

Safeguarding Report for Diocesan Synod

Date of meeting: 19.07.25

Report presented by: Harry Steele

Report prepared by: Siân Checkley (Safeguarding Adviser)

Overview of activity since 15.05.25

Over the last month, the safeguarding team has been involved to a greater or lesser extent with 42 cases which includes six new cases and five cases where we received new information on a case with which we had previous involvement. We have closed eight cases. We have reviewed eight safety plans, ending two and are in the process of reviewing a further five. We have three cases which involve ongoing core group processes.

We received a similar number of requests for advice and guidance as we did in the same period last year with the majority being requests for advice around safe practice.

The trial of Chris Brain, former leader of the Nine O'Clock Service in Sheffield, commences on 30th June 2025. The trial will take place in London and is scheduled to run for 8 – 10 weeks. The Diocese have a number of support services in place including commissioning Elizabeth Pollard to attend the court on a daily basis, pastoral and listening services provided by clergy in the diocese and 31:8. All the information regarding the provision is available on the dedicated NOS page on the Diocesan website here - [Nine O'Clock service - The Diocese of Sheffield](#)

General update:

The number of parishes using the dashboards and hubs continues to rise. Currently there are only 5 parishes who are not on the dashboard with 86.7% of parishes actively using the dashboard.

The third annual celebration day for Parish Safeguarding Officers occurred on Saturday 17th May and was a big success. We had three workshops for all to participate in. The first was led by Kirsty Duxbury, the Diocesan registrar and focused upon the legal responsibilities for PCCs and the PSO role within that. The second was led by Ryan Gadsby and Mike North. Ryan is a survivor of child sexual abuse and delivers a powerful presentation regarding his experiences. The third workshop was delivered by Rebecca Bool from the DBS and provided insight into the DBS processes.

The next PSO celebration day will take place on Saturday 6th June 2026 when we will return to Rotherham United. Please ask your PSOs to put this date in their diaries now.

Siân and Claire visited Snaith and Hatfield deanery on Thursday 5th June to share information with them about safeguarding practice with older people and the safeguarding dashboards.

Safeguarding training

During May 2025 227 online courses were accessed, with 70 face to face courses being completed. This breaks down as 90 people completing the basic safeguarding course and 72 the foundation course with 8 completing the combined basic and foundation course. 18 people completed the leadership course, 11 the safer recruitment course, 80 the domestic abuse course and 3 the modern-day slavery course provided via the clewer initiative. 9 people completed training in the use of the safeguarding dashboards and hubs, 4 the PSO induction course and 2 the train the trainer course.

Elina and Rachel have completed training on supervision for ADSAs. Claire has participated in the National Networking day for trainers and completed training in trauma informed communication and safer recruitment. Debs and Claire have completed

training on managing conflict. Rachel and Claire have attended training on working with individuals who sexually offend delivered by the Lucy Faithful foundation and organised by NST. Elina and Siân will attend subsequent sessions of this training. **INEQE**

INEQE are undertaking audits of all dioceses and cathedrals over a period of five years. Sheffield Diocese and Cathedral will be audited during the week 11th – 15th May 2026. This is not an audit of the safeguarding team but is an audit of the entire Diocese and Cathedral of which the safeguarding team is a part.

INEQE published their first annual report drawing together the findings from all the audits they had conducted in 2024. This is available, along with the individual area audits on INEQE's website here - [Church of England - Ineqe Safeguarding Group](#) (here for the annual report - [church-of-england-independent-safeguarding-audits-annual-report-2024.pdf](#)). I would highly recommend you read the annual report and familiarise yourself with the contents therein. There are many examples of good practice and several recommendations many of which are for the wider Church of England to increase consistency, some relate to things that this Diocese is already doing and some relate to things that we need to consider.

Following the last DSAP meeting a small working party from DSAP met together to consider the recommendations in the annual report and how we might start to implement some of them in an ongoing development plan for DSAP.

Prior to the audit in May 2026 we will be required to supply a large amount of information to INEQE as part of a 360 review of both the Diocese and Cathedral. Gathering this information is a large job and I would therefore request that this is prioritised such that when information is requested it is delivered promptly. I would also request that all make note of the dates of the audit, ensure these are blocked out in diaries and everyone is aware of the need to be flexible that week to engage with INEQE as and when required.

Part of the audit will involve gathering information from a wide range of individuals involved with our churches. This is done through questionnaires and focus groups. We would like to hear from as many people as possible as part of this so I would ask that you encourage individuals to complete the questionnaire and get involved in the focus groups when these are available.

Part of our preparation for the INEQE audit is around reporting and aligning our reporting with the national safeguarding standards. Further information regarding these can be accessed here - [National Safeguarding Standards | The Church of England](#). I am gradually changing the way I report to various meetings to be more closely aligned with these standards so look out for a revised style of report at forthcoming meetings.

Siân Checkley
19.06.25