

## Saxilby and Stow Group of Parishes

### Safeguarding Annual report Year end 31-12-2025

As safeguarding officer I am so pleased that Rev Jane has supported me by continuing to promote safeguarding and strived hard to make all of our churches within the group safe places. All of our PCC's have done well in achieving that aim to the best of their ability. They are all reviewing and discussing safeguarding issues at their meetings both at group and individual church level.

The policies which were reviewed in 24 were imbedded into daily practice particularly around the use of "what's app" when folk have been working alone in church. Early in the year we succeeded in all our churches having a lone working policy in place. This was followed later in the year with all the churches backing this up with Lone working risk assessments. Further policies will be reviewed in 2026.

Further development was made with the use of the dashboard system. Some of our churches using the dashboard system action plans which help maintain us to follow good practice and to follow the plans guidance to maintain compliance.

Safeguarding training opportunities on line, zoom and face to face were well taken up. As a reminder for those who have kept up their training you only need to renew and keep in date your highest level of training whether that is basic C0 /foundation C1 or for some leadership C2. As a group we really worked hard at encouraging all our volunteers/ bellringers to undertake the basic training. This included one afternoon as a face to face session of cleaners, flower ladies and other volunteers in October. Supplied with cake and refreshments Rev Jane and myself managed to cover the basic course face to face to 18 people. We are intending to repeat this course for those needing it in 2026. During the year I announced that the domestic abuse course was now not mandatory for PCC members. However the course is still available free on line and is now totally new material. I would encourage at least some PCC members from each church to renew their certificate. Domestic abuse sadly is still one of the highest forms of abuse in the UK. It does however remain mandatory for ALM's, clergy and the safeguarding officers.

I remain the DBS verifier for the whole group of churches. With only a few exceptions PCC members have kept up to date their DBS applications. From January 2026 the requirements for DBS are changing to exclude churches where they have no regular activities connected with children and vulnerable adults. Within our group therefore it is likely we will have a small number of churches who may not require DBS's for PCC members to continue.

We have continued to have a small number of safeguarding queries which I have helped with over the year with giving advice and seeking information from the Diocese safeguarding team. We also have one case which continues to be monitored and supported with the help of the Diocese and other outside agencies.

Thank you to all who have supported and helped me perform my role over the year. I remain always available to talk to and if I do not know the answer to your question I usually can call on someone I know who can

Barbara Bussey