

PAST CASE REVIEW 2020 A GUIDE FOR SURVIVORS

What is a past case review?

The Church of England has started an important review of every safeguarding case since 2007. This involves reading the personal records file of every member of clergy and people who work in the church whether as an organist, volunteer youth worker or employee. It includes anybody who volunteers and works with children or adults who are vulnerable. We are looking at any complaints we have received and are asking parishes and communities about any concerns arising in the past, as well as now.

We are undergoing an independent review of our safeguarding cases past and present. The 3 independent reviewers are experienced safeguarding professionals who are either Social Work England registered social workers or former police officers or solicitors. They are not employed by the diocese, but we are funding their work.

The independent reviewers are reading over five thousand files. If people have moved on to work elsewhere, we are checking with their new diocese to ensure their files are read there. We are working with colleges, hospitals, prisons, and all institutions who may employ chaplains and others, so that we can be as thorough as possible to examine any issues. This is a national effort and we expect it will take until early 2021 to complete. All our parishes have engaged with the review and the review is supported by all the Diocese of London bishops.

What is the national church doing?

They are coordinating the national programme of reviews and they have asked us to send them the review report when it is done. They will publish the reports and respond to the findings. In the Diocese of London both the General Secretary and the board of trustees are fully behind this review and have provided the resources to make this happen.

How are we listening to survivors of abuse in the church in London?

If you were abused by someone in our churches, we will listen to you, but if it was in another diocese, we will ask that diocese to work with you. It does not matter where you live now, we will speak to you and ask you if you would like to take part in this review in three ways:

- 1. We are holding video conferenced focus groups using zoom**
- 2. We are booking up to an hour slot for a one to one telephone meeting with one of the independent reviewers**
- 3. We are asking you to complete a questionnaire**

We would like to know how you found the diocese, church staff and officers response and if safeguarding staff were involved when you disclosed your circumstances. We would like to know whether we could do better or whether you felt listened to and your case was handled sensitively? We are hoping you have been adequately supported, but if this is not the case, we would like to sign post you to the right professionals to offer help.

We would like to learn from your views and experiences so that we can design services and build partnerships to help any victims and survivors who come to us to receive the right help and advice.

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What is the local London offer to help you?

We have a listening service and you will be offered access to an Authorised Listener. Our Listeners are independent professionals with a therapeutic background who understand the church environment and will help you to work out what further support you need and what action you can take.

As part of the national project there is also a helpline number run by the NSPCC if you would like support from someone not in the diocese.

**Past Cases Review 2 NSPCC helpline for Children and Adults:
0800 80 20 20**

What can you expect from us?

We will listen and take forward what you tell us. We will not reopen your case if its concluded and there is no new information. If you need support, we will signpost you to the professionals who can assist you. In some cases, we may not be able to help, but we will do our best to.

How we will listen and how we will act?

The safeguarding team have been trained by The National Association for People Abused in Childhood (NAPAC) who is the UK's leading national charity offering support to adult survivors of all types of childhood abuse, including physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect; and we will work within their principles. The safeguarding team are professionals and will respect your wishes and support you when we can. We will maintain your confidentiality and we will take action when we can, but if we cannot, we will discuss the reasons why with you.

These are organisations who can also help:

Victim Support <https://www.victimsupport.org.uk>

NAPAC <https://napac.org.uk>

For further information contact:

PCR2 Project team

Ailsa Reid-Crawford

Susie Barber

pcr2@london.anglican.org

Safeguarding Team

Andrew Munro

safeguarding@london.anglican.org

tel:020 7932 1224