

**Delia Stokes**

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Dear colleagues,

I would like to take the opportunity at the start of this New Year (albeit not quite the new start that we were hoping for) to explain a change to the auditing process for parishes in regard to their safeguarding procedures.

This will be the replacement for the previous toolkit that was usually collected in at the Archdeacons Visitation in May each year, and I wanted to ensure that you have as much time as possible to be prepared.

For the last 2 years now there has been a choice for every parish as to whether they complete the old toolkit format, or use the newer Parish safeguarding Dashboard. 109 (63%) of our parishes have already chosen to adopt the Dashboard and are working well with it.

The Diocesan Operational Safeguarding Group (chaired by Bishop Martin) have taken the decision that the Dashboard will, from now, be the preferred audit method, and that we will not be offering the option of the old toolkit style this year. I would like to stress that none of the requirements for safeguarding in your parish will have changed – it is simply a more effective way for parishes to ensure that they are meeting the requirements, and for us to gather the data.

The Dashboard provides us all with a number of advantages:-

- An intelligent system that shows at a glance the current status of safeguarding in the parish (rather than a once a year check in)
- A ready to view action plan with all outstanding tasks in priority categories – can be printed or emailed instantly
- The provision to access/print/share safeguarding procedures from the resources (no need to look them up on a website)
- The provision to amend/view/plan safeguarding tasks as often as required
- The opportunity for tasks to be reviewed and planned across a whole team/PCC
- For support to be given in an informed manner by the safeguarding team in response to any gaps that are apparent via the data – i.e. training offered for specific topics/resource sharing etc

Access to the Dashboard needs to be initially arranged for the PSO and/or member of clergy in terms of editing rights, and others (Church Wardens, administrators, PCC members) can be allowed viewing rights by your choice when you are ready.

**Action required please**

- If you are already using the Dashboard, and are happy with how it is going – there is no need to do anything other than continue the good work – thank you – please continue to check in with your dashboard regularly to gain full advantage of its benefits.

- If your parish does not yet have access to the Dashboard, please arrange for your PSO and/or member of Clergy/church warden if appropriate to email Delia to ask for this to be given. Support is available to anyone who would like help to get started. Please ask.
- If you have access to the Dashboard, but have not yet started to use it, then please do so asap – if you would like support in getting started then please ask.

**The sooner the Dashboard is accessed, the more time you will have to ensure that everything is in place for Archdeacon Visitation timing**

If the content of this email provides a significant issue for your parish (in terms of personnel, technology problems) please talk to me and we will find the most suitable way for this task to be completed in the future.

With very best wishes to you all,

Delia