



SAFEGUARDING FOR BELLRINGERS IN THE DIOCESE OF DERBY

This guidance has been developed by the Diocese of Derby Safeguarding Team in partnership with the Derby Diocesan Association of Church Bellringers (the Association). It applies to all bellringers in Church of England towers in the Diocese of Derby, whether or not they belong to the Association. It seeks to provide:

- clarity around the requirements for DBS checks and safeguarding training for all bellringers aged 18 or over or with responsibility for others whilst ringing in Church of England churches across the diocese and
- to provide assurance that everything has been done to make our towers safe for all ringers and learners to enjoy.

The guidance aims to reflect the fact that each ringing tower is different and provides some key principles which can be applied as required. All new bellringers will be provided with a leaflet explaining the safeguarding arrangements in the diocese and the tower.

The Association:

- Agrees to appoint an Association Safeguarding Officer;
- Agrees to appoint a Safeguarding Lead Member to the Association Management Group.

Tower captain:

Every tower will be led by a Tower Captain who will usually be agreed by the band members and then appointed by the Incumbent. The appointment should be made using safer recruitment processes in line with the Church of England [Safer Recruitment and People Management](#) guidance. The Tower Captain is a church officer and must ensure regular communication with the Incumbent and the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO).

The Tower Captain plays a crucial role in the culture of the tower, particularly around safeguarding attitudes and practice. This includes keeping a register of attendance for each practice and ringing session. The register will be kept securely, in line with Church of England safeguarding record keeping guidance. The purpose of the register is:

- To evidence who is a regular ringer in the tower
- To ensure there is a record available of who was in attendance in the event of future safeguarding concerns being raised
- To provide a ready record in the event of a health and safety issue, such as a fire.

These requirements also apply to visiting bands or individuals.

A Deputy Tower Captain and/or Ringing Master may also be appointed, depending on the size of the band.

The Central Council of Church Bellringers have produced a template for the role description of a Tower captain which can be found [here](#). This template can be used as the basis for the role description in individual parishes.

Safeguarding leadership:

All group leaders are responsible for safeguarding in their groups. Safeguarding in the tower is the responsibility of the Tower Captain. The safeguarding responsibilities are:

- To promote a safe environment and culture.



- To ensure compliance with safeguarding training, in conjunction with the Parish Safeguarding Officer.
- To maintain a register of those attending to ring.
- To respond promptly to any safeguarding concerns brought to their attention.

He/she may appoint a separate Tower Safeguarding Lead if appropriate, but in such circumstances, the Tower Captain will retain overall safeguarding responsibility.

Every tower will display a poster which provides information on who to speak to if someone has a safeguarding concern, including details of the Tower Captain, Parish Safeguarding Officer and the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

DBS checks:

It is the joint responsibility of the Tower Captain and the PSO to ensure that bellringers in the tower have DBS checks in place as set out in the table below. The PSO of the church will assist in processing the DBS applications and maintaining a record of individuals' DBS and training.

Role	DBS requirement
Association Safeguarding Officer	Enhanced DBS check – renewed every three years
Association Management Group Safeguarding Lead Member	Enhanced DBS check – renewed every three years
Leader of Derbyshire Young Ringers	Enhanced DBS check – renewed every three years
Tower Captain	Enhanced DBS check – renewed every three years
Deputy Tower Captain	Enhanced DBS check – renewed every three years
Tower Safeguarding Lead (if applicable)	Enhanced DBS check – renewed every three years
Ringling teachers	Enhanced DBS check – renewed every three years

The Association is committed to working with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team in the management of any offenders or those who may pose a risk who wish to ring in Church of England churches across the diocese.

Safeguarding training:

Role	Basic Awareness	Foundation	Domestic Abuse Awareness	Leadership
District Ringing Master	✓	✓	✓	
Association Safeguarding Officer	✓	✓	✓	✓
Association Management Group Safeguarding Lead Member	✓	✓	✓	✓
Leader of Derbyshire Young Ringers	✓	✓	✓	



Tower Captain	✓	✓	✓	To be agreed with the Incumbent
Deputy Tower Captain	✓	✓	✓	
Tower Safeguarding Lead (if applicable)	✓	✓	✓	
Ringing teachers	✓	✓		
All bellringers over 18	✓			

Notes:

- The requirement for all bellringers to complete Basic Awareness training is in line with the Central Council of Church Bellringers safeguarding guidance, “How Church Bell ringers are trained, safeguarded and organised”.
- The modules referred to are those set out in the Church of England Safeguarding Learning and Development Framework.
- Basic Awareness and Foundation modules are online via the [National Safeguarding Training Portal](#)
- Domestic Abuse Awareness and Leadership can be booked via the [Diocesan Safeguarding Team website](#).
- The Tower Captain is responsible for:
 - ensuring everyone in the tower has completed the required training and DBS checks
 - keeping the Parish Safeguarding Officer updated on compliance.
- Training must be renewed every three years in line with the [Safeguarding Learning and Development Framework | The Church of England](#)

Concerns/allegations:

- Failure to comply with this guidance will result in the Tower Captain referring the individual to the Safeguarding Officer(s) of the Association.
- **In the event of allegations needing an urgent response and where any delay might cause harm, the matter should be reported to the police** before following the procedure set out in the bullet points below.
- All safeguarding concerns should be reported to the Tower Captain who will share the information with the Parish Safeguarding Officer.
- All allegations will be notified to the Parish Safeguarding Officer and the Association Safeguarding Officer by the Tower Captain. The Parish Safeguarding Officer will then refer the allegation to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.
- The Diocesan Safeguarding Team will lead the investigation of any allegations and the Association Safeguarding Officer will act in an advisory capacity. The Safeguarding Lead Member of the Association Management Group may also be invited to advise.

This guidance is endorsed by:

- the Bishop of Derby, President of the Association
- the Association Management Group
- Diocese of Derby Head of Safeguarding