

SAFEGUARDING



WELCOME

Welcome to the summer 2024 Diocesan Safeguarding newsletter!

We are now counting down the days to our annual 'Diocesan Safeguarding Conference' taking place on Saturday 8th June, 9:30am – 4pm at Christ Church, Worksop. The theme of this year's conference is 'Creating Safer Environments', with a particular focus on the National Safeguarding Standards.

We are looking forward to welcoming Clergy, Churchwardens, Parish Safeguarding Officers, DBS Lead Recruiters, PCC members and DSAP Members from across the diocese for a day of worship, workshops, lunch and networking. Please note that bookings have now closed. Thank you to those who have reserved a place, we look forward to seeing you on the day.

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Wilkinson & Jay Reports
- Parish Dashboard Updates
- Record Retention
- Trial of DBS Digital ID Checks
- A Blog from Survivors for Survivors
- National Safeguarding Standards
- Training Updates

SAFEGUARDING BRIEFING

It was great to see so many attend our recent *Safeguarding Briefing* (previously PSO Briefing) on 1st May over Zoom. Moving forwards, this online termly event will be available to anyone in a leadership role in church to attend (clergy, churchwardens, PCC members, Parish Safeguarding Officers, DBS Lead Recruiters).

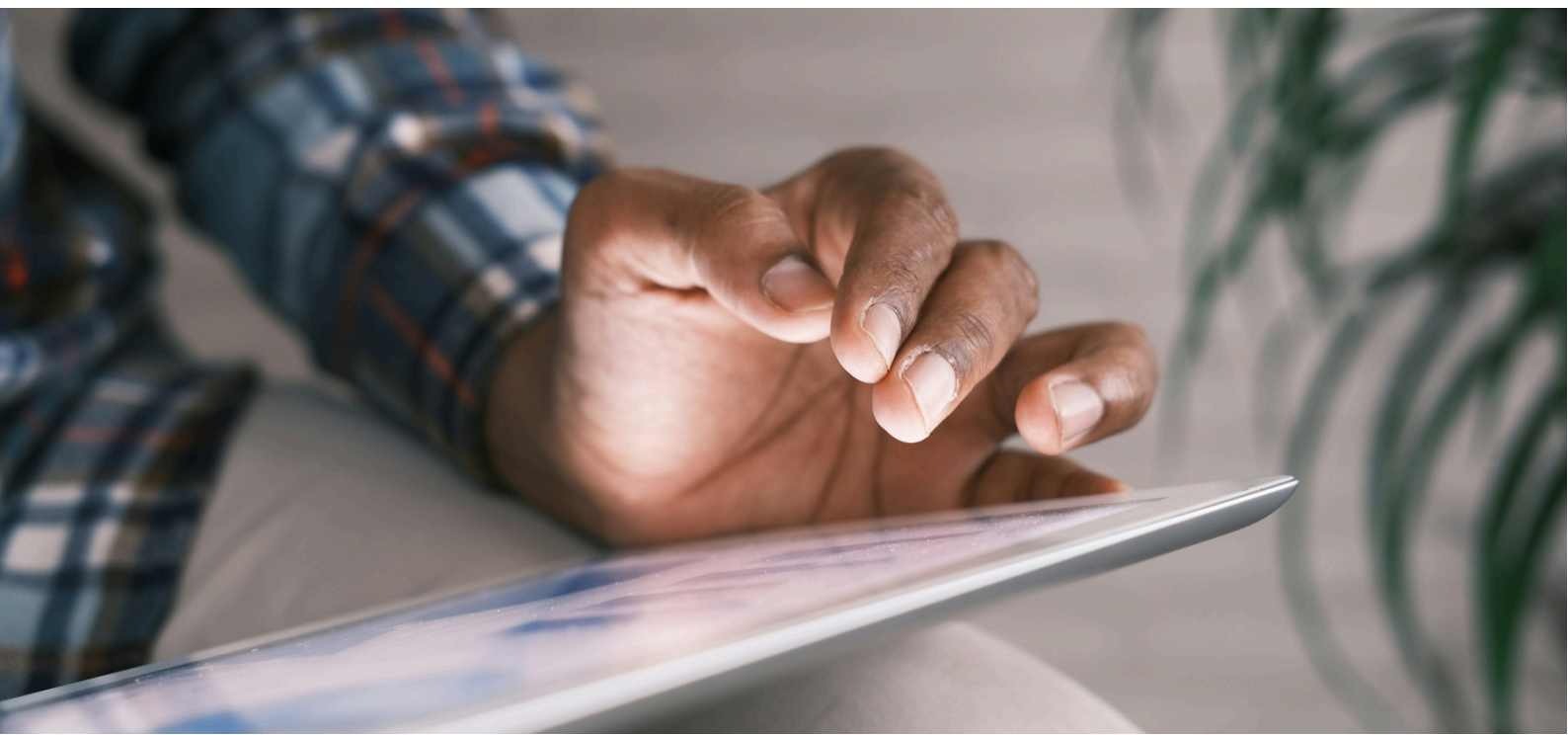
The date of the next briefing is:

Thursday 26th September 7-8:30pm

All topics covered in the briefings are included within this termly newsletter.

WILKINSON & JAY REPORTS

You may have heard about the Wilkinson and Jay reports that were commissioned last year by the Church of England, but not be as clear about what they are, or why they were commissioned. Over the next few years there will be significant changes in the way that safeguarding is delivered in the church. At the moment, what the future will look like is not known but to begin our understanding of what might emerge, I thought some background explanation might be helpful. The full reports plus a more detailed resumé is **[available on the Diocesan Website here](#)**. Please do share these with your PCCs and start a discussion.



The Wilkinson Report

The Independent Safeguarding Board (ISB), started in 2021, in part as a response to the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) which reported their recommendations in relation to the Church of England the previous year (2020). The ISB had survivor representation on the Board and provided scrutiny for the work of the national church. The ISB was stepped back in the summer of 2023 amidst national media attention and feelings that the voices of survivors had not been heard. You might recall that the debates around General Synod and the strength of feeling following the Church's decision to end the work of the ISB. Sarah Wilkinson was commissioned to look at the arrangements for setting up the ISB, its working and its disbanding. She reported in January 2024 with some strong criticism of the way the ending of the ISB had been managed.

I would urge you to read the 'Lessons to be Learned' section found on pages 150-153 of the full report. In summary, the report states that:

A complex matrix of reasons led to the termination of the ISB contracts. The structural reasons for the termination were principally the responsibility of the Archbishops' Council. The short-term reasons were the responsibility of both the original ISB members and the Archbishops' Council, all trying to operate in a situation where their roles were not clearly defined.

Wilkinson also reported that:

The ISB was designed under extreme time pressure imposed principally by the Archbishop of Canterbury. While the intention to create an independent safeguarding function rapidly was laudable, the speed at which it had to be designed resulted in serious design flaws.

Parish Dashboards Update

Updates are being made to the Parish Dashboards to incorporate the National Safeguarding Standards. Dashboard users will receive notifications via the Parish Dashboard as changes are scheduled. Updates are available via your Parish Dashboard or [on the website here](#).

A summary of the Lessons Learned include the following:

- **TRAUMA TRAINING** everyone involved in decision making about safeguarding issues at the NCIs, from the Archbishops to case workers and including all members of the Archbishops' Council, should have mandatory training on trauma-informed handling of complainants, victims and survivors.
- **RISK ASSESSMENT:** risk assessments of the impact on participants of the termination of any case review process should always be carried out by those making the decision to terminate.
- **SCRUTINY GAP:** the scrutiny gap that needs to be addressed by the creation of any new independent scrutiny body is that there is no appeal process for the outcome of a diocesan core group or an NST safeguarding investigation save for the NCIs general complaints procedure, which is not designed for the purpose.
- **GOVERNANCE OF ANY NEW OVERSIGHT BODY:** in order to avoid conflicts of interest and to assure the requisite expertise is available, the NCIs, or any successor body such as the proposed CENS, should not set up the governance of any new safeguarding body but should outsource it to management or governance consultants who have safeguarding experience and have undergone trauma training. The set up of any new oversight body should not be rushed.
- **CASE REVIEWS:** the design of any future safeguarding scrutiny body should incorporate a mechanism for the implementation and enforcement of case review findings.
- **DIGNITY:** everyone involved in safeguarding should communicate courteously, in tone and manner, in all forms of communication with each other, including social media, not least because the extent of trauma on either side may be undisclosed.

The Alexis Jay Report

Sometimes referred to as the Future of Church Safeguarding Report, the Jay Report was commissioned by the two Archbishops to advise on how the Church of England could deliver a fully independent safeguarding service.

The report made the following recommendations:

- We recommend the creation of two separate charities, one for independent operational safeguarding and one for independent scrutiny of safeguarding.
- These charities will be funded by the Church but structurally independent of them, to ensure that safeguarding decisions are implemented in full, and not subverted, to provide fully independent scrutiny and to mark an unambiguous change of culture.
- We further recommend that the General Synod pass a Measure, with Parliamentary approval and royal assent, to create two overarching duties requiring all Church institutions, bodies, and personnel, whether ordained or lay, remunerated or voluntary, to refer all safeguarding matters to these independent bodies and to implement all the decisions of these independent bodies.



Response to the Wilkinson and Jay Reports

While proposals were suggested at General Synod to immediately accept all of Jay's recommendations, these were not accepted. The Lead Bishop of Safeguarding, The Rt Revd Joanne Grenfell spoke well on this matter at General Synod and proposed the setting up of a Response Group with representatives of survivors, Diocesan Safeguarding Advisors/Officers, Diocesan Secretaries, DSAP Chairs and independent safeguarding professionals to name but a few. This was accepted at General Synod and work is already underway gathering the various responses from all parties before a proposal plan for the way forward is produced for the July Synod.

What seems to be emerging is general acceptance of the benefits of independent scrutiny, policy development and standard setting but less appetite for independence of service delivery.

The response to the Jay Report will be a regular feature in our newsletter as a way of keeping everyone informed of the developments that emerge.



RECORD RETENTION

A new suite of documents has been collated and released in April 2024 on record retention. There are six separate documents covering the following areas of record keeping:

1. Safeguarding Records (2024)
2. Cathedral Records (2013)
3. Diocesan Records (2008)
4. Episcopal Records (2009)
5. Parish Records (2009)
6. Clergy Personnel Files (2021)

Only the safeguarding files section is new, and the document is formatted into a grid design for ease of use/reference. This will be an evolving document as the National Safeguarding Casework Management System (MyConcern) is rolled out across the dioceses and further updates evolve. For example, at the moment, the facility to delete concerns and profiles within MyConcern is not possible. However, as almost all safeguarding files are kept for 75yrs, it is something that the NST will have time to resolve.

The full grid is available on the Safeguarding pages of the [Diocesan website here](#). I would recommend not downloading a personal copy as it could become out of date quite quickly, but do set up a link to the webpage so that you always have the most recent version. The timescales of significance for parishes are as on the table on the next page.

RECORD RETENTION SCHEDULE – SAFEGUARDING FUNCTION

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RETENTION PERIOD	DISPOSAL	NOTES
Advice Non-casework	Records of non-case related non-legal advice	3 years	Destroy	
Advocacy	Notes / notebooks	1 year	Destroy	To ensure compliance with data protection and good records management practices. Notebooks should be treated as follows. 1. Ideally case notebooks should only hold details relating to cases, any other general work related note taking not directly related to case work should be kept separately. 2. Notes should clearly reference the specific case they relate to. 3. Notes should be written up as soon as practicable and stored in a structured filing system. 4. When notes have been transferred the page should be crossed out with a marker to indicate that they have been written up and appropriately filed. 5. Before destruction all pages should be reviewed to ensure that the notes have been transcribed. 6. Notebooks must be retained until all notes have been typed up and filed and can then be destroyed.
Advocacy	Electronic Files (MyConcern)	75 years	Destroy	
Case Management	Allocation and planning documents	6 years	Destroy	
Case Management	Concerns about Church Officers Non- Safeguarding	1 year	Destroy	If an issue becomes a safeguarding case, then information will be transferred to a case file.
Case Management	Concerns about non-Church Officers	1 year	Destroy	This relates to any documents relating to incidents that are reported to the safeguarding team that do not involve matters relating to Church Officers. Data controllers are not responsible for retaining records on behalf of statutory agencies, there are no duties beyond the reporting of these matters.
Case Management	Individual Cases – no further action	2 years	Destroy	
Case Management	Individual Safeguarding Cases	75 years	Destroy	Records of safeguarding case investigations. Includes: notes, correspondence with victims, correspondence with alleged perpetrators, safeguarding casework reports, minutes of core group meetings, risk assessments etc.
Victim and Survivor Engagement	Records relating to the communications with victims and survivors. Includes correspondence with victims and survivors, newsletters etc.	3 years	Destroy	

TRIAL OF DBS DIGITAL ID CHECK

As more people receive important documents online, many struggle to provide documents received by post for an DBS ID verification check. APCS, our DBS provider, now offer a digital ID check process which Safeguarding are trialling for DBS checks. Feedback is good thus far. We would like to invite 2 or 3 volunteer parishes to trial this in parish before we consider rolling it out across the diocese. If you are interested, please contact Dawn Todd via email dbs@southwell.anglican.org.

WHAT IS NEEDED?

- The applicant must have a smart device with a camera that can take images and access web pages (laptop or mobile phone – not iPad).
- The applicant's current address must be in the UK.
- The applicant must upload certain ID documents. (APCS will send instructions directly to applicant). The number of documents required will depend on the type of DBS check.
 - **Basic DBS (1 document):** Passport or Biometric Residence Permit
 - **Enhanced DBS Check (2 documents):** Passport or Biometric Residence Permit & UK Driving Licence or National ID Card
- A 'liveness' check is carried out therefore the device must have a camera.
- The process:
- The applicant completes the online application form and confirms to the recruiter they can meet all requirements for a digital id check; Recruiter submits application for digital check; APCS contact the applicant instructions. Once complete, the recruiter receives a pass/fail report; Pass, APCS submit the application to DBS; Fail, revert to standard check with recruiter.
- Once this is rolled out it is the applicant's choice whether to use our current methods or the digital id check (they must meet all requirements to be accepted for digital check otherwise the check fails).
- Cost £4.50 per digital id check funded by the Diocese. *(We are charged for failed checks.)*

Dates for your diary

Diocesan Safeguarding Briefing
Thursday 26th
September, 7-8.30pm

Safeguarding Hub Workshop Dates
Thursday 20th June,
7pm

PSO Induction Training Sessions
Tuesday 15th October,
7-8.30pm
Book via the Learning Hub

PSO / LR Workshops
DBS:
Thursday 3rd May

Safer Recruitment:
Wednesday 12th June

(Both 6.30-7.30pm)
Meeting ID: 585 799 3391
Passcode: 82KBeW

Safeguarding Sunday
17th November 2024



A BLOG FROM SURVIVORS FOR SURVIVORS

In March 2024, we sent out our first 'blog' style email to some of the victims and survivors we are engaging with. The blog was initially for those affected by church-based abuse, however we have been supporting many individuals with different experiences who have asked to be included as it is helpful to hear from others to feel less alone. The blog will contain poems, pictures, prayers, quotes and more from survivors for survivors. If you or someone you know would find it helpful to receive this monthly email please contact blog@southwell.anglican.org. All information is confidential and anonymity protected.



An image created by a survivor who has benefited from sitting on the bench at The Minster.

NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS

The National Safeguarding Standards were published last year and are a set of standards that should be worked on over the next few years at both Diocesan and Parish levels. The suggestion is to consider a couple of standards each year and not attempt to address all in one go. The language used within the standards can appear a little daunting, especially for those smaller churches who might be struggling to meet all the safeguarding requirements. But please do not be too anxious. Most of the standards you will either already be doing in one form or another and those you have yet to address, you have time to plan what is needed before the deadline for compliance (31st December 2027).

That said, we want to start to raise awareness so that your PCCs can begin to discuss and become familiar with the standards over time. The national standards are as follows:

Standard 1 **Culture, Leadership and Capacity**

Standard 2 **Prevention**

Standard 3 **Recognising, Assessing and Managing Risk**

Standard 4 **Victims and Survivors**

Standard 5 **Learning, Supervision and Support**

The national Church has already produced some advertising materials which can be found on either the Church of England Website or the Diocesan Website – Safeguarding Resources – Governance and Quality Assurance. You can also find the full National Standards Document there too. On Saturday 8th June we are holding a Safeguarding Conference and one of the main themes of the day will be to introduce the standards and start to look at what helpful materials/tools you might want us to develop to assist your parish in ensuring you are addressing each standard. Just to reiterate, you don't have to do them all at once and the advice is to undertake a stocktake of what you are already doing and concentrate on one or two per year for those that are less well developed.



The INEQE audit on 9th-11th January 2026 will measure the Diocese against these standards and will want to see evidence that they have been rolled out to the parishes. We will have a slot in each of the next Newsletters and Safeguarding Briefings for us to update and pick up on any problems parishes are experiencing. I want to thank you in advance as we are very conscious that the national safeguarding standards come at the same time as parishes are discussing and embracing the Vision Strategy Refresh. Hopefully the materials that we develop from the safeguarding conference will assist you in undertaking your audit and action planning for addressing the standards over the coming years.

For those of you already using the Safeguarding Dashboard and Hub, the National Standards are about to be embedded within the Dashboard, so if you have yet to explore the Dashboard I would strongly encourage you to think about it, and speak to one of the Dashboard Champions or contact Steph as the Parish Support Officer who can help you get started.

Training Updates

- A few updates have been made to **Autumn Leadership schedule** which is [available here](#).
- The **2025 Training Schedule** is being developed and will be circulated in June 2024.
- The National Safeguarding Team have addressed **feedback from the 'Plain English Campaign'** regarding the use of language being overly complex and academic in the Leadership course. The Leadership materials have been edited to reflect this feedback, which we hope will make the course more accessible and less overwhelming for attendees.
- **New DBS/Training Matrix has been developed** in line with the updated National Training Framework. Key changes include:
 - *PCC members are no longer required to complete the Domestic Abuse Awareness training – this is now optional (although we still welcome anybody to access the course for awareness raising). This change has been made following the National Team receiving feedback from attendees and parishes.*
 - *Tower Captains need to complete the Leadership Module if they are in charge of a large tower (interpret that as having a regular team and not needing any deputising from other towers to ring).*
- **You can access the new DBS/Training Matrix [here](#).**