Safeguarding Blog from Grahame Snelling, Independent Chair of the District Safeguarding Group – October 2026

The Connexional Safeguarding Committee meets….

This blog has something of a live outside broadcast feel as I'm writing it in the pre-dinner downtime at the Methodist Safeguarding Committee meeting on October 6th. It's a 24-hour event and we are meeting at the Royal Foundation of St Katherine retreat house in Limehouse which is a wonderful oasis of green, well, patchily brown clam, in an otherwise gritty urban landscape just adjacent to the London Docklands developments. It would be quiet except for the roar of jets taking off and landing ts the nearby London City airport.

This afternoon we have been participating in the Senior Leadership Course, which, as it says on the tin, is a course above the level of the Advanced Module for district chairs and other connexional leaders. It is designed to encourage them to remember their public facing duty of accountability in respect of safeguarding , stressing the need for them as leaders to have a deeper understanding of it and being clear about their responsibilities. We have been thinking about power and its potential for misuse, the expectations placed on leaders and the need for adherence to professional boundaries. Our last session offered an introduction to being trauma informed in our responses to concerning situations or when hearing disclosures. We were privileged at Lincolnshire's safeguarding conference in 2025 to learn about this approach from Revd Karen Jobson who is a chaplain with the NW Ambulance Service. She has provided the input for this part of the new course along with Jenna Thorne who is a member of the Learning Network. This is an aspect of practice that we will attempt to share more widely in the year ahead, as it underpins best safeguarding practice.

Later tonight we will be meeting with the consultant that the Connexion has engaged to review how the restructuring of the national safeguarding team last year is progressing and has been experienced in the country. From a Lincolnshire District perspective, we will aim to share our experience of this as the review commences, so it will be good to learn a bit more about the terms of reference and how the work will be completed. The District Safeguarding Group will no doubt help shape our response when we meet on 14th October.

Tomorrow it's the business meeting of the committee before we head for home at lunchtime. Thus far it has been a very useful session and so I am hopeful for a productive time in the morning as well!

I don't think there is anything else major to report, so this is Grahame Snelling, District Safeguarding Group chair, signing off from London E14.

Grahame
5 October 2026