

**Annual Safeguarding Report  
St Mary's Church, Broomfleet  
1<sup>st</sup> May 2025**

**Introduction**

The congregation at St Mary's can be assured that Safeguarding is taken seriously in this Benefice and that the Clergy, Lay Preachers and PCC members have been appropriately screened and trained.

Safeguarding is an agenda item at all PCC meetings. As the PSO, I attend the meetings for this item or provide a report for Terry Gelder to present.

Safeguarding has its own page on the St Mary's Church website, which is kept up-to-date by Rebecca Timmins, and a red folder with all things Safeguarding is kept at the back of the church, for those who prefer paper copies. The obligatory notices with key contacts for reporting Safeguarding issues are on the notice boards inside and outside church.

**Incidents / issues of concern**

There have been no safeguarding incidents or issues of concern reported over the past 12 months.

**National agenda**

Safeguarding in the Church of England is seldom out of the news. Sadly not for the best of reasons. Over the past 12 months there have been resignations, disciplinary action and the imprisonment of current or retired senior office holders in the Church of England either because they were perpetrators or because they took insufficient action to deal with reported abuse. It is known that there are still individual cases of alleged abuse that are being investigated and so the trail of negative news is likely to continue. However, action is now being taken and this is positive, both for the survivors of abuse and restoring the reputation of the Church.

At its meeting in February, the Synod considered and voted on the recommendations in Baroness Jay's report *Future of Church Safeguarding*, which particularly addressed future Governance arrangements. The recommendations were hotly debated and challenged and it was decided that there should be a new Safeguarding organisation, independent to the CoE but that the local Diocesan Safeguarding Teams would remain managed by the Diocese for the time being. Therefore, absolute clarity in the Governance arrangements for Safeguarding requires further work, which is a little disappointing.

**Diocesan Support**

I have attended the quarterly PSO Forums, which are useful for updates and exchange of good practice. The Diocesan Safeguarding Bulletins provide helpful information and these are circulated more widely within St Mary's by Terry Gelder.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Week took place this year between 18<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> November and it was absolutely excellent. I attended 9 virtual sessions, with topics ranging from the Theology of Safeguarding to Stalking and Harassment to Neurodiversity. All speakers were of a very high calibre. I will encourage more folk to look at the programme next year and sign up to sessions of interest to them, as it promotes our thinking about Safeguarding beyond mandatory screening and training.

**Training**

Within the St Mary's congregation, 12 have completed the Basic and Foundation Safeguarding modules; 13 have completed the Domestic Abuse Awareness module; and 5 have completed the

Leadership module. I will remind folk when they need to undertake their mandatory refresh this year.

### **Diocesan Dashboard**

St Mary's Safeguarding Dashboard shows an excellent Level 3 at 92%. Because of the really good progress made, there was no further work required for the Annual Diocesan Safeguarding Audit.

### **Next Steps**

The good progress that has been made must be maintained and this will require individual effort when reminders are sent for updating either their 3 yearly DBS or their training. I will provide help where this is needed.

As St Mary's develops ideas for its outreach into the community over the coming months, I will support the Reverend Shelly Jones in whatever way that is needed to ensure that residents have confidence that this church is safe and welcoming for children, young people and the vulnerable.

### **Appreciation**

Thank you to everyone who has committed to the Safeguarding agenda and helped to make St Mary's a safe and welcoming church for everyone. It really is a team effort and I am grateful for the importance and support that Andrew and the PCC give to this agenda.

**Claire Wood**

**Parish Safeguarding Officer**