

Letters to the Church Times

C of E support for survivors and victims of abuse

August 5

Sir, — In response to your report “Survivors upset by delay to redress scheme” ([News, 22 July](#)), I repeat our apology to victims and survivors that the scheme is not going to be fully functioning as soon as we would have hoped. As we have previously pointed out, other schemes of a similar scale took three years to establish, owing to their significant complexity. But I would like to emphasise that we are committed to there being no gap of provision of support for survivors and victims, whether through our current interim support scheme for those in urgent need or through a possible pilot redress project before the main scheme is in place.

The Redress Board, which I chair, and which is tasked with establishing the scheme, continues to work closely with a survivor working group, and two representatives serve on the Redress Board. Their input is key to development of the redress scheme.

Lastly, let me clarify what the principle of subsidiarity refers to. This is about ensuring that appropriate responsibility is taken across the Church for our safeguarding failings, wherever abuse has actually taken place. It is about the national and local Church’s working together, with details still to be agreed. But it is vital to emphasise that this will not affect the survivor-facing aspects of the scheme. Claims will not be thus delayed, and survivors will have a single point of contact, and will certainly not be passed from institution to institution, as has been suggested.

It is important that, as a Church together, we do not forget the failings, highlighted in our three [IICSA](#) hearings, that allowed abuse to happen, and that we work together to make our Church a safer place for all. In working to establish the redress scheme, the Board as a whole is deeply committed to putting in place a scheme that is robust and evidently fit for its purpose, and to do so in as timely a manner as possible.

Bishop of Truro, Philip Mounstephen, Chair of the Redress Board

August 12

Sir, further to last week’s letter [C of E support for survivors and victims of abuse](#) from Bishop Philip Mounstephen, chair of the Church of England’s redress board, we would like to add the following points.

Over the last year the Working Group of victims and survivors has met to help shape the development of the Redress Scheme. Both as a group, and with two representatives on the Redress Scheme Project Board, we are working to be a voice for survivors and help to ensure the Redress Scheme is centred around the needs of those who have experienced church related abuse. We are working with the Church of England in the hope that the Scheme can be a functional and fair source of redress, offering compensation for harm caused, acknowledgement and apology, and support for emotional and spiritual recovery. The plans are developing and moving forward, although the scale of the task means it is slower than originally hoped for and we want it to be the best it can be. We are pleased to hear that the Church is discussing closing the gap between the Interim Scheme and the Redress Scheme. It is crucial that the current gaps in provision are closed to ensure that the necessary support for survivors remains available

Redress Scheme Victim and Survivor Working Group

