



May 2026

Welcome everybody to the latest edition of the Safeguarding Newsletter. As well as sharing some safeguarding news and updates, this month I am seeking your support in sharing some important messages with members of your PCCs who, as charity trustees, have safeguarding obligations laid down by the Charity Commission. The national church has just launched a new [Safety page](#) on their website that signposts PCCs to existing mandatory and best practice information relating to protecting people from harm in a church setting. In June they will also be running a campaign to promote awareness of, and the reporting of, serious safeguarding concerns.

You will have heard me say many times that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone, not just the parish safeguarding officers and incumbents, and I feel is an opportunity to remind everyone of their responsibilities. I appreciate all of this newsletter will not be relevant to your PCCs, but [please download this short version](#) and share it with them for review during your next PCC meeting so, as trustees, they are aware of recent developments and concerns.

I am also deeply saddened to share the news that Helen Humphreys, former Assistant Safeguarding Adviser, has passed away. We had not been aware that Helen had been unwell, and the news has come as a huge blow to our team and her former colleagues. She supported diocesan safeguarding for almost two decades and I am sure was well known to many of you and that you, like us, will want to remember Helen and her family in your prayers.



**Ben Goodhind**  
Safeguarding Manager

# Safeguarding responsibilities

## It's not just policy, it's personal

'It's Not Just Policy, It's Personal' is a campaign to raise awareness of how to recognise and report safeguarding concerns. The campaign will run from 1 June - 14 June 2026. There are resources available which are designed to build confidence in responding and taking appropriate action.

[Find out more about the 'It's Not Just Policy, It's Personal' campaign and access the resources.](#)

## Timely reporting

If there is an incident in your parish where a child or vulnerable adults is at risk of harm, where someone who poses a risk to this group starts attending church, or where a church officer is under investigation for a safeguarding related matter, this needs to be reported into us within 24 hours.

This is a due regard requirement for all parishes and failure to do so is a very serious matter. Additionally, where a PCC member has a potential conflict of interest in relation to a safeguarding matter.

Please be assured the Safeguarding team will always support PSOs and PCC members compassionately and with expert advice.

[Visit our Report it](#) web page to find out how to report incidents

[Visit the new Church of England Safety web page](#) which signposts PCCs to existing mandatory and best practice information relating to protecting people from harm in a church setting

## External organisations bringing individuals into church settings

Small charities or independent organisations - often working with prison leavers - regularly support individuals who wish to attend church activities. While this is to be supported, it is important that this takes place with the appropriate communication and safeguarding oversight. It is important to

emphasise that risk assessment in such situations requires specialist expertise, and should not be undertaken informally.

What this means for parishes:

- Continue to ensure your safeguarding policies are visible and clearly communicated
- Make parish safeguarding contact details readily available at events
- Maintain a culture of appropriate awareness and curiosity where something does not feel right

Do seek advice from the diocesan Safeguarding team whenever you are unsure.

The diocesan safeguarding team are also working directly with organisations to help strengthen their understanding of safe engagement within church communities.

## Remembering Helen Humphreys

Helen sadly passed away at the end of March following a battle with cancer. Helen worked as an Assistant Safeguarding Advisor for almost two decades, departing in 2022 following her moving away from the area. Helen focused primarily on safer recruitment and worked very closely with PSOs across our diocese forming very close relationships with a number of volunteers.

Ben says, "I have spoken with my predecessor, Glenys Armstrong, who worked with Helen for eight years and who I know was incredibly fond of Helen, describing the support she offered to her own work as crucial.

"I only worked with Helen for a year but her care for individual volunteers and clergy shone through as did her immaculate administrative skills which as we all know senior managers are utterly terrible with. In fact, many of the templates and documents we still use were created by Helen.

"I have been in contact with Helen's partner Paul to pass on the sincere condolences of the Bath and Wells Safeguarding community and if anyone would like to share their own personal comments, please do let me know. I will be giving some thought as to how we can have a lasting tribute to Helen and her commitment to the diocese and all of you."

## New guidance about publishing photographs of children online

Schools rightly want to celebrate the achievements of their pupils, and photographs are a natural part of that. But [new guidance from the UK Safer Internet Centre \(UKSIC\)](#) sets out why that instinct now needs to be balanced carefully against an emerging safeguarding risk.

The guidance follows a confirmed incident, reported to the Internet Watch Foundation by UK police, in which criminals harvested photographs from a secondary school's website, used AI tools to turn them into child sexual abuse material, and demanded money from the school with the threat of wider distribution. Incidents of this kind are not widespread, but likely to become more common.

The practical steps you can take include: avoid face-on, identifiable photographs, never pair names with images, and publish only low-resolution versions. It is worth reviewing existing content on your website and social media with this in mind.

The question is not whether to celebrate pupils, but how to do so without creating unnecessary risk.

[Access the full guidance, including a checklist of actions, on the UKSIC website.](#)

## Mental Health First Aid

In 2027 we are having a Safeguarding focus on mental health and in particular suicide prevention. Part of this will involve encouraging parishes to train at least one volunteer in mental health first aid. This will equip the volunteer to be able to respond to supporting someone experiencing poor mental health. Ben has recently completed this qualification and is now serving as one of the Mental Health First Aiders at Flourish House.

Ben says, "I attended a course run by Claire Shelton and highly recommend her. She has over 20 years of experience working alongside Social Services and the crisis intervention team in supporting vulnerable people through a wide range of social, physical and mental health difficulties. She also holds a number of qualifications in understanding poignant topics that are significant to support the recovery of mental ill health."

Claire is a qualified mental health instructor delivering the MHFA England course online and face to face. Should you like to know more about the course, which costs £390, please [email: claireyshelton6@gmail.com](mailto:claireyshelton6@gmail.com). Alternatively, free courses are available by local councils, but please note that spaces are limited.

## PSO Forums and domestic abuse training dates

The Safeguarding team are offering more frequent PSO forums in a lecture-style training format on a range of contemporary safeguarding topics, followed by the opportunity to ask questions and network. This year's forums are focused on the Year of Action on Domestic Abuse.

[All dates are now available to book online via Eventbrite.](#)

- **May - Spiritual Abuse and Domestic Violence**  
With Sally Hope, from Always Hopeful (online via Zoom) on Wednesday, 27 May 14:00 – 15:30
- **June - Parental Experience of Violence in The Home**  
With PEGS (online via Zoom) on Thursday 11 June, 14:00 – 15:30
- **July - Supporting Male Victims**  
With Mankind (online via Zoom) on Thursday 2 July, 14:00 – 15:30
- **October - Theological look at Domestic Abuse with Bishop Michael**  
through the lens of a case study in the Democratic Republic of Congo.  
In person at Flourish House on Thursday 15 October 13:00 – 15:00
- **November - Supporting Those Experiencing Violence in Same Sex Relationships**  
With Galop (online via Zoom) on Thursday, 19 November, 14:00 – 15:30
- **December - Dementia and Domestic Abuse**  
With Ben Goodhind, Safeguarding Manager (online via Zoom) on Thursday, 3 December, 14:00 – 15:30.

## Upcoming training opportunities

### Leadership training

Leadership training is now available up to the end of June 2026. There is a six week period of reflection following the training before your final course work can be submitted, so please ensure you book a date well in advance of your current training expiring.

- Tuesday 2 & 9 June (Zoom) - from 19:00 to 20:40
- Thursday 11 & 18 June (Zoom) - from 14:00 to 15:45
- Monday 15 & 22 June (in person at Flourish House) from 14:00 to 16:00

### Safeguarding Leadership for PTOs

A half day course for those with PTO who only have occasional ministry in church

- Thursday, 21 May (in person at Flourish House) from 14:00 to 16:00

[Find out more about the range of safeguarding training available and the requirements for these courses on our Safeguarding training web page.](#)

[Visit the Safeguarding Eventbrite page to book on these and other courses](#)

## Waiting lists

If you wish to be added to a waiting list for a course please contact us. Please note, that to take up any available place you will need to have submitted the pre-course work at least one week before the first training session.

If you have any questions re training or issues with booking, please [email training.safeguarding@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:training.safeguarding@bathwells.anglican.org)

## Annual PSO Conference

Our annual event for Parish Safeguarding Officers will be held on 5 September 2026. There will be an opportunity to network, engage in some workshops and celebrate the contribution of PSOs.

More details to follow, but in the meantime you can [book your place on our Eventbrite page.](#)



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