

APCM May 18th 2025

Safeguarding Report

Most of you will remember the rather dramatic resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury in autumn last year after revelations about historical abuse in the church – in fact somewhat ironically - it coincided with Safeguarding Sunday last year too. There has followed a reassessment by the C of E of safeguarding processes, particularly in respect of the support of abuse survivors. Safeguarding in the dioceses and in the whole C of E organisation is moving towards being independently managed and scrutinised.

All Saints is truly blessed by many people who work with groups of children and vulnerable adults in and around the church building. All these people have to make application for the voluntary position, references are taken, they are 'interviewed' and where appropriate, a DBS (police) check is carried out. Once appointed, safeguarding training is undertaken and this is re visited every 3 years, as is the DBS check.

Each group or activity undertakes a risk assessment relevant to the activity and this also is revisited regularly. As the churches safeguarding lead I try to keep in contact with each group to discuss any safeguarding concerns that may have arisen.

Where concerns have been raised we have been able to liaise with community bodies and the diocese have given ongoing support with the more challenging matters.

Of course we cannot be complacent about our safeguarding practice. To this end the PCC have agreed that questionnaires go out to all the groups operating in All Saints - to check that people feel safe, respected, welcomed and heard. So far the responses to these questionnaires have been very positive ----- but they will be coming your way as a congregation soon and you will have an opportunity to tell us about your experience and to have your say about safeguarding at All Saints.

The PCC have also agreed that we need to be a church where there is a culture of openness- including that about the difficult issues in life. We cannot ignore the fact that churches hold within their congregations' folk who have experienced trauma and abuse at some time in their lives ----- and that will include folk in our own congregation too. All members of the PCC have to attend training about domestic abuse (DA) but I am charged now to explore this further with 'Restored' – a Christian organisation that supports churches to be places where the issue of DA is not swept under the carpet and which also supports women who have been the subject of DA. (Men who have been the subject of DA are directed to another agency but we know that it is mainly women who are subject to DA)

I hope that you feel safe and respected at All Saints. The work of Safeguarding is always a 'work in progress' but please do speak with either myself or Aaron if you have any concerns which you feel need addressing – either personally or at All Saints.

But ----- mainly a BIG THANK YOU to all you lovely volunteers who help make All Saints the vibrant, caring, nurturing church that I believe we really want to be.

Jenny Liston

