

The Church of England's National Safeguarding Team has today published a progress report, one year on from the Elliott Review, which recommended a range of safeguarding proposals for the Church, particularly in the areas of handling disclosures and accountability.

The independent review, by safeguarding consultant Ian Elliott, was commissioned in 2015, to look at lessons learnt in the case of 'Joe', a survivor of clerical sexual abuse. He reported that he had disclosed his abuse over a number of years to different people on separate occasions, both within and outside the Church and that he had not received a response which he felt adequately addressed his needs. The report, which was received by the Bishop of Crediton, Sarah Mullally, as a senior woman in the Church, at the request of the survivor, made a range of recommendations.

The Church has issued an unreserved apology to Joe and on publication of the report last year, said it was fully committed to implementing the recommendations. The responses to these include: Strengthening of the training for handling disclosures with a bespoke module for bishops and senior church staff; an independent audit of safeguarding in all dioceses, due to be completed at the end of the year; further plans to work more closely with survivors to learn from their experience.

The full recommendations and responses can be read in the [Progress Report](#).

Bishop Sarah said: "I continue to be absolutely committed to ensuring that the implementation of these recommendations is carried out at all levels of the Church, I know this was the promise of the Archbishop of Canterbury when he read the Report. I have had personal contact with Joe throughout the year and am aware of the ongoing suffering and pain he has endured as a survivor of this terrible abuse. As a Church we must do better in our response to all survivors and I am encouraged that by working through the implications of this review we are already starting to see a more unified approach to safeguarding training and awareness. Practical changes resulting from any review are always important but these must be accompanied by a hearts and minds sea change so we respond with compassion to all who come forward. I know for Joe progress may not be fast enough but I am reassured by that we are moving in the right direction."

[Elliot review findings](#)

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