SURVIVOR STRATEGY

PAST CASES REVIEW 2

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Past Cases Review (PCR2) is a central part of the Church’s proactive approach to identifying where abuse allegations have not been managed appropriately or safely or with the needs of the vulnerable at the centre of its decision making. The welfare of children or of adults at risk of abuse is of paramount importance in our planning for PCR2.

1.2 As part of this the Diocese of Carlisle is highlighting the support available to survivors of abuse. This includes the launch of the Safe Spaces project jointly with the Catholic Church. Safe Spaces is introduced in Section 2 below.

1.3 Cumbria County Council and Cumbria Police have been notified that the PCR is taking place and have been provided with a copy of this practice guidance for information.

1.4 A dedicated telephone helpline operated, independently from the church, by the NSPCC, has also been set up for those affected by issues which may arise as a result of PCR2. This information is on the Church of England website and on our own diocesan website. The telephone helpline number and details of how to make contact directly with the diocesan safeguarding team are also on the front safeguarding page of our diocesan website.

1.5 This strategy should be read alongside “Responding well to those who have been sexually abused” practice guidance (2011) which you can find within the policies and procedures on the Church of England website and our diocesan website.

2. SAFE SPACES

2.1 Background

Victim Support (VS) has been awarded the contract to manage Safe Spaces, a joint Anglican and Catholic Church project to provide a vital support service for survivors of church-related abuse. It is run independently by the charity Victim Support, who are one of the leading charities providing specialist support to survivors of abuse in England and Wales. Safe Spaces is a free and independent support service, providing a confidential, personal and safe space for anyone who has been abused through their relationship with either the Church of England or the Catholic Church of England and Wales.

2.2 What Safe Spaces does

Safe Spaces comprises a team of trained support advocates who have undergone specialist training in supporting survivors of sexual violence and who have received additional specific training in how the churches respond to abuse cases, the way in which faith and church-related settings have been used to carry out abuse, and the particular issues affecting people who have had or still have, a relationship with the church.

The team are based in Wakefield, West Yorkshire, but it is a national service providing remote support through their helpline, live chat service and website. Remote support is provided for as long as the survivor needs. This can be advocating for the survivor, giving them support, providing information (including information on church and police procedures), understanding individual needs and jointly working on individual support plans. If face-to-face support is also required, contact and referrals will be made with appropriate local organisations depending on need.

2.3 Eligibility

Safe Spaces is for anyone who feels they have experienced church related abuse of any form in England or Wales.

By ‘church related’, this may include:

• Abuse by a church officer. A church officer is any person, ordained or lay, paid or voluntary, who holds a role in the church.

• Abuse that is linked to participating in a church-led activity or group.

The service is for people who live in England and Wales. If someone lives outside of England and Wales, but suffered abuse by a Church Officer from the Church of England, Catholic Church in England and Wales or the Church in Wales, will endeavour to provide support but this may be limited due to the support available outside of England and Wales.

It is for people aged 18 or over, but the abuse can have happened at any time, now or in the past. If support is required for someone younger, we will endeavour to find appropriate local support.

Survivors do not have to have reported the incident to the Church authorities or the Police in order to access support.

You do not need to be a current active member of the church in order to access support.

It is for people who have experienced any kind of abuse – this includes (but is not limited to) sexual violence, inappropriate sexual behaviour, physical abuse, financial abuse or exploitation, psychological abuse (including spiritual abuse), domestic abuse, coercive and controlling behaviour.

2.4 Referrals

The Safe Spaces team are available through our helpline and live chat service between Monday–Saturday 10am-6pm, apart from Thursdays when the service is open 12-8pm.

Safe Spaces aims to reduce re-traumatisation at every stage of support, & as such they ask for details of the victim/survivor, their personal circumstances, any related support needs, and the nature of the abuse. They ask for these extensive details to reduce the requirement for the victim/survivor to repeat their experience, and to ensure that they make safe and appropriate contact, matching specific skills-sets of Advocates whenever possible.

Safe Spaces can receive referrals via the telephone, or by completing a pro-form referral document. The security of the personal and sensitive data of victims/survivors is vital, therefore in order to ensure that referrers are able to share the full referral details required they only accept referrals shared via secure email.

The team will make contact within 48 hours of reviewing a referral (72 hours at weekends).

Safe Spaces can be contacted via a variety of methods, according to the needs and preferences of victim/survivors by:-

Phoning 0300 303 1056 (a voicemail facility is available outside of opening times)

Emailing safespaces@victimsupport.org.uk

LiveChat with the team, or access to service information, at [www.SafeSpacesEnglandandWales.org.uk](http://www.SafeSpacesEnglandandWales.org.uk)

3. ENGAGEMENT WITH SURVIVORS COMING FORWARD AS A RESULT OF PCR2

3.1 In every case where engaging with those with lived experience of abuse is considered, their well-being will be the paramount consideration. It is very important that time is taken to consider the current circumstances of the individual and whether they have previously indicated their willingness to be contacted by the diocese in this way.

3.2 Planning the approach to any individual will involve a gentle, non-intrusive contact to see if further discussion or involvement would be welcomed. Independent sources of support will be available through the PCR2 advocate for survivor care. Communication with the advocate will be immediately available to anyone that the diocese seeks to engage with in this way.

3.3 Where someone makes contact seeking to make representations to the PCR2 process, the DSA will liaise with the Independent Reviewers (IR’s) to plan how best to receive the representations.

3.4 Where safeguarding professionals or diocesan clergy are in current contact with victims and survivors, who have experienced abuse by clergy or church officers, an invitation should be extended to victims and survivors to have contact with the IR’s if they so wish. Any such approach will be planned by the DSA with IR’s:

* Consideration will be given as to how approaches may appropriately be made to parents or guardians of people under the age of 18
* Consideration will also be given to approaching those with advocacy or support roles for individuals with diminished capacity
* Any contact with an individual inviting them to express their views to the IR’s should make them aware that the IR is not able to pursue any personal concerns or issues which individuals may have

3.5 If there are unmet support needs or unmitigated risk identified, then the IR’s will pass these to the DSA. The DSA will address these as per the usual work of the diocesan safeguarding team in line with House of Bishops’ current practice guidance.

3.6 Those survivors who, after consideration of their needs, are approached, should be made aware that the purpose of their invitation to engage with the IR’s is to generate information about how victims and survivors have been responded to by the church. They should be invited to:

* Comment on how helpful they found the response
* What could have been done differently to assist them more
* Any survivor engaging with the PCR2 process will be assured of support and of anonymity and that any sensitive information shared will be protected
* These insights will be utilised to assist the dioceses and the NST to improve their responses to victims and survivors

4. SPECIFIC CASES

4.1 Where contact with named individuals is deemed necessary because the PCR2 has identified previously recorded incidents of abuse where risk mitigation, statutory reporting, criminal investigation or survivor support has been inadequate or IR’s have identified good practice they wish to explore further, IR’s have contacted survivors with a questionnaire and the offer of a conversation. The IR’s working in the Carlisle Diocese have contacted five survivors or their representatives as part of the preparation of their overview report.

4.2 It is the role of the DSA to ensure that there is a broad spectrum of support options available to meet the needs of those who may be seeking to support. Provision of support will be discussed with the IR’s and with statutory agencies where there is police or local authority involvement, so there can be a coordinated response with the survivor at the centre.

4.3 No survivor should be contacted by the DSA, the IR’s, police or the local authority without a plan in place to offer them immediate care and support. There should be:

* Planned pastoral care available within a church context for those that want this
* Access to support and care that is provided independently from the church context for those that need it. Some people may need both pastoral and psychological support and one should not be offered at the exclusion of the other
* From the outset the individual needing support should be asked what would best meet their needs
* Any survivor engaging with the PCR2 process will be assured of support and of anonymity and that any sensitive information shared will be protected

5. LOCAL NETWORKS

The establishing or cementing of effective local partnerships (e.g. with Victim Support, Rape Crisis, local counselling providers etc.) will be undertaken by the DSA, with support from the PCR reference group and Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel. They include:

**Victim Support**

Victim Support provides an integrated support service for victims of crime and abuse. This includes a range of services, such as risk assessment and safety planning emotional support, practical help with issues ranging from rehousing and accessing medical care to assistance with completing forms, advocacy and help to understand and navigate the criminal justice system.

**REFERRAL DETAILS:**

The service can be contacted on **0300 3030157** during office hours (8am-6pm Monday-Friday) and the Supportline is available for service users 24/7 on **0808 1689111**

For victims of domestic abuse who are at high risk of harm or homicide (whether or not they have reported to the police), support is provided by Independent Domestic and Sexual Violence Advisors. Referrals can be made by emailing highpvp@victimsupport.cjsm.net.  A completed DASH risk assessment must be provided.

For victims of domestic abuse who are at medium risk (whether or not they have reported to the police), support is provided by Independent Victim Advocates who are trained to support people experiencing domestic abuse. Referrals can be made by emailing mediumpvp@victimsupport.cjsm.net.  A completed DASH risk assessment must be provided.

For victims of domestic abuse who are assessed as being at standard risk, the service can provide support for those who have reported crimes to the police and this is provided by Independent Victim Advocates. Referrals can be made by emailing Vcu.cumbria@victimsupport.cjsm.net. A completed DASH risk assessment must be provided.

The service also includes support for victims of rape and sexual assault, including specialist support for children and young people who are victims of serious sexual assaults. The service works as part of the network of services provided through The Bridgeway for sexual assault victims. Sexual abuse cases requiring Independent Sexual Violence Advisor support can be referred to the service by emailing: cumbria.isva@victimsupport.cjsm.net

If you are unsure about which email address to submit a referral to, contact the service or email:  Vcu.cumbria@victimsupport.cjsm.net or CumbriaVARC@victimsupport.org.uk (not secure)

**Third Sector Agencies**

There are also statutory and voluntary sector agencies in Cumbria who can provide counselling and therapeutic support. For details of the agencies who can offer support and links to their websites please go to the Third Sector Partner agencies section.

**Churches Together in Cumbria**
Christian communities working in partnership to tackle domestic violence www.churchestogethercumbria.co.uk . Churches Together DV Champions, Rev Eleanor Hancock: 01228 527106, Rosemary Campbell: 07778220810

**Safety Net   Tel: 01228 515859**http://safetynetuk.org/

**The Police & Crime Commissioner for Cumbria https: cumbria-pcc.gov.uk**