



The Diocese  
of St Albans

**DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING ADVISORY PANEL**

**REPORT TO THE BISHOP'S COUNCIL 2021-22**

***1. Introduction and overview***

- 1.1 The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel is responsible for overseeing the implementation and review of policies and procedures for safeguarding children and adults throughout the diocese and for developing and maintaining good practice in relation to the safety and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. The current terms of reference and constitution can be found on the Diocesan website at [Safeguarding Contacts - Diocese of St Albans \(anglican.org\)](https://www.anglican.org/safeguarding-contacts).
- 1.2 The past year has seen the completion of the second review of past cases (PCR2) and major developments in House of Bishop's guidance, including Safer Recruitment and People Management, Learning and Development and Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults. Together with an ever more complex caseload, this has placed an immense burden on the DSA team and on diocesan resources. Jez Hirst (DSA) and assistant DSAs Martyn Hedley and Mandy Davies have worked intensively to respond to these initiatives and to ensure that the highest standards of safeguarding practice are maintained. In recognition of the increased demands on the team, an additional ADSA (Dave Adams) has now been appointed (starting on 2 May 2022) and Catherine Boon has been appointed as Safeguarding Administrator. We greatly welcome this strengthening of the team, which directly reflects the scale of the work and the commitment of the diocese to safeguarding.
- 1.3 The Panel continues to offer a broad range of safeguarding experience within the diocese and from other agencies and the contribution of representatives of the police and safeguarding boards has been particularly valuable.
- 1.4 The Safeguarding Strategy Action Plan has recently been updated to reflect the steps taken over the past year to support the overarching Safeguarding Strategy for the Diocese. This covers every aspect of Strategy, ensuring a focussed approach to meeting our priorities for safeguarding. The Safeguarding Strategy itself will be reviewed in the course of this year.

- 1.5 The safeguarding section of the Diocesan website has been fully updated to provide access to all the relevant safeguarding documents and information and team continues to provide up-dating information about training and developments in the Safeguarding Newsletter (last issued in November 2021).

## **2. Training**

- 2.1 The new Learning and Development Framework has led to a fundamental review of how training is delivered across the diocese. The continued restrictions on face-to-face meetings meant that most training has been on-line or by Zoom during last year and the new framework allows this to continue. A note was provided to the last meeting of the Council setting out the key aspects and implications of the framework and a copy of the note is attached for ease of reference (***Annex 1***).

### **2.2 Leadership training (formerly C2)**

In anticipation of the introduction of the new Leadership module this year, the training team (Jez Hirst and Carol Taylor) worked hard to complete courses for eligible clergy and laity in October and November 2021. This has allowed a breathing space before we begin delivery of the new module in April. The new course will be offered by Zoom and a programme of sessions has now been set up for coming year, each with a theologically trained facilitator and a volunteer trainer. We are extremely grateful to the clergy and volunteer trainers who have kindly agreed to lead this training and to Catherine for organising the programme.

### **2.3 Basic awareness & Foundation (formerly C0/C1)**

These core modules are delivered on-line and there continues to be a steady increase in the number of people completing them with over 5400 having now undertaken C0 and over 2000 having completed C1. Feedback from those undertaking these module has remained positive.

### **2.4 Domestic abuse awareness (formerly S3) and Safer Recruitment and People Management (formerly S1)**

These modules are also now delivered on-line, but there is a new requirement for refresher training every three years, which will involve regular monitoring. The framework makes clear who is required to undertake this training and the availability of this material promises to resolve the difficulties we had previously identified about access to training in these areas.

## **3. Past cases review 2**

- 3.1 The second Past Cases Review (PCR2) was concluded in October 2021 and the report of the independent reviewer (Elaine Rabbitt) was submitted to the national team. A note outlining the conclusions of the report was provided to the last meeting of the Council and a copy is attached for ease of reference (***Annex 2***).
- 3.2 The report was presented to the national Project Management Board in November 2021 and the Board expressed its thanks to all those involved in the process for their hard work and commitment. The Board requested further information about the Victims and Survivors Strategy for the diocese and about one case noted in the report.

The DSA has provided detailed responses on both matters; these have been accepted by the PCR2 Stakeholder Engagement Manager and were due to be presented to the Board on 24 February 2022; confirmation the response of the Board is awaited.

- 3.3 The report made a number of recommendations for consideration by the diocese, particularly in relation to record-keeping, some of which have already been addressed. Any outstanding matters will be addressed in the DSAP action plan. As noted in the Annex 2 (paragraph 5), there is one historic matter which has been referred for consideration by the PCR reference group for consideration; it does not involve any immediate or continuing risk of harm.

#### **4. *Casework and risk assessments***

- 4.1 The volume of safeguarding referrals and enquiries remains high, with a significant number of more serious or complex cases to be managed and several issues arising from DBS disclosures.
- 4.2 Mental health has continued to be a concern and courses on mental health awareness have been provided by Jez and Rev'd Richard Allen (Herts NHS Partnership Trust). These were well-attended and well-received by those attending, who were then to cascade the training within their deaneries. There has also been a demand for this training material from other Eastern Region DSAs.
- 4.3 The use of the parish dashboard has increased over the past year, with over 70% of parishes now subscribed up. However, some parishes still require encouragement to use the dashboard and we are considering how this support can be provided – perhaps through mentoring from those already using it successfully.
- 4.4 A safer recruitment hub is being developed to work alongside the dashboard to assist in managing and recording recruitment.
- 4.5 There are currently 32 cases of known risks which are managed by safeguarding agreements. These are reviewed regularly with annual risk assessments. All assessments are seen by Carol Taylor (as DSA supervisor) and quality assurance of risk assessments continues to be undertaken by Liz Hanlon (Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board). No concerns about the quality of assessment have been identified.
- 4.6 The Survivor Care Strategy developed in 2019 as part of the PCR process has been reviewed and further details of the support and services provided by the diocese have been set out as part of the information provided to the PCR2 Board. The demand for these services in the diocese has been limited, but we are conscious of the need for a clear pathway for victims and survivors to receive support.

#### **5. *Safeguarding at the Cathedral***

- 5.1 The SCIE safeguarding audit for the Cathedral was completed in April 2021 and the

Cathedral has developed an action plan which the DSAP will monitor progress. The report of the audit was generally positive and includes recommendations about the role of the DSAP in relation to the oversight and scrutiny of safeguarding at the Cathedral and about Cathedral representation on the DSAP. The Cathedral has developed an action plan which has been shared with the DSA and at its next meeting (April 2022) the Panel will be considering the plan and how to take forward the recommendations from the audit.

- 5.2 We are pleased to note the appointment of Elaine Rabbitt as the new Cathedral Safeguarding Officer and we will continue to work closely with the Cathedral clergy and with her in promoting best practice and appropriate oversight. We take this opportunity to thank Sally Hickman for her outstanding work as Cathedral CSO and for her contribution to the work of the DSAP.

## **6. *Guidance, policies and parish support***

- 6.1 In addition to the Learning and Development Framework Two major new guidance documents have been issued by the NST in the past year: Safer Recruitment and People Management and Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults. Both are available as part of the Church of England Safeguarding e-manual. The DSAP responded fully to consultation of the draft guidance, particularly in relation to the Safeguarding guidance on spiritual abuse. DSAs across the country have expressed concerns about the impact of the guidance on workloads and once it takes effect we will wish to monitor this aspect. The Safeguarding guidance was approved by the House of Bishops in December 2021 and is due to 'go live' on 4 July 2022. As part of the implementation the national team is offering training on spiritual abuse and healthy cultures and we will ensure that this is cascaded as appropriate across the diocese.
- 6.2 It is anticipated that existing policies and guidance will be incorporated in a new Code of Practice to be issued by the House of Bishops later this year under the Safeguarding (Code of Practice) Measure 2021. The Measure will replace and strengthen the duty to have regard to House of Bishops' guidance with a duty to comply with the Code of Practice. We will monitor these developments and will consider how best to publicise the Code and ensure compliance.

## **7. *Concluding comments***

- 7.1 Once again, the diocese and the DSA team have faced substantial challenges over the past year. However, the commitment to safeguarding work remains clear and the DSA team have worked hard to meet the demands presented by new guidance and by the casework. The coming year will bring an increase in training requirements and the implementation of the new safeguarding guidance, all of which will add to the safeguarding work of the diocese. We are fortunate to have a strong and dedicated team to meet these challenges and are grateful to them and to the Bishops and senior clergy for their commitment to this work.

**Philip Waller**

*Independent Chair, Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel*

*March 2022*

**Annex 1****Safeguarding Learning and Development Framework 2021: a note from the DSAP Chair**  
**Introduction**

1. The new learning framework makes significant changes to safeguarding training for all clergy, church officers and others in positions of leadership or requiring an awareness of safeguarding. The framework is to be implemented from January 2022 and the diocese will be required to follow the framework from then. A failure to have fidelity to the learning model will be regarded as a failure to have due regard to House of Bishops' Safeguarding Guidance.
2. The framework consists of a range of 'pathways' with detailed specifications for the content and delivery of each and for the categories of people required to undertake them. The framework consists of four core pathways and a number of additional pathways for specific issues or roles; a chart summarising the pathways is attached.

**Key elements**

3. The former C2 leadership training has been completely revised and replaced by a more reflective programme which will have a significant impact on training and administrative resources.
4. Refresher training is required every three years for all relevant modules, including the additional pathways. This is a new requirement in relation to the domestic abuse and safer recruitment pathways and will involve a further increase in administration.

**Leadership training: the impact for the diocese**

5. The DSA team are taking steps to minimize the initial impact of these changes from January. All clergy and Readers who have their C2 refresher training due before 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 will be asked to attend training sessions in October and November 2021 and these will all run with the current format of C2 delivery and will be delivered by Carol Taylor and Jez Hirst. This allows a 3-month cushion at the start of 2022, with the new leadership pathway being rolled-out in March.
6. Planning for the new pathway for leadership (clergy, PTO, Readers and PSO) has begun and an assessment has been made of the numbers requiring the pathway and the number of sessions required annually. A delivery plan has been drafted in outline, from which it is clear that additional training and administrative resources will be required.
7. We expect around 1100 clergy, Readers and PSOs will need to attend the main leadership pathway, which is delivered over two 90 minute Zoom sessions, with reflective tasks to be completed by participants before and after each session. The responses to these tasks will need to be read and evaluated by the trainers.
8. For those holding PTO there is a separate module delivered in one three-hour Zoom session (3hr 15 mins including break). There are approximately 330 people in this category.
9. The maximum number of participants for each session (whether clergy etc or PTO) is 16 and we therefore estimate that over a three-year period there will need to be c70 paired sessions for clergy etc (ie 140 in all, or 46-48 sessions each year) and 21 (or 7 each year) for PTO.
10. Each session must have 2 facilitators, one being theologically trained and the other a safeguarding trainer. The same pair will need to deliver a pair of sessions with the same delegates to ensure continuity of pre and post course work.

11. It is proposed that we identify at least 12 volunteer facilitators with a theological educational background and recruit additional volunteer safeguarding trainers.
12. Additional and effective administration will be necessary to prevent this from becoming cumbersome and unworkable. This will include setting up the sessions and collating attendance records, receiving and collating written material from participants and a maintaining the database. An electronic management system will be required to support this process.
13. A communications strategy will be agreed to ensure that this more complicated system runs efficiently and that those required to undertake the leadership pathway are aware of the forthcoming changes. It is recognized that the new programme will place extra burdens on hard-pressed clergy, in particular, and will need careful introduction.
14. Online modules C0 and C1 are a pre-requisite to Leadership (C2) and communication is to go out to instruct all those who have not completed these modules (C0 and C1), and are required to complete the leadership training, that they must complete these before the leadership programme starts in April 2022.
15. The DSAP will work with the Bishops and senior clergy to assess the specific resource implications of the new framework and how they might be met.

**Philip Waller**  
**DSAP Chair**  
**October 2021**

## ***Annex 2***

### **Past Cases Review 2: an outline of the conclusions**

1. The review of past cases has now been completed, in accordance with the PCR2 Protocol and Practice Guidance and a report has been provided in draft by the Lead Reviewer, Elaine Rabbitt.
2. The review has involved consideration of the files for 1848 individuals (clergy, PTO, retired clergy Ordinands, LLM & ALM, Readers and lay Diocesan and Cathedral staff) as well as records of known cases. There was a 100% response from parishes to the requirement to provide information and 65 of the returns were referred to the DSA for further consideration. Of these, all but 3 were already known cases and none of the new cases posed a risk to an adult or child or a lack of survivor engagement. There were no reports or contact from any survivors during the review.
3. As a result of the review of 136 cases on Known Cases List the reviewers found 6 cases requiring referral to the DSA for further action to resolve incomplete or unanswered issues identified. None of these issues posed an immediate risk and the reviewers were content following discussion with the DSA for the issues to be worked through as capacity allowed.
4. A further 17 queries arose from the review of files, all of which have been resolved without the need for further action. None of these posed any immediate risk.
5. Of the 6 cases identified as potentially requiring further action, all but one have been resolved. There is one outstanding historic matter which is being referred to the PCR reference group for consideration of any further action. This case does not involve any immediate or continuing risk of harm.
6. The report concludes as follows:

*“The PCR2 of the Diocese of St. Albans has met all objectives as set out in the Protocol and Practice Guidance. All amber and red cases have been dealt with to a satisfactory conclusion. The DSA and safeguarding team are to be credited for the efficiency, sensitive and prompt action taken in all cases.*

*As far as practicable all allegations of abuse of children or adults previously recorded or identified within this review have been dealt with appropriately and proportionately to a standard that is expected of the Diocese of St. Albans and the national Church. It is recognized that some cases due to time lapse and, change in church policy are not of the present acceptable standard. However, the needs of the survivor where the survivor is known have been addressed. All risks have been considered and addressed.*

*The Diocese of St. Albans have evidenced some excellent working practices. There are areas for improvement at a local and national level. The Safeguarding team are dedicated, professional and, committed to producing a high standard of work with the interests of the victims/survivors uppermost.”*

7. The report and its recommendations will be considered by the DSAP at its next meeting (on 20 October 2021) and any remaining queries will be referred to the PCR reference group. The draft report has been seen by the Bishop and shared with his senior staff. The DSAP will report to the Bishop on all actions taken in response to the report.

**Phil Waller**  
**DSAP Chair**