a big push in regard to training and although the numbers are steadily going up, we are still far short of the figures that we hope to have.

Emails have been sent previously to clergy, clergy with PTO and Readers followed by letters from the Archdeacons in many cases, and more recently a letter from Bishop Alan.

Since the letters, those mentioned above who have still not completed the necessary modules are being contacted by telephone on behalf of Bishop Alan. Many of those contacted are still surprised to hear that they have online courses outstanding on the national training portal.

Please could you take personal responsibility to log in to the portal and check that you have completed the courses mandated for your role.

The figures for training compliance of Parish Safeguarding Officers is also low.

For those who have not checked, please click on the link below to the relevant newsletter which gives you the information you need about how to check whether your training modules are up to date or not.

[Safeguarding Training Newsletter - November 2021](#)

As always, thank you to those who have checked their online training status on the national training portal and have completed any outstanding courses.

Please note that the portal does not record the Leadership (C2) module due to it being taken with the diocese rather than it being an online course on the training portal. The diocese records Leadership training internally.

Note to churchwardens in vacancy—if you are in an interregnum or are aware that your parish will be, there is a requirement for churchwardens to complete the C2 Leadership module. Please contact Catherine Boon cboon@stalbans.anglican.org to let us know and Catherine will arrange a date.

Thank you to those Parish Safeguarding Officers who attended the two Parish Safeguarding Officers Induction courses that we ran in the Spring at Holywell Lodge. We will be running further courses after the summer and will email all PSOs with the dates once they are arranged.

The Safeguarding Hub Stage 2

We are pleased to tell you that Stage 2 of the Safeguarding Hubs is now live as of 10th July and ready for parishes to use. This allows a parish to create role descriptions & person specifications.



What new features are available at Stage 2?

Stage 2 allows a parish to:

- Create *Role Descriptions and Person Specifications*
- Designate a Responsible People for relevant roles (who can then approve the role description and person specification)
- Create PDF and online adverts

How can you try Stage 2?

Please click on the link below for a tutorial video:

www.safeguardinghubs.org.uk/safeguarding-hubs--stage-2.php

Then sign into dashboards/hubs at www.parishdashboards.org.uk or in your usual way.

Please note - Stage 3 is coming soon – Stage 3 (Safer Recruitment) will track the recruitment process for new volunteers. We are expecting this to be released before the end of the summer.

For those who have not yet registered for the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard, or the Safeguarding Hub, I would encourage you to do so to help organise and keep your safeguarding requirements and safer recruitment information together and up to date. Please email Catherine with a request to register, or if you are having any problems with the dashboard and hub, at cboon@stalbans.anglican.org.

Zoom Drop-In for Parish Safeguarding Officers

We are extremely pleased that the monthly drop-in sessions via Zoom are proving popular and hopefully helpful to those who can join.

For those who wish to join us, they are held at 9.30am for an hour on the last Friday of every month on the following dates for the remainder of 2023:

- * 28th July
- * 25th August
- * 29th Sept
- * 27th Oct
- * 24th Nov



One of the safeguarding team will be available to answer questions, however, please check if you can find the answer to your question at www.stalbansdiocese.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-frequently-asked-questions/ first.

Remember if you have a question related to DBS then please first utilise the services of 31:8 who provide an outstanding DBS advice service as part of our agreement with them.

They can be contacted by any registered recruiter (DBS administrator) on 0303 003 1111 or at disclosure@thirtyoneeight.org

We look forward to seeing you.

Safeguarding Team

We were sorry to see Assistant Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser Martyn Hedley leave us at the end of May and wish him all the best in his retirement.

Please be aware that we are exceptionally busy at present and politely ask for your patience as it may take longer than we would like to respond to your emails or calls. Be assured that if you leave a voicemail, or send an email, you will get a reply.



Your Diocesan Safeguarding Team are:



Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) Jez Hirst. 01727 818107 or mobile 07867 350886
Jez works full time.



Assistant DSA Mandy Davies. 01727 818117 or mobile 07771 179015
A key part of Mandy's role is the co-ordination, preparation, and delivery of safeguarding training. Mandy works part time. Her usual workdays are Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.



Assistant DSA Dave Adams 01727 818104 or mobile 07469 351357
Dave works full time.

Email address for all: safeguarding@stalbans.anglican.org



Catherine Boon
Training and Safeguarding Administrator
01727 818103 cboon@stalbans.anglican.org
Catherine works on weekdays between 9:15am and 2.45pm.



Lesley Shroobree, DBS and Safeguarding Administrator.
01727 818101 db@stalbans.anglican.org
Lesley works 9:30am -2pm on Monday to Thursday and 1:30pm to 4:30pm on Fridays.



Introducing Assistant DSA Warren Lucas 01727 818106 or mobile 07311 310545
Warren works the same hours as Martyn Hedley used to work. He started at the beginning of June, is part time, and his usual workdays are Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday.

Going Deeper into God • Making New Disciples • Transforming Communities

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