

INEQE Recommendations Action Plan - November 2025 Diocesan Synod Update

Number	Recommendation DBF	Responsible Person (s)	Sign off Due	Complete
D1	<p>The DBF should routinely raise awareness about whistleblowing across the workforces operating in the DBF, the Cathedral and parishes. They should do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Promoting awareness using traditional and digital communication strategies. b) Testing awareness by using anonymised surveys. c) Reinforcing awareness and contextual understanding through focus group engagement, utilising case studies and prompts. d) In conversation, what leaders say and do matters. Leaders should frequently and routinely raise the issue of the importance of safeguarding. 	Chris Elder <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Promote thru ebulletin/targeted email – ROLLOUT DATE BEING PLANNED WITH COMMS. Plan Jan 26 b) Add brief survey to targeted email thru Googleforms – PLANNED ONCE MAILING COMPLETE c) Via SG training - COMPLETE d) Via SG training - COMPLETE 	Nov 28 th 2025	Ongoing, partially implemented Aim end Jan 26
D2	Implement leadership audits highlighting an individual leader's active and authoritative approach to safeguarding. For example, instances where a senior leader has challenged inappropriate conduct and taken steps to highlight and report safeguarding concerns. This might include providing words of advice and instigating disciplinary processes as well as public statements, official communications and participation and support provided to individuals and groups including victims / survivors.	Included in Clergy Safeguarding Skills Audit	Nov 28th 2025	Launch Jan 26

D3	As part of its use of surveys, focus groups and other engagement activity, the DBF should ensure it routinely tests awareness about whistleblowing processes and seeks feedback for areas of improvement	Sharon Devlin Covered as part of D2	Nov 28th 2025	Data to be captured in Clergy Skills Audit Jan 26.
D4	The remit of the Lead Officer for the Chaplaincy to Survivors should not be used for activities beyond a clearly defined range of survivor related support activities (including training)	MOU in place	Nov 28th 2025	21/10/2025
D5	The Bishops Council should carry out a skills audit to ensure that it has optimised the opportunities to engage individuals with the skills, abilities and lived experience necessary to safeguard contemporary Church communities. This will also help to ensure relevant and robust challenge during briefings on safeguarding issues.	Covered by D2	Nov 28th 2025	21/10/2025
D6	During future visitations (and in consultation with the DSA), data from Parish Safeguarding Dashboards should be dip sampled as part of reassurance testing by Archdeacons	Now covered in Visitation	Nov 28th 2025	21/10/2025
D7	The Chair of the DSAP should consider broadening the membership of the DSAP to include more representatives from the wider community within which the Diocese sits, particularly local charities with a focus on supporting the young and vulnerable.	Within the remit for the newly appointed DSAP chair	Nov 28th 2025	21/10/2025
D8	The Council, Bishops Staff Team and DSAP should operate and maintain contemporary risk registers. Each should target and assess the areas of risk most relevant to their oversight responsibilities, e.g. strategic and / or operational	Added column into risk register to escalate to BST, BC where appropriate. Otherwise covered by D17,D18	Nov 28th 2025	21/10/2025
D9	The DBF should remunerate the role of DSAP Chair. This should be fixed against an appropriate	Included in contract for newly appointed DSAP	Nov 28th 2025	21/10/2025

	<p>comparator role and based on an average across similar roles.</p> <p>The approach to remuneration of such posts is not uniform and the Audit will make a recommendation to the NST in this regard in due course</p>			
D10	The Bishop and Dean should consider the creation of a dedicated Director of Safeguarding. This role would be part of the most senior leadership team. It would provide direct insight from a safeguarding perspective and support the oversight and operational delivery of the DST	New team In place since end April 2025	Nov 28th 2025	April 25
D11	Except in exceptional circumstances and with the relevant permissions, Blue Files should be viewed (when appropriate) by a member of the DST, preferably the DSA	Process introduced with the new team	Nov 28th 2025	April 25
D12	The DBF should immediately review and reinforce its DST with a focus on building capacity and resilience. In doing so, it should consult with other DSTs to establish how best to achieve a blended, multi-disciplinary team	Following wider consultation, new team In place since end April 2025	Nov 28th 2025	April 25
D13	The Bishop and Dean should ensure that immediate work is undertaken to resolve any ambiguity concerning working practices between the Cathedral and the DBF. Where required, changes should be set out within the arrangements covered by the MOU	Sharon Devlin MOU drafted and due for sign off on 25 th Nov	Nov 28th 2025	Planned signoff 25 Nov 2025
D14	The DBF should ensure that its commitment to safeguarding is embedded throughout all job adverts, application forms and job descriptions	Implemented – standard job template amended	Nov 28th 2025	April 25
D15	The DBF should ensure that all staff who undertake any duty as part of the recruitment	Sharon Devlin	Nov 28th 2025	Nov 25

	process undergo safer recruitment training according to the CofE's guidelines. This training should be renewed if it was taken more than three years ago.			
D16	The DBF should ensure that all staff who undertake any duty as part of the recruitment process have an up-to-date DBS certificate	Sharon Devlin	Nov 28th 2025	Nov 25
D17	The DBF should develop a standalone safeguarding risk register to allow for more focus and scrutiny on safeguarding concerns. This should be reviewed and updated at a minimum cycle of quarterly	Risk register quarterly review in place addressing D8, D17, D18	Nov 28th 2025	21/10/2025
D18	The DBF's safeguarding risk register should be developed to clearly identify risks as they relate to the CofE's National Safeguarding Standards	Risk register quarterly review in place addressing D8, D17, D18	Nov 28th 2025	May 25
D19	The DSA, supported by investment from the DBF, should take steps to ensure that case management, scrutiny, record keeping and oversight of practice is strengthened across the entire safeguarding pathway. This should include the DSA conducting and recording monthly management reviews of active cases on MyConcern	Complete	Nov 28th 2025	21/10/2025
D20	Now that the risk rating tool is available on MyConcern, open cases should be reviewed by the DSA as a priority.	Complete	Nov 28th 2025	21/10/2025
D21	The DBF should review the work priorities of the DST and ensure that the arrangements in place for delivering and managing casework are properly resourced, effectively delivered and robustly line managed.	Complete and being regularly reviewed	Nov 28th 2025	July 25
D22	The DSA should receive additional training on the case management system MyConcern.	Complete	Nov 28th 2025	May 25

D23	Recording on MyConcern should be improved to more consistently detail the rationale for why certain decisions have been made. This recording should clearly explain why action or inaction on individual cases has been decided.	Complete	Nov 28th 2025	May 25
D24	The DSA should always provide a signature to safety plans.	Complete	Nov 28th 2025	May 25
D25	All existing safety plans should be reviewed to include the following statement as part of a respondent's monitoring arrangements. 'The subject of this plan must inform the Reference Group and DSA or DSA's representative if they want to attend a different Church or different Church activity to the Church / Church activity outlined in this plan. The DSA / DSA representative will then liaise with the other named Church to establish another Safety Plan and Reference Group to support this attendance'.	Complete	Nov 28th 2025	August 25
D26	The accountability and responsibilities of the DST outlined in the MoU for safeguarding services and support between the Cathedral and DBF should be clearly communicated.	Linked to D13	Nov 28th 2025	Planned signoff 25 Nov 2025
D27	The DBF should implement clear procedures for escalating differences of opinion regarding case management decisions.	Sharon Devlin Escalation to DSAP chair to be added into pathway	Nov 28th 2025	Planned sign off Feb 26. After start of DSAP chair
D28	Clergy, staff and volunteers should receive training on data protection, information sharing and how to identify a data subject request.	Ruth to source CofE briefing	Nov 28th 2025	Ongoing Completion targeted for Jan 26
D29	The DBF should develop and publish a stand-alone Safeguarding	Sharon Devlin / John Hulse Strategy in development	Nov 28th 2025	In progress Completion targeted for

	Training Strategy. As a minimum, this should outline the key principles of safeguarding training, the key responsibilities of staff and volunteers, the role and function of the DST / relevant staff and the framework for safeguarding training covering need analysis, delivery and evaluation. Strategic priorities should be defined based on NST requirements and local analysis of needs. A specific action plan should set out how these priorities will be met			March 26 as needs DSAP chair input
D30	The DBF should develop a defined pool of safeguarding trainers. It should build on its existing familiarisation sessions, by introducing a defined 'train the trainers' programme that supports trainers with content, helps them with techniques for delivery and involves regular support sessions / meetings for them.	Complete – substantive trainer in place, PSO trainers being quality assured	Nov 28th 2025	21/10/2025
D31	The DBF should explore how the commitment, resourcing and arrangements for volunteer trainers could be integrated into the governance arrangements for Deaneries.	See D30	Nov 28th 2025	21/10/2025
D32	The DBF should redesign the training role in the DST so that it has overall responsibility for coordinating the safeguarding training pathway. This should include responsibility for analysis, programme design and delivery and evaluation. Given existing demands, alongside the recommendations made within this report, the Audit believes this role should be secured at no less than 0.5FTE.	Complete	Nov 28th 2025	May 25
D33	The DBF should review its training needs analysis process to ensure this adequately covers the full range of roles in place across the Diocese. The	Sharon Devlin Included in training Strategy – see D29	Nov 28th 2025	In progress Completion targeted for

	analysis should be used to identify where additional 'role specific' training might be of benefit			March 2026 as needs DSAP chair input
D34	The DBF should progress at pace with implementing its planned training on sex offenders. Further consideration should be given to the range of relevant staff and volunteers for whom this training is likely to be relevant, beyond incumbents, PSOs and Link Persons.	Sharon Devlin To be considered as part of training offer, linked to D33	Nov 28th 2025	Director of Safeguarding is currently exploring the appropriateness of this recommendation with Northumbria Police. PSO training on safety planning booked for Dec 2025
D35	To accompany the DBF's Digital media guidance, training on digital safeguarding should be introduced and be accessible to relevant Church officers in the DBF, Cathedral and parishes	Sharon Devlin To be considered as part of training offer, linked to D33	Nov 28th 2025	In progress Completion aim March 26 as needs DSAP chair input
D36	The DBF should implement a specific evaluation process that seeks to capture evidence from staff, volunteers and their managers about how training has helped their practice. As part of this process, questions about unmet training need should be asked	Sharon Devlin Unmet training needs to be addressed with D2	Nov 28th 2025	Nov 2025
D37	All new clergy should receive a formal, face to face induction session with a member of the DST	Sharon Devlin / Archdeacons	Nov 28th 2025	Programme to run Feb, June and Oct. Commences 2026
D38	The DBF should consider implementing mandatory counselling	Professional supervision in place	Nov 28th 2025	21/10/2025

	sessions for members of the DST to ensure they are sufficiently supported in the challenging role they do			
	Recommendations for Cathedral			
C1	The Cathedral should utilise a variety of mechanisms including, scenario-based workshops, externally facilitated focus groups and anonymous surveys to periodically review and assess progress on embedding a safeguarding culture. Outcomes should be reviewed by the Chapter Safeguarding Committee, the Independent Safeguarding Advisory Group (if adopted - see Recommendation C3) and presented to Chapter.		Nov 28th 2025	
C2	The Cathedral should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish the full nature of any concerns held by staff via an anonymous survey or other appropriate form of engagement. Allowing them to share their concerns and ideas about how best it can be supported. • Assess the adequacy of their risk assessment process. • Assess whether staff carrying out such duties with the enhanced responsibilities attached to their role are appropriately remunerated. 		Nov 28th 2025	
C3	The Cathedral should carry out a skills, diversity and inclusion audit to		Nov 28th 2025	

	broaden and strengthen the membership of its governing bodies and safeguarding oversight functions. This should include consideration of the creation of an ISAG.			
C4	The Safeguarding Committee should construct and present a risk assessment regarding the level of risk, mitigations and capacity to deliver, matched against the activities and interrelated risks that currently co-exist. This should result in an options paper for Chapter on what it can, should and should not continue until capacity is appropriately managed and support is increased.		Nov 28th 2025	
C5	The Dean should engage with senior leaders with responsibility for safeguarding functions and reinforce with them the need to ensure that safeguarding is not lost within the range of their other responsibilities.		Nov 28th 2025	
C6	The Cathedral should ensure that its relevant risk registers are reflective of current safeguarding needs and incorporate all identified risks related to the Cathedral's initiatives		Nov 28th 2025	
C7	In line with the Audit's recommendations about reinforcing safeguarding capacity in the DBF / DST, senior leaders need to ensure that capacity issues as they relate to the Cathedral are also factored into any solutions		Nov 28th 2025	
C8	The Cathedral should ensure door codes are regularly changed and shared only among Cathedral staff. All choristers and chorister parents should use designated		Nov 28th 2025	

	entry and exit points where chorister staff are present			
C9	A specific Chorister Safeguarding Policy / Handbook should be created which details all safeguarding procedures and arrangements for choristers. This should be easily accessible for those working with choristers and chorister parents / carers		Nov 28th 2025	
C10	The Cathedral should implement a central record keeping system regarding relevant handover information. This can be achieved by the creation and use of a daily handover logbook / spreadsheet or similar mechanism. The logbook / spreadsheet or other mechanism used to record this should be frequently and routinely examined and signed off by the Director of Music.		Nov 28th 2025	
C11	Chorister staff at the Cathedral should consider ways to ensure safeguarding is a standing agenda item in staff meetings		Nov 28th 2025	
C12	The Cathedral should set up a dedicated pathway for chorister parent communication and feedback that includes safeguarding as a standing agenda item.		Nov 28th 2025	
C13	The Director of Music should be provided with a work mobile phone for communication with parents and carers		Nov 28th 2025	
C14	The Cathedral should review its recruitment procedures and seek to streamline these, whilst continuing to align with House of Bishops' guidance		Nov 28th 2025	

C15	The Cathedral should ensure that the Church of England portal access to historical records is proportionate to the user's needs. Any identified flaws in access should be promptly addressed to prevent 'bottlenecking' around those with access.		Nov 28th 2025	
C16	The Cathedral should ensure that its commitment to safeguarding is embedded throughout all job adverts, application forms and job descriptions.		Nov 28th 2025	
C17	The Cathedral should seek to implement at pace a code of conduct for all staff		Nov 28th 2025	
C18	The Cathedral should display the Lantern Initiative more prominently on its website to give visitors a true reflection of their visit. It should ensure that links are working correctly and imagery accurately reflects the community a visitor is likely to encounter		Nov 28th 2025	
C19	All staff who move around the Cathedral, engage with children and young people, or routinely engage with vulnerable members of the public as part of the Lantern Initiative must always wear radios.		Nov 28th 2025	
C20	CCTV should be installed in all secluded areas of the Cathedral and monitored as required i.e. post-incident or allegation. Retention and storage of such material should be compliant with UK GDPR legislation.		Nov 28th 2025	
C21	A robust risk assessment should be created to consider how the Lantern Initiative interacts and overlaps with children and young people in the Cathedral. This		Nov 28th 2025	

	assessment should be reviewed frequently to ensure the Cathedral is responsive to any changes that may heighten the level of risk within shared spaces			
C22	The Cathedral should consider reducing, changing the arrangements around, or eliminating school visits during the street life community's peak visiting times		Nov 28th 2025	
C23	The Cathedral should ensure posters and signposting are displayed around the premises that set ground rules for acceptable behaviour, outline the actions staff members will take and specify the consequences of breaching these behaviour rules. In line with the ethos of Radical Welcome, these posters should be inclusive, using visuals and accessible fonts and formatting		Nov 28th 2025	
C24	Include a comprehensive briefing of the Cathedral's Radical Welcome value in the digital pack for visiting schools or choirs, detailing exactly what they may encounter and the safety measures in place		Nov 28th 2025	
C25	Those who display contact numbers on posters offering support should operate on a rota basis to ensure that calls are always answered and responded to.		Nov 28th 2025	
C26	The DBF and Cathedral should ensure the approach to safeguarding concerns adhere with the requirements set out in the MoU.		Nov 28th 2025	
C27	In partnership with the DST, the Cathedral should proactively engage		Nov 28th 2025	

	with its workforce to promote confidence in reporting and escalating concerns			
C28	The Cathedral and DBF should collaborate on developing a Diocesewide training strategy. This should include specific reference to the strategic training priorities for the Cathedral		Nov 28th 2025	
C29	In line with the recommendation for the DBF to develop a defined pool of trainers, the Cathedral should seek to identify at least two members of its workforce to form part of this cohort.		Nov 28th 2025	
C30	In collaboration with the DST, the Cathedral should ensure that a bespoke training needs analysis for its staff and volunteers is developed as part of the recommendation made to the DBF for improving this process.		Nov 28th 2025	
C31	In collaboration with the DST and in line with the recommendations for the DBF to create role specific training, the Cathedral should identify the different cohorts of staff and volunteers for whom this would be relevant and seek the support of the DSA / CSA to facilitate these.		Nov 28th 2025	
C32	The Cathedral should ensure that all staff and volunteers who have outstanding training, complete this within three months of the publication of this Audit.		Nov 28th 2025	
C33	To help determine the impact of training in making people safer, the Cathedral should ensure that the implementation of any enhanced evaluation process by the		Nov 28th 2025	

	DBF includes the provision of disaggregated data for its own staff and volunteers.			
C34	<p>The Dean should ensure that all clergy at the Cathedral are made aware of the various avenues of support currently available to them.</p> <p>The Dean should commission work to consider the suitability and accessibility of such support for Cathedral staff and volunteers.</p>		Nov 28th 2025	