

SAFEGUARDING AUDIT

January 2026

October Briefing

Project Update

Preparation for the INEQE safeguarding audit in January 2026 (6–9 January 2026) continues at pace. The Diocese and Cathedral are busy sourcing, formatting and uploading evidence to INEQE's 360° Audit Tool. To ensure the most productive use of time, INEQE's approach is to analyse all available information in advance of site visits. This information is collected using INEQE's 360° Safeguarding Audit Tool.

The 360° Safeguarding Audit Tool is a series of questions set against a framework that captures an organisation's baseline policies, practices and other information relevant to the audit. For example, beyond policies, this includes records relating to safeguarding training, safer recruitment practices, previous audits, reviews or reports commissioned by or into the Church body.

Mapped against the National Safeguarding Standards, the 360° Safeguarding Audit Tool also provides a baseline against which the overall sufficiency of safeguarding is assessed, and any progress evidenced (i.e. against previous audit recommendations). Each Church body receives an individually tailored 360° Safeguarding Audit Tool as part of their Audit Briefing Pack which must be fully completed online by the 12th November (extended from 5th November due to key personnel being absent). Amendments cannot be made after this date.



Audit Readiness

The cathedral & diocesan safeguarding teams, and project board have been working flat out to keep everything moving smoothly. They're supporting colleagues across diocese, parishes, and the cathedral, answering questions, sharing guidance, and keeping the project timeline on track. With regular check-ins and a focus on spotting and solving issues early, we're making sure the audit stays on schedule and that we hit all the key deadlines.

The diocesan INEQE project board now meets fortnightly to coordinate activity and monitor progress. The next board meeting will take place on 3rd November, with a key focus on reviewing evidence and identifying any potential gaps in the evidence.

Julian Hodgson and Phil Morris, the Diocese and Cathedral Project Single Points of contact (SPOCs), remain in regular communication with INEQE through Biweekly 'Keeping in Touch' (KIT) meetings. This includes creating the audit schedule for the onsite visit in January. The visit schedule will be completed by 8th December.

Parishes Preparing for the Audit

As part of the audit process, the team from INEQE Safeguarding Group would like to engage with a wide spectrum of individuals from diocese, parishes and cathedral communities through online surveys. These surveys will act as a mechanism through which individuals can comment on matters relevant to the audit's focus.

All parishes have received information about the audit and how to take part in the surveys, including a briefing at Diocesan Synod and an Ad Clerum from the Bishop. The survey's **close on 5th November** and your input is really important. Please take a few minutes to complete them – your feedback really matters! **You only have a few days left!**

The surveys are organised into different groups, so please complete **all those that apply to you:**

- **Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF), Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) and Office of the Bishop Workforce** – Including, for example, DBF staff or volunteers, Staff of the Diocesan Bishop's Office or Diocesan Synod.
- **Parish Community** – Including, for example, parishioners, worshippers, or attendees of other activities in the parishes.
- **Cathedral Workforce** – Including, for example, the Chapter members, clergy, staff, volunteers, choristers, or bell ringers.
- **Parish Workforce** – Including, for example, clergy, parish staff, volunteers, choristers, bell ringers, or worshippers.
- **Cathedral Worshipping Community** – Including those who visited, attended services or worshipped at the Cathedral.
- **Victims/survivors of church-related abuse**
- **Children or Young People**

[CLICK HERE TO COMPLETE A SURVEY](#)

Closing Date: 5th November 2025

OR you can scan the QR Code below



You can also follow us on social media and access the surveys by clicking the following links:



The surveys are both anonymous (the audit team are not seeking to identify individuals) and confidential (individuals will not be identified in INEQE's report). The purpose of the surveys is to enable the audit team to conduct a wider analysis of practice across Church bodies and give individuals the opportunity to contribute to the audit. **No one from the Church of England or diocese or Cathedral will be provided with or have access to the survey responses.**

The audits will ensure that safeguarding is not just about policies and protocols but is a living thread woven through everything we do - creating churches where everyone feels safe. Thank you to those who have completed the surveys so far! Please encourage others to do the same.

Table of INEQE Survey Completion Rates

Form Name	Result
CoE Southwell Minter Workforce Survey	71
CoE Southwell DBF, DBE and Office of the Bishop Workforce Survey	44
CoE Southwell Parish Workforce Survey	359
CoE Southwell Minster Worshipping Community Survey	59
CoE Southwell Parish Community Survey	186
CoE Southwell Children and Young People Survey	24
CoE Southwell Victims and Survivors of Church-Related Abuse Survey	8



A message from Julian Hodgson, Diocese Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and Project Single Point of Contact (SPOC):

*“We’ve seen a fantastic increase in survey completions over the past month, rising from just 94 in September to **751 to date** – **a real testament to everyone’s efforts in encouraging participation.** Thank you to all who have taken the time to complete or promote the survey so far. **As we head towards the final deadline of 5th November,** we’re keen to see even more responses, particularly from the Diocese, cathedral workforce, and our parish and cathedral communities. Every submission helps build a stronger, more accurate picture to inform the auditors of our safeguarding work, so please take a few minutes to complete the survey if you haven’t already – and encourage others to do the same”.*

[CLICK HERE TO COMPLETE A SURVEY](#)



Updates from Lucy Andrewartha, Cathedral Safeguarding Officer:

"We are well underway with the 360° Audit which will be submitted in the next fortnight. There has been lots of input and work completed by all Cathedral staff in preparation for this and we are evidencing everyone in the Cathedral's hard work in relation to safeguarding. This preparation also has been a useful tool for the Cathedral to identify if there are any learning areas for us in advance of the audit in January, to support with us planning for future safeguarding work.

There have been some responses to the INEQE survey but we would really appreciate everyone to complete every possible survey relevant to them (there may be more than one survey relevant to them), this will help inform the audit but also to support us with any future learning and plans; we want everyone to help inform the future of Southwell Cathedral safeguarding and this is the opportunity to do that.

Thank you to those who have already completed the survey and thank you in advance to those who are going to complete the survey".

You can listen to Dean of Southwell's message about the INEQE Safeguarding Review [here](#).

Safeguarding Dashboard

- Over 91% of parishes now have active dashboards, although some figures in the remaining 9% include closed churches or parishes who are not following Anglican safeguarding arrangements (Local Ecumenical Partnerships or LEPs).
- Archdeacons are contacting remaining parishes to ensure they are supported in using the system.
- Safeguarding Hubs currently stand at 35% of parish usage, however this is understandably lower than the dashboards because the hubs were developed a number of years after the dashboards, and some parishes use ChurchSuite to record their HR data.

NEXT MONTH: November Focus

Looking ahead to November, we'll be wrapping up the busy preparation stage of the audit. The next focus will be to respond to any requests from INEQE for additional evidence. This is important because the focus of the INEQE audit is to work with us to identify our strengths and any gaps in evidence. We will also be finalising the audit schedule. We will continue to meet with INEQE on a fortnightly basis to formalise arrangements for their audit visit in January.

Keep an eye out for the November edition of the INEQE project briefing which will have information about focus groups, 1:1 interviews, semi structured discussions and the audit schedule.

THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone contributing their time, information, and commitment. Every survey completed, briefing attended, and piece of evidence uploaded, strengthens our shared safeguarding culture.

Together, we are ensuring that the Diocese and Cathedral remain safe and supportive communities for all.

