

The Church of England's Lead Safeguarding Bishop, Joanne Grenfell, has responded to the publication of a [report by the Anglican Church in South Africa](#) (ACSA) examining its failure to respond adequately to a warning from the Church of England about the abuse perpetrated by John Smyth. The report also makes recommendations on ACSA's safeguarding process.

Bishop Joanne said: "The report will be a harrowing reminder of the horrific abuse inflicted by the late John Smyth. We are aware that any fresh focus is retraumatising for victims and survivors, who continue to be offered support.

"As I commented when the Makin Review was published in November, it is appalling that any clergy person could believe that covering up abuse was justified in the name of the Gospel. It is evident that Smyth was allowed to go abroad in the 1980s, with the full knowledge by some in the Church of his abuse. This was wrong and should not have happened.

"The Makin Review already made clear that information about Smyth's abuse was reported to the police (on a number of occasions) and to ACSA. ACSA's own review confirms today that they did receive this information from the Diocese of Ely in 2013. While they state that they have not found any evidence of abuse by Smyth within their churches, they do admit that the Diocese of Cape Town's communication of the danger which Smyth posed between when they were informed of that danger (2013) and when he died (2018) fell short of what the circumstances demanded.

"This is sobering to read. I am glad both that ACSA rapidly commissioned their own review in response to the Makin Review, and that they are now transparent about its findings. We join them in penitence for the failings of our Churches and in redoubling our efforts to care for and listen to victims and survivors, and to take all necessary and possible steps to respond well to all allegations of abuse."

*Please also see a [statement from the Archbishop of Cape Town](#).*

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