



THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

NATIONAL CHURCH INSTITUTIONS



APPOINTMENT OF **Executive Chair**

Safeguarding Structures Programme Board
May 2025

Saxton Bampfylde

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ABOUT

Across the Church of England, people who are serving in every expression and entity – parishes, cathedrals, theological colleges, diocesan offices, bishops’ councils – are acutely aware of our responsibilities to offer a safe and accessible welcome to everyone and to demonstrate openly and transparently that this is what we are doing.

The Safeguarding Structures programme is the work which responds to the mandate from General Synod to increase the independence of scrutiny and delivery in Church safeguarding, so as to improve consistency of service and confidence in safeguarding.

The Lead Bishop for Safeguarding Structures and her team are in the process of constituting a Programme Board, which will oversee two Project Boards delivering major workstreams:

1. Scrutiny of Church Safeguarding
2. Operational Delivery of Church Safeguarding

This programme will run for three years because it includes developing and passing legislation which must follow a rigorous and transparent process, accountable to and approved by General Synod and then Parliament.

The Scrutiny Project Board, overseen by the Programme Board, will take the policy decisions required to:

- (i) set up an external scrutiny body which will provide external assessment of how the Church of England is performing on safeguarding and operate an end-stage complaint process (perhaps something similar to an ombudsman service) and commission audits and reviews; and
- (ii) oversee the development of a local complaint policy for use in dioceses and cathedrals, among other similar duties.

The Operational Delivery Project Board, overseen by the Programme Board, will take the policy decisions required to:

- (i) transfer certain national safeguarding operational functions to a new service;
- (ii) test in detail the feasibility of transferring operational safeguarding activities currently delivered through 84 registered charities (including cathedral and diocesan teams) to line management by one external employer, and take this feasibility analysis to General Synod for decision; and
- (iii) take the policy decisions required to develop and implement the decision taken by General Synod.

The day-to-day operation of delivering the work that General Synod has commissioned is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Structures team of highly qualified and experienced staff with backgrounds in statutory regulation, policy development, change management, safeguarding, survivor participation, strategic communications and engagement, and organisational design, among other disciplines.

The Safeguarding Structures Programme Board is a delegated committee of the Archbishops’ Council, which is a charity set up in law to co-ordinate, promote, aid and further the work and mission of the Church of England, and is one of the National Church Institutions. The Archbishops’ Council employ the Safeguarding Structures staff team.

Some of the Board members and staff working on this programme are regular churchgoers and others are not. This work is delivered by people of all faiths and none. They all want to see the Church of England offer the best possible welcome to everyone.





THE ROLE

As Executive Chair of the Safeguarding Structures Programme Board, you will lead and champion a three-year programme mandated by General Synod to enhance the independence, consistency and credibility of Church safeguarding. You will ensure the Programme Board and its two Project Boards maintain momentum and operate within a robust governance framework by guiding workplans, chairing meetings and driving decisions at pace. Acting as the principal advocate and spokesperson—alongside the Lead Bishop—you will drive trauma-informed practice, engage survivors and safeguarding experts, and represent the programme under media and public scrutiny, in order to keep the focus firmly on its core objectives.

- Providing clear, strategic leadership to the Programme Board, ensuring the Programme operates within its terms of reference.
- Maintaining the focus of the Programme, including its various project boards and workstreams, ensuring that the Programme maintains momentum with decisions taken at pace throughout the programme's lifecycle.
- Overseeing the development of a robust governance framework for the Programme, ensuring transparency, efficiency and effective decision-making.
- Developing and guiding the Programme Board's workplan, ensuring clear, realistic objectives.
- Chairing regular Programme Board meetings, fostering an inclusive, collaborative and accountable environment and ensuring that the Programme Board functions effectively.
- Making sure that the work of the Programme and Project Boards is discussed and delivered in a way which meaningfully recognises and is sensitive to the trauma experienced by victims and survivors of abuse which has been perpetrated in the Church of England.
- Being personally committed to, and encouraging others to, developing one's own awareness and understanding of trauma and its consequences.
- Acting as an advocate for the Programme, ensuring victims and survivors, safeguarding experts and parish safeguarding officers are effectively engaged in shaping its work.
- In conjunction with the Lead Bishop for Safeguarding Structures, acting as the spokesperson of the programme at high-level meetings, media engagements and in the public forum, under intense media and public scrutiny.
- Supporting the Lead Bishop to report to General Synod and other Church of England governance bodies as required.
- Ensuring that the Programme focuses on its core objectives and those items within the scope of the programme, in an environment where there are multiple competing priorities and an ongoing journey of culture change.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The successful candidate should possess the following experience, knowledge, skills and personal attributes:

Safeguarding knowledge and understanding

- Demonstrable chief officer or chair level experience of leadership in a public sector (Government or equivalent) organisation which delivers safeguarding, demonstrating a deep understanding of the complexities and challenges within existing safeguarding systems.
- Knowledge of safeguarding policies, procedures and relevant legislation and of leading and managing processes of change within the safeguarding sector.
- Demonstrable commitment to trauma-informed working, and empathy for victims and survivors of abuse.

Leadership and Strategic Oversight

- Proven experience of planning, overseeing, and delivering large-scale, complex, organisational change, within a senior leadership capacity in local/national government or equivalent, where the space is contested and where there is an active media – and therefore able to demonstrate high levels of personal resilience;
- Proven experience of chairing or leading governance bodies within complex programmes, particularly within the public or charity sectors.
- Extensive experience of building and shaping programme structures, and of developing and implementing long-term transformation plans.
- Ability to build consensus and manage resistance to change among diverse stakeholder groups.
- Strong political awareness and ability to navigate complex and sensitive environments where demonstrating tangible progress is key.
- Strong understanding of programme management including the ability to effectively manage a number of projects, dependencies and risks simultaneously.
- Proven track record of overseeing programmes which deliver on time and within budget.

Governance and accountability

- Experience of overseeing and supporting governance structures for programme delivery.
- Extensive understanding of governance principles and best practices, with an ability to integrate new programmes effectively within existing organisational governance frameworks.
- Commitment to transparency and accountability in order to maintain credibility and trust with victims and survivors and within the wider Church community.
- Sympathy with the ethos, mission and work of the Church of England.

Stakeholder Management and Communication

- A proven and accomplished spokesperson; this role requires a confident and credible ambassador experienced in authoritatively representing an organisation to the media under intense scrutiny.
- Exceptional communication and interpersonal skills including the ability to communicate complex changes clearly and sensitively.
- Exceptional ability to build and maintain effective relationships with a wide range of stakeholders internal and external to the Church, including victims and survivors of abuse.
- Ability to foster a collaborative and inclusive working environment.
- Proven ability to influence and negotiate effectively.

Financial Management

- Understanding of financial governance including experience of overseeing substantial budgets and resources.
- Proven ability to ensure efficient and effective allocation of resources to support the programme and its operations.

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

This will be a 3-year appointment. It is anticipated that the successful candidate will be required to work 8-10 days each month. Remuneration will be a competitive consulting rate on a retained basis.

HOW TO APPLY

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to the National Church Institutions on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code **FBUCA**.

Click on the ‘apply’ button and follow the instructions to submit an application and complete the equal opportunities monitoring form.

The closing date for applications is **midday on 13th June 2025**.

- The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application.

Data Protection

According to GDPR guidelines, Saxton Bampfylde Ltd are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.





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