

A new service providing vital support for survivors of church-related abuse has become operational today.



Safe Spaces, commissioned by the Anglican and Catholic Churches in England and Wales, will be run by Victim Support, a national charity with a track record of providing survivor support.

Safe Spaces is a free and independent support service, providing a confidential, personal and safe space for anyone who has been abused through their relationship with either the Church of England, Church in Wales or the Catholic Church of England and Wales.

Safe Spaces comprises a team of trained support advocates, who have undergone specialist training in supporting survivors of sexual violence and who have received additional specific training in how the churches respond to abuse cases, the way in which faith and church-related settings have been used to carry out abuse, and the particular issues affecting people who have had or still have, a relationship with the church.

The service is for those who may have experienced any form abuse, including sexual abuse, physical abuse, financial abuse, psychological abuse (including spiritual abuse), domestic abuse, coercive and controlling behaviour.

**The Bishop of Southampton, Debbie Sellin, Deputy Lead Safeguarding Bishop for the Church of England, said:** "I'm delighted that this service will shortly be available to offer support and advice to survivors of abuse.

"I want to express my thanks to all those who have helped to bring the project together, particularly the survivors who have given of their time and energy.

"In Victim Support, we have an excellent operational lead, and we look forward to continuing a constructive partnership with them as well as the other denominations involved.

"I commend the service for use and hope colleagues will do all they can to promote it locally."

The service will run for an initial two years, with a view to extending this. It has been paid for by the Catholic and Anglican churches involved, supported by a grant from Allchurches Trust.

## More information

- [Safe Spaces website](#)
- [Read the announcement on Victim Support's website](#)
- [Previous news: Victim Support appointed to run 'Safe Spaces'](#)

---

**Source URL:** <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-news-and-releases/safe-spaces-launches-offer-support-survivors>