



Diocese of Derby Safeguarding Team Survivor strategy

Introduction

The Church of England is committed to ensuring that the Church is a safer place, where abuse of any kind is not tolerated. Central to this commitment is meaningful engagement with victims and survivors, ensuring that their voices, experiences, and perspectives are listened to, respected, and taken seriously.

The Diocese of Derby and Derby Cathedral recognise that abuse experienced within a church context can have a profound and lasting impact on an individual's life, faith, and spiritual wellbeing. We, the Diocesan Safeguarding Team for Derby, are committed to acknowledging this impact and responding with care, compassion, and accountability.

We believe that through direct engagement with victims and survivors, and by actively seeking and valuing their views, we can learn from their experiences. This learning enables us to strengthen our safeguarding practice and to ensure that appropriate, compassionate, and effective responses and support are in place.

Background

A key priority within the Diocesan Safeguarding Strategy, overseen by the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel, is the development of a Survivor Strategy. From the outset, it was recognised that meaningful engagement with victims and survivors was essential to this work.

The Diocese of Derby sought the views and experiences of survivors who are currently receiving, or have previously received, support from the Diocese. Their contributions have been invaluable in shaping this strategy and have helped to ensure that it recognises and responds to survivors' needs with compassion, understanding, and appropriate support.

Throughout the development of this strategy, reference has been made to the [Church of England guidance, Responding Well to Victims and Survivors of Abuse](#). This document has informed the approach taken and reinforced the importance of survivor centred practice.

Process

We have sought the input, comments, and views of survivors who are currently, or have previously been, supported by the Safeguarding Team.

Engagement has also taken place with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel and regional colleagues, with particular thanks to the Diocese of Leicester for their support and for enabling input from victims and survivors focus groups. This collaborative approach has been central to the development of a robust Survivor Strategy for the Diocese of Derby, shaping how care and support for survivors will be delivered in the future. It was important to ensure that there were meaningful opportunities for survivors' voices to inform and contribute to practice development.

This strategy sets out how the Diocese of Derby will care for and support individuals who have disclosed abuse related to church settings, as well as those who have experienced abuse outside of the church and who are seeking support from the Diocese. It also outlines how we will actively seek feedback from victims and survivors in order to inform continuous learning and improvement.

We are deeply grateful to survivors for their willingness to contribute to this work and for sharing learning drawn from painful lived experiences. Their insight has been essential in shaping this strategy and strengthening our understanding of how best to respond.

For the purposes of this strategy, the term survivors will be used to refer to those who have experienced abuse. We acknowledge, however, that no single term fully reflects everyone's experience, and we remain respectful of individual preferences.

Our Commitment: Values and Core Principles

In line with the Church of England's Responding Well guidance, and informed by feedback from survivors and regional colleagues, the following principles underpin all engagement, responses, and support offered by the Diocese of Derby.

We commit that all survivors will be:

- Listened to with care, respect, and seriousness
- Treated with dignity, compassion, and sensitivity
- Supported through a person centred and needs led approach
- Recognised as experts in their own experiences
- Given clear, honest information about processes and options
- Supported at their own pace, without pressure or expectation
- Offered pastoral support, including access to a pastoral lead where appropriate

We recognise that abuse may have taken place many years ago, and we commit to responding well whenever a survivor chooses to come forward.

We commit that survivor supporters and safeguarding professionals will:

- Listen carefully, communicate clearly, and respond thoughtfully
- Demonstrate compassion, patience, and professional curiosity
- Be sensitive to trauma, triggers, and emotional impact
- Use a trauma informed approach in all interactions and decision making
- Respect diversity, identity, faith, culture, and lived experience
- Recognise that each survivor's journey is individual and non-linear
- Avoid judgement, defensiveness, or minimisation of experience

Support will focus on the survivor's wellbeing, safety, and choices, rather than solely on process or outcomes. We acknowledge that:

- It is never too late to seek support
- Survivors may come forward at different points in their lives
- Healing and recovery are ongoing and personal journeys
- The Church has a responsibility to respond with humility, learning, and accountability

We are committed to continuous learning from survivors' experiences, in order to improve safeguarding practice and ensure that the Church responds well, consistently, and compassionately.

The Diocese of Derby commit to the following:

- We recognise that everyone's experience of abuse is different. Talking about painful experiences can be extremely difficult, and for some people it may take many years before they feel able to do so. Choosing to share such experiences requires trust and courage. We also recognise that the response to a disclosure can be as traumatic as the abuse itself.
- We recognise that some people may not wish to approach the Diocese or the Diocesan Safeguarding Team directly. Information about independent sources of advice and support is available in our Commitment to Survivors document and on our website.
- When someone reaches out for support to talk about experiences of emotional, physical, sexual, financial and or spiritual abuse, regardless of when the abuse occurred, they will be treated with compassion, taken seriously, and listened to.
- We undertake to work in a caring, sensitive and trauma informed way, recognising the different needs of each survivor and affirming that they are not to blame for what has happened to them.

- We will seek to work in a non-discriminatory way that is empowering, inclusive, and respectful of differences in gender, sexual orientation, disability, and ethnicity.
- We will respect confidentiality in relation to the information shared with us, unless there are concerns about potential risks to the individual or to others. Wherever it is safe to do so, we will explain in advance if information needs to be shared more widely.
- We are committed to learning from the experiences of survivors and to making changes based on that learning, in order to improve the support we offer.
- We will work in accordance with the requirements of the House of Bishops Practice Guidance, [Responding Well to Victims and Survivors of Abuse](#).

Seeking feedback

- Our contact with survivors may sometimes be brief, and at other times may take place over a longer period. This contact may include supporting someone to come forward to report concerns, listening to their experiences, and helping them access counselling and other support services.
- Feedback is an important way of helping us to improve how the Diocesan Safeguarding Team and parishes respond to survivors. The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel is keen to hear directly from survivors about their experiences of support and engagement.
- It is important to us that providing feedback is straightforward, accessible, and does not feel like a burden. Survivors will always have a choice about whether or not they wish to give feedback, and deciding not to do so will never affect the support they receive.

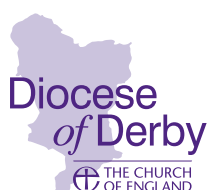
How we will use and share feedback

- We will always seek consent before sharing any feedback and will ensure it is anonymised.
- With consent, feedback may be used to inform reports, to support learning within the Diocese, to inform the work of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel, on our website, or to support individual learning and development.
- We value feedback and comments on all aspects of our safeguarding and survivor work. Listening to and learning from this feedback enables us to improve our practice and ensure that our support continues to meet the needs of those who turn to us for help.

How We Comply with UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018

We protect personal information in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018, ensuring it is handled lawfully, securely, and only for legitimate safeguarding purposes.

Further information about how we collect, use, store, and protect personal data can be found in our Diocesan Privacy Notice, available at derby.anglican.org/en/privacy-policy



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