

Survivor Participation Annual Report – 2024

Survivor participation stems from the commitment of the Church of England to make the Church a safer place. The Church provides space for victims and survivors to help us to make all appropriate safeguarding changes and improvements. This report shows the areas victims and survivors were involved in at the national in 2024. We are grateful to all victims and survivors who took part in different developments, initiatives, and workstreams, including the development of a national framework which will guide this work from now on.

The report is divided into 4 sections:

1. An overview of survivor participation work at national level.
2. The ways by which victims and survivors have interacted.
3. The development areas in which victims and survivors participated.
4. Key learning points as conclusion.

1. Overview

In the last year, 161 victims and survivors participated with the National Safeguarding Team (NST thereafter), through different interactions (receiving newsletters, sending email enquiries, attending activities or events, being part of groups, and having individual meetings).

Table 1 shows the details of the overall participation in 2024 in comparison to last year's data.

TABLE 1:	2023	2024
Survivors who participated at the national level	103	161
Survivors who completed an online anonymous survey	82	143
Interactions made by victims and survivors	152	515
Active participants at the start of 2025	38	68
Newsletter recipients at the end of 2024 (including survivors groups/organisations representatives)	75	112
Withdrawals	5	8

The overall participation of survivors in the safeguarding work in 2024 increased by 56.3% from last year. This increase is bigger than the 12% increase from 2022 to 2023 (103 participants in 2023, 92 participants in 2022). This is also evident in the number of survivors who completed the public anonymous survey run last year. 143 individuals shared their views on the future of safeguarding structures in Spring 2024.

The journey to connect with the work of the NST, for some survivors, starts by consenting to receive the monthly survivor engagement newsletter¹. The newsletter shares updates on

¹ Details on how someone can register to receive the newsletter can be found on the Church of England's webpage on survivor participation: [Survivor participation | The Church of England](#)

safeguarding developments in the Church, opportunities to participate and invitations to events. The number of newsletter recipients also increased from 75 to 112.

All this data shows that involving survivors in safeguarding developments is embedded as a practice in the Church and successfully reaches many participants. The increased withdrawals are in proportion to the increased participants.

2. The ways victims and survivors participate

We know from the survivor engagement report² in 2023 that there is a huge variety in the methods survivors use to participate with the Church. This is reflected in this year's data:

TABLE 2: Methods of interaction	Number	% participation
Surveys	143	27.7%
Consultation and written responses	31	6%
Newsletter	108	21%
Groups	60	11.6%
Training	6	1%
Initial meeting	45	8.7%
Media production, i.e. videos	12	2.3%
Recruitment	5	1%
Workshops	51	10%
Open Forums	28	5.4%
Synod	7	1.3%
Total	515	

The data suggests it is easiest for survivors to participate anonymously (for example, the online surveys). The newsletter was the next most popular method of participation, followed by groups and workshops. This shows the importance of more personalised participation (receiving information in your inbox) and group interactions via workshops or working groups. Fewer prefer to be involved with training, media production or attendance in General Synod. The low number of survivors involved in recruitment is because there were only four roles that included survivors in the selection process advertised in 2024.

The table shows the current picture of participation methods, not people's preferred participation methods. Not all methods of participation are possible for every project; therefore, this data is skewed by the options available. There are two areas to pay our attention to: 45 of the 58 new individuals participating took up the offer of an initial meeting, highlighting the importance of an introduction. The Open Forums require further work because they do not attract the high numbers expected, see also page 5 below.

² Published in October 2023, the report can be accessed here:
<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2023-10/survivor-engagement-survey-report.pdf>

3. The development areas in which victims and survivors participated

Victims and survivors' lived experience, knowledge and perspectives have been valuable in different developments, workstreams, projects and businesses, including those within the [Safeguarding Programme](#), which monitors the implementation of IICSA recommendations. Victims and survivors have been involved in many aspects of safeguarding work, over 10 broad areas:

- **Co-designing the National Survivor Participation Framework**

One of the major achievements of 2024 has been finalising the strategic framework that will guide this work. 27 victims and survivors were part of the co-design process. This framework was developed throughout the year in four task and finish groups with 13 victims and survivors, external subject experts and church officers from the NST, subject experts in National Church Institutions (NCIs), dioceses, and cathedrals. Further to this, 20 survivors (and 18 church officers) in dioceses and cathedrals provided further feedback on the framework in August. The National Safeguarding Steering Group (NSSG) approved the framework in November. The framework will be launched in February 2025, and it will be revised in November 2026.

- **Contributing to reforms and conversations about the structures and future of safeguarding**

Survivor participation was vital in the [Wilkinson/Jay Report working group](#) and the wider consultations and research that looked at the learning from the two reports for the future of safeguarding in the Church. 4 survivors sat in the main group, and 23 victims and survivors shared their views in four sessions across the year. Survivors was an identified stakeholder in the national anonymous survey which enabled 143 individuals to respond to this important development.

- **Co-developing or delivering support services provision for victims and survivors**

In 2024, many survivors have continued to be involved in schemes and services responding to the restorative and support needs of victims and survivors. Five survivors sit on the Redress Survivor Working Group. They help shape and design the **National Redress Scheme** (IICSA recommendation 7) providing invaluable insight and survivor perspectives. Two members also sit on the Scheme's Project Board representing survivors' perspectives. Furthermore, three survivors sit on the **Interim Support Scheme** panels assessing applications of victims and survivors in immediate and urgent need, and the **Safe Spaces Advisory Committee (SSAC)** has two survivors representing the Church of England. Last year, it was positive to see a survivor become a trustee in First Light, the provider of Safe Spaces.

- **Being part of national policy developments and awareness raising**

Survivors have been a central part of the work of the **NST's Policy Development team**. 2 survivors participated in the final stages of the revision of the **Safeguarding Practice Review Code of Practice on Managing Safeguarding Concerns and Allegations**, and a further 18 survivors gave their views in a second consultation. In October 2024, the final consultation was run on the Safeguarding Code of Practice, involving 20 survivors who participated in two different ways, providing feedback and/or taking in a group session. Survivors' participation in this work was concluded with the approval of the Code of Practice by the National Safeguarding Steering Group in November 2025.

6 survivors were involved in launching the **White Ribbon campaign** across the National Church Institutions (NCIs), developing visual material to raise awareness about male violence against women and girls and co-developing priorities for the three-year NCI White Ribbon action plan. Further to this initiative, the **Spiritual Abuse working group**, in which three survivors are involved, is producing a short video to raise awareness and understanding around spiritual abuse.

8 survivors took part in a consultation concerning the **revision of the Clergy Conduct Measure** providing their feedback on the areas of the measure affecting survivors.

- **The intersection of safeguarding with theology and faith**

The [Seal of Confessional](#) work involved 9 survivors, 2 of whom attended the main working group, representing survivors' voices. Their contribution was incorporated in the final report for the House of Bishops.

Furthermore, the **Theology and Safeguarding Group** has 4 survivors as members. The Group aims to shape a theological underpinning to the current understanding and practice of safeguarding in the Church. The group includes survivors, church officers, and NST staff.

- **Supporting safeguarding training, learning and development**

Survivors worked alongside the **National Safeguarding Learning and Development Team** in several initiatives. 7 people co-developed learning resources for safeguarding advisors in dioceses and cathedrals. This included work on trauma-informed practice (TIP), pastoral principles for safeguarding, and safeguarding practice in parishes via the PSO (Parish Safeguarding Officers) National Group and the Safeguarding Virtual Library.

3 people helped with the co-delivery of the **Support Person Learning Pathway**. 6 survivors, including those who are clergy, provided valuable insights and produced new video material in relation to the **Senior Leadership Safeguarding Pathway**

- **Contributing to the quality, consistency, and quality of diocesan and national safeguarding practice.**

An open session provided a space for 2 survivors to share their views on the final stages of the [IICSA 1&8 Project](#) which supports the transition of the safeguarding arrangements in dioceses, and the change from Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor to an Officer role (IICSA recommendation 1).

Additionally, 2 survivors sit in the Audit Programme Monitoring Group which monitors the delivery of **independent safeguarding audits** of dioceses and cathedrals across the Church.

- **Speaking out in forums, spaces of dialogue, and knowledge exchange**

This year, we have continued to provide a confidential online space for survivors to share and discuss their concerns during General Synod proceedings. 4 survivors attended the February Synod's online space, and 7 survivors attended the online space during the Synod in July.

Additionally, open forums with victims and survivors were standardised in the work of the Church. The NST has an established practice to meet with victims and survivors every six months. These took place in May and November with the Lead Bishop for Safeguarding and the National Director of Safeguarding. Each time, there was a meeting for victims and survivors and another for advocates, representatives of survivors' groups, and support organisations. 21 survivors attended these events (a drop of 32% from the 31 last year).

Also, we provided a webinar for the victims and survivors related to Makin Review facilitated by an independent expert. The webinar was attended by four survivors.

- **Being part of safer recruitment processes and interview panels.**

5 survivors took part in the shortlisting and selection process for three roles, two within the NST, and one related to the recruitment of the new chair of the National Safeguarding Panel.

- **Nurturing partnerships and collaboration with survivors' groups and organisations**

We are grateful to the following key partners which have supported and shared the opportunities for victims and survivors to participate in the safeguarding work of the Church. These include:

- Survivors Reference Group
- Survivors Voices
- Response Ability Theatre
- House of Survivors
- Broken Rites
- MACSAS
- Replenished Life
- Fear-free
- First Light
- IDAS
- Support for Survivors
- Champions for Change

We have expanded and maintained our network of partners and collaborators this year, as in 2022 we liaised closely with only 4 groups. We cannot estimate the reach of our work through these partnerships.

4. Conclusion and some learning for the upcoming year

Survivors' voices, experiences and participation have been valuable in many different developments, initiatives and workstreams. The number of victims and survivors who have volunteered and actively participated in shaping and delivering safeguarding work in the Church of England has increased. This trend was also noted in the 2023 report.

The quantity of the information does not replace the quality of information that survivors' contributions bring to help others, to prevent abuse and do everything possible to keep everyone safe in the Church. The NST, as the organiser of this work, has provided space and opportunities for victims and survivors to participate in a variety of areas within and outside the team (White Ribbon initiative, Archbishops Council, General Synod, legal team). We are grateful to 161 victims and survivors of abuse who had the courage, aspiration, and time to be part of our work last year.

January 2025, when this report was compiled, has had a promising start, with 68 victims and survivors currently involved at the national level. The launch and implementation of the National Survivor Participation Framework in 2025 presents a unique opportunity to make survivor participation more meaningful, inclusive, trauma-informed and more importantly impactful.

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