



## **Wells Cathedral Safeguarding Handbook**

*For all staff, volunteers, contractors, and community*

## Foreword from the Dean



Everyone who participates in the life of the Cathedral has a role to play in promoting a safe environment for all. It is one of the most important aspects of our life together, reflecting the love and care of God for every person. We take very seriously our responsibility to ensure that the Cathedral is a place of safety and security for everyone, a place where all may flourish in a culture which is both welcoming and safe. We recognise our particular concern to ensure that children, young people and all those who are vulnerable are protected from abuse or harm of any kind.

This Safeguarding Handbook is a vital and comprehensive resource. You will find details of policies and practice guidance as well as information about training and useful further links and pointers. There is also clear guidance about how to respond to any possible safeguarding concern and the details of who to contact to report a concern or to seek further advice.

Psalm 121 speaks of God as the *keeper* of Israel; the Hebrew word can be translated as *Safeguard*. This reminds us that our role mirrors that of our God, and we are to live the Gospel imperative that Jesus loves everyone, especially the least, the last and the lost. Safeguarding is at the heart of God's will for everyone, as we encourage everyone to live fully in God's love and safekeeping.

We are indebted to all who support the safeguarding work of this Cathedral, and grateful for those who have compiled this Handbook. I do commend it to you and thank you for your attention and care.

## Introduction

Wells Cathedral, in all aspects of its life, is committed to and will promote the safeguarding of children, young people and adults who may be at risk of harm, neglect or abuse. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and the Cathedral gives equal priority to keeping all children, young people and adults safe, regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. This handbook brings together the Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance for Wells Cathedral, as well as providing electronic links in the appendix, for additional information and related pages.

Wells Cathedral has a Service Level Agreement with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team, who supply the Cathedral with safeguarding provision, and should be consulted whenever a safeguarding concern of any kind arises within the Cathedral. The Diocesan Safeguarding website is available [here](#), with contact details for members of the team and additional safeguarding resources.

Furthermore, Wells Cathedral adopts the House of Bishops' National Safeguarding Policies and Practice, which can be found here: [Policy and practice guidance | The Church of England](#). All staff and volunteers are encouraged to refer to the Church of England Code of Safer Working Practice, available [here](#), and in the reference section.

Wells Cathedral is committed to:

- Promoting a safer environment and culture
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children and vulnerable adults within the church
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subjects of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons
- Responding to those who may pose a risk to others

This handbook supersedes all previous safeguarding handbooks/manuals and should be used as a first point of reference in relation to any safeguarding matter.

## Contacts for the Effective Operation of Safeguarding at Wells Cathedral

**The Cathedral has a Service Level Agreement with the Bath and Wells Diocesan Safeguarding Team. The following are the key contacts taking the lead on safeguarding at Wells Cathedral:**

Precentor – *Chapter Safeguarding Lead*

Revd Timothy Stevens (clergy) Tel: 07979 854727 Email: tim.stevens@wellscathedral.org.uk

Chief Operating Officer and Chapter Clerk – *Operational Safeguarding Lead*

Nerys Watts Tel: 01749 674483 Email: nerys.watts@wellscathedral.org.uk

Diocesan Safeguarding Manager (Independent of the Cathedral)

Ben Goodhind Tel: 01749 588917 Email: ben.goodhind@bathwells.anglican.org

Diocesan Safeguarding Caseworker (Independent of the Cathedral)

Jo Austin Tel: 01749 588905 Email: joanne.austin@bathwells.anglican.org

Diocesan Safeguarding Coordinator (Independent of the Cathedral)

Jake Lent Tel: 01749 588907 Email: jake.lent@bathwells.anglican.org

Diocesan Safeguarding Trainers (Independent of the Cathedral)

Enita Andrews (*part time*) Tel: 01794 685113

Jacqui Keir-Bucknall (*part time*) Tel: 01749 588907

Email: training.safeguarding@bathwells.anglican.org

**Safeguarding at Wells Cathedral is scrutinised by the Cathedral Safeguarding Advisory Panel (CSAP), chaired by:**

Patricia Hellier - *For queries regarding CSAP please contact safe.guarding@bathwells.anglican.org*

**The following is a list of Cathedral employees available as a departmental point of contact for safeguarding queries:**

### **Head Virger**

Simon Rose Tel: 01749 832206 Email: simon.rose@wellscathedral.org.uk

### **Learning Manager**

Jessica Witchell Tel: 01749 832203 Email: jessica.witchell@wellscathedral.org.uk

### **Director of Music**

Timothy Parsons Tel: 01749 832204 Email: timothy.parsons@wellscathedral.org.uk

### **Commercial Operations**

Alexia James Tel: 01749 674483 Email: alexia.james@wellscathedral.org.uk

### **Volunteer Services Manager**

Ruth Clacee-Rowe Tel: 01749 832217 Email: ruth.clacee-rowe@wellscathedral.org.uk

### **HR contact:**

Barbora Cowell Tel: ext 5042 Email: barbora.cowell@wellscathedral.org.uk

## Abuse and Neglect of Children and Adults

The abuse of children, young people and adults can take many forms. Everyone has the same right to protection regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. Children, young people and adults from minority ethnic groups and those with disabilities (physical, sensory and/or learning difficulties) are especially vulnerable and need special care and protection.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Team (DST) will manage allegations against Church/Cathedral Officers where the victim meets one of the vulnerability criteria below or where the allegation is one of the specific cases listed below.

If the Respondent is not a Church/Cathedral Officer, the DST will provide advice and support but will not take responsibility for case management. For allegations made against those who are not Church/Cathedral Officers, the DST will provide advice to refer to statutory agencies.

## Safeguarding Vulnerability Definitions

### Children

All children, under 18, are considered to be vulnerable. Any allegation of abuse or neglect of a child should be referred to the DST.

### Adults

#### I.Care Act

Statutory Guidance issued under the Care Act 2014 (14.2) by the Department of Health uses the term 'adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect' to assess eligibility to statutory social care services.

- (a) has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs),
- (b) is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
- (c) as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

Any allegation of abuse or neglect of an "adult at risk" should be referred to the Safeguarding Team.

For the purpose of Church policy and guidance the definition of 'vulnerable adult' is contained in the [Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure \(2016\)](#), which defines a 'vulnerable adult' as "a person aged 18 or over whose ability to protect himself or herself from violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation is significantly impaired through physical or mental disability or illness, old age, emotional fragility or distress, or otherwise; and for that purpose, the reference to being impaired is to being temporarily or indefinitely impaired".

In cases where the adult is not "at risk" under the statutory definition but maybe considered "vulnerable" under the church definition it will be necessary to assess whether their ability to protect themselves is "significantly impaired".

### **Specific cases for which the DST will manage allegations:**

1. **Sexual Abuse allegations** will require the involvement of the DST, to assist with multi-agency liaison and risk assessment. If the alleged victim meets the vulnerability criteria above then the case could be led by the DST but if not, the DST will support whoever is managing the allegation e.g. the Archdeacon or Director of HR.
2. **Physical Abuse allegations** will require the involvement of the DST, to assist with multi-agency liaison and risk assessment. If the alleged victim meets the vulnerability criteria above then the case could be led by the DST but if not, the DST will support whoever is managing the allegation e.g. the Archdeacon or Director of HR.
3. **Domestic Abuse** will require the involvement of the DST, to assist with multi-agency liaison and risk assessment.
4. **Bullying** Most cases of bullying in the workplace are unlikely to meet the threshold for psychological abuse. Where the bullying does not meet this threshold, the behaviour would be more appropriately dealt with by HR or Clergy Discipline Measure (CDM) processes. For cases that have been referred to the DST, the Diocesan Safeguarding Manager will make a decision and refer to the appropriate department where necessary.
5. **Spiritual Abuse** would fall under the responsibility of the DST if the spiritual abuse was a sub-category of other abuse, e.g. psychological abuse, sexual abuse, or domestic abuse. The use of scripture as part of an allegation of verbal bullying would not necessarily require case management by the DST and as above, may be best dealt with by HR or the Archdeacon.
6. **Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking** does not specifically fall under the DST but the DST will assist with multi-agency liaison and advice.

**Management of Sex Offenders.** The DST will be responsible for the multi-agency liaison and risk assessment of sex offenders that attend church. If a sex offender is attending the Cathedral, a small group (known as the reference group) will be made aware and become signatories to the safety plan to carry out the risk management plan.

## Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass all of the above within a relationship context. Children witnessing domestic abuse are considered victims, as well as those being abused. Please consider completing the Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse training for further clarity on this subject, available on the Church of England Safeguarding Training Portal, free of charge. In addition, the [Responding Well to Domestic Abuse Policy and Practice Guidance](#), by the Church of England, provides detailed information on forms of domestic abuse, the impact of this and best practice in responding.

## Low level concerns / concerns that do not meet the threshold for management by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team

There are many occasions whereby a concern is raised that does not meet the threshold for management by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team, as outlined on pages 5-6. Behaviour that falls short of Wells Cathedral's standards and values and does not align with the expectations outlined in the Code of Safer Working Practice, must be addressed. Such behaviour can range widely—from inadvertent or careless actions to those deliberately intended to enable abuse.

“A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than a ‘nagging doubt’ – that an adult may have acted in a manner which: • is not consistent with an organisation’s Code of Conduct, and/or • relates to their conduct outside of work which, even if not linked to a particular act or omission, has caused a sense of unease about that adult’s suitability to work with children” (Farrer & Co, 2020). A low-level concern could refer to a concern about an adult reported by a child; peer on peer concerns relating to children; or adults’ behaviour towards other adults. A low-level concern may also be a concern for a vulnerable adult, even if there is no specific information indicating they are at risk of, or currently experiencing, abuse. Additionally, it may be used for incidents within the Cathedral that do not meet the safeguarding threshold, such as a missing or lost child (not under Cathedral staff supervision), or instances of anti-social behaviour.

You are not required to assess whether the concern you have qualifies as a low-level issue or meets the criteria of an allegation. Once what is perceived to be a low-level concern is reported, it is the responsibility of the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer (CSO) to make that determination. The CSO will triage the concern, and where it does meet the safeguarding threshold, will refer it to the DST. The concern will be directed to other relevant departments where necessary in order to address the concern and will keep a record of the concern in a confidential file.

To report a low-level concern, please complete the Neutral Notification/Low Level Concern form available on the Cathedral internal drive and on the website and email to [joanne.austin@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:joanne.austin@bathwells.anglican.org).

## Safer Recruitment

Wells Cathedral is committed to safely recruiting all staff and volunteers. We carefully select, train and support all those with any responsibility for children and vulnerable adults in the course of their duties, in line with the House of Bishops [Safer Recruitment and People Management Guidance](#).

As part of this process, we undertake Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) checks for those being recruited who will have frequent contact, or supervise, children and/or vulnerable adults. For further information on who needs a DBS, ID checking guidance and applicant guidance, refer to the Diocesan Safeguarding website [here](#).

For DBS and Safer Recruitment related queries, please contact the Safeguarding Coordinator, Jake Lent, on 01749 588907 or [dbs.safeguarding@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:dbs.safeguarding@bathwells.anglican.org).

For DBS applications and ID checks, please contact Barbora Cowell on [Barbora.Cowell@wellscathedral.org.uk](mailto:Barbora.Cowell@wellscathedral.org.uk).

## Volunteers at the Cathedral

Wells Cathedral is fortunate to have a network of around 400 volunteers whose work is vital to the efficient running of the Cathedral to ensure it is a pleasurable experience for all. This also means volunteers play an important role in safeguarding and are therefore recruited in line with Safer Recruitment principles. Some volunteers will require DBS checks.

Volunteers should follow the safeguarding process outlined in this handbook for any safeguarding query or concern. They will be directed to the appropriate training pathway prior to starting their role by the Volunteer Coordinator.

It is acknowledged that there are sometimes changes to an individual's circumstances, such as ill health, that may require input from the DST to safeguard them appropriately within their role. This input will be done jointly with the Volunteer Coordinator and handled sensitively with the aim of providing support to the individual.

For further information, please refer to the Wells Cathedral Volunteer Handbook or contact the Wells Cathedral Volunteer Services on [volunteers@wellscathedral.org.uk](mailto:volunteers@wellscathedral.org.uk) or 01749 832217.



## Safeguarding Training

Safeguarding training for Wells Cathedral is provided by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team. Wells Cathedral observes the [The Church of England Safeguarding Learning and Development Framework](#), which sets out the learning and development pathways available. The Church of England delivers core learning pathways which are “essential learning necessary to recognise, respond, record and refer safeguarding concerns”.

Staff, volunteers and members of the congregation will all have varying levels of experience with safeguarding. The training delivered by the Church of England situates “safeguarding practice within the unique context of the Church of England and provides participants with the opportunity to relate their learning to their faith”. It is therefore expected that regardless of prior experience, **all** staff and volunteers complete the minimum requirement of Basic Safeguarding Awareness upon commencement of their role. Further training is available for those holding additional responsibility, as outlined in the table below:

Role	Basic Awareness	Foundation	Leadership	Senior Leadership	Domestic Abuse	Safer Recruitment
<b>The Dean</b>	√	√	√	√	√	√
<b>Executive Chapter Members / Residentiary Canons</b>	√	√	√	√	√	× (unless they are a lead recruiter)
<b>Non-executive Chapter Members</b>	√	√	√	× (unless their role within the Diocese requires a higher level)	√	× (unless they are a lead recruiter)
<b>Cathedral Safeguarding Officers, Chapter and Operational Leads</b>	√	√	√	√	√	√

<b>Heads of Department</b>	√	√	√	× (except for Director of Music and Chief Finance Officer)	√	√
<b>Cathedral staff or volunteers (that work with children or vulnerable adults)</b>	√	√	×	×	√	× (except for those with responsibility for administering DBS)
<b>Virgers</b>	√	√	×	×	√	×
<b>Chaperones</b>	√	√	×	×	√	×
<b>Any other staff/volunteer (who do not work with children or vulnerable adults)</b>	√	×	×	×	×	×

The above matrix should be used as a general guide only. For detailed guidance, please refer to [The Church of England Safeguarding Learning and Development Framework](#).

All members of clergy, staff and volunteers undertaking Foundation level (or above) training, must also complete Domestic Abuse training. Where an individual is the lead recruiter on an interview panel, they should complete Safer Recruitment training *prior* to starting the process.

According to the [The Church of England Safeguarding Learning and Development Framework](#), “failure by a member of the clergy to comply with a requirement is an act or omission which may constitute misconduct under the Clergy Discipline Measure. Failure by a Reader or lay worker to comply with a requirement would be grounds for the revocation of that reader’s or lay worker’s licence by the bishop, and failure by a churchwarden, PCC or cathedral chapter could result in an investigation being conducted by the Charity Commission and the person being disqualified as a charity trustee. If a volunteer is in a role that requires them to undertake safeguarding learning, they should not be allowed continue in that role if they refuse to complete the required learning.”

Basic Awareness, Foundation, Domestic Abuse and Safer Recruitment training are all available via the [Church of England Safeguarding Online Portal](#). You will need to create an account to access these.

Leadership training is delivered by the Diocesan Safeguarding Trainers, Jacqui Kier-Bucknall and Enita Andrews. To book onto these sessions (delivered either in person or online), click [here](#). Senior Leadership training is delivered by the National Safeguarding Team. Anyone requiring Senior Leadership Training will be informed of available dates by the DST.

For any questions about safeguarding training, please contact Jake Lent on 01749 588907 or [training.safeguarding@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:training.safeguarding@bathwells.anglican.org).

## Responding to a Safeguarding Concern or Allegation at the Cathedral

Wells Cathedral has a Service Level Agreement with the Diocese of Bath & Wells; therefore, all safeguarding concerns should be reported to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team (DST) within 24 hours. This can be done via telephone, email or using the online reporting form, [here](#).

When reporting a concern, please have as much of the below information available as possible:

**Who** – names, ages and contact details of those involved. Additionally, details of anyone else who has been spoken to about the concern, who you have already referred to, and the parent/guardian's details if the concern is about a child.

**What** – the facts of what exactly has happened/been disclosed.

**Where** – where specifically did this occur; in the Cathedral/school/home?

**When** – dates of occurrence and any subsequent events.

Concerns can be reported to the following:

---

**Jo Austin – Diocesan Safeguarding Caseworker**  
Tel: 01749 588905 Email: [joanne.austin@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:joanne.austin@bathwells.anglican.org)

**Ben Goodhind – Diocesan Safeguarding Manager**  
Tel: 01749 588917 Email: [ben.goodhind@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:ben.goodhind@bathwells.anglican.org)

[Confidential incident/concern form - Bath and Wells Diocese](#)

---

Following your report, the DST will brief Safeguarding Leads within the Cathedral where necessary.

The DST may need to share information about a concern with statutory agencies. Where a crime is reported, or a child or vulnerable adult is deemed to be at risk of serious harm, the DST has a responsibility to share this information with the Police and Social Services. The DST will seek your consent to do so, and can support you to make this report yourself. Where consent is withheld, the DST's responsibility to refer remains but efforts to anonymise your details will be made, where possible.

Reporting confidentially – There may be occasions when you do not feel able to provide your personal details with a safeguarding concern. In this instance, you can write to Ben Goodhind, Safeguarding Manager, Diocese of Bath and Wells, Flourish House, Wells BA5 1FD.

**Any allegation of abuse made against a Cathedral officer should be reported immediately to the DST.**

**If you believe a child or adult is in immediate danger of significant or serious harm, contact the emergency services on 999.**

The Diocesan Safeguarding Team also has an out of hours service available via [thirtyoneeight.org](http://thirtyoneeight.org), for any concerns outside of 9-5 office hours.



The Diocese of Bath & Wells partners with thirtyone: eight in relation to accessing the Safeguarding Helpline during out of hours (which operates 5pm - midnight & 7am - 9am on Mon-Fri; 7am - midnight on Sat and Sun), on bank holidays and other absences. During the above-mentioned instances, you are advised to contact thirtyone: eight's Safeguarding Helpline on 0303 003 1111 for emergency safeguarding queries. An Information Sharing Agreement between the two organisations will allow for the DST to receive a copy of the advice thirtyone: eight may offer the caller, so that appropriate follow up and support can be offered to the caller/situation, on the DST's return to the office.

## Wells Cathedral School

Any disclosures made to a member of the Cathedral by a child from Wells Cathedral School (regardless of who the perpetrator is), must be reported to the DST. The DST will then liaise with the school safeguarding link on your behalf.

## Statutory and voluntary sector agency contacts

Please note, the role of the DST is to manage safeguarding concerns within the church setting. In your roles or general life, you may come across safeguarding concerns relating to other settings. Whilst we can provide some level of advice, these need to be reported to statutory agencies of which you can find details below.

If you are faced with an emergency situation please call 999.

- Somerset Safeguarding Adult concerns - [Report a concern](#)
- Somerset Safeguarding Children concerns - [Report a Concern](#)
- Banes Child or Vulnerable Adults concerns - [Report a concern](#)
- North Somerset Childrens concerns - [Child protection and safeguarding](#)
- North Somerset Vulnerable Adult concerns - [Adult Safeguarding Board](#)

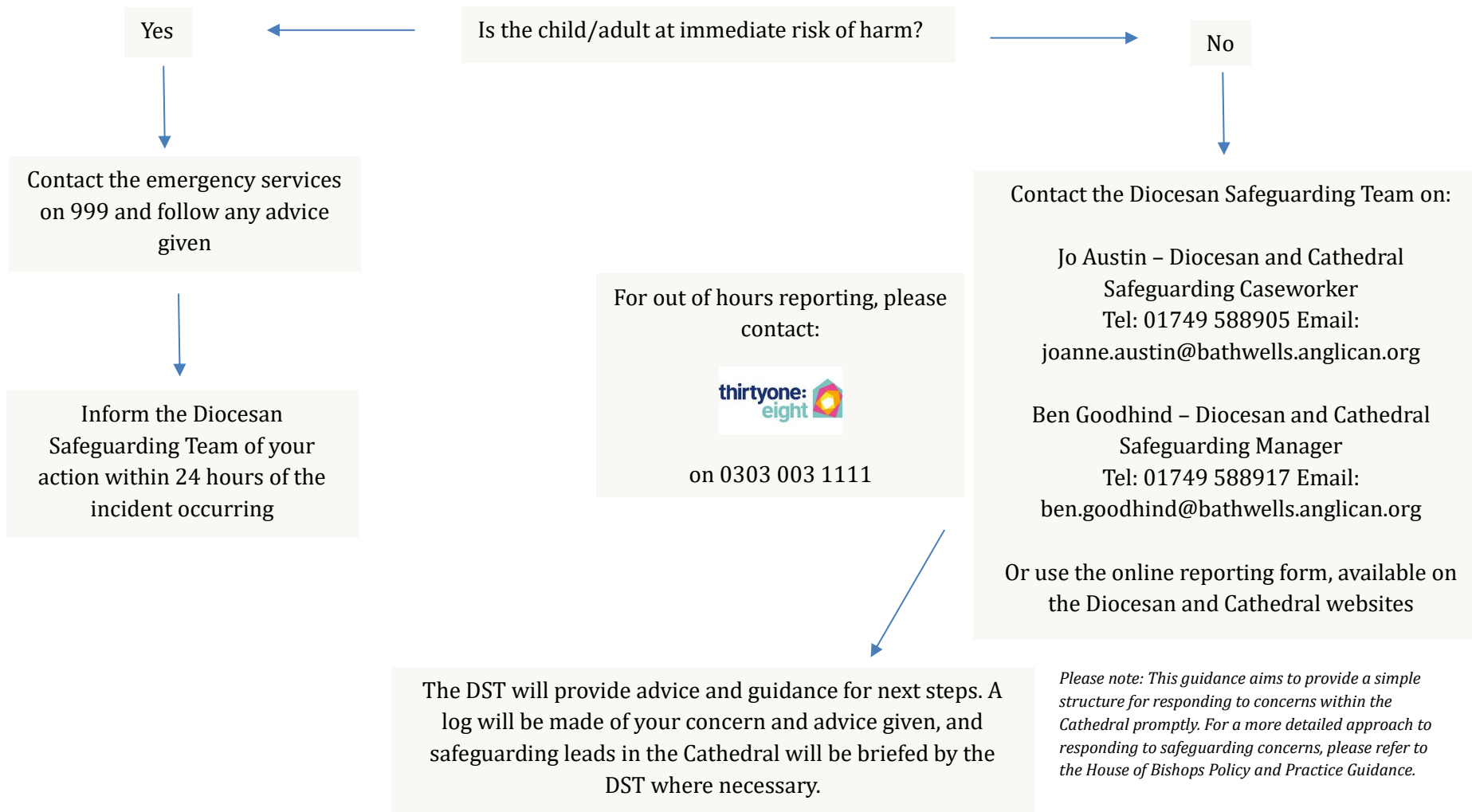
Voluntary sector agencies that can also provide support include:

- Ukraine refugees [Homes for Ukraine](#)
- National Domestic Abuse Helpline: [0808 2000 247](#) (lines free and open 24 hours). Phone if you are experiencing domestic abuse.
- Mental Health Crisis – (Somerset Mind line) [08001381692](#) (freephone) [01823276892](#) (local)
- Samaritans Helpline: 116 123 (open 24 hours). Phone if you feel you are struggling to cope and need someone to talk to.
- National Rape Crisis Helpline: [0808 802 9999](#) and is open every day from 12-2.30pm and 7-9.30pm.

- The Survivors Trust: [0808 801 0818](tel:08088010818) and is open Monday to Wednesday 10-7.30pm, Thursday 10-6pm and Friday 10-2pm.
- LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline: [0800 999 5428](tel:08009995428) [help@galop.org.uk](mailto:help@galop.org.uk)
- Men's Advice Line: [0808 801 0327](tel:08088010327) [info@mensadviceline.org.uk](mailto:info@mensadviceline.org.uk)
- Age UK Advice Line: [0800 678 1602](tel:08006781602)
- Action Fraud - [Contact us](#)



## HOW TO ACT IF THERE IS A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN AT WELLS CATHEDRAL



## Guidance for responding to a person disclosing abuse

### Respond

#### Do:

- Listen.
- Take what is said seriously.
- Only use open questions (who, what, where, when and how?).
- Remain calm.
- Take into account the person's age and level of understanding.
- Check, if face to face, whether they mind you taking note whilst they talk so you can make sure you capture the information correctly. At the end you can check with them that you have understood everything correctly.
- Offer reassurance that disclosing is the right thing to do.
- Establish only as much information as is needed to be able to report to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team and/or statutory agencies.
- Check what the person hopes to happen as a result of the disclosure.
- Tell the person what your next actions will be.

#### Do not:

- Make promises that cannot be kept (e.g., that you won't share the information).
- Make assumptions or offer alternative explanations.
- Investigate.
- Contact the person about whom the allegations have been made.
- Do a physical or medical examination.

### Record

- Make some very brief notes at the time, if appropriate, and write them up in detail as soon as possible.
- Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team or statutory agencies.
- Record the date, time, place and actual words used, including any swear words or slang. Include direct quotes in quotation marks.
- Record facts and observable things, not your interpretations or assumptions. Make it clear where your notes reflect your opinion or interpretations.
- Don't speculate or jump to conclusions.

### Report

- If there is immediate danger to a child or adult, call the police on 999.
- Otherwise report the concern to your Head of Department immediately.
- Within 24 hours, the Head of Department should report the concern to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.
- The Diocesan Safeguarding Team will advise regarding reporting to statutory agencies within 24 hours.
- If there is any doubt, seek advice from Children's/Adult's Social Care, or the Police on 101.



The current full [practice guidance](#) is available on the Church of England safeguarding e-manual.

**A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and adults, and respecting the rights of the person against whom an allegation is made. In such circumstances the welfare of the child, young person or adult must come first. The rights of the person against whom the allegation is made are important and must be given due weight, once the immediate safety and protection of the child, young person or vulnerable adult have been assured.**

### **Reporting to the Charity Commission**

Wells Cathedral is registered with the Charity Commission, and is therefore subject to the jurisdiction of the Charities Act 2011 and that of the Charity Commission. Any “Serious Incident” must be reported to the Charity Commission. The Church of England has produced [guidance](#) on identifying and reporting a serious safeguarding incident. The Diocesan Safeguarding Team are able to do this on behalf of the Cathedral Chapter, due to the Service Level Agreement in place. Reporting of the incident can also be delegated to the Chief Operating Officer.

Any serious safeguarding incident involving a Cathedral Chorister must be reported by the Cathedral Chapter to the Wells Cathedral School Safeguarding Lead as the school may need to make its own report to the Charity Commission.

## Support for those alleging abuse by a Cathedral officer

The Diocesan Safeguarding Team have a Service Level Agreement with FearFree, a charity experienced in supporting victims of abuse, who provide advocacy and support independent of the Church of England. Following an allegation of abuse perpetrated by a Cathedral officer, the DST will arrange for a Support Person from FearFree to be offered to all adult victims/survivors. The DST can alternatively arrange for a Support Person from within the Church of England, where requested.

In line with the House of Bishops guidance on [Responding Well to Victims and Survivors of Abuse](#), the Support Person's function is as follows:

- Support within the community and the Church.
- Listening, being alongside the victim or survivor in their distress.
- Some might be able to provide pastoral and spiritual support (and some victims and survivors might prefer this from a lay person).
- Being easily contactable and readily available to liaise between the victim or survivor and the Church Body or DSA about the management of their safeguarding disclosure.
- Explaining support being offered and assisting victims and survivors to choose and engage with the support options that meet their needs.
- Supporting victims and survivors during meetings with statutory services and other professionals, where appropriate. This should not extend to meetings about the Church Body's investigations about their disclosure as this will be a conflict of interest.
- Assisting the victim or survivor with exploring how their longer-term spiritual and welfare needs can be managed.
- Signposting victims and survivors to Safe Spaces, the Interim Support Scheme and the Redress Scheme, and work with any appointed advocate for the survivor.
- Being a befriender to assist the victim or survivors to build their confidence and networks.

For children and young people, the DST will seek advice from local authority Children's Services to arrange for the most appropriate support. This will include the views of the young person/child and be organised in conjunction with statutory agencies.

The DST will also provide information about support and advocacy for those who have experienced church-based abuse.

Wells Cathedral would like to engage with victims and survivors to improve the way we respond and support those affected by abuse. If you are a victim or survivor and would like to contribute to these discussions, please contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team on [safe.guarding@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:safe.guarding@bathwells.anglican.org).

## Issuing an apology to victims and survivors of church-based abuse

In line with in the [Responding Well to Victims and Survivors of Abuse](#) guidance, Wells Cathedral will issue an apology to victims and survivors as follows:

- after the conviction of a Church Officer for abuse they committed against them.
- - where there has been a finding (for example as part of civil proceedings or a CDM) that the alleged abuse is proven on the balance of probabilities.
- if it finds, after Independent Case Review(s) as outlined in relevant House of Bishop guidance, that previous allegations against a Church Officer have not been investigated or pursued in an appropriate manner. The apology will be for the lack of action about the original allegation, and it should state a commitment to (re)investigate without delay.

Wells Cathedral commits to issuing an apology as far as possible in line with the survivor's wishes. The Dean remains responsible for overseeing and issuing the apology, but will do so in conjunction with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

## The Choristers of Wells Cathedral

The Choristers of Wells Cathedral are all educated at Wells Cathedral School. To optimise the safety of the choristers, Wells Cathedral follows Safer Recruitment principles and those responsible for the Choristers for any period of time will be sufficiently safeguarding trained as per the Church of England and Wells Cathedral School policies.

Choristers are also chaperoned whilst under the care of Wells Cathedral. Choristers are deemed to be under the care of Wells Cathedral as soon as the choristers have entered Wells Cathedral premises, at the North Door. The choristers are under Wells Cathedral School care at all other times, including but not limited to “ranks” up and down Vicar’s Close, pre and post rehearsals and services. Chaperones are again, safely recruited (as volunteers) and trained in line with their responsibilities. Chaperones should refer to the Chaperone Handbook for further information, or contact Melanie Lawlor, Music Department Coordinator, on 01749 832204 or [Melanie.Lawlor@wellscathedral.org.uk](mailto:Melanie.Lawlor@wellscathedral.org.uk).

Wells Cathedral and Wells Cathedral School have regular meetings for oversight of safeguarding matters, ensuring compliance with Safer Recruitment and Training. The Cathedral and the school have a joint safeguarding agreement in place, to ensure continuity and seamless care for the children and young people of Wells Cathedral Choir. In addition, we share a Single Central Register to ensure any chorister-related new staff, volunteers or chaperones are identified and recorded simultaneously.

The designated safeguarding leads at Wells Cathedral School are Martin Ashton and Stephen Bradford. The school’s safeguarding policy can be accessed [here](#).

## Events at Wells Cathedral

The Commercial Operations team are responsible for completing all risk assessments, terms and conditions, arranging public liability insurance and the publication of planning notes for all events at the Cathedral. Bookings are organised via EventBrite, which includes Visitor Safety Instructions, Terms & Conditions and safeguarding information on the [booking page](#).

To ensure the ongoing safeguarding of those attending events in the Cathedral, the Commercial Operations team provide clear instructions to the Virgers, who are charged with the responsibility of implementing these throughout the event.

The Commercial Operations team also manage the Cathedral Shop and Café, both of which follow safer recruitment practices for staff and volunteers, including a policy of no lone working for under 18s.

For further information and risk assessments completed by the Commercial Operations Team, please contact Alexia James on 01749 674483 or [alexia.james@wellscathedral.org.uk](mailto:alexia.james@wellscathedral.org.uk).

## Learning, Education and Outreach

The Learning Department undertake risk assessments for any visiting schools and family activities to the Cathedral. All staff and Education Guides within the Learning Department are safely recruited and appropriately safeguarding trained. Education Guides are also expected to undertake additional training specific to their role within the Learning Department. For further information, bookings, or copies of risk assessments, please contact Jessica Witchell, Learning Manager, on 01749 832203 or [Jessica.Witchell@wellscathedral.org.uk](mailto:Jessica.Witchell@wellscathedral.org.uk).

## Visiting Choirs at Wells Cathedral

Prior to any visiting choir, Melanie Lawlor, the Music Department Coordinator, will be in touch to ensure the choir has appropriate safeguarding measures in place, including the management of ex-offenders. Safeguarding issues arising from the booking process will be referred to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team. Risk assessments are completed to ensure visiting choirs operate safely whilst at the Cathedral.

## Virgers at Wells Cathedral

Virgers discharge responsibility for the safeguarding of children, young people and adults on Cathedral premises for events. To contact a Virger, approach the Virgers Vestry or dial Channel 1 on the radio. Any member of the Cathedral requiring a radio will receive full training in its use.

## Cathedral Safeguarding Advisory Panel (CSAP)

The Cathedral Safeguarding Advisory Panel (CSAP) has been established to provide scrutiny of safeguarding policy and practice for Wells Cathedral and ensure outcomes are communicated to all relevant parties.

The CSAP will:

- Provide support and guidance to Chapter regarding the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.
- Offer advice regarding policies that are specific to safeguarding and those which might impact on safeguarding practice.
- Undertake regular reviews of policy and practice to ensure alignment with the National Church of England (CofE) safeguarding developments and government legislation.
- Provide strategic oversight of policy, legislation, and practice to support Chapter in meeting their safeguarding obligations for the cathedral and its activities. This will include clear communication with Wells Cathedral School.
- Ensure that safeguarding responsibilities are understood as a collective responsibility within the culture of the Cathedral and embedded in all departments.
- Undertake a Quality Assurance Role as part of its scrutiny.
- The CSAP Chair will interface with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel (DSAP) on which the Diocesan Safeguarding Manager sits. If the Chair is unavailable for a meeting the Cathedral Chapter Lead or the Operational Safeguarding Lead will attend.

The CSAP chair is Patricia Hellier. For CSAP enquiries, please contact [safe.guarding@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:safe.guarding@bathwells.anglican.org).

## Complaints

Complaints regarding the handling of a safeguarding concern by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team should be sent to the Ben Goodhind, at: Diocese of Bath and Wells, Flourish House, Wells BA5 1FD or [ben.goodhind@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:ben.goodhind@bathwells.anglican.org).

For non-safeguarding related (eg. conduct) complaints, please refer to the [Wells Cathedral Complaints Policy](#).

## Closing Remarks

Thank you for taking the time to read this handbook. If you are unsure about any aspect of safeguarding after reading this information, please contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team who will provide further advice and guidance. Please refer any feedback to Jo Austin, Diocesan and Cathedral Safeguarding Caseworker, on 01749 588905 or [joanne.austin@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:joanne.austin@bathwells.anglican.org).

This handbook will be reviewed on an annual basis.

## Key Documents for Wells Cathedral

### Volunteer Handbook

Please email [volunteers@wellscathedral.org.uk](mailto:volunteers@wellscathedral.org.uk) for the latest copy of the volunteer handbook.

### Chaperone Handbook

Please email [Melanie.Lawlor@wellscathedral.org.uk](mailto:Melanie.Lawlor@wellscathedral.org.uk) for the latest copy of the chaperone handbook.

### Chorister Handbook

Please email [Melanie.Lawlor@wellscathedral.org.uk](mailto:Melanie.Lawlor@wellscathedral.org.uk) for the latest copy of the chorister handbook.

### Staff Handbook

[Wells Cathedral Staff Handbook 2023 V I FINAL .pdf](#)

### Complaints policy

[Complaints Policy FINAL July 2024.docx](#)

### Wells Cathedral Statement of Safeguarding Principles

[2024.06\\_WC\\_Statement-of-Safeguarding-Principles.pdf \(wellscathedral.org.uk\)](#)

### Whistleblowing Policy

[Whistleblowing Policy FINAL July 2024.docx](#)

### Wells Cathedral and Wells Cathedral School Joint Safeguarding Agreement

[Cathedral and WCS Safeguarding Agreement Reviewed March 2024 - draft 1.docx \(wellscathedral.org.uk\)](#)

### Church of England Code of Safer Working Practice:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-07/code-of-safer-working-practice-02.07.2021.pdf>

## Referenced Web Pages

### The Diocese of Bath & Wells Safeguarding page:

<https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/diocese/safeguarding/>

### Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukcm/2016/1/section/6>

### The Church of England Safeguarding Online Portal:

<https://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org/>

### Diocesan Safeguarding Team Training Calendar:

<https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/calendar/>

### Diocesan Safeguarding Team Online Reporting Form:

<https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/confidential-incidentconcern-form.php>



Thirtyone:eight Out of Hours Reporting:  
[thirtyoneeight.org](http://thirtyoneeight.org)

Somerset Safeguarding Adult Concerns:  
<https://ssab.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/contact-us/>

Somerset Safeguarding Children Concerns:  
<https://somersetsafeguardingchildren.org.uk/report-a-concern/>

Banes Child or Vulnerable Adult Concerns:  
<https://bcssp.bathnes.gov.uk/form/report-a-concern>

North Somerset Children Concerns:  
<https://nsod.n-somerset.gov.uk/kb5/northsomerset/directory/site.page?id=gE-ZtDakyBs>

North Somerset Adult Concerns:  
<https://nssab.co.uk/>

Homes for Ukraine:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/homes-for-ukraine-scheme-launches>

Wells Cathedral Events Booking Page:  
<https://www.wellscathedral.org.uk/cathedral-events/book-tickets>

## **Referenced Church of England Policies**

House of Bishops' National Safeguarding Policies and Practice:  
<https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/policy-and-practice-guidance>

Responding Well to Domestic Abuse; Policy and Practice Guidance:  
<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-12/RespondingWellWeb.pdf>

Safer Recruitment and People Management Guidance:  
<https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/safer-recruitment-and-people-management-guidance>

Safeguarding Learning and Development Framework:  
<https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/safeguarding-learning-and-development-framework>

Practice Guidance: Responding to, assessing, and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers:  
<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-12/responding-pg-v2.pdf>

Making a complaint against a member of clergy:  
<https://d3hgrlq6yacptf.cloudfront.net/60638a2c87045/content/pages/documents/safeguarding-making-a-complaint-about-a-member-of-clergy.pdf>

Developing and Implementing a Low-Level Concerns Policy, Farrer & Co 2020:

<https://www.farrer.co.uk/news-and-insights/developing-and-implementing-a-low-level-concerns-policy-a-guide-for-organisations-which-work-with-children2/>