



...w lead safeguarding bishop, taking over from Bishop Jonathan Gibbs

Bishop Joanne, who will attend the House of Bishops, will work closely with the national director of safeguarding, Alexander Kubeyinje, who took up the role in September. As the Church continues to develop its safeguarding practice, there will be a particular focus on responses to and implementation of [the recommendations from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, IICSA](#) and the Church's [second Past Cases Review](#), PCR2, published at the end of 2022.

Bishop Joanne will chair the National Safeguarding Steering Group (NSSG), the delegated House of Bishops body responsible for making national safeguarding decisions, and will work closely with the deputy lead bishops for safeguarding, the [Bishop of Bristol](#), Viv Faull and the [Bishop of Birkenhead](#), Julie Conalty.

Both as a former archdeacon and currently as an area bishop in London Diocese, Bishop Joanne has chaired a number of safeguarding reviews and currently is the diocesan safeguarding lead, working closely with the Bishop of London. Bishop Joanne also chairs the [national working group](#) looking at the Seal of the Confessional.

Bishop Joanne said: "I believe that how the Church of England deals with safeguarding is of the utmost importance. It reveals our values and identity as a Church and is therefore a matter of spiritual integrity. I am committed to working for culture change, drawing on the wisdom of survivors and engaging with NST colleagues and leaders across the Church of England. My aim is that together we will not only prevent church-based abuse now, but also deal honestly, thoroughly, and proactively with what has previously been perpetrated and covered up."

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, said: "I am grateful to Bishop Jonathan who, as lead safeguarding bishop, has led the Church's response to the IICSA and PCR2 reports, leading on the response both to the recommendations and the important calls for change from survivors. While recognising the safeguarding failures of the Church, Bishop Jonathan has been committed to seeking change in our safeguarding culture and practice.

"I am now very pleased to welcome Bishop Joanne to the role of lead safeguarding bishop. I commend her commitment and experience as well as her willingness to take up this role, which is a vital part of the work of the Church. I am aware of the immense time commitment that this role rightly involves and pray for Bishop Joanne as this new chapter begins."

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