

Safe Spaces service specification

1.1 Introduction

The Catholic Church in England and Wales and the Church of England and Church in Wales are working together to procure an independent national hub and local community network of therapeutic support services for adult victims and survivors of church related abuse of any form.

Within this tender documentation the terminology of victim and survivor are both used to recognise the different preferences and personal meaning that individuals may have when using either or both words.

The service is currently referred to as “Safe Spaces”, and for the sake of this Invitation to Tender, all bids submitted should be referenced as such. It is possible that once awarded, the contract service may be re-named accordingly.

This document sets out the tender specification for the procurement of this service. Bids may be based on an operational model that achieves delivery via a single supplier, or an offering that includes more than one supplier working in a partnership, a Joint Venture using a Special Project Vehicle (SPV) or in a consortium arrangement.

1.2 Background and requirements

The requirements of this Invitation to Tender are detailed below and should be read carefully and responded to in conjunction with the questions in the evaluation section of this document.

The Church of England (CofE), Church in Wales and the Catholic Church in England and Wales (CCEW), its archbishops, bishops, clergy and its leaders are committed to safeguarding all children and adults at risk of abuse and view this as being an integral part of the life and ministry of the churches.

1.3 Church of England (CofE), Church in Wales (CIW) and Catholic Church in England and Wales (CCEW)

Victims and survivors voices have been central to the call to set up an independent service for victims and survivors of church related abuse.

Many victims and survivors of past and current abuse perpetrated in a range of settings in the Church of England and Church in Wales and the Catholic Church of England and Wales told the Church and other partner agencies that their experience of reporting abuse to and seeking ongoing care and support from the Church when needed at the different stages in their journeys has not been positive and has been re-traumatising.

The concept of “Safe Spaces” had its roots in earlier conversations between the Bishop of Durham the Right Reverend Paul Butler and the Minister and Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors organisation (MACSAS) in 2013.

The National Catholic Safeguarding Commission’s (NCSC) working group on pastoral support for victims and survivors identified the need for victims of abuse to access pastoral support services. The ‘Hurt by Abuse’ Hallam study (2016) reported

that progress has been made by the Catholic Church of England and Wales (CCEW) in setting up safeguarding arrangements. Some people are still having difficulty coming forward without further facilitation and assistance, with some feeling unable to seek pastoral support from existing services.

1.4 Ecumenical approach to supporting victims and survivors

A series of initial discussions between the national safeguarding leads for both churches highlighted the similarity of the issues being addressed in respect of developing support to victims and survivors in both churches, and therefore it was decided to jointly procure an independent organisation to deliver “Safe Spaces”.

The Allchurches Trust Ltd. awarded a grant to the Church of England in April 2018 to develop an ecumenical partnership with the Catholic Church in England and Wales, in respect of setting up an independent national support service for adult victims and survivors of church related abuse of any form. This grant alongside financial contributions from both churches forms the total funding for the “Safe Spaces” project.

“Safe Spaces” will provide an opportunity for survivors to access support via an independent route outside of either church following any allegation of abuse. “Safe Spaces” will seek to ensure that all survivors of church related abuse are listened to, and supported with respect and dignity, compassion, openness and justice and integrity. The voices of victims and survivors will become a critical part of the quality assurance of this service and will be central to understanding what works and what makes a difference.

1.5 Clergy and church related abuse – evidence base Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA)

IICSA is currently undertaking investigations into the extent of any institutional failures to protect children from sexual abuse in religious institutions. The first two of these are specifically looking at the Catholic Church in England and Wales and the Church of England and Church in Wales.

The first public hearing for the CCEW investigation was held in November 2017 and the first public hearing for the CofE investigation was held in March 2018. The Inquiry also published an investigation report in August 2018 about Ampleforth and Downside Abbeys, which are affiliated to the English Benedictine Congregation, and their respective schools. Further public hearings in relation to the Churches’ investigations will take place in July 2019 for the Church of England and Church in Wales, and in October 2019 for the Catholic Church in England and Wales.

To support these investigations, in November 2017, the Inquiry’s research team published *Child sexual abuse within the Catholic and Anglican Churches: A rapid evidence assessment* (IICSA Research Team, 2017)¹, which summarised the existing research on child sexual abuse within the church institutions.

¹ IICSA Research Team (2017) The impacts of child sexual abuse: A rapid evidence assessment. Available at: <https://www.iicsa.org.uk/key-documents/1534/view/iicsa-impacts-child-sexual-abus-rapid-evidence-assessment-full-report-english.pdf> (Accessed: 17 April 2019).

The REA reported that the ability to address the question of prevalence of child sexual abuse within the Catholic Church in England and Wales and the Church of England and Church in Wales is compromised by a lack of data, but that the themes emerging suggested that the culture and regulatory frameworks of religious institutions play a significant role in the incidence of child sexual abuse and their response to it.

The research reported that some of the Churches' responses to allegations of child sexual abuse have frequently been characterised by denial, secrecy and the use of internal clergy discipline mechanisms.

Given the lack of primary research on child sexual abuse in the Catholic Church in England and Wales and the Church of England and Church in Wales, the REA drew on research from other jurisdictions, where it reported significant differences in the governance and safeguarding arrangements of the churches between jurisdictions, as well as the socio-demographic context within which the churches operate. It identified that while those studies provided an important indication of what the scale of the problem might be, and of themes which may underpin the incidence of and response to child sexual abuse, they should not necessarily be generalised directly to England and Wales. Therefore, it remains a challenge to establish in full both the extent of abusive behaviour perpetrated in church related settings and the numbers of individual perpetrators involved.

IICSA has recently published the first of its thematic reports examining what victims and survivors have shared with the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse as part of the Truth Project (IICSA Research Team, 2019)².

It details the research findings in relation to experiences of sexual abuse that occurred in 'religious contexts'. This includes both sexual abuse that has taken place in a religious institution and sexual abuse that has taken place in a different setting but where the perpetrator was a member of the clergy or other staff affiliated with a religious institution. It found the following;

- Those sexually abused in a religious context often did not report the abuse whilst it was ongoing due to feelings of shame or embarrassment.
- Victims and survivors of child sexual abuse in a religious context reported that they knew of others being abused in the same institution or by the same perpetrator.
- Participants considered that the power, authority and status of religious institutions and the individuals working within them meant that the conduct of perpetrators was not questioned.
- The extent of influence and involvement the religious institutions had over their communities and the culture and background of victims and survivors and their families was more visible than typically seen in other institutions,

² IICSA Research Team (2019). Truth Project Thematic Report: Child sexual abuse in the context of religious institutions. Available: <https://www.iicsa.org.uk/key-documents/11687/viwe/truth-project-thematic-report%3A-child-sexual-abuse-context-religious-institutions-full-report.pdf>. Last accessed 6th June 2019.

providing greater opportunities for the abuse, making it difficult to be able to tell anyone about what was happening.

- Perpetrators were able to use the child's spirituality and religion to manipulate them.
- When disclosing sexual abuse as a child or as an adult, participants abused in a religious context often shared that they reported their experiences of abuse to someone in authority inside the institution.
- Victims and survivors reported that the protection of the reputation of the religious institution and individual perpetrators meant they were often disbelieved, discredited and not supported after disclosing their experiences of sexual abuse both as children and as adults.
- The spiritual impact of the abuse upon victims and survivors had a damaging impact, particularly where their religion provided the foundation for their morality, beliefs, and social relationships.

The All-Party Parliamentary group (APPG) on Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse survey report published in May 2019³ found the following:-

- 90% said their intimate relationships were negatively affected
- 89% said their mental health was negatively affected
- 72% said that it had damaged their career
- 46% said it had a detrimental effect on their financial situation (because they often had to pay for therapeutic help they couldn't access otherwise)
- Only 16% said the NHS mental health services met their need.

Recent research by the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) on improving Church responses to victims and survivors of abuse involved a survey of survivors who had experienced a range of types of abuse, both Church and non-Church related, and had sought support from the Church of England (SCIE, 2019)⁴

The survey showed that respondents rarely reported experiencing just one type of abuse and generally indicated that they had suffered multiple types of abuse. Half of the respondents indicated that they had experienced sexual abuse.

Of the 58 respondents to the SCIE survey, 20 stated that they had never received a meaningful response from the Church, and over half stated that the quality of response they received from the Church was unsatisfactory.

Detailed safeguarding policies and guidance and data that reflects an annual audit of safeguarding activity in both churches alongside all relevant key statutory legislation can be found at the following websites for both churches:

³ The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse. (2019). *Can adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse access justice and support? Part One: Achieving quality information and support for survivors*. Available: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5c8faf788d97401af928638c/t/5cd05b45eb3931052c31b479/1557158727790/Achieving+quality+information+and+support+for+survivors.pdf>. Last accessed 19th June 2019.

⁴ Social Care Institute for Excellence. (2019) *Final overview report of the independent diocesan safeguarding audits and additional work on improving responses to survivors of abuse*. Available: <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/17300>. Last accessed 8th May 2019.

<https://www.csas.uk.net/procedures-manual/>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/safeguarding>

Data on safeguarding activity in the Church of England from 2015-2017 was published in June 2019⁵.

1.6 Survivor engagement in the consultation process for “Safe Spaces”

The development of “Safe Spaces” has been informed by face to face consultation with a small group of victims and survivors from both churches via facilitated workshops and meetings.”.

Alongside this, the development of the service model has also been informed by the findings in the SCIE report and Hurt by Abuse Hallam study .

In the Church of England, a survivors’ reference group is in the early stages of formal constitution and is being co-produced with SCIE. Survivors’ views are currently also represented on the Church of England National Safeguarding Panel by three survivors of church related abuse.

In the CCEW, the Survivors Advisory Panel (SAP) was set up in 2016 and four survivor members currently provide input to the National Catholic Safeguarding Commission (NCSC) in the following ways;

- Advice and recommendations on matters relevant to victims/survivors.
- Knowledge and insight into experience of abuse.
- A positive contribution to improve responses regarding victim disclosures and church support.
- Expertise to inform and influence work by highlighting previously unidentified areas/topics for attention.
- Input on NCSC media and communications strategy.

1.7 Shaping principles for “Safe Spaces”

“Safe Spaces” represents the opportunity to deliver an entirely new ecumenical approach to meeting the care and support needs of survivors of church related abuse across two major churches with the potential for wider roll out with other denominations and faiths. The following key principles are seen as central to the service design and delivery;

- The needs of all victims and survivors are at the centre of “Safe Spaces”.
- The service should focus on the pastoral and not just the procedural and must not be re-traumatising.
- Victims and survivors must be listened to, empowered, and given choice and control.
- Victims and survivors should be part of the quality assurance of the services being provided.
- The services are led by a provider who is independent of both churches.

⁵ <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-06/Safeguarding%20Data%20Report%202015-2017%20for%20publication%20%28003%29.pdf->

- Different routes for victims/survivors to access immediate support outside of the church to enable victims/survivors who would not ordinarily contact the churches directly.
- Victims and survivors are supported promptly in complete confidence.
- Services are easily accessible.
- Services are sensitive to the faith dimension for victims and survivors and recognise some may be fearful of approaching any organisation with links to the churches.
- Services are sensitive to the faith dimension for victims and survivors and recognise some will wish to maintain links with their church.
- Accountability for the good use of funds with proportionate reporting.
- Services offered should be flexible and strengths based, and able to recognise that resilience and recovery for victims and survivors are fluid states at times.
- Services should be sustainable to have the potential to grow.
- Services should be able to work in partnership with other statutory agencies and faith and non-faith based voluntary and community-based organisations who support victims and survivors.
- The service should be marketable at a national church level through a variety of means of information dissemination.
- Governance should be simple and transparent with victims and survivors.
- Evaluation of “Safe Spaces” should be proportionate and focused on helping to develop more and better services with a proven effective basis for future sustainability.

1.8 “Safe Spaces” delivery model

“Safe Spaces” will be developed as a national helpline that is a central hub.

1.9 Scope and coverage criteria

“Safe Spaces” will be targeted towards adults aged 18+ who are victims or survivors of church related abuse of any form in England or Wales, recognising that children or other victims and survivors of abuse not related to the churches may also contact the service.

1.10 Referral routes

Abuse may occur in a wide range of church-related contexts, and, it follows, referrals may come from many sources from within and outside the institutional churches.

1.11 Timescales

The pilot project will commence from the point of contract for a two-year period, with regular reviews being held every month for the first three months, and thereafter every quarter (or as required) so that both parties can review the progress and make any necessary adjustments. Annual break clauses may be included.

It is expected that providers will have existing infrastructure in place to ensure the central hub service is operational within a short time frame.

There is a possibility that, if the initial two-year pilot period is successful and meets expectations, then the contract may be extended for a further 12 months with a maximum of three extensions.

1.12 Key requirements

Provision of a national central hub alongside the development of “Safe Spaces” community spokes across England and Wales should include the following key activities;

- Skilled trauma-informed first response support advocates trained in providing online trauma support and safety planning assessment process in respect of church related abuse for adults and children.
- Development of a light touch but robust financial administrative process that enables effective and accountable disbursement of the small grants, and management of the allocation of the costed packages of support.
- Building relationships with a network of providers to provide or commission church related abuse training to organisations that require it.
- A deep understanding of the issues facing victims and survivors of church related abuse.
- Provision of online sessional counselling as and when required.
- Setting up of a light touch small grants process to facilitate the provision of grants of up to £5,000 each to fund 10 new or existing self-help based therapeutic initiatives that support survivors of church related abuse. These must be co-produced with survivors and provide innovative responses to church related abuse that could be sustainable beyond the life of the initial two-year project.
- Development of a web base to create a network of community spokes of support for victims and survivors that will underpin the central hub to develop an alliance of service providers to whom victims and survivors can be signposted when required.
- It is expected that the provider will also develop a data-base of sessional independent trauma support advocates across England and Wales, ensuring they are trained in church related abuse to enable access when needed to support following a disclosure of recent or non-recent abuse where there is no other suitable provision available in the area.

1.13 Operation of the central hub helpline

- To be able to operate for 5 days a week; 52 weeks of the year.
- At least one of those days to include a Saturday or Sunday.
- All days to include some hours for evening access.
- Resourced with trained first response trauma informed support advocates who listen, support, respond and with consent, assess to provide the bespoke offer.
- Provision of online sessional counselling support in format to suit the victim or survivor.

- Provision made available for sessional independent safeguarding advocacy where required and not available elsewhere.
- Access to community provision of therapeutic support where assessed as required, ranging from face to face formal accredited counselling, to other therapeutic support as defined with the survivor.
- Provision of an ICT system for capturing effective links, referral pathways, and contact with out of hours statutory/emergency safeguarding agencies.
- Provision of an ICT system for capturing out of hours contacts, communication, monitoring and actioning later during operating hours.

1.14 Operation of the community spokes

As part of the project the supplier will administer and define a proportionate suitable application/ proposal process for 10 new or existing survivor therapeutic support groups with access to small grants of funding of up to £5,000 each for survivors for issues of church related abuse.

1.15 Communications plan

- Nationally available publicity material developed and targeted via a key stakeholder communications plan.
- A comprehensive marketing strategy which includes a website with clear information in respect of the function of the services offered, eligibility criteria, access arrangements, service standards, complaint arrangements and support available to those with language or communication needs.
- A range of easy read, downloadable materials including support for self-advocacy and informal advocacy.
- Clarity of the offer relating to church related abuse and how it fits alongside other services offered.
- Description of individual project approach with a 'Frequently Asked Questions' section to help prospective service users determine their own suitability for the service on offer.
- Signposting to other general sources of advice and support.
- An inclusive multi-media approach informed by an understanding of equalities legislation that makes reasonable adjustments.

1.16 Partnership and interdependencies

Nationally, the "Safe Spaces" project will develop and maintain active working relationships with the safeguarding teams of other denominations and key statutory, third sector and private organisations.

The Church of England, Church in Wales and the Catholic Church in England and Wales will continue to offer their current safeguarding services to victims and survivors and will be expected to consider "Safe Spaces" as a positive referral choice for survivors seeking independent trauma informed advocacy advice and online counselling/ other community based therapeutic support as available and appropriate.

It is expected that providers will work closely where required with existing church safeguarding services the newly emerging survivors' reference group in the CofE and the CCEW Survivors Advisory Panel.

1.17 Desired outcomes and benefits for victims and survivors

In dialogue with survivor groups from both churches, a set of desired outcomes and outputs for “Safe Spaces” is reflected . It will be fundamental to the success of “Safe Spaces” that survivors derive real benefits from the services offered and, if successful, that the learning from the pilot period could be mainstreamed across all dioceses in both churches.

Therefore, the churches expect that providers will be able to record and evidence outcomes in Figure 1 below.

1.18 Fig. 1: Outcomes Framework for Safe Spaces

Nos	Outcomes for Safe Spaces	Indicators – How we have achieved this outcome
1	Increased voice and personal choice and control	Victims and survivors report that they were; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involved in any decision-making processes and were supported and empowered to make their own decisions • Listened to and responded to well • Not re-traumatised by their experience of receiving support from “Safe Spaces”
2	Improved wellbeing and economic opportunities	Victims and survivors; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report an improvement to their health and wellbeing • Report some evidence of improvement in their economic wellbeing via access to information, support or resources to do so
3	Challenging injustice	Victims and survivors have; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Been protected from further abuse and where a disclosure was made good support was provided • Where appropriate been supported or signposted to agencies to help them appeal, complain or raise concerns in respect of a decision made
4	Strong co-production	Victims and survivors; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have ongoing opportunities to be involved in the development of services for survivors of church related abuse. • Were supported to be involved in co-production.
5	Safeguarding services delivered by the Church of England, the Church in Wales and the Catholic Church of England and Wales provide a positive response	Victims and survivors; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Safe Spaces” is able to report that when the church safeguarding services were accessed by victims and survivors the safeguarding service response was good.

	to Safe Spaces	
6	Positive partnership with local communities and dioceses	<p>Victims and survivors report;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The opportunity for connecting with faith-based community support was a positive experience • The opportunity to connect with non-faith-based self-help community based support was a positive experience
7	Wider awareness of church context abuse	<p>Victims and survivors report;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved networking and opportunities for their involvement in training with local safeguarding partners and church dioceses

2 Monitoring of service delivery

2.1 Contract monitoring

In line with the contract management and monitoring arrangements described in the agreement governing the delivery of this service, the supplier will be expected to monitor and report on an agreed set of measures that help NewCo to monitor the quality and delivery of outputs and attainments of outcomes as specified in the service specification.

The following are indicative of likely measures to be agreed during the mobilisation of the contract for the relevant quarter or reporting period:

2.2 Accessibility and Availability

- % of days helpline service was operational as per service specification – broken down by means of communication, e.g.; telephone and online.
- Number of contacts to helpline differentiated by type.
- Effectiveness of marketing to all potential service users.
- Number of referrals into the service by ‘out of hours’ response services and any other organisations.
- Number of ‘eligible’ and ‘ineligible’ contacts.
- Number of existing services captured in digital database.
- Number of complaints from users of the service.

2.3 Response

- Number of initial assessments from contacts.
- Response time for follow up to initial contact with helpline (by agreed time bands).
- Average length of time between disclosure of abuse and link to therapeutic support.
- Number of referrals to Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor or Co-ordinators
- Number of referrals to other statutory safeguarding agencies.
- Number of individuals provided with ongoing advocacy and other direct support via the service.

- Number of referrals to other agencies for support by type, e.g.; formal counselling and other therapies.
- Number of community-based support activities or interventions facilitated by the hub by type, e.g.; formal counselling, other therapies, self-help, residential retreat, etc.
- Compliance with contractual and regulatory requirements.

2.4 Finance

Accounting for the use of funds provided under the agreement, for the operation of this service in the agreed format, e.g.; quarterly reports based on management accounts for the service, as well as report on progress and planning for sustainability of service.

2.5 External evaluation

In addition to the monitoring requirements, and as detailed in the service specification, the supplier will engage and co-operate with the third-party organisation (to be confirmed) who will have been appointed to evaluate the “Safe Spaces” project.

Any relevant information provided by the supplier for the purposes of monitoring and managing the agreement for the provision of the service will also be made available to the third-party external evaluator on request.

NewCo will be responsible for ensuring information sharing is undertaken appropriately and safely under the terms of this agreement and in line with the agreement governing the external evaluation.