

Following today's preliminary hearing held by the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, chaired by Justice Goddard, the Church of England has issued the following statement.

"We welcome the plans outlined in today's preliminary hearing by Justice Goddard, for the Anglican Church, as it examines the extent to which institutions and organisations in England and Wales have taken seriously their responsibility to protect children.

As a church we will be offering full cooperation and are committed to working in an open and transparent way, with a survivor-informed response. We are already reviewing our 2008 Past Cases Review, referred to in today's hearing.

We commend those survivors who have come forward as core participants or who are contributing to the Truth Project, knowing how costly it will be to relive their experiences. It goes without saying we will examine lessons learnt from the Inquiry's findings and believe it will play a vital part in our commitment to making the Church a safer place for all.

The true cost of child abuse and the abuse of adults at risk is far higher than any of us have ever been prepared to acknowledge in terms of the mental, emotional, social and physical health and well-being of very large numbers of our population."

The Rt Revd. Paul Butler, Bishop of Durham, lead Church of England bishop on safeguarding.

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