CARLISLE CATHEDRAL

INEQE AUDIT SAFEGUARDING ACTION PLAN

APRIL 2026

This Action Plan follows the structure of the Church of England National Safeguarding Standards (NSS) and outlines the practical actions being undertaken by the Cathedral to address the recommendations of the INEQE Safeguarding Audit 2025.

- This Plan is owned by the Chapter of Carlisle Cathedral and delegated to the The Rev'd Canon Dr Benjamin Carter in his role as the Chapter Safeguarding Lead (CSL).
- The Plan will be monitored on a twice-yearly basis by the DSAP (Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel), the Cathedral Safeguarding Group (CSG), the Cathedral Audit and Risk Committee and the Cathedral Chapter, and updated accordingly.
- The Chapter is professionally advised by the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer (DSO) under the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding signed by Cathedral & the Diocese.
- Chapter has requested that DSAP oversee its safeguarding and this forms part of DSAP's Terms of Reference.
- The Chapter Safeguarding Lead is a member of DSAP.
- Areas marked as Red on this Action Plan are also noted on the Cathedral's Risk Register and Risk Management form (E1) which covers Safeguarding.

Colour code	**Progress**
	Work has not yet commenced
	Complete
	In progress
	Not completed

Date begun	Actions	Who will do it	Measures	Timeframe	Progress	Notes/ Status
1. Culture, Leadership and Capacity						
C1: The Cathedral should increase awareness of the safeguarding lead/s within the worshipping community by implementing a multi-faceted communication campaign that involves: • ***Prominently displaying the safeguarding lead's name and contact information on notice boards, in service leaflets, and on the Cathedral website.*** • ***Including a short introduction of the safeguarding lead during services and other community events.*** • ***Offering a brief, informal Q&A session with the safeguarding lead after a service.*** • ***Utilising social media and email communication to share information about safeguarding and the safeguarding lead.***						**Accepted**
Q2 2025	Review and update Safeguarding information	CSL/ Marketing and Comms Officer	• New Safeguarding information in place	12 months		• Change and update current notices as required
Q1 2026	Develop plan to introduce and communicate role of CSL in person and online	CSL/ Marketing and Comms Officer	• Cathedral Event held	12 months		• Discussion between CSL and DSO about new rolls and forms of communication 3/2026
Q2 2026	Q&A session for CSL at future Cathedral Community meeting	CSL/ Dean	• Cathedral Event held	12 months		
C2: The Cathedral should set a target to raise awareness of the safeguarding lead(s) across the worshipping community within six months to 80% and measure impact via a short, anonymous survey distributed after services and via email.						**Accepted**
Q3 2026	Online Safeguarding awareness questionnaire targeted at worshipping	CSL	• 80% recognition of work of CSL and Safeguarding Team from survey	12 month		• Work on this has been delayed next to the INEQE time scale but

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	community (according to new roll)					will follow from actions linked to C1 above
C3: The Cathedral should address these concerns and improve perceptions of decision making and communication by: • ***Providing ongoing forums through which the cathedral community can better understand the decision-making structures within the Cathedral, particularly since the passing of the Cathedral's Measure of 2021. These forums should seek to address how decisions are made and at what level, and also continue to review and improve the patterns of communication to the wider Cathedral community.*** • ***Following these forums, implement agreed-upon actions and assess their effectiveness through a follow-up survey within six months of each forum taking place.***						**Accepted**
Q2 2026	Organise Community Meetings following completion of new Cathedral Roll	Dean/KN	• Meeting takes place with focus on communication of Cathedral systems and processes	6 months		• Organised in conjunction with events linked to C1 and C2
Q4 2026	You Said/We did Actions	Dean/KN	• Publication of You Said/We Did actions after 6 month meeting • Survey about greater effectiveness of Communications etc within 12months	6 months		• To follow on from successful completion of the action above.
C4: The Cathedral should review and, if necessary, revise the Terms of Reference for the Audit and Risk Committees to emphasise its advisory capacity on risk matters relating to safeguarding. • ***The Terms of Reference should clearly articulate that whilst the Committee provides scrutiny and challenge regarding risk management, it does not have executive responsibility for safeguarding. They should also specify that accountability for safeguarding remains with Chapter, the CSG, and the SMT, as appropriate.*** • ***The Audit and Risk Committee should agree safeguarding risk assessments with the CSG and SMT prior to submission to Chapter.***						**Accepted**

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Q2 2025	Review of Audit and Rick ToR	Chair of Audit and Risk Committee	• ToR updated	18 months as per policy renewal schedule		• Completed at September 2025 meeting
C5: With the upcoming retirement of a non-executive Chapter member with an education background, Chapter should consider using the vacancy to bring the CLSL onto the Chapter. This would better connect meetings, providing extended oversight and more contemporary and informed safeguarding challenge.						**Accepted**
Q1 2025	CLSL approached to join Chapter	CSL and Dean	• CLSL invited to join Chapter	3 months		• Julie Clayton has accepted the Bishop's invitation to be a member of the Cathedral Chapter
C6: To address the ambiguity surrounding roles and responsibilities, Chapter should produce a clear outline of the Cathedral's governance, assurance, and operational oversight and delivery frameworks. This document should explicitly define the distinct responsibilities of Chapter, the SMT, and other relevant bodies, clarifying their interrelationships, roles and responsibilities. This document should then be disseminated and discussed with all staff, including senior management, to ensure a shared understanding. Regular reviews of this document should be conducted to maintain its accuracy and relevance.						**Accepted**
Q2 2026	Production of Organisational Chart and accompanying narrative	COO	• Shared with staff and discussed at Team meeting • Follow up questionnaire to clarify if this has been fully communicated	12 months		• This action will be delivered in conjunction with the actions for C3
C7 (and Diocesan Recommendation 12): The Cathedral and DBF should jointly further consider investigating the potential for opportunities to expand their collaboration and explore efficiencies and the potential to alleviate the financial pressures which inhibit further investment in safeguarding. Specifically, they should assess the feasibility and						**Accepted**

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benefits of sharing support services, such as HR, finance, or IT, which could lead to cost savings and streamlined operations for both organisations. A formal review should be undertaken to identify shared service possibilities and develop a plan for implementation where appropriate.						
Q2 2025	COO and Diocesan Secretary to meet	COO		6 months		• Completed and agreed as not a feasible solution for either party
C8: The Cathedral should appoint a dedicated, professional Cathedral Safeguarding Advisor (CSA). Whilst routinely based at the Cathedral, the CSA would be line managed and professionally supervised by the DSO/A. This would consolidate professional safeguarding resources (providing resilience and contingency) and ensure a consistent approach to safeguarding policy and practice.						**Accepted**
Q3 2025	Cathedral to be part of working group with Diocese to assess feasibility of C8 and C9 (D10)	Dean/ CSL/COO	• Group meets to propose way forward for C8 and C9	6 months		• New structure agreed for implementation
Q3 2025	Cathedral involved in recruitment to posts in new structure	DSO/ Charles Proctor	• Interviews successfully completed	3 months		• Initial appointments made September 2025
Q1 2026	Embedding of new staff into Cathedral Team on agreed working patterns	CSL/ Cathedral Head of People/ DSO/ New CSO	• Successful completion of probationary period.	6 months		• Appointment made and induction begun.
C9 (and Diocesan Recommendation10): To strengthen safeguarding across the Diocese, the DBF should establish an internal but operationally independent Safeguarding Directorate, led by a Director of Safeguarding. This Directorate would consolidate all safeguarding resources and provide comprehensive support to the DBF, parishes, and Cathedral. The Director of Safeguarding would have the authority and autonomy to: • ***Provide expert advice and oversight on all safeguarding matters.*** • ***Challenge senior clergy and Church bodies when necessary.***						**Accepted**

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• ***Escalate concerns to higher authorities, including the NST.***						
Q2 2025	Cathedral to be part of working group with Diocese to assess feasibility of C8 and C9 (D10)	Dean/ CSL/COO	• Group meets to propose way forward for C8 and C9	6 months		See actions for C8 above
C10: The Cathedral should install CCTV in the organ loft to improve visibility and act as a deterrent for anyone who might seek to misuse this area.						**Accepted**
Q2 2026	Vergers and/or Head of Works to look at CCTV in organ loft	Vergers/ Head of Works	• CCTV installed	12 months		Explore with Head of Works and new Head Verger
C11: The Cathedral should ensure that child-friendly safeguarding posters are displayed in the Song Room and associated toilets, to serve as a clear reminder of whom to approach should they need support or have concerns.						**Accepted**
Q1 2026	Child friendly posters produced with feedback form choristers about clarity and usefulness	CSL	• New posters in place	6 months		Focus of work for new member of Safeguarding Team when in post
C12: All music staff should undertake behaviour management training, including direction and guidance for supporting children with neurodiversity and additional needs. This training should form part of the induction process and be renewed regularly.						**Accepted**
Q3 2025	Behaviour management training put in place following more details conversations about form and nature of this.	CSL/HR Officer	• Training put in place and completed by all relevant staff	12 months		Initial advice sought by CSL

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C13: All staff who regularly engage with or have responsibility for young people should complete leadership safeguarding training as a minimum.						**Accepted**
Q2 2025	Update training matrix	HR Officer/Business Support Officer		6 months		Training Matrix updated
Q2 2025	Invite relevant staff for Leadership training	HR Officer		6 months		Relevant staff have completed leadership training
2. Prevention						
C14: The Cathedral should ensure that all relevant staff and volunteers have up-to-date DBS checks.						**Accepted**
Q2 2025	HR team to ensure all DBS checks are up to date	HR Dept	• All DBS checks are up to date by End of 2026	15 Months		
C15: Within the next twelve months, the Cathedral should ensure that all recruitment records are complete in the central database with no gaps in data.						**Accepted**
Q2 2025	HR to reformat and populate the central register	HR Dept	• Central Register is complete to the satisfaction of the COO by end of 2026	18 Months		
C16: For choir visits to parishes - the risk assessment should include discussion with the DSA / CSL to cross reference any relevant information held pertinent to the visit (e.g., the likelihood of a person of concern being subject to a Safety Agreement attending the church).						**Accepted**

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Q1 2026	Requirement to cross reference parishes with Diocesan Team added to future choir visit Risk Assessment and Action list	Music Admin/ CSL	• Generic choir visit risk assessment updated to the satisfaction of the CSL	3 months		As these visits are currently infrequent the generic risk assessment will be updates to provide institutional memory of this requirement
3. Recognising, Assessing, and Managing Risk						
C17: To further strengthen the Cathedral's Risk Register, it should be expanded to include a comprehensive assessment of safeguarding risks specific to the Cathedral's context and environment. This should include specific safeguarding focused consideration of: • ***Risks arising from allegations of abuse or misconduct, mishandling of safeguarding cases, or negative publicity. This should include protocols for managing allegations, proactively searching for and addressing (open source) online criticism and media relations.*** • ***Risks associated with the cost-of-living crisis, such as increased vulnerability to exploitation and abuse due to financial hardship. This could involve strategies to support vulnerable individuals and families and to prevent financial abuse.***					**Accepted**
Q2 2025	Audit and Risk Committee to review this recommendation against the existing Strategic Risk Register	COO/ Audit and Risk Committee	• Strategic Risk Register updated in light of outcome of review of recommendation	12 months		
4. Victims and Survivors						
C18: The Cathedral should consider implementing a formal feedback mechanism to assess the impact of Safeguarding Season, particularly on victims and survivors. This could include surveys, feedback forms, or facilitated listening sessions.						**Accepted**

Date begun	Actions	Who will do it	Measures	Timeframe	Progress	Notes/ Status
Gathering this data will provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of the season and identify areas for improvement.						
Q2 2026	Work with Victim/ Survivor contact about possibility fulfilling this recommendation	CSL	• Form of feedback (quantitative or qualitative) agreed and implemented for 2026 Safeguarding Season	12 months		• Victim/survivor focus identified for 2026 Safeguarding Season
5. Learning, Supervision and Support						
C19: The Cathedral should develop an internal system for evaluating the effectiveness of safeguarding training for its workforce. This could involve collecting feedback directly from participants and analysing its relevance to their roles or undertaking a longer-term impact assessment to ensure that the training translates into improved safeguarding practices.						**Accepted**
Q2 2025	Cathedral to engage with existing Diocesan systems for evaluation of Safeguarding Training	HR Officer	• Cathedral able to see and assess feedback from Safeguarding training sessions	12 months		
Q2 2025	Safeguarding included as mandatory question in all Staff appraisals/reviews	COO/ HR Officer	• Safeguarding awareness noted in all staff appraisals/reviews	12 months		• CSL to confirm this is in place with HoP.