

SAFEGUARDING

Annual Report 2021



OVERVIEW

2021 presented unique challenges for safeguarding at all levels, but particularly within congregations which were seldom able to meet as a body of people, face to face. Claire Benton-Evans, our Youth & Children Officer, produced guidelines to not only deliver children's liturgy online, but also how to keep them safe with their increased online activities.

Further dialogue and work with individual charges, following the results of the Provincial Safeguarding Audit Report, was continued by the Dean.

We were heartened by the recent re-commencement of training delivered by the Province, covering the new SEC Policy, and other PVG matters.

ANNUAL RETURNS

The Annual Safeguarding Checklist for charges in 2021 reverted to a more familiar set of questions, as lockdown had gradually eased during the year, and congregations began to gather in churches once more, and non-liturgical activities also re-started.

At the point of writing this report, we have 2 checklists still to be returned by individual charges. Once received, I will be in a position to analyse them all, report to the Provincial Protection Officers, and offer support to any PVG Coordinators facing any challenges or difficulties. The main issues from those received are:

- **7** charges do not have Safeguarding as a 'Standing Item' on Vestry agendas – even to report that there are no incidents/cases
- **5** charges do not present a Safeguarding Report to their AGMs
- **22** charges have not identified their 'Regulated Work Employer' (the Rector or a Vestry member)
- **11** charges do not keep a Register of 'Regulated Work Positions and 'Positions of Trust'
- **18** charges do not obtain a reference for each person taking on regulated work or a position of trust (whether - voluntary or paid)

Again, we are working with the Dean to address all these and to determine what support those charges need to be able to convert their answers to a "yes".

PVG COORDINATORS

During 2021, I was pleased to confirm (on behalf of the Bishop) the appointments of new PVG Coordinators at:

1. St Mary's Cathedral
2. Balerno
3. Edinburgh St Barnabas
4. Edinburgh St Mark
5. Edinburgh St Paul's & St George's
6. Galashiels

I am very grateful to all the PVG Coordinators, who take on this critical coordination work voluntarily. Nevertheless, it remains a whole-Vestry responsibility, and the PVG Coordinator is just that – the coordinator.

Simon Filsell
Diocesan Protection Officer