

St Edmundsbury Cathedral



Safeguarding Complaints Policy

This policy explains what to do if you wish to make a complaint about how a safeguarding concern has been dealt with or if you wish to offer any further comment on issues related to safeguarding.

If you would like to report a safeguarding concern or allegation, please refer to the Promoting a Safer Church guidelines which provide the contact details you will need. This process is outside the scope of this policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with St Edmundsbury Cathedral's [Whistleblowing Policy](#) which is available on our website.

Our Safeguarding Complaints Policy

The purpose of this policy is:

- To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a safeguarding complaint
- To publicise the existence of our safeguarding complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint
- To make sure everyone at the Cathedral knows what to do if a safeguarding complaint is received
- To make sure all safeguarding complaints are investigated appropriately and promptly
- To make sure that safeguarding complaints are, where necessary, referred to the appropriate authority.
- To gather information which helps us to improve what we do

Routinely, comments and complaints will in the first instance be handled by the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer. Reference to the Dean, the Diocese or Church of England National Safeguarding Team will be made if required. Comments or complaints about the Safeguarding Officer can be made directly to the Dean or the Diocese, contact details below.

Confidentiality

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

Making a Complaint

A safeguarding complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of safeguarding procedure or case handling at St Edmundsbury Cathedral.

Informal Approach

In many cases, a safeguarding complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about, therefore you are encouraged, in the first instance, to address your concerns directly with the individual concerned. Alternatively, you can speak to the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer on 01284 663440.

Formal Approach

If, following the informal process, you remain dissatisfied with the proposed resolution or with the way your safeguarding complaint has been handled, or do not believe the informal route is appropriate for your concern, then the formal procedure should be followed.

How to make a Formal Safeguarding Complaint

Your safeguarding complaint should be sent in writing to the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer at The Cathedral Office, Abbey House, Angel Hill, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP33 1LS or by email at: tanyadawson@stedscathedral.org

Should your complaint be about the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer then it should be directed to the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer by email at: safeguarding@cofesuffolk.org or the Dean by writing at the above address or by email at: dean@stedscathedral.org

How we will respond

The Cathedral Safeguarding Officer should acknowledge your complaint within three working days, enclosing a copy of this procedure.

The Cathedral Safeguarding officer will assess whether or not your complaint relates to safeguarding. If it does not, we will communicate with you about how best the complaint can be addressed.

A suitably senior person will be appointed to investigate the facts of the case and propose a resolution and/or make a decision. Where necessary, external advice will be sought. If the investigator believes that meeting with you would be appropriate to discuss the matter in further detail and you would like to attend a meeting, they will aim to arrange this within 14 days of acknowledging your complaint.

The Cathedral will aim to conclude this process and provide you with a definitive reply (within the bounds of confidentiality requirements) within 28 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter. Sometimes a complaint is more complex and so it will take us longer to investigate it. Where this happens, we will send you a progress report and let you know when you can expect to receive a final response

The reply will usually describe the action taken to investigate your safeguarding complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, any action taken or solutions proposed because of your complaint, and what to do if you are unhappy with the outcome.

What to do if you are unhappy with the outcome

If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you should contact us again where we will appoint another suitable person to review the decision. In the case that you wish to have the decision reviewed, we will aim to write to you within 14 days of receiving your request for a review, confirming our final position on your safeguarding complaint and explaining our reasons.

If you feel that the matter has not been resolved, or remain dissatisfied with the procedure followed, you can raise the matter with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer at: safeguarding@cofesuffolk.org

We hope we are able to resolve your complaint in an honest, open and satisfactory way. However, if you are still unhappy then you can write, either by letter or email, to either of our regulators:

- a) The Church Commissioners at: cathedralregulation@churchofengland.org

Please name the cathedral, outline the details of the complaint and explain why you have not been satisfied with our response.

- (b) The Charity Commission at:

The Charity Commission PO Box 211 Bootle L20 7YX
www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission

Before you write to the Charity Commission, you should check your complaint is one which the Charity Commission will look into¹. As stated in the Charity Commission's guidance on complaints about charities, its involvement in relation to complaints about a charity is limited to issues that pose a serious risk of significant harm to that charity's beneficiaries, assets, services or reputation.

Any file relating to your complaint will be securely retained by us for 7 years from the date of the last correspondence or settlement of the matter, after which it will be destroyed.

Contact Details

Tanya Dawson, Cathedral Safeguarding Officer

Email: sarah-janeallison@stedscathedral.org

Tel: 01284 663440

Reverend Canon Matthew Vernon, Priest with Pastoral Charge for Safeguarding

Email: canon.pastor@stedscathedral.org

Tel: 01284 748720

Karen Galloway, Diocesan Safeguarding Officer

Email: safeguarding@cofesuffolk.org

Tel: 07785 621319

¹ Complaints about charities - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Comments and Suggestions

At St Edmundsbury Cathedral, we believe that constructive comments can represent an opportunity to learn and improve for the future. We welcome suggestions on how we can improve our safeguarding culture within the Cathedral community and with the activities/events we provide or support.

Comments, encouragements and suggestions can be sent to Tanya Dawson, Cathedral Safeguarding Officer (please see above for contact details).

We will make sure that your comment is dealt with. Any comments will be carefully considered, and you will be informed of any actions taken as a result. A written record of your comment will be held.

April 2026