



Diocese of Bristol

Safeguarding Annual Report 2023

When I joined the DSSG in April 2023, I was not sure of the structure I would find and what was the quality of the staff in the safeguarding team. I found dedicated, experienced professionals who had a valuable mix of safeguarding related backgrounds. The team was well led and supported with governance which is well set and, thankfully, complacency did not seem to be a problem.

This seemed complimented by the Bishop and her senior leadership team who are committed to best practice and highly supportive of the staff. During 2023 the communications team were reforming and now they are supportive and, in my opinion, an essential arm of the work.

Representation and collaboration with the Cathedral and the College is strong.

Being part of the Pathfinder regional initiative has brought an extra dimension to the work and, I believe, has the opportunity to be a valuable support network in the South West. Having colleague Chairs to discuss issues does help decision making.

I would commend the work that the team and senior leadership support.

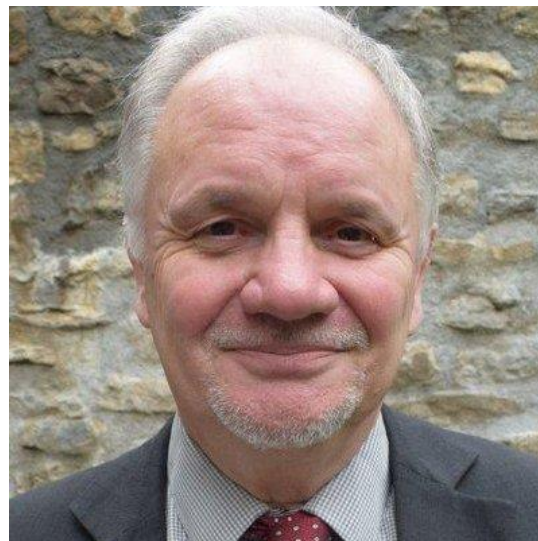
Towards the latter part of 2023 details emerged of a forthcoming comprehensive audit of safeguarding in all Dioceses. Our one was scheduled for March 2024 and work was started by Adam and the team during Advent 2023.

Although there are possibly some significant changes to the Church's safeguarding structures, I have confidence that Bristol is well served.

David Niven

Independent Chair, Diocesan Safeguarding Steering Group

May 2024



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Diocesan Safeguarding Steering Group (DSSG)

The DSSG meetings oversee safeguarding activity within the Diocese. There are standing agenda items which include national updates, performance metrics and the Safeguarding Improvement Plan (which outlines the development work of the Diocesan Safeguarding Team (DST) and the DSSG).

'Quarterly Metrics' are provided at each meeting as well as updates regarding use of the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard by parishes. This has been particularly effective. These figures report on training, casework and DBS compliance levels.

Membership

As at December 2023 the membership of the DSSG was as follows:

Name	Role
Mr David Niven	Independent Chair
Caroline Jowett-Ive	Director of People & Safeguarding (Bishop's Lead for Safeguarding)
Revd Lucy Cleland	Bishop's Chaplain
Revd Adam Beaumont	Associate Archdeacon
Claire Pengelley- Scott	Parish Safeguarding Officer
Jan Coombes	Parish Safeguarding Officer
Christopher Whitehead	Parish Officer
Ben Silvey	Cathedral Chief Operating Officer
Rob Fortune	Avon and Somerset Constabulary
Tina Wilson	LADO, South Gloucestershire Council
Revd Dr Sean Doherty / Mr Andrew Lucas	Trinity College Bristol
*Katheryn Caithness	Safeguarding Co-ordinator (Notetaker)
*Adam Bond	Diocesan Safeguarding Officer
*Helen Styles	Safeguarding Training and Development Officer

Diocesan Safeguarding Steering Group Attendance 2023

Name	17/1/23	18/4/23	11/7/23	17/10/23
Dr Andrew Wills / David Niven	✓(AW)	✓(DN)	✓(DN)	✓(DN)
Caroline Jowett-Ive	A	✓	✓	✓
Revd Lucy Cleland (in post from Aug 23)	-	-	-	✓
Ven. Neil Warwick	✓	A	✓	A
Claire Pengelley- Scott	✓	✓	✓	A
Jan Coombes	✓	✓	✓	A
Christopher Whitehead	A	✓	✓	✓
Ben Silvey	✓	A	✓	✓
Sarah Jenkinson (Cathedral)	-	✓	-	✓
Tina Wilson	✓	✓	A	A
Rob Fortune	-	✓	A	A
Revd Dr Sean Doherty / Andrew Lucas	-	A	✓	✓
Lee Coley (Registrar)	-	-	-	-
*Katheryn Caithness	✓	✓	✓	✓
*Adam Bond	✓	✓	✓	✓
*Helen Styles	✓	A	✓	✓

- * Members of Diocesan Safeguarding Team attend DSSG but are not members
- Attendance not required;
- A Apologies received;
- ✓ attended

Safeguarding Staffing

The team has remained stable during 2023.



Adam Bond,
Diocesan
Safeguarding
Officer
(4 days per
week)



Helen Styles,
Diocesan
Safeguarding
Training and
Development
Officer
(3 Days Per
week)



Nick Papuca,
Safeguarding
Caseworker
(3 Days Per
week)



Esther
Williams,
Safeguarding
Caseworker
(2 Days Per
week)



Katheryn
Caithness,
Safeguarding
Co-Ordinator
(5 Days Per
week)

Safeguarding Service Development

Diocese

Inductions: One-to-one Safeguarding Inductions for Clergy and DBF Advisers/ Officers were continued during 2023.

Trinity College: Trinity College in Bristol is the only Theological Education Institution (TEI) within the Diocese of Bristol. Support is provided to Trinity College with safeguarding issues including the provision of advice and guidance on safeguarding arrangements within the College and the provision of safeguarding training to both staff and the student body.

Out of Hours/ Holiday Advice Access: An Information Sharing Agreement is in place with Thirtyone:eight¹ to enable individuals from Parishes to access their 24 hour helpline and for urgent telephone advice to be provided during DSO leave. Requests for advice are shared with the Diocese though we do not at present receive usage data.

¹ [Thirtyone:eight home page \(thirtyoneeight.org\)](http://thirtyoneeight.org)

Regional

South West Safeguarding Trainers Network: A network for safeguarding trainers in Church of England Dioceses in the South West. The group has established itself and meets quarterly to provide support and share good practice across the region.

South West Independent Chairs (SWItCH): meeting quarterly to share good practice and provide support amongst independent chairs.

Regional DSO meeting: these are now established as quarterly meetings and are facilitated by the Regional Safeguarding Lead as part of the National Pathfinder project in response to the IICSA recommendations 1 and 8.

National

Pathfinder Pilot project: The Diocese of Bristol is part of the pathfinder pilot project to address recommendations 1 and 8 of the IICSA report in order to contribute to the improvement of safeguarding arrangements in the church as a whole. The Pilot project has embedded regular supervision and support for the DSO and TEam from the regional safeguarding lead. Opportunities for collaboration and mutual support are also being explored led by the regional lead. A Quality assurance framework will be implemented during 2024.

Independent Safeguarding Audit Programme: The Diocese volunteered to be an early participant alongside Bristol Cathedral in the independent safeguarding audits of dioceses and Cathedrals. The Audits will be conducted by INEQE² and the initial phase of information gathering, and submission commenced in November 2023. The final report for Bristol will be published during the summer of 2024

Policy and Procedures

Diocese

No new policies or procedures have been issued at a Diocesan level. During 2023 all Diocesan policies, procedures, guidance and supporting documentation was reviewed and updated. The Safeguarding pages of the Diocesan Website were updated and restructured with revised information.

National

Safeguarding Practice reviews guidance was issued during 2023 alongside revised guidance for Local Ecumenical Partnerships. We are expecting revisions to the managing allegations guidance safeguarding learning and development guidance during 2024.

² [Church of England - Ineqe Safeguarding Group](#)

The new National Safeguarding Standards³ were issued in October 2023. These will be implemented and embedded across the church over the coming 2-3 years.

Safeguarding Training

During 2023 the Diocesan team have continued to provide the full range of core and specialist training as required in the Church of England Training and Development Framework (2021) The framework is currently being updated, the new version will be published this summer.

In addition to the mandatory training, we have also provided or contributed to the following training:

- Personal Safety and Lone working
- Mental Health First Aid
- Mental Health Awareness
- Deliverance Ministry
- Safeguarding induction for new curates
- Safeguarding for discernment candidates

Attendance numbers are strong and participants continue to be well engaged. The feedback we get is overwhelmingly positive. The pre work and course materials are very academic which sometimes provokes some negative responses. We have adapted the material and provided feedback to the national safeguarding team. We had one participant in 2023 who gave very negative feedback and we followed up with them to discuss their comments and concerns.

Here are some examples of the feedback received in 2023:

'Thank you for the leadership training I found it very good and useful'

'found [it] thought-provoking and helpful'

'Thanks once again for a brilliant Safeguarding course. You have devised a great way of training us. The activities outside of the sessions, the breakout groups, the scenarios – cleverly blend together to ensure that we are trained in a very 'active' rather than 'passive' way. You deliver the sessions incredibly well – a very safe pair of hands'

'Just wanted to take a moment to say thank you for the training today and last week. It was so well led by you and Adam. Always a complex course but I have come away feeling more confident and empowered to make some changes, even if they may seem small! So thanks again and if there are any further courses similar I hope to join in!'

³ [National Safeguarding Standards | The Church of England](#)

Safeguarding Training Courses

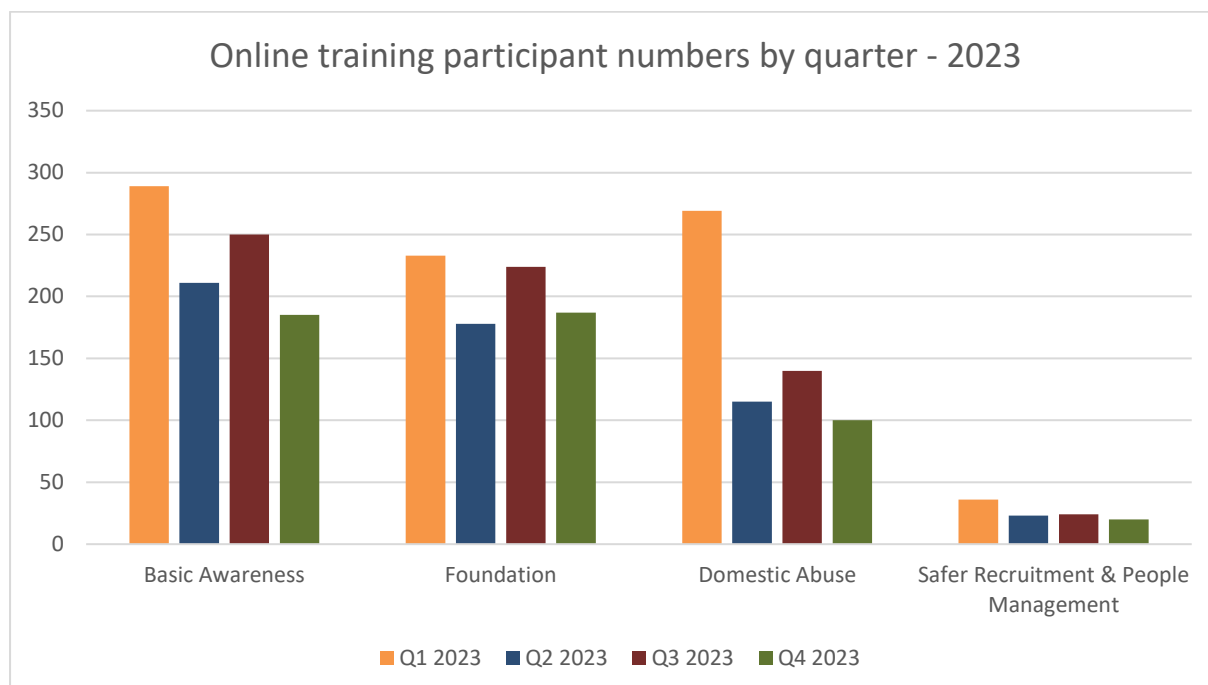
The full suite of training available within the Diocese is as follows:

- **Basic Awareness** – pre-requisite for all face to face training and recommended for all, available online via the safeguarding training portal.
- **Foundations** course provides an introduction to safeguarding within a church context and equips participants with skills and knowledge to know how and when to report concerns (available online via the safeguarding training portal).
- **Leadership** Equips participants to embed safeguarding practice in a leadership role within their church. It is a two part course which includes pre course requirements and post course evaluation.
- **PTO Pathway** This is a bespoke leadership training for any clergy or Licensed Lay Minister holding PTO in the diocese.
- **Parish Safeguarding Officer Induction Pathway.** This course aims to engage and equip all Parish Safeguarding Officers with information they need to complete the varied aspects of this important role. The course includes information on what to do in the case of a safeguarding disclosure, managing risk, safer recruitment and use of the parish dashboards.
- **Safer Recruitment and People Management** Explores statutory legislation and guidance and the House of Bishops safer recruitment procedures, policies and practice guidance (available online via the safeguarding training portal).
- **Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse** Exploring the nature and dynamics of domestic abuse, with a focus on church settings (available online via the safeguarding training portal).
- **Personal Safety** an additional course provided to support clergy and other church officers whose role will often require them to work alone. Developed from training provided by the Suzy Lamplugh Trust⁴

⁴ [Train-the-Trainer Bespoke Course | Suzy Lamplugh Trust](#)

Online training

The online training provision comprises Basic Awareness and Foundations, Domestic Abuse and Safer Recruitment. There is also a module available regarding Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking.



Course	Delivery style	2022	2023
Basic Awareness	Online	679	935 (↑37%)
Foundation	Online	441	822 (↑86%)
Safer recruitment	Online	74	103 (↑39%)
Domestic Abuse	Online	375	624 (↑66%)
Total		1569	2484 (↑58%)

Face to Face and Virtual Training

We have continued to provide the Basic Awareness, Foundations, Domestic Abuse Awareness and Safer People Management face to face where required. This ensures that the training is accessible to all who need to complete it.

The leadership training is available on zoom and in person. The zoom option continues to attract higher booking numbers and attendance.

Course	Number of courses delivered	participants
Foundation	6	73
Leadership Safeguarding (face to face)	2	7
Leadership Safeguarding (virtual)	22	233
Domestic Abuse	10	132
PSO Induction Training	3	28
PTO Pathway	3	26
Total	54	622

Monitoring and reporting

Monitoring of levels of training for those holding a Bishop's licence or permission to officiate, DBF staff and Parish Safeguarding Officers is reported at each DSSG meeting. Failure to complete Safeguarding training can result in suspension of a licence.

DBS and Safer Recruitment

Any role in a Parish that is eligible for a Disclosure and Barring Service Check should have one completed prior to a person being appointed to that role. Every parish has access to the DBS system provided by Thirtyone:eight, either directly or in a one case through the Diocesan Safeguarding Team. The Safeguarding Team also works with the DBS Regional Outreach Adviser to provide workshops for Parish Lead Recruiters covering DBS eligibility and use of the DBS Update Service.

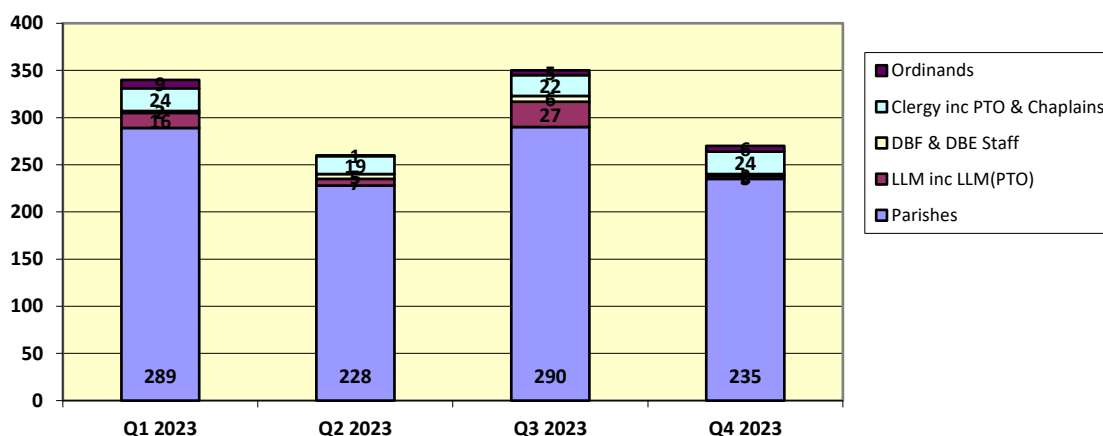
All Church officers that are required to have a current DBS check should ensure it is renewed every 3 years.

Outstanding DBS checks

Period		Clergy	LLM	DBF Staff	PSOs	Church wardens
As at 31/12/22	Total number in role	305	165	17	178	251
	outstanding checks	0	15	0	25	20
	% outstanding checks	0%	9%	0%	14%	8%
As at 31/12/23	Total number in role	328	157	22	182	274
	outstanding checks	0	9	0	21	35
	% outstanding checks	0.3%*	5.7%	0%	11.5%	12.8%

* One clergy person overdue with Police and DBS. Application made in time.

Completed DBS Checks - 2023



Quality Assurance

Diocese

A Section 11 (Children Act 2004) audit return was submitted to 3 Local Authorities in September 2023.

Parish Safeguarding Dashboards & Hubs

Parish use of the Safeguarding Dashboards and of the Safeguarding Hub for Safer Recruitment is monitored over the course of the year.

Safeguarding Dashboards	31/03/2023	30/06/2023	30/09/2023	31/12/2023
Live Dashboards	151	153	153	159
Unowned Dashboards	1	2	1	0
Owned Dashboards with no activity*	20	18	18	13
Level 1	32	32	28	32
Level 2	72	67	67	64
Level 3	47	54	58	63

Safeguarding Hubs	31/03/2023	30/06/2023	30/09/2023	31/12/2023
Unused Hubs	124	102	94	90
Owned Hubs	29	37	40	45
Live Hubs	29	40	42	45

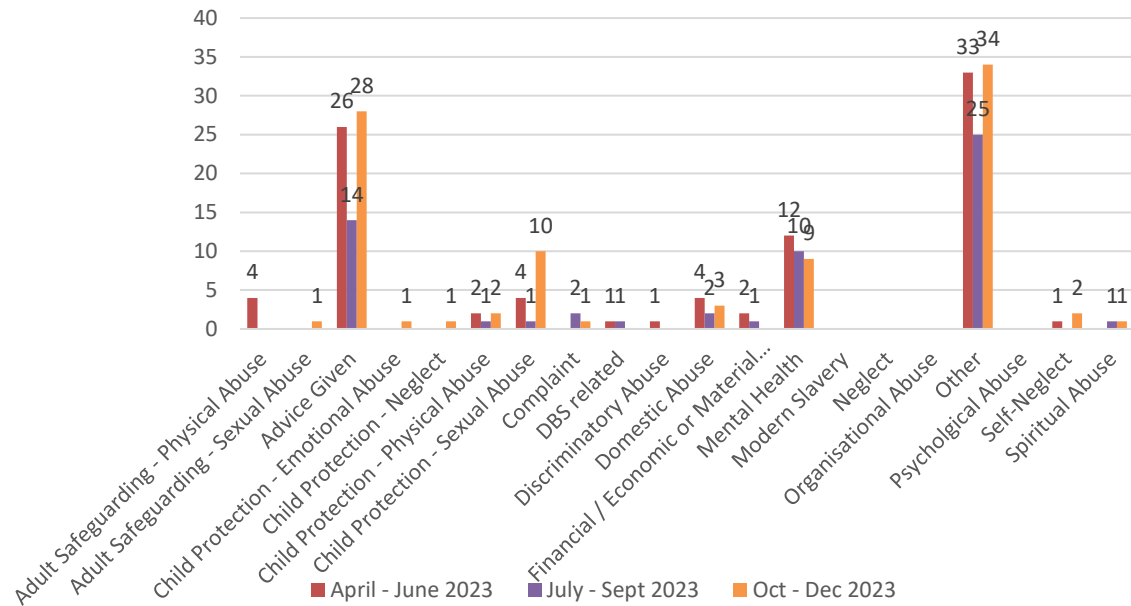
Case Work

All cases are recorded on the National Safeguarding Case Management System (NSCMS). Either where advice is sought from the DSO and is related to a safeguarding concern or has the potential to require a degree of intervention by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team or other types of queries e.g. recruitment, DBS, policy, training, signposting to services for parishioners.

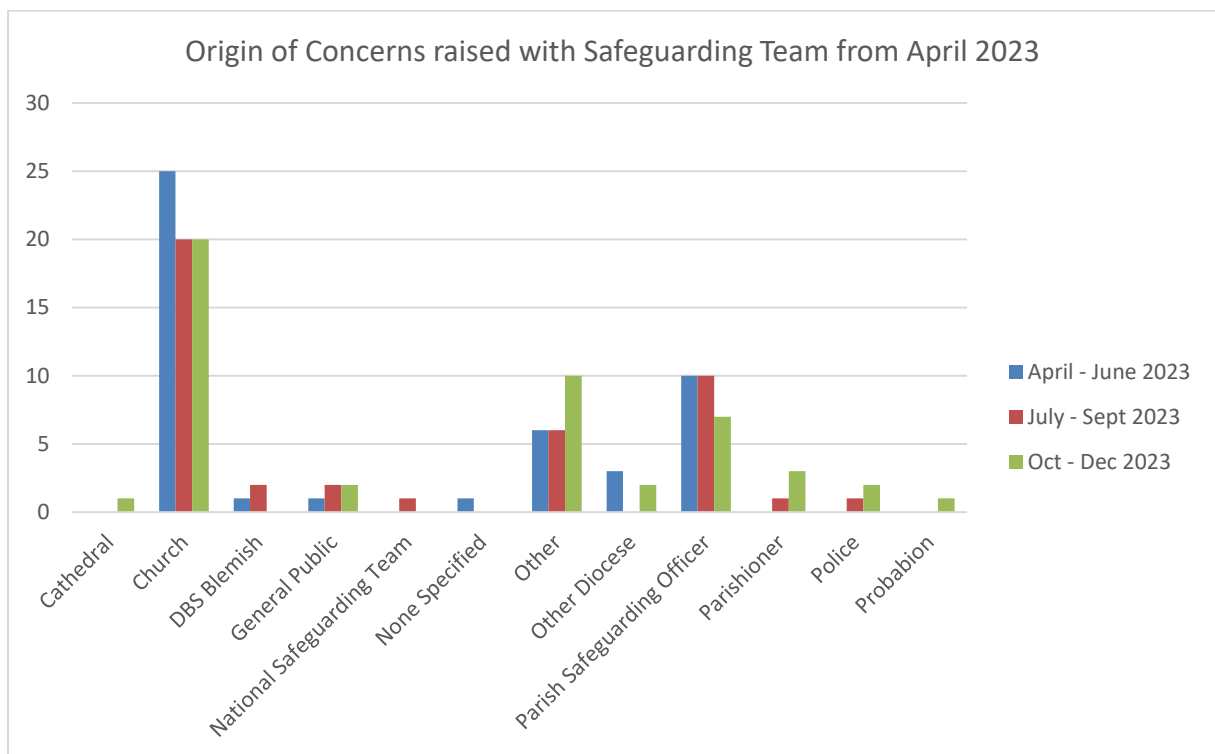
Number & category of new cases opened per quarter

An updated Case Management System, implemented during 2022, has meant that the way cases are recorded has changed. During 2023 every concern, whether a safeguarding case type of query, was recorded in the same system and reported together using the categorisation provided by the National Safeguarding Team. In Bristol, the categorisation system was implemented from April 2023 and consistent recording became available after that date and is broken down below.

Categories of concerns raised by quarter from April 2023



Origin of new cases opened per quarter



Safety Plans (formally known as Safeguarding Agreements)

During 2023 the terminology for these types of arrangements changed and they are now known as Safety Plans. A safety plan is put in place when an individual who poses a risk to children or adults at risk would like to attend and worship at a church.

Prior to the implementation of a plan, a risk assessment is completed to ensure that the plan fully meets the risk posed and that the individual is provided with the necessary support.

As at December 2023, there were 16 active plans in place involving 15 individuals.

Budget

Description	2022 Spend	2023 Budget	2023 Actual Spend	Variance
	£	£	£	£
*DBS Disclosure Costs	23,520	12,000	13,568	-1,568
Safeguarding risk assessments & investigation	250	6,000	2,347	3,653
Safeguarding training	2,000	3,000	349	2,651
Safeguarding resources	5,000	2,000	5,437	-3,437
Independent review	0	1,000	0	-1,000
DSO & DSSG working expenses	5,000	11,000	6,025	4,975
Totals	35,770	35,000	27,726	7,274

Glossary

DBF - Bristol Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd

DBS - Disclosure and Barring Service

DSO - Diocesan Safeguarding Officer

DSSG - Diocesan Safeguarding Steering Group

DST - Diocesan Safeguarding Team

IICSA - Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse

LADO - Local Authority Designated Officer

LEP - Local Ecumenical Partnership

LLM - Licensed Lay Minister

PCC - Parochial Church Council

PSO - Parish Safeguarding Officer

PTO - Permission to Officiate