

**GENERAL SYNOD****Safeguarding: national projects and workstreams****Summary**

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1. This paper sets out the work being undertaken by the National Safeguarding Team and Lead Bishops for Safeguarding.
  2. General Synod members are invited to take note of the workstreams and projects that are set out in this paper.
  3. Annex One gives an update from Maggie Atkinson, Chair of the Independent Safeguarding Board.

**Overview of paper**

This paper provides information about:

- National Safeguarding Background
- Safeguarding Governance
- National Safeguarding Team

Projects and workstreams:

- Safe Spaces
- Safeguarding Guidance Development
- Safeguarding Learning and Development
- National Case Management System
- Information Sharing Project
- Survivor Engagement
- IICSA Recommendations 1 & 8 / Regional Model Pilot
- Redress Scheme
- Interim Support Scheme (ISS)
- Past Cases Review 2 (PCR2)

Dr Jonathan Gibbs, Bishop of Huddersfield and Lead Bishop for Safeguarding  
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**GENERAL SYNOD****1. National Safeguarding Background**

1.1. The IICSA report into the Anglican Church was published on the 6<sup>th</sup> October 2020, and set out six recommendations which relate to the structure of safeguarding, revising clergy discipline, information sharing between the Church of England and Church in Wales and statutory partners, support for victims and survivors of abuse and an independent external auditing of safeguarding . These represent significant pieces of work, and once they had been fully analysed and scoped, it became apparent that an overarching programme management approach was required to deliver these changes. By February 2021, the Safeguarding Programme had been established, comprising projects to cover recommendations 1 and 8 (independence of DSAs) and 5 and 6 (Information sharing). Included within the programme are other safeguarding projects which are ongoing, including the National Safeguarding Case Management System and PCR2. This means all work benefits from a robust project management approach, regular oversight and consistent engagement with survivors.

**2. Safeguarding Governance**

2.1. The National Safeguarding Steering Group (NSSG) was established in 2016. It operates both as a committee of the House of Bishops, including for the purposes of delegated work on behalf of the House, and as a committee of the Archbishops' Council. The group's main functions are to have strategic oversight of national safeguarding activity, oversight of the work of the National Safeguarding Team, advising on the development of and scrutinising draft safeguarding policy, and overseeing the Church of England's response to IICSA. Its membership consists of a range of representatives from across the Church, including the National Church Institutions, dioceses and cathedrals, and members are appointed by the Archbishops and include both lay and clerical representatives. The NSSG is chaired by the Lead Bishop for Safeguarding, Jonathan Gibbs, and staffed by the National Safeguarding Team.

**3. The National Safeguarding Team**

3.1. The National Safeguarding Team's function is: to develop and implement a 'Promoting a Safer Church' business plan that outlines the actions towards promoting a safer culture throughout the Church of England; Provide expert advice, guidance and support to dioceses, cathedrals, National Church Institutions and

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other Church bodies in respect of safeguarding policy, learning and development, casework and communications.

3.2. The NST was established in 2006 and at that time it had one member of staff that was shared with the Methodist Church. The NST has developed significantly over the period since then in order to respond to the changing nature and volume of the work and implementing the recommendations from IICSA. The first National Safeguarding Advisor was appointed in 2014 and the team has grown to forty members of staff, including full time, part time and consultants. This is the equivalent of 26.5 FTE.

**4. Safe Spaces**

4.1. The Safe Spaces service is an ecumenical project with the Catholic Church in England and Wales. The two churches formed a new company 'Safe Spaces England and Wales' (SSEW) which is responsible for commissioning the Safe Spaces service, which is being delivered by Victim Support. Safe Spaces is a free and independent support service, providing a confidential, personal and safe space for anyone who has been abused by someone in the Church or as a result of their relationship with the Church of England, the Catholic Church in England and Wales or the Church in Wales. The service is provided nationally through the Safe Spaces helpline and Live Chat for as long as service users feel they need it and it is deemed to be helpful.

4.2. Rocket Science Labs are undertaking an independent evaluation of the Safe Spaces service. The 1-year report was received by SSEW Directors at their meeting in December. The report indicated that the service is being generally well received and is proving beneficial to those who have used it. Evaluators reviewed service data and surveys undertaken Victim Support, as well as their own independent surveys. They also met and interviewed a number of service users. The report included a number of positive accounts, with service users reporting feeling listened to, empowered and supported.

4.3. The report also contained a number of helpful recommendations, including recommendations relating to publicity and awareness of the service, survivor engagement, accessibility and data collection.

4.4. This report will help SSEW Directors to plan for the future of the service after the two-year pilot, including the future service specification and funding arrangements. A final report will also be produced at the end of the pilot which will be published and made publicly available as part of SSEW's commitment to transparency and contributing to learning in this area.

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### **5. Safeguarding Guidance Development**

#### 5.1. Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

5.1.1. This Guidance was approved at a meeting of the House of Bishops on 13 December 2021. The Guidance provides explanations of what is meant by “safeguarding” and the different forms that abuse can take. It thus provides the foundation for the other safeguarding Guidance documents which focus more on process. It includes a comprehensive explanation of what is meant by “spiritual abuse”. This is being followed up by the implementation spiritual abuse training sessions over the coming weeks and months. The guidance is due to be implemented on 4 July 2022.

#### 5.2. Safe Recruitment and People Management

5.2.1. This Guidance was approved in April 2021, and came into effect on 4 January 2022. A comprehensive series of workshops have been conducted to support Church Bodies to prepare for its implementation.

#### 5.3. Responding Well to Victims and Survivors of Abuse

5.3.1. This comes into effect in April 2022 and work is underway to help prepare Church bodies for its implementation.

#### 5.4. Responding to and Managing Safeguarding Allegations and Concerns

5.4.1. Work is underway to develop new Guidance in respect of responding to, and managing, safeguarding allegations and concerns in respect of both Church officers and non-Church officers (e.g. members of the congregation).

5.4.2. With regard to Church officers, the new guidance will introduce separate pathways for the different types of Church officer (clergy, employed, volunteers, elected), and separate pathways for allegations / concerns about direct abuse, and allegations / concerns about failure to follow safeguarding process.

5.4.3. Draft Guidance will be consulted on during 2022.

#### 5.5. Learning Lessons Case Reviews

5.5.1. Work is underway to develop Guidance in respect of the commissioning and management of Learning Lessons Case Reviews when serious safeguarding incidents occur. This will also be consulted on during 2022.

### **6. Safeguarding Learning and Development**

#### 6.1. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Accreditation of Safeguarding Learning Pathways

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6.1.1. CPD stands for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and is the term used to describe the learning activities professionals engage in to develop and enhance their abilities. It enables learning to become conscious and proactive, rather than passive and reactive.

6.1.2. All four core safeguarding learning pathways (Basic Awareness, Foundation, Leadership and Senior Leadership) have now been accredited by The CPD Certification Service. The Permission to Officiate Pathway (offered as an alternative to the Leadership Pathway), the Link Person Pathway (offered to those who are supporting Church Officers who are the subject of safeguarding allegations), the Safer Recruitment and People Management module and the Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse module have all also received this accreditation.

6.1.3. The Support Person Pathway (offered to those who are supporting victims and survivors of abuse) and the Diocesan Director of Ordinands Pathway will be submitted for accreditation once they have been fully piloted and released.

### 6.2. Spiritual Abuse and Healthy Cultures Training

6.2.1. The Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Guidance was approved by the House of Bishops on Monday 13th December 2021. It has an official 'Go Live' date of 4 July 2022.

6.2.2. In preparation for 'Go Live' an implementation plan has been prepared. A key focus of the implementation plan is the delivery of training on spiritual abuse and healthy cultures. This training will be delivered by Dr Lisa Oakley of the University of Chester and Lisa Clarke, National Safeguarding Learning and Development Manager (Development Lead).

6.2.3. The training aims to achieve the following learning outcomes for participants:

- Increased awareness and understanding of what spiritual abuse is and what it is not
- Greater understanding of the impact of the experience of spiritual abuse.
- Improved awareness of the features of a good response and what intervention is most appropriate
- An understanding of how to build healthy cultures to prevent potentially spiritually abusive situations arising.

6.2.4. The first tranche of training will be aimed at Bishops (Diocesan and Suffragan), Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers (DSAs) / Assistant DSAs and Cathedral Safeguarding Advisers (CSAs). These will take priority and will be delivered between January and May 2022. The response to these sessions being offered has been

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overwhelmingly positive with all but 31 (out of 108) Bishops already booked on and all but nine DSAs.

6.2.5. A second tranche of training is planned to commence from June 2022 and will include Cathedral Deans and a wider range of participants from across Church bodies.

### 6.3. Safeguarding Learning and Development Framework

6.3.1. Work is now focused on bringing the remaining Pathways to the point of release.

- The Support Person Pathway (offered to those supporting victims and survivors of abuse) is being piloted in February 2022 with three cohorts. Further dates will then be offered to cover all dioceses and cathedrals.
- The Diocesan Directors of Ordinands Pathway is in the final stages of drafting and will be ready for pilot early in 2022.
- The Professional Development and Advanced Safeguarding Programme for DSAs, CSAs and Trainers including:
  - Core professional development
  - Communities of practice
  - Masterclasses
  - Concepts of thinking and responding: Bitesize sessions
  - Virtual Library

is also now being finalised with the first events commencing in January, February, and March 2022. The full curriculum will be published in January 2022 and many of the aspects of curriculum will be offered more widely across the Church to consolidate learning within the safeguarding pathways and create common language and shared knowledge.

## 7. National Case Management System

7.1. The Archbishops' Council has committed to creating a National Safeguarding Casework Management System, for use by the National Safeguarding Team (NST), dioceses and cathedrals of the Church of England.

7.2. The Safeguarding Company has been appointed as our supplier to deliver their system 'MyConcern' for the Church, and testing work is underway to ensure the developing system meets the specific requirements of the Church. Phase 1 of delivery will involve rolling the system out to a group of dioceses/cathedrals who have volunteered to participate in the first phase and support the development and refinement of the system. The project has experienced some delay from the timeline shared with General Synod in July 2021, primarily due to further identified technical integration requirements, capacity for

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contract review, and recruitment challenges. Although it is still within the project tolerances, the system is now expected to be rolled out to phase 1 participating bodies in March/April 2022.

7.3. The system is then expected to be available to all dioceses and cathedrals by the end of 2022.

### 8. Information Sharing Project

8.1. The information sharing project is taking forward IICSA recommendations 5 and 6:

- Recommendation 5: Information sharing agreements between Church of England church bodies, and the Church in Wales
- Recommendation 6: Information sharing agreements between Church of England church bodies and statutory agencies (such as the police and local authorities).

8.2. Since spring 2021, a small project team (which includes colleagues from the NST and the wider NCIs) has been working along with external legal specialists to finalise a suite of documents, which includes an Information Sharing Framework and two separate information agreements (one for safeguarding information and one for HR information linked to the implementation of the People System Project).

8.3. Work on the draft documents has concluded and a final consultation ended on 3rd November. Due the previous extensive consultation with dioceses, cathedrals and others, this recent consultation involved a smaller group of church bodies who kindly volunteered to participate. Following any further required amendments these documents will be shared with dioceses for implementation in early 2022. This will be supported by a training package that is currently being scoped.

8.4. It is expected that work to progress IICSA recommendation 6 will move forward in the first half of 2022.

### 9. Survivor Engagement

9.1. The Church has a long-standing commitment to engage with victims and survivors in the development and improvement of safeguarding in the Church. Victims and survivors have made, and continue to make, valuable contributions to the work of the NST in many areas. The NST is also committed to the development of a survivor engagement strategy and framework for the Church, to support open, transparent and effective work with victims and survivors to improve safeguarding.

9.2. To begin this work, a national anonymous survey is planned to hear from victims and survivors, including those who have not engaged with the church previously, about how

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they would like to work with the Church to develop the survivor engagement framework.

Victims and survivors have provided helpful input and feedback for the survey questions, and a launch date for the survey will be available shortly.

### **10. IICSA Recommendations 1 & 8 / Regional Model Pilot**

- 10.1. A group of twenty-one dioceses and cathedrals have been selected as Pathfinders, to take part in the IICSA Recommendations 1 & 8 and Regional Model Pilot. The Pathfinders will form three groupings in order to explore the respective merits of the regional and central support models. The South West and Midlands regions will be supported by two Regional Safeguarding Leads and a third group will be supported by a Central Safeguarding Lead. All three Safeguarding Leads will be employed and supervised by the NST. They will provide professional supervision and quality assurance of the Cathedral / Diocesan Safeguarding Officer's work, amongst other things.
- 10.2. In November 2021, the Project Board signed off the Outline Project Proposal, which set out the project's purpose, scope, stakeholders, timelines, risks and budget. As a result, the project is now in the Plan & Design phase in which we plan how to deliver the pilot and subsequent stages. Key activities within this phase include the definition of Professional Supervision, the requirements of the Cathedral and Diocesan Safeguarding Officer roles (as opposed to current Adviser roles), how to test and develop the National Safeguarding Standards and Quality Assurance Framework, the requirements for the next round of independent audits, and how to define and appropriately resource the Church's safeguarding activity. During this phase will we be recruiting three Safeguarding Leads, and two Research and Evaluation Leads (one for cathedrals and one for dioceses) who will lead our quality assurance and evaluation workstreams. All this work will contribute to the Full Project Proposal, for which we will seek approval before we 'go live' with the delivery of the pilot phase.

### **11. Redress Scheme**

- 11.1. The National Redress Scheme is in development stage and the Project Board continues to meet on a regular basis to work out and define objectives, benefits and key areas of policy.
- 11.2. The project's Victim and Survivor Working Group is fully up-and-running. Two members of the group have now joined the Project Board as full members to ensure that their voices are heard and given appropriate weight throughout the development of the Scheme. Their feedback has been positive.

### **12. Interim Support Scheme (ISS)**

- 12.1. To date, 60 victims and survivors have approached the Interim Support Scheme and 40 have received an offer of assistance.

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12.2. The ISS has been through a period of development and process improvements have been made as a result of an internal audit and Lesson Learnt exercise. The recommendations arising from this are currently being implemented and are approaching completion

12.3. Members of the Interim Support Scheme panel now meet regularly to establish and develop good practice in the management of the Scheme and the award of funds to survivors.

**13. Past Cases Review 2 (PCR2)**

13.1. The original Past Case Review (PCR) conducted in 2007/2009 was a large-scale review of the handling by the Church of child protection cases over many years. A review of that original PCR by an Independent Scrutiny Team (IST), published in 2018, revealed serious shortcomings in its discharge and recommended that:

- ALL dioceses and the provinces ensure that relevant files (including those of diocesan lay employees working with children) which are known not to have been examined in 2008/09 or which have subsequently been located and not examined, are independently reviewed and any cases of concern which emerge, are dealt with by the DSA as if they were new referrals.
- ALL dioceses should be asked to check with every parish that all safeguarding concerns about the behaviour of any parish employee or volunteer towards children both currently and historically have been notified to the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (DSA).
- An updated version of the PCR, as prescribed by the National Safeguarding Steering Group (NSSG), should be conducted in seven dioceses where further work was considered necessary.

13.2. As a result, the Past Cases Review 2 (PCR2) was commissioned and the National Safeguarding Steering Group (NSSG) later agreed to extend the remit of PCR2 by inclusion concerns relating to adults at risk of abuse (also referred to as vulnerable adults.)

13.3. The PCR2 objectives are as follows:

1. To identify all information held within parishes, cathedrals, dioceses or other church bodies, which may contain allegations of abuse or neglect where the alleged perpetrator is a clergy person or other church officer and ensure these cases have been independently reviewed.
2. To ensure all allegations of abuse of children, especially those that have been recorded since the original PCR, have been handled appropriately and proportionately to the level of risk identified and with the paramountcy principle<sup>1</sup> evidenced within decision making.

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3. To ensure that recorded incidents or allegations of abuse of an adult (including domestic abuse) have been handled appropriately demonstrating the principles of adult safeguarding.
  4. To ensure that the support needs of known survivors have been addressed.
  5. To ensure that all safeguarding allegations have been referred to the DSA's and are being/have been responded to in line with current safeguarding practice guidance
  6. To ensure that cases meeting the relevant thresholds have been referred to statutory agencies.
- 13.4. The majority of diocesan reports have been submitted prior to the deadline of the 10th December 2021 for approval at the Project Management Board. Reports due to be submitted after this will also be considered for the final report and there is a process in place between the Project Team and the relevant Dioceses to facilitate this.
- 13.5. The reports from the Lambeth and Bishopthorpe Palace and the National Safeguarding Team (NST) are also complete and will be considered for approval at the Project Board Management Board meeting in January.
- 13.6. The overarching themes identified from the review to date include: culture, leadership and governance; safer recruitment; victim/survivor response; safeguarding capacity; case management; risk management; knowledge, training and skills; management of perpetrators and the role of the NST.
- 13.7. After full consultation with dioceses during the summer the PCR2 local publication guidance was presented to the Project Management Board in October 2021, with the recommended option to share a template with dioceses to encourage consistency but also provide the ability to adapt to support local need being agreed. The proposal does not support publication of local reports.
- 13.8. The project management team have recruited an external author for the final national report, with a timeline to publish the report in May.
- 13.9. There will be a series of workshops with stakeholders to consult on the emerging themes and recommendations that emerge, specific survivor workshops and lastly an editorial group that reports into the Project Management Board

Dr Jonathan Gibbs, Bishop of Huddersfield and Lead Bishop for Safeguarding  
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**Safeguarding: Independent Safeguarding Board (ISB)**

**Summary**

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1. This paper briefs Synod on the work of the Independent Safeguarding Board (ISB) since September 2021.

**Overview of paper**

This paper provides information about:

- Overall safeguarding structure and key contacts
- Members of the Board
- Findings to date

Maggie Atkinson, Chair, Independent Safeguarding Board

January 2022

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1. This paper briefs Synod on the work of the Independent Safeguarding Board (ISB) since September 2021, when two of its three members took up their roles. The ISB's formal launch took place in January 2022, following the appointment of the third member.
2. The Board's three members are the Chair Professor Maggie Atkinson, whose career has been spent in education, and in safeguarding and promoting the rights and voices of children, young people and latterly adults; Survivor Advocate Jasvinder Sanghera CBE, who has lived experience and a rightly high profile as a survivor and also works in safeguarding partnerships in localities; and a third Independent Member, soon to be announced. Members work 2 to 3 days per week for the ISB. All three also have other commitments in the wider safeguarding world, meaning they are all busy and widely respected professionals, and bring experience and expertise from their wider work into the ISB's remit.
3. The ISB has a single staff member working directly for it, Niamh Meehan who started her work on 04/01/2022. She is an administrator with project delivery experience, from a background in supporting complex safeguarding arrangements and the staff who undertake it. A senior member of the NST Deborah McGovern gives part of her FTE role to the ISB. Her work with us is entirely dedicated to ISB activity. The Board has SLAs with Church House teams for communications, financial, legal, IT and HR advice. There is pragmatism in having these given the teams concerned do not have to learn ways of working in C of E bodies with which the ISB works. The work they undertake for the ISB is never allowed to overlap with work they undertake for C of E bodies.
4. The ISB liaises with, oversees and reports on the work of, the NST. ISB Members also meet regularly with the Lead Bishop for Safeguarding + Jonathan Gibb, and with ++ Canterbury and ++ York and their staff teams on behalf of the Archbishops Council under whose remit the ISB was formed. The Chair will attend and give reports and reflections to the Synod and its constituent Houses, the Archbishops' Council, the House and the College of Bishops, on an at least annual basis. ISB members also meet with DSAs, DSAP Chairs, and other representatives from C of E bodies or institutions all of whom are responsible for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of those who come into contact with, or are involved in the work and activities of, the C of E.
5. The voices views wishes and feelings of victims and survivors of safeguarding failure always inform the ISB's work. No one individual survivor, or single survivor representative body, holds a paramount position. The ISB seeks to be inclusive, and to reach those whose voices might otherwise not be prominent. These less noticed or listened-to groups are likely to include children and young people, and those with a range of difficulties or disabilities that may get in the way of their being noticed or heard.

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6. The ISB meets 6 time a year, four meetings being business sessions, two being review-and-plan-ahead sessions looking strategically and forensically at the C of E's progress in continued improvement in safeguarding. The ISB is not a re-investigation body. It does not have powers to sanction, direct, regulate, inspect or insist. Its authority is moral, members having no connection to the C of E and its remit being to oversee the work of the NST, and to advise on how an independent presence in overseeing challenging and advising on safeguarding should go on in the long term, through continuation of the ISB as currently constituted, or through a new body with the powers and position of the current ISB, or a possibly strengthened configuration, and a larger membership and wider remit.
7. The ISB also seeks to highlight where C of E institutions, leaders and members whether ordained/in orders or lay, and members of parishes or communities do good, widely replicable work in preventing safeguarding failure, acting in a proactive, co-owned and responsible way on others' behalf, thereby ensuring the wellbeing of those who approach, worship or are involved in the Church.
8. In its first few months of operation, the ISB now feeds back its collective reflections to Synod, and through it to the Church of England. The ISB hereby signals where its concentration and focus will now lie, as follows.
  - a. We believe the C of E is sincere in its wish to improve how safeguarding is undertaken at national, diocesan, cathedral, community, parish, school and other levels. We believe the language of concern, where necessary of contrition, remorse and a determination to improve expresses genuine intent.
  - b. We are however also keenly aware that the Church's past failures, and the associated pain, shame, ongoing confusion, sometimes anger and potentially lifelong trauma of victims and survivors, are too often still present long after the suffering concerned is brought to light, whether or not the Church considers it has in fact now been addressed, and matters concluded.
  - c. We wish to help the Church to ensure that as well as responding more swiftly, with a stronger victim rather than institutional focus to shortcomings, it develops and sustains proactive, preventive, "everybody here's responsibility" safeguarding that ensures the safety of all concerned, that will help to prevent failure in the future.
  - d. We consider the findings of IIICSA on safeguarding in the C of E, and failures which have been made public through IICSA's reports, tell a powerful but by no means the full story of safeguarding in the Church.

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- e. We consider there is a pressing need for the C of E to look beyond its own boundaries and structures so that it can learn from strong and replicable safeguarding practice in services and agencies in localities and wider society, not least in local safeguarding children and safeguarding adults' partnerships and boards
- f. We find it regrettable, and as a result we will focus much of our attention on the fact that in spite of the C of E's explicit and repeated acceptance of IICSA's and many other vital reports, survivors and complainants of all ages routinely approach ISB members with the following, all-too-common, threads:
  - i. Over-complex, hard-to-navigate structures, bodies and boards at national, diocesan and other levels, a review and reform of which should have been considered, alongside other governance issues, by + Baines' recent governance review
  - ii. Slow, institutionally defensive responses, with the person making a disclosure often disbelieved, alongside a continued sense that "institutions" and the potential of upset for the accused matter more than, rather than as much as, the person making disclosures
  - iii. Promises about action that will follow and redress that will be made, too often either only partially or simply not delivered, or seriously delayed and bound about with legalistic defensiveness
  - iv. A culture in some settings where safeguarding is seen as an "also-to-do" or secondary set of tasks, rather than a culture that should infuse all actions, and all practice, and be funded resourced and staffed to match that cultural shift.
  - v. A "child-unfriendly" approach if a child or young person makes an approach for help, advice or redress, and an escalation of that young person's enquiry into formal and complex complaints processes, when practice should have seen off the difficulty at the point where help was sought.
  - vi. A sense that in the midst of these problems, it is somehow not seen as permissible or seemly to highlight, celebrate or publicise what really strong, positive safeguarding look and feel like, and what tremendous work is done every day in dioceses, parishes, cathedrals and other settings, to the great good fortune and wellbeing of all those involved.

Maggie Atkinson, Chair, Independent Safeguarding Board  
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