

The Bishop of Durham, Paul Butler, Chair of the Churches National safeguarding committee, made the following comments to the *Press Association* in response to Home Secretary Theresa May's [announcement](#) yesterday that there will be two inquiries into alleged child abuse and cover up in Westminster in the 1970s and 80s. The Hillsborough-style inquiry, not expected to report until after the General Election next year, is likely to investigate all institutions, including the Church, about their 'duty of care to protect children'.

Press Association report and interview

A full public inquiry into institutional sex abuse needs to take place or the whole truth might not come out, the Bishop of Durham has said.

The Right Rev Paul Butler said he believed the country has a problem with this kind of abuse and it is important that victims have their stories heard and they receive justice.

He also acknowledged that the process of investigating such abuse could highlight unpleasant and difficult stories from within the church.

"We're really pleased there's been quite a shift and that an inquiry is now taking place," he said.

"Over a month ago the Archbishop of Canterbury, with support of Cardinal Nichols and the president of the Methodist Church, wrote to the Home Secretary saying a full public inquiry is required into institutional child abuse, which I followed up in the House of Lords a few days ago.

"A full public inquiry is required because under those terms people have to take oaths and therefore swear to tell the truth. My fear is the whole story won't come out without that.

"We're absolutely clear that the Church of England and other churches need to be involved in this inquiry as we already know there are parts of our history that involve church people having committed abuse.

"So we have to be investigated just like anybody else and there will probably be some unpleasant and difficult stories to handle and I accept that's part of the reality.

"We think there is a real problem around institutional abuse, so schools, civil service, police, politicians and the church, we need to try and get to the bottom of why people can get into institutions and use those institutions as a safe place to abuse.

"Victim survivors need justice and they need their story to be heard and, as a nation, we need to help them to move on."