



In response to an item on Channel 4 news this evening about the Bishop of Liverpool, John Perumbalath, we provided the following statement.

A spokesperson for the Church of England said: "Anyone who comes forward to make a complaint will be taken seriously, treated with respect and their voice will be heard."

"We can confirm that early in 2023 a complaint of alleged misconduct against Bishop John Perumbalath was brought to the National Safeguarding Team (NST). This complaint was made after Bishop John Perumbalath had formally and legally become Bishop of Liverpool.

"The complaint was looked into according to statutory safeguarding guidance in an NST-led process and an independent risk assessment undertaken.

"This process concluded that there were no ongoing safeguarding concerns, but a learning outcome was identified with which the bishop fully engaged.

"The complaint was also investigated by the police which resulted in no further action.

"The NST concluded that there was not sufficient evidence to bring a safeguarding-related complaint under the Clergy Discipline Measure (CDM) itself but offered the woman support if she wished to do so. The NST continues to have contact, at her request, with the woman who came forward and the offer of ongoing support remains.

"Some time subsequently, after hearing the details of the complaint directly from the complainant, the Lead Safeguarding Bishop also offered advice and support to the woman if she wished to bring a CDM complaint. That offer also remains.

"While we do not discuss specific details of individual cases, this matter was taken very seriously while protecting the confidentiality of the complainant.

"Shortly after the start of this process a further disclosure was made by another woman. The information brought by the second complainant was explored and assessed not to be a safeguarding matter but a matter of alleged misconduct. Pastoral support has been provided throughout for the second complainant and is ongoing.

"The second complainant did not bring a CDM complaint within the one-year deadline. She later applied for permission to bring it after the deadline, which the Archbishop of York fully supported.

"However, this was refused by an independent judge, the Deputy President of Tribunals.

"Archbishop Stephen has supported the complainant pastorally throughout the process and continues to offer practical help. He had no part in the decision-making around safeguarding or disciplinary matters."

## Notes to editors

There were a number of inaccuracies in Channel 4 News's report tonight including:

- The report stated that the body which nominates new bishops (the CNC) was not told of the allegations when they nominated the new Bishop of Liverpool. This is because the CNC met and nominated Bishop John six months before any allegations against Bishop John were made.
- The report also claims that Bishop John did not receive the required two-thirds majority on the CNC to be appointed. This is not true – it's not possible, under the rules, for a CNC to nominate someone as a bishop if they don't secure the two-thirds majority.

## Finding support

If you or anyone you are in contact with are affected by the publication of this report and want to talk to someone independently please call the Safe Spaces helpline on 0300 303 1056 or visit [safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk](https://safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk).

Alternatively, you may wish to contact the [diocesan safeguarding team in your area](#) or the National Safeguarding Team at [safeguarding@churchofengland.org](mailto:safeguarding@churchofengland.org).

There are also [other support services available](#).

---

**Source URL:** <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/press-releases/statement-response-channel-4-news-story>