

Saxilby and Stow Group of Parishes

Safeguarding Annual report Year end 31-12-2023

The end of 2022 saw the end of the covid pandemic effecting how we have managed safeguarding, it is nice to be back to some normality. However safeguarding is also about caring for the vulnerable and I am pleased that parishes have continued to offer warm spaces and collections for food banks and other initiatives.

All of our churches have continued to understand the importance of safeguarding as an agenda item at all PCC meetings throughout 2023.

In July we welcomed Rev Jane Foster following a period of vacancy. She is committed to safeguarding and our continuing strive to maintain our churches as a safe place.

Towards the end of the year she has begun to change some of the formats of PCC meetings which has enabled us at times to be together as a group. Updating policies, providing news and training information along with the management of the dashboards I am beginning to find easier to manage in this way. This is still in its early days but as 2024 progresses I am sure we will see this system settle into an improved way of working.

Rev Jane now has access to all of the dashboards as well. I have continued to keep these as updated as I can and have produced for churches their action plans from this system to maintain our compliancy with what is required of us.

Basic awareness and Foundation Safeguarding training courses along with the Domestic abuse awareness training course have been continued to be available for PCC members to complete online and I have circulated and reinforced the message to all PCC members in all of our churches with good progress being made by all of the churches this year. I continue to hold a record of achievements and have reminded and prompted members when needed. Please make sure that at your APCC meetings all those who are to be on your new PCC are fully aware that training is mandatory and they should not take on this position if they are not willing to do this. Safeguarding Leadership training is mandatory for safeguarding officers and ALM's and is now available face to face as well as an online zoom course. As a reminder any of the training courses once completed are valid for three years and then require to be updated. If undertaken in a timely fashion safeguarding training needs only to be renewed at the highest level an applicant holds. I appreciate it is difficult for those who do not have access to IT to complete however I am always here to support with help and advice with this so it can be achieved.

I also act as the groups DBS recruiter. A DBS is also a mandatory requirement as trustees of the church and I am pleased to say a large number of renewals and new ones have been received this year.

Although as a whole group we are not in a perfect position a "well done" is very much in order because as a group we are one of the most higher achievers to becoming compliant within the whole diocese.

Most safeguarding concerns or issues reported to me during the year were for minor issues or a request for advice where I have been able to give assistance or help as needed. One case was reported which required and had the support of the diocese safeguarding team to manage.

Barbara Bussey