

Statement from the Rt Revd Paul Butler, Bishop of Durham, lead bishop on safeguarding:

"Following a hearing at the Central Criminal Court today Bishop Peter Ball has pleaded guilty to two charges of indecent assault and one charge of misconduct in public office.

We offer an unreserved apology to all the survivors and those affected by this news. We commend the bravery of those who brought these allegations forward, acknowledging how difficult and distressing this would have been.

We are aware that two individuals will not have the opportunity to have their case heard in criminal court following the plea agreement.

Peter Ball was charged with the offences following his arrest in November 2012 and as a Church we have provided full co-operation with the police throughout their investigation.

The Church of England always takes any allegations of abuse very seriously and is committed to being a safe place for all. To this end we have robust procedures and policies in place. But we can never be complacent. Any survivors or those with information about church-related abuse must always feel free to come forward knowing that they will be listened to in confidence.

Should anyone have further information or need to discuss the personal impact of this news the Church has worked with the NSPCC to set up a confidential helpline no. 0800 389 5344."

Notes

- [Sussex Police statement](#)

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