

Catholic Council for the IICSA – Recommendations Action Plan

Introduction

1. The IICSA Report into the Roman Catholic Church was published on 10th November 2020. The Report covered the material following the final set of public hearings held the previous year as well as matters emerging from the case studies into the English Benedictine Congregation (Ampleforth, Downside and Ealing Abbeys and their associated schools) and the Archdiocese of Birmingham.
2. The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales met in Plenary Assembly that month, following the publication of the Report. A significant amount of time was dedicated to the analysis of the Report alongside an additional report, commissioned by the Bishops. Mr Ian Elliott, a well-renowned leading independent safeguarding consultant, led a review into the effectiveness of safeguarding structures and operations in the Catholic Church in England and Wales. This extensive root and branch review produced a detailed report including recommendations on how safeguarding structures could be strengthened across the Church.
3. At the end of the meeting, the Bishops' Conference passed the following resolution:

The Bishops' Conference receives both the Final IICSA Report into the Roman Catholic Church and the Independent Review Report on Safeguarding Structures and Arrangements.

- a. *It accepts the Recommendations of the IICSA Report, noting that the Catholic Council for the IICSA must provide a detailed action plan within 6 months to the Inquiry showing how the Church will implement the Recommendations.*
- b. *It accepts fully the Recommendations of the Elliott Report and asks that an Implementation Group be created using members of the Review Steering Committee, to scope the way forward, without delay, so that effective positive change is made in our safeguarding structures and arrangements.*

This resolution was passed with unanimous agreement.

4. The Bishops also agreed the following statement for public release:

Statement on Safeguarding

The Bishops' Conference agrees that the following statement is published in its name on Friday 20th November 2020.

The account given in the IICSA Report of abuse known to be inflicted on children in the Catholic Church in England and Wales in the past 50 years is shocking and overwhelming. At our meeting this week, we Bishops have stood together in profound shame. We express our sorrow and contrition before God.

We have reflected on our need to reach out afresh to those who bear the wounds of permanent damage caused by this abuse. We commit ourselves to listen more intently to those who have been abused so as to learn from them and benefit from their wisdom. It is through learning from their testimony that hearts are changed.

We are grateful to those survivors who have come forward, not only to lay before us their experience of abuse, but to help us understand the depth of their pain. We invite anyone who has experienced abuse to come forward, no matter how long ago the abuse took place. We undertake to listen carefully to them with open heart and mind and support them on a journey of healing.

We have carefully considered the recommendations of the IICSA Report and formally accepted them. We have already begun work towards their implementation.

The IICSA's generic hearings into the Church began last October. Around that time we commissioned an Independent Review of our Safeguarding Structures and Arrangements in the Catholic Church in England and Wales. This was carried out by Mr Ian Elliott, an experienced safeguarding professional who has worked across the world in this area.

This week, alongside the IICSA Report, we have also examined in depth the Final Report of the Elliott Review and fully accepted its recommendations. It is a searching analysis of our safeguarding work, in its weaknesses and strengths. It proposes a number of remedial and forward-looking recommendations, which accord with the IICSA Report's own recommendations. The work of implementation will begin immediately. It will be carried out in close cooperation with the Religious Orders who play such an important part in the life of the Church.

In all our activities, our desire and resolve is to be a Church in which every child and vulnerable person is not only safe but nurtured into human flourishing. These recommendations present us with steps towards this goal. Key to them is a standards-based approach to safeguarding together with a specially commissioned national body with powers of effective audit and oversight of safeguarding in both Dioceses and Religious Orders. Everyone in the Church will be required to work to clear, published standards of behaviour and action. Most significantly, the Elliott Report has been fashioned with the participation of survivors of abuse. Their insight and wisdom has been crucial. We thank them for their great courage and generosity in working with us and we look forward to continuing this growing collaboration.

The Elliott Report builds on all that has been achieved in our safeguarding ministry in the past 20 years, achievements also recognised in the IICSA Report. Therefore we thank profoundly all who contribute to the work of safeguarding in the Church today: the thousands of Parish Safeguarding Representatives, the professionals who work in our Safeguarding Offices in every Diocese, the Safeguarding Commissions who oversee this work and give objective and professional advice to guide our decisions, the staff of the Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service and those who serve on the National Catholic Safeguarding Commission. These, and many others, have contributed greatly to the current work of safeguarding in the Church.

Today, however, we acknowledge without hesitation, our failings, our mistakes, our lack of adequate cooperation. We express our deep sorrow and ask forgiveness, especially from victims and survivors. We affirm our resolve to effect the next step in our work of safeguarding and care for survivors. In prayer we turn to Christ the Good Shepherd, the fount of healing and compassion, asking that this moment of painful truth becomes a time of grace as we strive to fulfil the ministry entrusted to us as bishops in an unshakeable unity of purpose.

On Tuesday November 10th 2020 the Conference of Religious in England and Wales published the following statement:

The Conference of Religious of England and Wales (CoR) would like to express profound sadness and sorrow to all those who are victims and survivors of sexual abuse at the hands of Catholic clergy and members of religious congregations.

We thank IICSA for bringing to light the acute suffering that has been inflicted over many years and our failures in safeguarding including engagement with victims and survivors. We also thank the victims and survivors for their courage in coming forward. We are wholeheartedly committed to learning lessons from this Inquiry and making every effort to assist religious congregations to embed a safeguarding culture at all levels of religious life.

As Christians we approach safeguarding with a determination to protect people from harm - especially when they are particularly vulnerable. We acknowledge that in the past the needs of the vulnerable have not been paramount. We undertake to remedy this through a new approach to safeguarding within the Church.

Since publication of the IICSA Report and receipt of the Elliott Report the Conference of Religious Executive has given significant time of each of its meeting to discussion of the Reports and the work being done to meet their recommendations.

The IICSA and the Elliott Review; implementing change in the Church

5. The Elliott Review made its final report to the Bishops' Conference in October 2020 and this was discussed by the Bishops alongside the IICSA Final report on the Roman Catholic Church at their Plenary Assembly in November 2020.
6. Many of the recommendations from the Elliott Review addressed the same issues raised by the IICSA Report, and as such, their implementation in fulfilling the requirements of the IICSA Report was supported by the Bishops.
7. A broad reading of the IICSA Report and its recommendations showed that there needed to be a fundamental change in culture within the Catholic Church to see Safeguarding as an intrinsic part of its mission. Elliott echoed this and made significant recommendations to fundamentally change the operation and structure of Safeguarding in the Catholic Church in England and Wales to bring about greater oversight and intervention, transparency and accountability, and efficiency embedding all of these important aspects into the very life of the Church.
8. Importantly, IICSA emphasised in its Final Report the absolute centrality of those who had been victims and survivors of abuse as key partners in effecting this change. Careful listening to their accounts, not only of the actual abuse that took place within the Church context, but also the poor way in which the Church dealt with their cases is paramount in effecting fundamental and lasting change.
9. Elliott and his colleagues, throughout the whole of their work, sought opportunities to speak to individuals and groups who had been harmed through their involvement with Church personnel. These individuals played a key role in the process of the Elliott Review, and their views were also sought on the findings and recommendations that were being formed. Some were resident in England and Wales, others elsewhere. All had been hurt through their involvement with the Church. Their wisdom and engagement in the work of the Elliott

Review helped to shape the robust proposals that are now being implemented. These essential contributions to the process were best facilitated through conversations where there was trust and respect present. The wisdom of the victims and survivors was drawn upon fully throughout this work, and their contributions added greatly to its final quality.

Recommendation 1: Leadership

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales and the Conference of Religious in England and Wales should each nominate a lead member of the clergy for safeguarding to provide leadership and oversight on safeguarding matters to their respective Conferences and the wider Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales.

- 1.1 The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales and the Conference of Religious have considered this recommendation and accept it. The Conferences have discussed the roles of the proposed leads in Safeguarding and have both drawn up role descriptions for these posts.
- 1.2 The role description for the Lead Bishop was approved by the Standing Committee of the Bishops' Conference in March 2021 and Bishop Paul Mason (the Bishop of the Forces) was appointed to this role at the Spring Plenary Assembly in April 2021 for a term of 3 years.
- 1.3 The Role of the Lead Bishop is defined as:
 - To work collaboratively with the Lead Safeguarding Religious (LSR) and their Assistant Leads to ensure and to model a "One Church" strategy to Safeguarding in the Church in England and Wales.
 - To communicate in conjunction with the LSR, key safeguarding messages both within the Church in England and Wales and to the wider community.
 - To support the work of the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) in ensuring that the voices of victims and survivors of abuse are heard by the Church including in the development of policy and practice.
 - To be a member of the Board of Directors' of the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA).
 - To attend, with the LSR, the presentation by the CSSA of an Annual report on Safeguarding in the Catholic Church to the Catholic Community and beyond.
 - To liaise with staff of the CSSA to provide a national training programme for Bishops which reflects their particular role of Leadership and Governance in the Church.
 - To chair a Bishops' Conference Safeguarding Reference Group of bishops which will review and digest policy and procedural developments in Safeguarding and present them, with CSSA Staff, to the Plenary Assembly of Bishops.
 - To represent the Catholic Church on the Safe Spaces Management Board.

- To represent the Church in England and Wales, in collaboration with the LSR, to the offices of the Holy See.
- To liaise and work with equivalent office holders in other ecclesial bodies on common issues of policy and practice in Safeguarding.
- To recommend to the Bishops' Conference the appointment of an assistant Bishop to work with him, focussing on the safeguarding pastoral care of communities and individuals in the church.
- To encourage the integration of a theology and spirituality of Safeguarding in the Church which reflects Gospel values and underpins the overall approach to Safeguarding.

1.4 The Executive of the Conference of Religious have approved the following role description:

The role of the Lead Safeguarding Religious shall be:

- To work collaboratively with the Lead Bishop for Safeguarding (LSB) and his Assistant Bishop to ensure and to model a “One Church” approach to Safeguarding in the Church in England and Wales
- To communicate in conjunction with the LSB key safeguarding messages both within the Church in England and Wales and the wider community.
- To support the work of the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) in ensuring that the voices of victims and survivors of abuse are heard by the Church including in the development of policy and practice.
- To be a member of the Board of Directors' of the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA).
- To liaise with staff of the CSSA to provide a national training programme for Religious Leaders which reflects their particular role in Leadership and Governance in the Church.
- To attend, with the LSB, the presentation by the CSSA of an Annual report on Safeguarding in the Catholic Church to the Catholic Community and beyond.
- To attend CoR Executive meetings at least quarterly to update and advise on current safeguarding work and developments.
- To attend the CoR Safeguarding Committee to encourage and facilitate effective implementation of policy and practice developments and to present these to the CoR Executive Committee when meeting with them.
- To work with CoR and other Religious to understand changes in Safeguarding and to ensure that they are presented to all Religious in a timely and clear way.
- To work collaboratively with the Religious Life Safeguarding Service and CoR to ensure that the best possible safeguarding culture and safeguarding practices pertain among the Religious in England and Wales.

- To ensure, with the Religious Life Safeguarding Service, that Religious are receiving adequate training and support in safeguarding matters.
 - To be a member of the Board of Directors' meetings of the Religious Life Safeguarding Service.
 - To liaise and work with other church bodies on common issues in Safeguarding.
 - Where appropriate, to represent the Church in England and Wales, in collaboration with the LSB, to the offices of the Holy See.
 - To encourage the integration of a theology and spirituality of Safeguarding in the Church which reflects Gospel values and underpins the overall approach to Safeguarding.
 - To be a leading voice of Religious in Safeguarding matters in the Church
- 1.5 The Executive of the Conference of Religious have appointed Fr David Smolira SJ as the first Religious Safeguarding Lead. The Executive expect to make a further appointment shortly.
-

Recommendation 2: Training

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales should ensure that safeguarding training is mandatory for all staff and volunteers in roles where they work with children or victims and survivors of abuse. It should also be a requirement that regular refresher training is completed. The training should consider the impact of child sexual abuse, including the impact of trauma and the perspective of victims and survivors, and should be developed in conjunction with the Survivor Advisory Panel.

- 2.1 The Bishops have already mandated that clergy and parish safeguarding representatives must undergo baseline safeguarding training, supplemented by biennial refresher training.
- 2.2 The reach of mandatory training is extended to volunteers by the recommendations from the Elliott Review, which proposes a move from a policy-based approach to safeguarding, to a standards-based approach for all who are engaged in any pastoral work in the Church.
- 2.3 The Elliott Review report identified eight safeguarding standards which will provide a framework against which all safeguarding practice across the Church can be measured. Of importance here is Standard 7 – *Training and Support for Safeguarding* (see below).

2.4 Standard 7: Training and Support for Safeguarding

The Church body will provide and access mandatory, role-specific, ongoing training and support to everyone involved in safeguarding to enable them to deliver the practice described within the safeguarding standards.

The criteria which indicate that this standard is being met include:

TS1: The Church body will:

- Ensure that all its members who require it, including those in formation, have access to and avail themselves of nationally agreed safeguarding training to support their contribution to the Church body's safeguarding practice.

- Look at ways in which the specific training needs of key personnel, such as safeguarding leads or those in leadership roles, can be met.
- Regularly review what training is provided and seek ways in which this can be developed further.
- Produce a training needs analysis to facilitate the provision of training.
- Avail themselves of locally provided safeguarding training from relevant organisations in the area.
- Keep records of those who avail themselves of training opportunities and proactively engage with those who do not attend.

TS2: The leadership of the Church body will:

- Prioritise the provision of effective safeguarding training which delivers and promotes critical reflection on practice.
- Raise an alert to its trustees and notify the CSSA on any failures to meet its training requirements which may impact negatively on its practice.

The following represents evidence that would indicate compliance with this standard:

- The existence of a safeguarding training plan for the Church body, which has been updated and revised.
- A comprehensive training needs analysis for safeguarding for the Church body.
- Notes within the minutes of management and leadership meetings for the Church body, that the training needs are being tracked and discussed.
- An induction programme for new leaders and other key roles within the Church body.

Links with other standards:

This standard links with all the other standards.

2.5 The adoption of this Standard means that everyone who is involved in pastoral ministry or volunteers in the Church must undergo safeguarding training relevant to their engagement in the Church in order to exhibit the good practice that is described by the Standard. The Standard requires Church bodies to provide and access mandatory role specific ongoing training and support to everyone involved in safeguarding to enable them to deliver the practice described within the safeguarding standards.

2.6 Central to the development of this standards-based approach to training is the voice of victims and survivors of abuse. The Survivors' Reference Panel (SRP), a successor body to the Survivors' Advisory Panel, will be a key player in this work, alongside other modes of engaging with individuals and survivor groups who wish to support the change that is proposed in this new methodology. To this end, a Charter for Survivor Engagement is being created as part of our implementation of these recommendations, so that the Terms of Reference of this engagement between the Church and victims and survivors is clearly enunciated.

2.7 Building on the national safeguarding training that is already provided to those in ministry and Parish Safeguarding Representatives, the CSSA will develop an "across the piece" safeguarding training programme which can be rolled out across the dioceses and religious orders so that all are aware of the standards in safeguarding that are expected from those in the Church at all levels.

- 2.8 This training programme will be based on the assessed needs for safeguarding at all levels, with a differentiated and developmental programme for these different levels of responsibility and engagement. The programme will be regularly assessed for its effectiveness and modified according to current practice outside as well as within the Church. A working group under the auspices of the implementation group working on the IICSA and Elliott review recommendations, is developing a training framework that sets out the different roles in ministry across the Church, and the type of training and frequency with which is to be received. Every person will be required to have a record of the training they have successfully completed and undergo regular refresher and developmental training as specified by the CSSA. Compliance with this framework will be audited by the CSSA and the completion of this training to a satisfactory level will be necessary for a person to continue in role.
- 2.9 Specific training for leaders in the Church (especially Bishops and Congregational Leaders) will be provided as these groups have particular training needs especially, in engaging with victims and survivors of abuse.
- 2.10 The expertise of the Survivors Reference Panel and other individual survivors and groups will inform this training to ensure that leaders engage in an appropriate way with those who have suffered abuse.
- 2.11 There will also be specific induction training for those who have been appointed to leadership roles in the Church to cover the aspects of the above.
- 2.12 The Bishops published their standards for ministry in July 2020 in their document *Caring Safely for Others, Pastoral Standards and Safe Conduct in Ministry* as a manual for the minimum standards expected of all office holders in dealing with people in their ministerial roles.
- 2.13 It is also proposed that a dedicated safeguarding training resource for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (ICLSAL) be developed which adequately meets the varying charisms, situations and needs of the individual institutes and societies. This safeguarding training will be a principal service provided by the new Religious Life Safeguarding Service (RLSS). Target groups for safeguarding training include religious safeguarding leads, provincial leaders, trustees and other members according to their ministry, including those in formation. The priority training areas are identified: baseline safeguarding awareness, communicating with survivors and victims, data protection and GDPR, good record keeping, and updates on contemporary issues and changes. It is anticipated that a multi-method approach to training will be required.
- 2.14 In terms of the ICLSAL training the following principles have been noted as priorities for developing their bespoke training:
- the need for dedicated safeguarding training for ICLSAL is acknowledged. However, a ‘one size fits all’ approach will not be appropriate because of the differing training needs;
 - Baseline safeguarding training for all, including those in formation;
 - Mandatory safeguarding induction for those in formation and new people in office, which also provides an opportunity to identify gaps in knowledge and understanding, and prioritise safeguarding learning needs;
 - A training needs analysis for all members of ICLSAL that identifies who needs additional and bespoke training;
 - An annual rolling programme of training that is accessible;
 - Consistent training provision;
 - Training must relate to the (currently proposed) national standards;

- Training that concerns spirituality and ministry, as well as practical application of safeguarding principles and procedures.
-

Recommendation 3: Compliance

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales and the Conference of Religious should publish a clear framework for dealing with cases of non-compliance with safeguarding policies and procedures. That framework should identify who is responsible for dealing with issues of non-compliance at all levels of the Church, and include the measures or sanctions for non-compliance.

- 3.1 Currently, there are two bodies, the Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service (CSAS) and National Catholic Safeguarding Commission (NCSC), and the role of both CSAS and the NCSC is advisory in nature and neither have any powers to ensure that there is compliance with policies, procedures and good practice within dioceses and religious congregations.
- 3.2 The Elliott Review recommended that the current structures for safeguarding at a national level in the Church in England and Wales be discontinued and a new body be created, the *Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA)*. Coupled with this is Safeguarding Standard 8 – *Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement* (see below). This new body signifies the move from providing a primarily advisory function to a regulatory professional standards function, to meet the needs of the 'One Church' going forward.
- 3.3 The CSSA is being established as a professional standards agency for the Catholic Church and includes a dedicated audit function with the necessary powers of sanction, which will provide a clear framework for dealing with cases of non-compliance with the national safeguarding standards and the related national safeguarding policies and procedures.
- 3.4 The new organisation has already been incorporated and staff TUPEd from the former CSAS into its employment. Role descriptions and person specifications have been created for the additional new roles required by this change and a full recruitment programme for staff will begin by the end of May 2021.
- 3.5 The CSSA will have a new Board of Directors comprising an independent lay Chair and the majority of Directors will be lay persons, and who do not hold any specific or designated role, employed or otherwise in the Catholic Church in England and Wales. The recruitment of these non-executive directors has been outsourced to a professional recruitment company and to date, over 60 applications from highly qualified individuals have been received. The shortlisting process will take place by the end of April 2021 and it is anticipated that the Board will be operational by June 2021. The CEO and key roles with the new CSSA will also be in post by June 2021, with staged appointments to the other new roles that are being created.
- 3.6 Each unique church body in the Catholic Church in England and Wales will be required to enter into a contractual arrangement with this new agency. The contract will set out arrangements for service provision from the agency to the particular church body, and the necessary levels of compliance that will be demanded through this contractual engagement. It will be via this mechanism that the CSSA will gain its regulatory powers which to date, have not been available to the national bodies.
- 3.7 These powers will relate to escalation and intervention in the event of safeguarding practice not reaching the required standards as set out by the agency. There will be an agreed stepwise

process of escalation which would ultimately require reporting to other regulatory bodies (such as the Charity Commission).

- 3.8 The CSSA will develop an audit cycle and the frequency of audit will be determined by the degree to which compliance with the national standards, policies and procedures is demonstrated. When an audit of church body takes place, these will be published by the audit arm of the CSSA to enhance transparency and build trust between the Church and other agencies. These bodies, if there are shortcomings in practice, will be required to draw up an action plan to remedy any failures. The audit body will revisit the church body after a stated period (six months but dependent on the urgency of the remedial action needed) to assess the remedial action taken. The frequency of such assessment visits will be determined by the audit arm of the CSSA.
- 3.9 If insufficient action is taken after intervention by the CSSA, then the ultimate sanction would be the referral of the church body to the Charity Commission highlighting the audit and review process and the failure of the church body to act on its own behalf.
- 3.10 It is hoped that the use of a contractual agreement between the Church body and the CSSA will be underpinned by the General Decree for Safeguarding that was submitted to the Holy See for *Recognitio* in June 2019. There has been recent developments (in March 2021) when a request for further clarifications was made to the Bishops' Conference. This was responded to immediately and submitted back to Rome within a week of receipt on 19th March 2021. The final response to the request for the formal *Recognitio* is awaited from the competent Congregation.

3.11 Standard 8: Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

(QA = Quality Assurance)

The Church body develops a plan of action to quality assure compliance with the safeguarding standards and to continuously improve their practice. The criteria which indicate that this standard is being met include:

QA: 1: The Church body will:

- Put in place and maintain arrangements that will evaluate compliance with the agreed safeguarding standards in its various activities.
- Regularly track the level of compliance as shown by its own auditing processes.
- Report any deficits in its compliance to the agreed standards along with details of any actions to be taken to address the situation, to its trustees, and to the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency.
- Analyse concerns and complaints received and create other ways in which it can draw learning from its practice to build improvements.

QA: 2: The Church body will:

- Create a three-year rolling safeguarding implementation plan.
- Specify who is responsible for implementing agreed actions within the plan.
- Make available the necessary resources to track and complete the agreed actions.
- Produce and make available an annual safeguarding Report for members, trustees, and other stakeholders.
- Regularly review its implementation of and adherence to the national mandatory safeguarding policies (at least every three years).

QA: 3: The Church body will:

- Facilitate the independent review of their compliance with the safeguarding standards undertaken by the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) in accordance with the contractual agreement between them.
- Adopt the recommendations arising from any CSSA review incorporating these into its safeguarding implementation plan.
- Make efforts to engage with and hear the voice of survivors/victims. Provide updates to the CSSA on progress in implementing the recommendations. Publish any CSSA review and report these to its stakeholders.

The following is an indicative list of possible evidence that can be used to assess compliance with this standard.

The following represent evidence that would indicate compliance with this standard. The Church body has:

- Devised a range of mechanisms that track its compliance with the agreed safeguarding standards.
- These may include direct observation of practice to ensure compliance with agreed standards.
- Sought and shared information relating to its performance with the CSSA.
- Regularly monitored and amended its safeguarding implementation plan as circumstances change.
- Share details of its performance with its members, trustees, the CSSA, and other stakeholders.

Links with other standards:

Standard 8 links with all other standards as the effective delivery of a high-quality safeguarding service must be regularly audited and seeking improvement across all the preceding standards.

Recommendation 4: External auditing

The Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service should have the effectiveness of its audit programme regularly validated by an independent organisation which is external to the Church. These independent reports should be published.

- 4.1 In order to ensure that all of the safeguarding work within the Catholic Church in England and Wales is fit for purpose, external validation is necessary, and the Bishops agreed that this would be an important part of the ongoing work of the new CSSA. This review is to ensure that the quality of its practice was meeting both the expectations of the Bishops' Conference and religious groups, and those involved in safeguarding outside the Catholic Church.
- 4.2 This would be the responsibility for the Board of Directors of the CSSA. An independent firm of recruiters (Saxton Bampfylde) has been engaged to advertise the roles of non-executive directors for the CSSA Board and an independent advisory panel chaired by Sir Peter Fahy (former Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police) has been created to review applications and make recommendations to the Safeguarding Project Implementation Group for appointment to the Board. The closing date for applications for the non-Executive directors was 18th March, over 60 applications were received and interviews for members of

the Board will take place on 6th and 7th May and it expected that the Board will be in place with an appointed Chair by early June 2021.

- 4.3 The literature for these appointments can be found here:
www.saxbam.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/XAOACA-CSSA-Appointment-brief.pdf
- 4.4 It will be the task of this new Board to identify the mechanics and scope for the external auditing of the CSSA which will ensure compliance with safeguarding standards that are expected in public life in the UK across all sectors. They will need to determine an appropriate body to undertake this work and determine the terms of reference and frequency of this work of external audit. The internal audit function will be carried out by the CSSA audit section.
- 4.5 Any external audit of the CSSA will produce a report which the CSSA will publish on its website along with any action plan that may be required for remedial work or enhanced operation.
-

Recommendation 5: Canon 1395

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales should request that the Holy See redraft the canonical crimes relating to child sexual abuse as crimes against the child.

5.1 The Context of the Offence

Canon 1395 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law places the offence of an act against the sixth commandment (“*contra sextum*”) between a cleric and a minor (under 16 in the 1983 Code, under 18 as of the norms promulgated by Pope St John Paul II in *Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela* [SST] in 2001) in the category of “offences against special obligations” and, in this case in particular, the obligations specific to clerics. This was somewhat different in the law which preceded the promulgation of the 1983 Code, where, in the 1917 Code of Canon Law, the offence *contra sextum* between a cleric and a minor is seen as an offence against *bonos mores*, or good morals. This is re-established in SST in 2001 and its amended version in 2010, where the offence is recognised explicitly as a more grave offence against morals. The Bishops’ Conference, while welcoming this development in context, agrees that the law should expressly provide for a discrete category of offences against minors, and their equivalents in law, and their dignity as persons made in the image and likeness of God.

5.2 The Sixth Commandment

The term “sixth commandment” or “*contra sextum*” has formed a significant part of canon law since 1917, where, in the 1917 Code of Canon Law, the term was used to criminalise acts of a sexual nature including those between clerics and minors under 16, as well as lay people and minors under 16. The term was found in some canonical and moral theology commentaries prior to 1917, with its use in the law itself being somewhat less extensive. Whilst understood as being associated, among other things, with adultery, there is evidence that the term has been used since the early Church as an all-embracing term for every illicit sexual act. There are problems however with its use in law. While attempting to be a “catch-all” term, “*contra sextum*” is also ambiguous, and there have been moves by the Holy See to delineate more explicitly the elements which constitute the “*contra sextum*” offence in canon law (for example, in the *motu proprio Vos estis lux mundi*, 2019, and the *Vademecum* of July 2020). The Church is committed to open and transparent cooperation with civil authorities, and given the gravity of the matter in question, it is important that all parties are able to understand in a clear way those acts for which a person can be held responsible in the

canonical penal system. It is also true that the term “*contra sextum*” is problematic for some Catholics who are not part of the Latin Church, where the Ten Commandments are individuated differently. The potentially ambiguous nature of the term “*contra sextum*” can therefore cause confusion to Catholics as well as others who engage with the Catholic Church in this matter.

5.3 Communication with the Holy See

The language of the Code of Canon Law is under the exclusive competence of the Holy See. For these reasons, and in light of the IICSA recommendation, the Bishops’ Conference has communicated to the Holy See its own formal representation that the context and wording of the offence should be reformulated. In particular, it has communicated:

1. That the context of the offence should convey, within the canonical penal system, the values which the Church holds as central with regards to the safeguarding of minors and their equivalents in law. The canonical penal system should establish in a discrete category the offence as a crime against minors, their equivalents, and their dignity.
2. That the elements of the offence should be clear and unambiguous to all parties. While it is recognised that the term “*contra sextum*” has been used in the tradition to express something far wider than adultery, it should also be recognised that the term, as used in the law, is no longer adequate to meet the demands of a contemporary canonical approach to sexual offences against minors and their equivalent in law, and can distort the values which the Church wishes to protect in prosecuting these offences.
3. To prevent any distortion in this way, and for the sake of clarity, the offence should no longer include the term “*contra sextum*” but should individuate the elements using categories which would, at the least, be intelligible to those who work in other legal systems.

5.4 The text of the letter to the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts is provided below.

5.5 This narrative and the text of the letter were provided by Rev. Fr John Poland, a canon lawyer who has specialised in the area of safeguarding and canon law and was reviewed by Rev. Mgr Gordon Read who gave evidence to the Inquiry.

Text of the Letter sent to the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts on 16th March 2021

15th March 2021

S.E.R. Mons. Filippo Iannone, O.Carm.
President of the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts
Palazzo delle Congregazioni
Piazza Pio XII, 10
00193 Roma
Italy

Your Excellency,

The November 2020 Investigation Report of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) commissioned by the UK Government sets out a series of recommendations to the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales. One of the key criticisms of the Church concerned the wording and context of the sexual abuse offence in canon law, and in particular, to the term “*contra sextum*” in the penal *factispecies*. The report states that:

“Describing child sexual abuse as the canonical crime of ‘adultery’ is wrong and minimises the criminal nature of abuse inflicted on child victims. A canonical crime relating to child sexual abuse should be clearly identified as a crime against the child” (IICSA C.2.6).

In light of this, the Report makes the following formal recommendation:

Recommendation 5: Canon 1395

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales should request that the Holy See redraft the canonical crimes relating to child sexual abuse as crimes against the child.

In full agreement with this recommendation, the Bishops' Conference kindly requests that consideration be given to a full reformulation of the canonical delict, which explicitly excludes the term "*contra sextum*." It also asks that the delict is placed in a discrete category of offences against minors, and their equivalents in law, and their dignity as persons made in the image and likeness of God. In addition to the IICSA critique, the Bishops' Conference offers its own reasons for this request, which are given below.

The Place of "Contra Sextum" in Canonical Tradition

The term "*contra sextum*" has formed a significant part of canon law since 1917, where, in the 1917 Code of Canon Law, the term was used to criminalise acts of a sexual nature between clerics and minors under 16, as well as lay people and minors under 16. The term was found in some canonical and moral theology commentaries prior to 1917, with its use in the law itself being somewhat less extensive. Whilst understood as being associated with adultery, there is evidence that the term has been used since the early Church as an all-embracing term for every sexual act. One prominent canonist, Chelodi, for example, makes the point that in the early Church every delict of the flesh came with the name *adultery*.¹

However, there is little use of the term "*contra sextum*" in the law itself (rather than its commentaries) prior to 1917, even though the criminalisation of acts with minors was not alien to the law. The term is not found in the *Liber extra*, in the sixteenth title of its fifth book, which concerns adultery and *stuprum*, although it can be found in commentaries on this title.² Benedict XIV makes reference to it in his constitution *Sacramentum Poenitentiae*, 1st June 1741, which, among other things, prohibited priests from hearing: "the sacramental confessions of those persons complicit in filthy and dishonest sin committed against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue."³ It was also used extensively by the moral manualists, including Alphonsus Liguori in his manual *Theologia moralis*.⁴ The term as used in the context of sexual sins or delicts was emerging in the seventeenth century therefore. One of the last great commentators on the *Liber extra*, F.X. Wernz, writing in 1913, states that "delicts of the flesh" ("*delicta carnis*") are universally understood to be grave and external sins committed against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue either with others or with public scandal.⁵

The term "*contra sextum*" is not found in either the 1908 or 1909 proposals of the 1917 Code, and there is evidence that it makes its first appearance in the 1910/1911 schemas. In the documents of the 1917 codification process, there is nothing in the *animadversiones* of the bishops, nor in the *verbali* of the consultors in their discussions, to indicate that any of them suggested using the term "*contra sextum*." It is reasonable to conclude, then, that the term "*contra sextum*" was placed in the canons by Cardinal Gasparri himself. But the motives for doing so remain unsaid. The reduction in the number of canons under the title *Delicts against good morals* indicates that Cardinal Gasparri was looking for economy in the number of canons, and "*contra sextum*" was a convenient term to use as shorthand for a range of different delicts.

Although absent from the instruction *Crimen sollicitationis*, "*contra sextum*" was obviously retained in the Code revision process in the 1960s and 1970s and found a place in the penal *factispecies* of can. 1395 of the 1983 Code. It is retained in SST and subsequent amendments.

¹ Cf. G. Chelodi, *Ius poenale et ordo procedendi in iudiciis criminalibus*, Tridenti 1935, 119.

² Cf. A. Reiffenstuel, *Ius canonicum universum*, V, Romae 1834, 266.

³ "...confessionem sacramentalem personae complicitis in peccato turpi atque inhonesto, contra sextum Decalogi praeceptum commissio". Benedict XIV, const. *Sacramentum poenitentiae*, 1st June 1741, §4.

⁴ Cf. A. Liguori, *Theologia moralis*, II, Parisiis – Insulis 1857, 229.

⁵ Cf. F.X. Wernz, *Ius decretalium*, VI, Prati 1913, 383-384.

While the term “*contra sextum*,” therefore, has a significant place in the canonical tradition in relation to sexual offences, this place is not absolute, and there are problems with its continued use as a legal term. Indeed, arguably it is no longer adequate to meet the demands of a contemporary canonical approach to sexual offences against minors and their equivalent in law.

First, the term does not sit easily with can. 18/CCEO can. 1500 and the requirement that laws which establish a penalty are subject to strict interpretation. The purpose of strict interpretation is to protect rights and to avoid unjust penalisation. It is a crucial principle, and those who apply the law must be guided by it. And yet, with the term “*contra sextum*,” we are placed in a difficult position. The *Vademecum* of the 16 July 2020 attempts to rectify this in part and implicitly by providing a non-taxative list of categories which constitute the “*contra sextum*” offence. In light of this, the function of the term “*contra sextum*” appears obsolete. Any interpretation of these categories is for the task of jurisprudence, and the need to retain a term which attempts to cover any non-specified category of sexual act between a cleric and a minor does not seem obvious. Can. 18/CCEO can. 1500 demands as little ambiguity as possible, and the term “*contra sextum*”, in and of itself, fails to meet this demand.

Second, it is true to say that “*contra sextum*” is not a tradition used across both the Latin and Eastern Churches. The term “*contra castitatem*” was the favoured option in the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches. From SST in 2001, the Eastern Churches were faced with “*contra sextum*” for the first time, in a tradition where, in some of the Eastern Churches, an act against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue has no sexual connotation at all.⁶

Third, given the gravity of the matter in question, it is important that civil authorities are able to understand, in a clear and unambiguous way, which acts are included in the penal canonical *factispecies*; that is to say, for which acts a subject can be held responsible in the canonical penal system. As was noted many years ago by one canonist, civil systems do not individuate crimes using commandments of the Decalogue, and reconciliation between the canonical and civil *fora* can therefore be difficult.⁷ In fact, even within canon law, no other delicts are individuated on the basis of commandments of the Decalogue, for the reason that penal law must be nuanced in a way that the commandments of the Decalogue cannot achieve. Clarity and the move towards less ambiguity in this matter is a crucial next step in making real the crucial principle of cooperation with civil authorities, the importance of which was emphasised in the circular letter of the CDF of the 3 May 2011.

While it is true that there should be vigilance in ensuring that civil law does not eclipse substantive canonical consideration, some of the language of civil law should be acceptable in formulating the canonical delict. The uniqueness of the canonical system can be found in other ways – including the prosecution of the delict – and not solely in the term “*contra sextum*.”

It seems reasonable that the categories delineated in Section I of the *Vademecum* of the 16 July 2020 could be used to formulate a delict without making use of the term “*contra sextum*.” The Bishops’ Conference feels that this would be a significant step to rectifying the very real problems and consequent misunderstandings that its officers are faced with when engaging with colleagues in the civil authorities. Such problems seem unnecessary when the use of the term “*contra sextum*” in the law is seen in its historical context. Indeed, by creating this barrier, the term can distort the values which the Church wishes to protect in prosecuting these offences. Whilst recognising that this proposal would not constitute any material alteration in prevailing jurisprudence, it will provide affirmation and clarity on the purpose to which the law is directed.

⁶ Cf. Pontifical Commission for the Revision of the Eastern Code of Canon Law, *Lo schema dei canoni riguardanti le sanzioni penali nelle Chiese Orientali Cattoliche*, *Nuntia* 4 (1977), 93.

⁷ Cf. P. Ciprotti, “Quinam sint dicendi ob delicta contra sextum decalogi praeceptum damnati ad effectum can. 2357 §2”, *Apollinaris* 8 (1935), 446.

The Context of the Offence

It is also the respectful proposal of the Bishops' Conference that delicts concerning sexual offences with minors and their equivalents in law should be placed in a new discrete category of delicts against minors and their dignity as persons made in the image and likeness of God. Canon 1395 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law is placed in the category of "offences against special obligations" and, in this case in particular, the obligations specific to clerics. This was somewhat different in the law which preceded the promulgation of the 1983 Code, where, in the 1917 Code of Canon Law, the offence *contra sextum* between a cleric and a minor is seen as an offence against *bonos mores*, or good morals. This is re-established in SST in 2001 and its amended version in 2010, where the offence is recognised explicitly as a *more grave* offence against morals.

It is important that the context of the offence should convey, within the canonical penal system, the values which the Church holds as central with regards to the safeguarding of minors and their equivalents in law. For this reason, the Bishops' Conference reiterates its view that the context of this delict should be explicit as a discrete category of offences against minors, and their equivalents, and their dignity as persons made in the image and likeness of God.

In summary, the Bishops' Conference, in light of the reasons given above, and Recommendation 5 of the IICSA Investigation Report, asks that the Holy See gives serious consideration to amend canon law in the following ways:

1. That the canonical delict is reformulated to exclude the term "*contra sextum*", and to promulgate a law which would, at the least, be intelligible to civil agencies. Recognising the existence of multiple civil systems, the Bishops' Conference suggests that the categories enunciated in the recent *Vademecum* could be used to formulate an intelligible penal *factispecies*. Given that the CDF has clarified these categories to be instances of acts *contra sextum*, such a reformulated *factispecies* would stand in the *contra sextum* tradition, even if this term itself were absent.
2. That any reformulated delict is put into a discrete category of offences against minors, and their equivalents in law, and their dignity.

The Bishops' Conference will note in the formal response that it is required to make to IICSA concerning the IICSA Report recommendations, that this letter has been sent to the Holy See for due consideration.

With all good wishes and prayers
Vincent Cardinal Nichols
President

Rev. Canon Christopher Thomas
General Secretary

5.6 A response from the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts was received by Cardinal Nichols as President of the Bishops' Conference on 23rd April 2021.

Text of the Response received from the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts on 23rd April 2021

Vatican City State
19 April 2021

His Eminence, Vincent Cardinal Nichols
President
Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales
39 Eccleston Square
London SW1V 1BX

Your Eminence,

I refer to your letter of 15 March 2021 in which Your Eminence have presented to this Pontifical Council the recommendation from the November 2020 Investigation Report of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) commissioned by the UK Government, regarding the wording and context of the sexual abuse offense in canon law. In particular, the IICSA expressed concern for the phrase “*contra sextum*” in the penal *fatispecies* and recommend that the canonical crimes relating to child sexual abuse as crimes against the child be revised to clearly distinguish the specificity of the offense against minors.

After review of the information and recommendation Your Eminence submitted to this Pontifical Council, I am pleased to inform you that the concerns you have expressed have already been taken into consideration in the revision of Book VI of the 1983 CIC, which is currently in process. In the revised Book VI of the 1983 CIC, crimes against minors are considered under a different title than crimes against the obligations of celibacy on the part of clerics. The revised title will be “Crimes against the life, dignity and freedom of man” and will include a canon that is specific to crimes against minors.

With assurances of my prayerful best wishes and fraternal esteem, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ

+Filippo Iannone, O.C.
Presidente

+Juan Ignacio Arrieta
Segretario

Recommendation 6: Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service website and policies and procedures manual

The Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service should review its policies and procedures manual and the documents within it to ensure that they are consistent, easier to follow and more accessible.

- 6.1 A review of relevant CSAS policy and procedures took place immediately after the IICSA Hearings in November 2019, following the comments made by Mrs Edi Carmi regarding the CSAS website and selected policy documents. The updates to policy and revisions to presentation of the different policy documents, were implemented and published on the CSAS website early in 2020. IICSA was updated on these prior to the publication of the final report.
- 6.2 Work is underway on developing a new website for the CSSA. Alongside this, work in reviewing the existing national policy and procedures to ensure that they align with the new standards is making good progress. Part of this process will see a reduction in the length and complexity of the policy and procedure documents, with more emphasis being placed on the overarching standard and policy position that must be achieved.
- 6.3 Alongside this, the establishment of a National Tribunal Service will address the need to streamline and simplify the language of the national policies and procedures as they relate to canonical processes. It is envisaged that the National Tribunal Service will produce policy and procedures relating to matters within its competence, that will not need to be reproduced in the national safeguarding policies and procedures.

- 6.4 The presentation of the revised policies and procedures will seek to achieve high level simplified information that will be easily accessible to different roles within the church, with signposting to more detailed procedural documents, where relevant, that are suitable for use by professional safeguarding roles. It is expected that these revisions will be ready by the end of June 2021.
- 6.5 The updated CSAS Website can be found here: www.csas.uk.net
-

Recommendation 7: Complaints policy

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales and the Conference of Religious should publish a national policy for complaints about the way in which a safeguarding case is handled.

The policy should deal with communication with complainants during the complaints process and set out an escalation process for all complainants to have their complaint assessed by an independent adjudicator, if they are unhappy with how their complaint has been handled.

- 7.1 The need for a robust Safeguarding Services Complaints Policy has been recognised by those involved with Safeguarding in the Church, by the Bishops and by the Executive of the Conference of Religious.
- 7.2 The CSAS Staff, working alongside a group consisting of Diocesan Financial Secretaries, Safeguarding Commission Chairs and Diocesan Safeguarding Coordinators drafted a framework and template for complaints which addresses the need for clear communication between the complainant and those handling the complaint, for escalation of the process if the outcome is felt to be unsatisfactory and at all stages, a clear timeline for what happens when and how this is communicated.
- 7.3 The policy was ratified by the Bishops in their November Plenary Assembly 2020. The Bishops acknowledged that each Diocese needs to adapt and formally adopt their bespoke version as each is a separate civil entity.
- 7.4 The template can be found here: <https://www.csas.uk.net/procedures-manual/#cat-10>
- 7.5 The policy template for dioceses did not include a process for seeking resolution outside of the diocese, when local processes had been exhausted but the complainant remained unhappy with the outcome. It is envisaged that the CSSA will facilitate the role of the independent adjudicator as envisaged by Recommendation 7 as it would have clear delineation of case support and audit functions within its structures and sits removed from the diocesan or religious orders often involved in this sort of dispute in the Church.
- 7.6 The CSSA will reserve the right to direct that independent persons or organisations may be better placed to evaluate complaints in more complex cases or cases that the CSSA has already been part of within the complaints process.
- 7.7 The process to be adopted by the CSSA will be developed once the CSSA is operational and in turn the diocesan bespoke version will be modified to reflect this position.

- 7.8 The Executive of the Conference of Religious recognise the importance of a robust policy on complaints which reflects the need for victims and survivors to have their complaints and cases handled sensitively and appropriately. A policy and templates which reflect the diversity of religious groups in the Church will be created by the new Religious Life Safeguarding Service, which will be established initially in June 2021. This will contain communication and escalation processes and comply with the standards established by the CSSA and will reflect Recommendation 7. Until transfer to the RLSS, Religious remain within the system of alignment. During the interim period while the RLSS is being established, in addition to the support of the relevant Safeguarding Commission or safeguarding sub-committee of the Diocesan Trust, the staff of CSAS and the Conference of Religious are available to provide assistance with the resolution of complaints.
- 7.9 In all cases where charitable trusts are involved, if there is continuing dissatisfaction with this internal process or its outcome, then recourse can be sought to the Charity Commission. However, it is hoped that the measures reflected in this procedure would suffice in bringing about resolution of any complaint.

Additional Relevant Information

- AM1. At the time of writing, the implementation of the IICSA Recommendations and those following the Elliott Report are well under way. The work that has taken place has been rapid and driven by the need to ensure that all Safeguarding practice in the Catholic Church is fit for purpose.
- AM2. The creation of the new central body, the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) has been in response to the issues raised by the IICSA Report which highlighted the areas of compliance and audit. The learning gained from considering developments in other parts of the Catholic world led to the adoption of a structure that was underpinned by a commitment to a Church wide implementation of a set of safeguarding standards. This new central body would be empowered to support the implementation of these standards and monitor their compliance by means of a robust review and audit process.
- AM3. It was acknowledged that the stated aim of having a ‘One Church’ approach had been the foremost objective for those involved in shaping the safeguarding strategy. However, it was recognised that this aim had not been achieved sufficiently robustly following the Nolan and Cumberlege Reports and differences of approach existed within and across the various institutions that together make up the Catholic Church in England and Wales. This again was an area of concern highlighted by IICSA in their investigation of the Roman Catholic Church.
- AM4. In creating this singular central body, which would be an agency of the Bishops’ Conference but distinctly separate from it with its own independent board of directors, the promotion of the ‘One Church’ strategy would form the underpinning of the work of Safeguarding, developing not only compliance and audit, but the promotion of a culture of Safeguarding which is embedded fully in the mission and life of the Church.
- AM5. At the local level of Diocesan and other Catholic Trusts, and responding to the requirements of the Charity Commission for trustees to hold full responsibility for all who engage with their charities, current safeguarding commissions which support the safeguarding practice in dioceses will now be replaced by safeguarding sub-committees of diocesan or religious trusts. This will make very evident the clear lines of responsibility for trustees and accountability within the operations of all safeguarding at this local level.
- AM6. With the cessation of the Diocesan Safeguarding Commissions, the practice of religious alignment to dioceses would also cease. Consequently, the needs of the religious members should be met by creating a safeguarding body that existed for the sole purpose of supporting them. This will be met by the newly created Religious Life Safeguarding Service (RLSS) which will be formally related to the CSSA. This would not be a shared resource with dioceses but one that had its own staff that were focused on delivering a high-quality service that is appropriate to the culture and context of religious life in England and Wales. Those organisations which are supported by this service will have to work to the same standards for safeguarding developed by the CSSA.
- AM7. The RLSS will ensure that members have access to a range of the services including implementing good safeguarding practice in its member organisations, on-going case advice, case management or acting when allegations are received, facilitating training and development, DBS processing as well as ensuring national safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented in line with the ‘One Church’ strategy to safeguarding.

- AM8. The CSSA will audit and oversee both the quality of service of the RLSS as well as how members from the religious orders respond to safeguarding advice, training and case management work provided to them by the resource.
- AM9. A decision has been made to establish a National Tribunal Service for the Catholic Church in England and Wales. As well as investigating and adjudicating on the canonical cases brought to it, this service should include an educative role, which is akin to that of other professional regulatory bodies. In each of these areas, the intention is the Church in England and Wales will be able to draw upon the National Tribunal in each of these areas and in doing so, promote a One Church approach which is able to enjoy the confidence of all those likely to be affected; whilst providing decisions which will be open and transparent. This would make an irreplaceable contribution to the reestablishment of transparency, consistency and public confidence in the Church and its ability to deal effectively with these matters.
- AM10. One of the most important aspects of the National Tribunal Service is to train those dealing with cases in the collation of evidence and in particular, the application of ‘special measures’ that will be made available to facilitate the participation of witnesses and other vulnerable parties in the investigation and determination of cases. In line with current practices adopted elsewhere, it is anticipated that these will include:
- Witness support group arrangements;
 - The production of guidance material for witnesses and other participants to aid informed participation;
 - The use of interpreters and aids;
 - The modification of procedures or physical arrangements to accommodate disabilities;
 - Where appropriate, the use of assessors and/or expert evidence;
 - Video recording of testimony; and
 - The use of modern forms of communication and technologies to enable remote participation.
- AM11. Work on drawing up the rules that are required for this National Tribunal Service are already well in hand, and an application to the Holy See will be made by the Summer of 2021 to request a formal delegation for the consideration of cases within the local Church, utilising the expertise of canonists and legal professionals within England and Wales. It is hoped that the creation of the National Tribunal Service will speed up the time taken to process cases to their judgement which has been a concern to the Inquiry.
- AM12. In order to develop trust and transparency of purpose of these changes to the national Safeguarding work of the Church, the Bishops’ Conference has seconded a senior professional from one of the Dioceses to drive this implementation work. The Conference of Religious has designated a senior member of a Society of Apostolic Life to work alongside the Implementation Director to help to deliver the IICSA and Elliott recommendations and to maintain the development of the ‘One Church Strategy’ for safeguarding across the Church.
- AM13. To ensure that good communication on the progress of this work was maintained, a unique website has been created for information dissemination, and a commitment to the publication of biweekly newsletters highlighting all aspects of the progress made. The website can be found at: www.catholicsafeguardingproject.org