THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Manchester
CHURCH FOR A DIFFERENT WORLD

Manchester Diocese Victim and Survivor Strategy

The Diocese of Manchester recognises the importance of, and is committed to, providing care and support to victims and survivors of abuse. We aim to provide caring, practical and trauma-informed support for all victims, ensuring that they feel heard and that healing and justice are at the heart of our response.

Our Approach to Supporting Victims and Survivors

We aim to deal with any contact made by a survivor/victim of abuse in a church-related context with empathy and understanding, recognising that reporting abuse is often difficult and distressing. Our responses are informed by the following objectives:

Listening to and Supporting Survivors

- Establish a dedicated, confidential support service for survivors of abuse via our Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, offering practical assistance in investigating disclosures of abuse.
- Ensure that survivors have access to counselling and therapeutic services, as well as links to local support groups and advocacy services. These are outlined in more detail later in this strategy.
- Offer ongoing communication with survivors throughout the process, ensuring they feel heard and supported.

Creating a Safe Environment for Reporting Abuse

- Ensure that all allegations of abuse are taken seriously and investigated appropriately.
- Ensure survivors feel safe and empowered to come forward by establishing clear and accessible reporting mechanisms, both online and offline.
- Develop and regularly review safeguarding policies and procedures, ensuring that the needs of survivors are embedded at every level.

Providing Training and Raising Awareness

- Offer the appropriate level of safeguarding training for all clergy, staff, parish safeguarding officers, church officers, and volunteers in the diocese. This emphasises the importance of supporting victims and survivors of abuse.
- Ensure that safeguarding training includes knowledge of trauma-informed care, so that we can better respond to the needs of survivors.

- Promote awareness of safeguarding training, policies and procedures, and the support services available to survivors.

Collaboration with Statutory and Specialist Agencies

- Work closely with statutory agencies, including police, social services, and mental health services, to ensure that survivors receive a coordinated, holistic response to their needs.
- Build on partnerships with external organisations such as We Are Survivors to offer access to support, advocacy, therapy, and legal advice ensuring that the needs of survivors are addressed comprehensively.

Ensuring Transparency and Accountability Throughout the Process

- Commit to transparency in how allegations are handled, ensuring that all investigations are carried out with due diligence, respect, and sensitivity.
- Provide regular reports to the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel on the progress of safeguarding and survivor support initiatives.
- Ensure that church leaders are aware of and held accountable for their role in safeguarding, and that proper procedures are followed when allegations of abuse arise.

Support Services Available to Victims and Survivors

To access support, victims and survivors should first contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA):

Abbey Clephane-Wilson
Address: St John's House, Bury
Email: safeguarding@manchester.anglican.org
Mobile: 0161 828 1465

Alongside investigating the disclosures of abuse, Abbey can provide access to a range of support. This includes:

Therapeutic Support

The DSA can arrange for access to therapeutic support to meet emotional and psychological needs in the immediate and medium-term period following a disclosure. Therapeutic support is usually provided through We Are Survivors, Manchester. This service offers support to male survivors who have experienced sexual abuse,

independent of the Diocese of Manchester. Support for female victims of abuse can also be accessed. Contact details:
Website: https://www.wearesurvivors.org.uk/
Email: support@wearesurvivors.org.uk
Phone: 0161 236 2182

Greater Manchester Rape Crisis provides specialist support, advocacy and counselling for women and girls affected by rape, sexual violence or sexual abuse. Contact details:
Website: https://manchesterrapecrisis.co.uk/
Email: help@manchesterrapecrisis.co.uk
Phone: 0161 273 4500

Support Person

A support person will be allocated to the victim/survivor to provide ongoing support to those who seek spiritual care, offering prayer and emotional support in a safe, non-judgmental environment. The role the support person plays must be agreed in consultation with the victim/survivor. The support person, provided the victim/survivor agrees, could be responsible for the following matters:

- Listening to and representing the victim/survivor's pastoral needs.
- Identifying any therapeutic or other needs the victim/survivor may have and offering choices as how these may be best met.
- Listening to and representing the victim/survivor's views during the management of the safeguarding concern or allegation.

External Support Services

The Diocese of Manchester recognises that many victims and survivors may not wish to contact local church representatives directly. Other services available to victims and survivors include:

Safe Spaces: a free and independent support service, providing a confidential, personal and safe space for anyone who has been abused by someone in the Church or as a result of their relationship with the Church of England.

Minister and Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors (MACSAS): supports women and men who have been sexually abused as children or adults by ministers, clergy or others under the guise of the Church.

Support is also available from Survivors Voices, a survivor-led organisation that runs peer support groups for victim-survivors of all kinds of abuse, including faith-based abuse. It also runs special events for survivors of abuse experienced in churches and other faith-based communities.

Survivors may also wish to visit the House of Survivors website. This site has been published by two members of the Survivor Reference Group who are themselves survivors of Church of England-based abuse. Its purpose is to provide helpful information for fellow survivors on various aspects of understanding or interaction with the Church and/or its representatives (legal, insurance, etc.).

Survivor Engagement

If a victim or survivor would like to engage with the safeguarding work of the Church today, or find out more about survivor engagement, they can contact the Survivor Engagement Team at engage.safeguarding@churchofengland.org

Financial Support

The Survivor Support Fund is for anyone seeking financial support. It provides short- to medium-term financial grants and therapeutic support for people impacted by Church-related abuse.

Support as part of a complaint process

In the event that a complaint is made via Manchester Diocese's formal complaints process, a support person will be provided to support victims and survivors throughout this process. The complaints process can be accessed here: Safeguarding Complaints Procedure - Diocese of Manchester.

Supporting Documentation

This strategy should be read in conjunction with the procedural guidance outlined in the following documents:

Practice Guidance: Responding to, Assessing, and Managing Safeguarding Concerns or Allegations Against Church Officers (2017)

Practice Guidance: Responding to Safeguarding Concerns or Allegations Relating to Children, Young People, and Vulnerable Adults (2018)

Safeguarding Children, Young People, and Vulnerable Adults (2021)

Parish Safeguarding Toolkit (2026)