

## **New year, new resolve and making a collective contribution**

The new year is often a time of personal and organisational resolution. A fresh start laced with ambition and enthusiasm. 'This time I really will carry through my plans to achieve my goals' we might say, or perhaps something a little less wordy. This is definitely the year! And then by the end of January, our aspirations, if not already lying in tatters, are often on the shelf. That gym membership?

Readers of this blog may well have thought of their own new year resolutions which may perhaps have been committed to paper, shared with another, or just stored away privately. Whatever these might be let's pause to think about our safeguarding resolutions for 2025.

For example, do I need to complete any training? Is it time for my Foundation or Advanced course refresher? Is my DBS check up to date? Are the risk assessments up to date for the activities I lead? Are there plans in hand to review, update and agree church and circuit safeguarding policies? If I am the church or circuit safeguarding officer, are my records up to date? You'll know if there other things you may need to crack on with!

This may just sound like another checklist and to an extent it is. But taking personal responsibility for getting our own requirements in order helps collectively to promote what the church sees as a key safeguarding priority – establishing a healthy safeguarding culture where we all know what we need to do and why. This contributes to a sense that in Lincolnshire District, we do know what we need to do, and this is how we do the things around here that really matter. This is a powerful preventive tool that lets potential abusers, or perhaps even those who see safeguarding as a chore, know that we are always striving for our churches to be safe spaces for all through meeting our obligations.

Good luck with keeping your new year resolutions and do take time to check on what you may need to do in respect of safeguarding for the whole year ahead – and not just January.

Happy new year to you all

Grahame Snelling

Independent Chair, Lincolnshire District Safeguarding Group