



February 2026

Welcome everybody to the latest edition of the Safeguarding Newsletter. There is quite a lot on offer to you this year including a new annual PSO conference (on a Saturday, as we have many fantastic PSOs who have been unable to engage in forums on week days) and a year of awareness raising around Domestic Abuse.

Our recent session for PSOs on [Artificial Intelligence and Safeguarding, which you can watch online if you missed it](#), proved to be our most popular PSO Forum yet. We are looking to further improve the format and content of our regular catch ups so they offer the most benefit to you all.

We have also been stepping up support for PSOs and parishes through Jake Lent's new role as parish support officer, and engagement in Deanery reviews, Deanery Chapter, and Synod meetings.

As ever we remain incredibly grateful for your continued commitment and support. My hope is that we can continue to grow our support for our parishes in the years to come, building on the healthy foundation of recent years.

Finally, my apologies to those who have struggled to get hold of us via phone recently. I am pleased to report that the issues with the phone system at Flourish House have been resolved.



Ben Goodhind
Safeguarding Manager

Annual PSO Conference: Save the date

Preparations are under way to hold an annual event for our PSOs which will be held on 5 September 2026. This will be an opportunity to network, engage in some workshops and celebrate the contribution of all our Parish Safeguarding Offices. More detail about the event will follow in due course.

Promoting a safer church policy - have your say

The national church is seeking input from Safeguarding teams and Parish Safeguarding Officers from across the country on the revised and updated policy document, 'Promoting a Safer Church'. If you can take a few minutes to complete this short survey that would be much appreciated.

- [Access the survey, as well as the accompanying note](#) which is helpful to read before answering the survey questions.
- Closing date: 27 February 2026

PSO Forums

We are continuing to offer more frequent PSO Forums, but in future they will have a slightly different format.

The first half of our gathering will be delivered lecture-style, offering the chance to have some high quality (and free) learning on a range of contemporary safeguarding issues. This will be followed by the usual opportunity to ask questions, network and get updates.

We plan to open booking for the following PSO sessions very soon via our [Eventbrite](#).

- **Domestic Abuse Awareness - Ben Goodhind and Revd Lucy Davies**
14:30 to 17:00 on 25 March at Flourish House
- **Spiritual Abuse and Domestic Violence - Sally Hope, Always Hopeful**
14:00 on 27 May - online only
- **PEGS (parental experience of violence in the home)**
June (date to be finalised) online
- **Mankind (Male victims)**
14:00 on 2 July - online only
- **Annual PSO Conference**
5 September at Flourish House
- **A theological look at domestic abuse through the lens of a case study in the Democratic Republic of Congo - Bishop Michael**
13:00 to 15:00 on 15 October
- **Gallop - support for those experiencing abuse in same sex relationships**
19 November online (time to be finalised)

- **Dementia and domestic abuse - Ben Goodhind**
3 December 14:00 - online only
- **Working with survivors of domestic abuse - Fear Free**
Online, date to be finalised.

Training

- Parish Safeguarding Officer Induction - 12 March 2026
- Train the Trainer - 25 March 2026
- Leadership in Safeguarding - dates available to end March 2026
- Leadership in Safeguarding for PTO - dates available to end May 2026

All of our training courses, including Train the Trainer, PSO Induction, and Leadership, can be booked through our Eventbrite page.

[Visit our Eventbrite page](#) to find out more about upcoming courses and view live availability information.

An update from General Synod

Those of you following Synod will be aware that some decisions have been taken regarding the future of safeguarding in the Church of England.

It has been announced that safeguarding will stay under the management of dioceses, however, there will now be an independent body (Currently referred to as the Independent Safeguarding Authority) acting in the role currently undertaken by the National Safeguarding Team. There will also be a new national complaints process and ombudsman service for safeguarding complaints that can't be resolved locally.

You can [read more about the proposed changes on the Church of England website](#).

Safeguarding Hubs

Those who use the Safeguarding Hubs (a tool within the Dashboard for parishes to store their volunteer DBS and training data, track recruitment, and automate reminders for renewals), may have noticed a slight change to the system design.

All parishes now start with access to all the tools in the Hub (instead of working up in levels like on the dashboard) and a few of the requirements (legal names for DBS checks and role specification approval) have been reviewed to make them simpler and more secure. This is based on feedback from parishes and diocese and we hope will make things easier for parishes as they go forward, and as the 31:8 DBS Portal, Training Portal, and Hubs will be linking up over the coming months.

For those who might be interested in getting their Hub set up to help keep track of their parish records, please do contact Jake at safe.guarding@bathwells.anglican.org who will be able to assist.

Reaching out to support

In his new Parish Safeguarding Support role, Jake has been working alongside Ben to put together a plan to identify and reach out to parishes who may need more support in helping to get their safeguarding processes set up and in place.

They have been working to highlight parishes who may be more at risk due to factors such as having a clergy or PSO vacancy, having low or inconsistent use of their dashboard or parishes in areas who may face more geographical difficulties such as high crime rates.

The aim in reaching out is to connect with parishes, gain an understanding of the difficulties and pressures that are being faced, and determine how to provide support to the parish to meet their legal requirements and keep their churches a safe and welcoming space.

Safeguarding at Wells Cathedral



Jill Edwards, the Cathedral's first specialist Safeguarding Adviser, under the professional supervision of Ben Goodhind, introduces herself:

I am delighted to be starting my role as Safeguarding Adviser at Wells Cathedral. My background is in teaching, pastoral care, and safeguarding, developed through my 22 years working at Wells Cathedral School. I also had the pleasure of working as a virger in the Cathedral for nine months, which opened my eyes to the valuable work of all the staff and volunteers. As a teacher, I worked closely with young people, choristers, families, and colleagues, developing strong, trusting relationships built on consistency, care, and clear communication. Teaching deepened my understanding of how safeguarding is lived out day by day, through noticing changes, listening carefully, responding thoughtfully, and working collaboratively to support the wellbeing of others.

Alongside this, my time as a virger gave me a deep, practical understanding of the rhythms and realities of Cathedral life. It strengthened my appreciation of the importance of welcome and hospitality, and of the quiet pastoral role of being present, observant, and approachable. It also allowed me to see the Cathedral as a living community, a place where worship, work, volunteering, and visiting all meet, and where people arrive just as they are, with all that life has brought them and a rich variety of experiences.

Safeguarding has always been at the heart of my work, and I am passionate about creating spaces where everyone feels safe, valued, and genuinely listened to.

As I begin this role, my focus is on building strong, trusting relationships and supporting a shared understanding of safeguarding as something we all hold together. Safeguarding is not about fear or paperwork alone; it is about people, awareness, and kindness, and about ensuring that concerns are heard and responded to appropriately. I am keen to support excellent practice, offer guidance, and help ensure that safeguarding feels accessible and supportive. I am really looking forward to working alongside the Cathedral community, getting to know people in their many varied roles, and learning from the wisdom already present here. My vision is to help the Cathedral continue to be a welcoming, caring, and safe place for all who come through its doors, whether to worship, work, volunteer, visit, or simply find a moment of peace.



Ben Goodhind

Head of Safeguarding

01749 588917

Ben.Goodhind@bathwells.anglican.org



Jo Austin

Safeguarding Caseworker

[Contact Jo](#)



Leonie Jones

Safeguarding Coordinator

[Contact Leonie](#)



Jake Lent

Safeguarding Coordinator

[Contact Jake](#)



Enita Andrews

Safeguarding Trainer

[Contact Enita](#)

Jacqueline Keir-

Bucknall

Safeguarding Trainer

[Contact Jacqueline](#)

Diocese of Bath and Wells

The Diocese of Bath and Wells
Flourish House, Wells
United Kingdom



You received this email because you signed up on our website or made a purchase from us.

[Unsubscribe](#)

