



6 October 2020

Diocese of Exeter Statement on the IICSA Final Report

We welcome the [IICSA Final Report](#)* and its recommendations to ensure our churches are safe places for all. Safeguarding is at the heart of our mission here in Devon and we are fortunate to have an experienced and committed Safeguarding Team. They advise, support and work alongside Diocesan senior staff and crucially, our parish clergy and local safeguarding officers to ensure the appropriate response to any safeguarding concern. The team runs a regular programme of training for churches, which, alongside Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults, includes Domestic Abuse awareness training and raising awareness of Modern Slavery.

One hundred percent of Anglican churches in Devon have now engaged with and responded to the Past Cases Review 2 process. Work to complete it is well underway ([https://exeter.anglican.org/resources/safeguarding/past-case-review-2/.](https://exeter.anglican.org/resources/safeguarding/past-case-review-2/))

The Bishop of Exeter, the Right Reverend Robert Atwell, said, “The IICSA Final Report holds up a mirror to the Church of England. Apologies will never take away the effects of abuse on victims and survivors, but along with others in the Church, we express our shame about the events that made those apologies necessary. It is why we particularly welcome the new independent Safe Spaces service for survivors of church-related abuse, which broadens the existing offer we provide to ensure survivors can access independent specialist support and advice. We look forward to studying the report in detail and taking action where needed.”

Charlie Pitman, the Diocese of Exeter Safeguarding Advisor, said: “The cases included in this report highlight the terrible past failings in the Church of England that have caused so much harm, from those that perpetrated the abuse to those who failed to respond correctly and compassionately. There are lessons for us all and there is no room for complacency. As we go forward, I am confident that the Diocese of Exeter has really engaged with, and is committed to, delivering robust and compassionate safeguarding provision. The challenges raised by this report will be considered and used to further inform and improve our services.”

The Diocese of Exeter Safeguarding Team can be contacted here:
<https://exeter.anglican.org/resources/safeguarding/safeguarding-team/>

**IICSA stands for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse*

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