

Compliance and training

DBS Compliance

It is with great pleasure that I can state that All Parish officers at St Mark & St Stephen's currently hold up to date DBS certificates and role descriptions, making us fully compliant with Church of England regulations. All Parish officers are required to complete statutory training every three years &, whilst this is still a bit of a work in progress, I have recently given all PCC members pocket guides which serve as handy reminders of what to do if faced with a safeguarding situation, which may be helpful in difficult and distressing situations.

Safeguarding visibility

Both Churches have welcome boards with the names and photos of Clergy and Church Officers clearly displayed and Churchwardens and stewards on duty all now have lanyards so that they can be easily identified by anyone new to the Church and requiring help. In addition to this, there is a safeguarding board at St Mark's, with useful contacts for people who may be experiencing problems in everyday life. Hopefully, this could also be established at St Stephens in the near future.

Parish Website

Safeguarding is visible on our Parish website and complies with the guidelines set out by the Diocese. With many thanks to Ken, who runs our Website for producing a clear and easy to navigate platform.

GDPR

I have recently made some changes to our GDPR compliance to make it more relevant to the needs of the Parish. Only Sunday school members & those people who regularly contribute to our Sunday worship in an official capacity will need to sign a form permitting their image to appear on the website or on social media. Both churches have designated seating areas with clear signage for those who do not wish to appear on our live-streamed feed during the service & filming is now paused during Holy Communion to allow people to move freely around the church.

The Parish Dashboard

This is the means by which the Church of England sets the standard for safeguarding to which all parishes must adhere. I am pleased to report that ours is in a very healthy state, with just a few minor issues outstanding, mainly in the areas of training and policy reviews.

Safeguarding Incidents

During the year there have been 4 safeguarding concerns raised within the Parish all of which have been dealt with in accordance with our safeguarding policies. We continue to support and care for the vulnerable members of our Church family.

Finally, I would like to thank Father Amatu, Mother Claire, the Church wardens and the PCC for all their help and support during the past year.

Janice Dickson May 2026