

SAFEGUARDING AUDIT

January 2026

September Briefing


Project Update

Preparation for the INEQE safeguarding audit in January 2026 is progressing well. The Diocese and Cathedral now have access to INEQE's 360 Audit Tool, the secure online platform through which all evidence for the audit will be submitted. This marks a significant milestone in our preparations for the forthcoming INEQE safeguarding audit **(6th–9th January 2026)**.

The 360 system is INEQE's digital self-assessment platform. It enables us to:

- Enabling INEQE to understand the context of the diocese and cathedral prior to the site visit.
- Upload our evidence of safeguarding practice across the five National Safeguarding Standards.
- Celebrate areas of strength in safeguarding ("what's going well")
- Identify gaps where more development is needed to improve our safeguarding service
- Provide plans for improvement, where relevant, to ensure that any person with lived experience of trauma receives the best possible response.

The tool is designed to give a rounded and honest picture of safeguarding across the diocese and cathedral — it is not a pass/fail inspection, but an opportunity for a specialist safeguarding organisation to journey with us, to review our progress and future learning needs.



Audit Readiness

The diocesan INEQE project board continue to meet monthly to oversee all preparation work and to coordinate activity and monitor progress.

The diocese and the cathedral both have a project single point of contact (SPOC) who are now in regular communication with the INEQE audit team. Currently meetings are taking place fortnightly, and this will be weekly as we near the audit site visit.

Parishes Preparing for the Audit

In early September we had our initial meeting with INEQE and as planned, letters have been sent to all Incumbent clergy, PSOs, Churchwardens, Deanery Administrators, and PCC Secretaries, explaining why requests for data are being made, set out what information is needed, and provide further information about the audit process. To support this, the letter included a 7-minute briefing recently shared at Diocesan Synod, along with signposts to further resources and upcoming INEQE briefings.

An Ad Clerum has also been sent out from Bishop Paul to all parishes requesting your cooperation with the INEQE project. The aim was that you are fully informed and that the INEQE process has the support and backing of the senior leadership within the diocese.

Your involvement in the INEQE audit will mainly take place through the online survey questionnaires, which were launched this week. Access details will be circulated directly via email to the following groups:

- Diocesan employees and volunteers – including all staff and volunteers within the Diocesan Board of Finance, Diocesan Board of Education, Bishop's Office, Diocesan Synod and Bishop's Council
- Members of the cathedral worshipping community
- Cathedral workforce – all employees and volunteers
- Parish workforce – including clergy, employees, volunteers and worshipping communities
- Separate questionnaires will also be available for children and young people (under 18s), as well as for victims and survivors

Posters containing the survey links and QR codes have been produced and will be available on request ([or click here to download](#)), as well as at the Diocesan Conference from 6–8 October 2025. If someone from your parish is attending the conference, please ask them to collect copies to bring back and display locally.

Each poster provides access via either a QR code or a web link, and you can choose to complete one or more of the surveys listed above. Please complete all those that are relevant to you.

[CLICK HERE TO COMPLETE A SURVEY](#)

Closing date: 5th November 2025

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 other body 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.

Well done and thank you to those people who have already completed the surveys, INEQE have received 94 parish workforce response This is a very encouraging start — however, we do need significantly more responses if we are to achieve statistical reliability. Your continued support in promoting and completing the surveys is greatly appreciated.

Table of INEQE Survey Completion Rates

	The Cathedral Workforce	The Cathedral Worshipping Community	DBF, DBE and Office of the Bishop Workforce	The Parish Workforce	The Parish Community	Victims / Survivors	Child or Young Person	Total
Sep-25	2	1	5	60	21	2	3	94
Oct-25								
Nov-25								
Total								

INEQE and the Diocese recognise that not everyone will be able to access the questionnaires online. However, to protect the integrity of the survey process, it would not be appropriate to change the method of collecting information partway through.

If there are people in your parish who would like to take part but do not have internet access at home, or who feel unsure about completing the form, please make arrangements for someone to assist them. There is no limit to the number of questionnaires that can be submitted from the same device.

Some parishes have already found it helpful to set up “surgery-style” sessions after Sunday services to support those who need assistance—this could be a useful approach to consider locally.

[**CLICK HERE TO COMPLETE A SURVEY**](#)

Closing date: 5th November 2025

Parish Demographic Survey:

The Parish Demographic Survey is now closed. We are very grateful for your engagement and feedback.



An introduction and update from Lucy Andrewartha, Cathedral Safeguarding Officer:

"I started the role of cathedral safeguarding officer in September 2025, part time 2 days per week. I am continuing the work of Miles Dent (Interim Cathedral Safeguarding Officer) who has been supporting staff at the Southwell Minster to prepare for the INEQE safeguarding audit in January 2026. Policies and procedures are still in the process of being reviewed and approved by Chapter. The safeguarding section of the cathedral website has now been updated and new leaflets for safeguarding have been distributed for the congregation. There is also a new safeguarding leaflet for staff and volunteers which is in the process of being distributed. New posters for Southwell Minster Safeguarding have been displayed around the Minster site and further safeguarding information is in the process of being completed.

Data collection for the 360 audit is also well underway, with Miles completing requests from colleagues for assistance, and arrangements being made for the secure storage of evidence. Information (posters, website and flyers) about the INEQE audit and surveys have now been distributed– a strategy to ensure maximum survey input from all staff/volunteers/members of the parish has been implemented.

Phil Morris the new Cathedral Chief Operating Officer has now settled into role and is the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for the Cathedral's INEQE project. Phil has been active in reviewing processes and is keen to ensure that safeguarding is a priority in the Cathedral. Phil and Julian are working very closely together to assist in the process as there is obviously a cross over with some evidence for INEQE between the cathedral and the diocesan audit."

Safeguarding Dashboard

The Safeguarding Dashboard is the simplest way to keep all your safeguarding records in one place and check, at a glance, whether you meet national requirements.

If your parish hasn't yet signed up to the Dashboard or Hub, there's still time. It's the quickest way to demonstrate progress towards compliance. Email safeguarding@southwell.anglican.org — we'll get you set up easily and can even connect you with a parish already using the system.

So far over 87% of parishes have active dashboards. This is a conservative figure because the parishes listed on the dashboard were set up by the national team and are out of date. And the list currently includes churches that are now closed, or who are in Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEP) who follow non-Anglican safeguarding relations.

The Archdeacons are making contact with any parish currently not engaged in the dashboards to assess what support they need.

NEXT MONTH: *October Focus*

In the October edition we will give you an update on the uploading of evidence and the progress on scheduling the audit visit.

THANK YOU

As always, thank you to everyone contributing their time, information, and commitment to this important work. Every form completed, briefing attended, and piece of evidence gathered strengthens our shared safeguarding culture.

Together, we are ensuring our Diocese and Cathedral remains safe, supporting communities for everyone.

