

The Lead Bishops for Safeguarding, Joanne Grenfell, Julie Conalty and Robert Springett have written to survivors and their advocates following the Archbishop of Canterbury's speech in the House of Lords.

*We write after watching Archbishop Justin's farewell speech in the House of Lords yesterday. We have heard from several of you about the distress and anger that this has caused you.*

*Both in content and delivery, the speech was utterly insensitive, lacked any focus on victims and survivors of abuse, especially those affected by John Smyth, and made light of the events surrounding the Archbishop's resignation. It was mistaken and wrong. We acknowledge and deeply regret that this has caused further harm to you in an already distressing situation.*

*We know that the Church of England has seriously failed over many years at many levels in relation to safeguarding, and we are so sorry that yesterday's speech was the antithesis of all that we are now trying to work towards in terms of culture change and redress with all of you.*

*As lead bishops for safeguarding in the Church of England, we apologize to you.*

*We will continue to do all we can to change the culture of the Church, so that abuse is exposed and prevented, those in authority are held to account, and the searching light of truth is allowed to shine into every corner of our lives.*

*If you are or are in contact with someone affected by this letter, please call the Safe Spaces helpline on 0300 303 1056 or visit [this webpage](#) where other support services are listed.*

**Joanne Grenfell, Julie Conalty, Robert Springett**

**Lead bishops for safeguarding**

- Following [Archbishop Justin's apology](#), Bishop Joanne said: "I welcome that Archbishop Justin has apologised for the hurt that his speech in the House of Lords caused."