



INVITATION TO SURVIVORS TO ATTEND SAFEGUARDING AUDIT FOCUS GROUPS

1. The Church of England has commissioned an independent audit of cathedral arrangements for keeping people safe from harm and abuse. We realise there is a risk that the occurrence of audits is mistakenly taken up on social media or in the press as indicating the revelation of an abuse scandal in a particular cathedral. We want to provide clarity and reassurance that every cathedral in England will engage in this audit process. Bringing in “fresh eyes” and safeguarding expertise in this way is standard good practice across all sectors. Its purpose is to enable learning proactively and improvement in how cathedrals individually and collectively keep people safe; it is not a response to something bad having happened here or elsewhere. Cathedrals nationally are taking part in this.

2. The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE), a leading improvement agency, is conducting these audits. Two SCIE auditors will be visiting Guildford Cathedral between 5 and 7 February 2019. As well as looking at Safeguarding files, policies and training, they will meet with safeguarding professionals and key members of Chapter, including the Dean.

3. In addition, they are keen to hear from people who have direct experience of receiving help or trying to get help from cathedrals to keep themselves safe, or people who have sought safeguarding help from the Cathedral on behalf of a friend or family member. So if you or someone close to you:

- Has been abused or mistreated by clergy or someone in a church-related role – be they lay or clerical, paid or volunteer;
- Have approached the Cathedral to talk about abuse or harm that happened in other places – for example in the family, at work, or in another organisation;
- Has raised concerns about unsafe situations in the Cathedral, where you’ve feared children or vulnerable adults may be at risk of harm or abuse;
- Needed help to keep safe because circumstances – such as bereavement, relationship breakdown, redundancy, physical or mental ill health, drug or alcohol dependencies, physical disabilities, learning disabilities, old age, or emotional distress – led you to seek pastoral support from the Cathedral;
- Has needed to complain about how one of the above concerns was handled by the Cathedral;

then the auditors would be interested in having a conversation with you, to talk about your experiences. The auditors want to hear from people with good and bad experiences of

cathedral responses. You can be a lay person, clergy or lay Church officer. You can be a friend or family member, as well as people with first-hand experience.

4. The kind of questions the SCIE auditors will want to hear from you on are:
 - In what ways did the Cathedral respond well to your situation and concerns?
 - In what ways did the response not meet your expectations?
 - Are there any lessons that you feel the Cathedral should learn from your experience?
 - What do you see as the top three most important things for making a cathedral a safe place for everyone, where the welfare and protection of all people is well tended to?

5. It is important to stress that the auditors will not be able to arbitrate on issues of dispute in particular cases.

6. If you have first-hand experience of turning to someone in the Cathedral for help to keep yourself or someone else safe, and would be willing to speak to the auditors, please contact the Safeguarding Lead, Matt O'Grady, on 01483 547864, or dops@guildford-cathedral.org. If you would prefer to remain anonymous, please contact SCIE directly on learningtogether@scie.org.uk. Either way, SCIE will arrange a time at your convenience to meet with the auditors. What you tell SCIE will be confidential and will not be shared with the Cathedral except as part of an overall report which will absolutely not identify you. Thank you.

5. The focus group discussion will be combined with other sources of information to help shape a report on each cathedral, which will be published on the cathedral website, once it has been approved by Chapter. Focus group members will not be identified by name, so can speak freely about their experiences and opinions.

6. If you would like to be included in the focus group, please contact Matt O'Grady on 01483 547864 or dops@guildford-cathedral.org.