

The Church of England wants to hear from victims and survivors as it carries out a full review of past safeguarding cases

Victims and survivors of church related abuse are invited to take part in a major review that has been commissioned nationally by the Church of England across the country. The Diocese of Guildford wants to hear from you, to listen and learn from your experiences.

Coming forward

Anybody who would like to give information or make disclosures about church-related abuse is asked to contact Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor Jackie Broadfoot (jackie.broadfoot@cofeguildford.org.uk 07918 559387).

A dedicated telephone helpline - **0800 80 20 20** – operated independently from the Church of England by the NSPCC has been set up. We hope this will make it easier for you to talk about what happened to you.

Anyone can use the helpline to provide information or to raise concerns regarding abuse within the Church of England context, whether they are reporting issues relating to children or adults or seeking to whistle blow about poor safeguarding practice.

The Bishop of Guildford, The Rt Revd Andrew Watson says: *“It is important we do everything we can to make our churches the safest places they can be. Safe means different things to different people but this review will help us to ensure that the concerns reported to our churches have been dealt with properly, and the care taken and the support given is of the high quality that people rightly deserve. We have learnt from a previous review that survivors and victims’ voices are critical, and I would urge you to come forward.”*

We know that local support is also critical. The Diocese of Guildford has established two listening services for those people who have experienced church related abuse but who might want to talk through their experiences and feeling before taking any next step. The two different listening options (one within the Diocese and one managed independently of the Diocese by thirtyone:eight) will allow those people who do come forward to our Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, to choose who and how they are supported. More details on these two critical listening services can be found [here](#).

Susan Stephen, Safeguarding Services Manager at [thirtyone:eight](#) says *‘At thirtyone:eight we know only too well how difficult it can be for people to talk about their experiences and to report what happened to them. But it is important to come forward so that today’s children and adults are better protected. I urge you to come forward. We will do all we can make it as easy as possible to talk to us. What you can tell us and what we can learn is important.’*

Past Case Review 2 (PCR2) – A broader scope

All 162 Church of England parishes in the Diocese of Guildford have been asked to check their records to

ensure all safeguarding concerns have been identified, reported, and properly actioned appropriately. The Church is committed to ensuring that the voices of victims and survivors, adults and children and young people are involved throughout the process.

The previous past cases review, carried out in 2007, looked at all safeguarding complaints made against clergy in relation to children. This new review has been broadened in scope - it is so important that all known cases of concern about the behaviour of church officers and clergy towards children and vulnerable adults have been considered and dealt with appropriately.

A key part of the review is to ensure that there are no outstanding and unmanaged safeguarding risks to children, young people and vulnerable adults posed by church officers and clergy. The review will also seek to ensure that the support needs of known victims and survivors of Church related abuse have been considered and met.

Clergy, Church Wardens and Parish Safeguarding Officers are being asked to go back through their records and complete a declaration that all concerns and allegations have been dealt with appropriately. Any that are found not to have been previously reported to the relevant authorities will be reported now.

Learning from the past

In common with other Church of England dioceses, the Diocese of Guildford has hired three independent reviewers who during the end of 2020 and through 2021, will be considering all cases of concern relating to the behaviour of church officers and clergy towards children and vulnerable people known to the Diocese.

-Ends-

Notes to Editors

Further information

For more information and for interview bids contact Nick Clarke 07779 780030

Interviews available

Bishop Andrew and Chris Cloke, Independent Chair of Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel are both available for interview

Church related abuse is defined as:

- *Abuse by a church officer. A church officer is any person, ordained or lay, paid or voluntary, who holds a role in the church.*
- *Abuse that is linked to participating in a church-led activity or group.*

About the Diocese of Guildford

Guildford is one of 41 dioceses which make up the Church of England and cover the whole of the United Kingdom. We have 162 parishes, 83 church schools and several hundred social and community projects, and our area includes two-thirds of Surrey (including Egham, Banstead, Dorking and Farnham), parts of North East Hampshire (including Farnborough and Aldershot) one parish each in Sussex, and one in Greater London.

About PCR2

More information about PCR2 is available from the Church of England website and on our [cofguildford.org.uk website](http://cofguildford.org.uk).