

The publication of the report of the public inquiry into child sex abuse in Telford, demands a response from all organisations working with children and young people. Over a thousand girls, across decades, were subject to Child Sexual Exploitation. Not only were signs ignored, but victims went unheard and were often themselves blamed.

Church leaders and representatives can be reluctant to comment publicly on the safeguarding shortcomings of other institutions, quite simply because of the Church's own failures to protect those who are vulnerable or to respond well to survivors and victims. But we must speak up.

There is no doubt that victims and survivors were badly failed and we should all be asking what we can learn from this important inquiry and how we can better protect children and young people in our communities.

We all need to listen to the voices of victims and survivors and to take them seriously. We all need to learn to recognise the signs of abuse and how best to respond.

We mourn the failure of our society, of which the Church is part, to protect these children and we long for justice and for safer communities.

We hope the recommendations and learnings from this will ensure that there is greater awareness in all our communities and institutions so we can end the sexual exploitation of children.

Bishop of Birkenhead, Julie Conalty, Church of England's deputy lead bishop, survivor engagement

Bishop of Shrewsbury, Sarah Bullock (Lichfield Diocese)

Zena Marshall, interim national director of safeguarding

Telford child sex abuse went on for generations, inquiry finds - BBC News

If you or anyone you are in contact with are affected by the publication of this report/this news and want to talk to someone independently please call the Safe Spaces helpline on 0300 303 1056 or email safespaces@victimsupport.org.uk.

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