

REDRESS PROJECT UPDATE February 2023

The Project Team continues to work alongside Church colleagues and the members of the Victims and Survivors Working Group to deliver a comprehensive National Redress Scheme for those who are victims and survivors of church-related abuse within the Church of England.

As well as the regular Board meetings and Survivors Working Group meetings, there are a number of sub-groups which work on specific work-streams, aiming to deliver the scheme in an effective and timely way.

The team is ensuring that we learn lessons from other redress schemes already operating, such as those set up by the Australian and Scottish governments. This should ensure appropriate design of the scheme and this can take time to ensure we “get it right”. It is correct to note that these government schemes took several years from inception to delivery.

We have recently been considering how the elements of non-financial redress will be taken forward and delivered alongside the financial elements. *The non-financial elements of the scheme remain an essential part of the National Redress Scheme.*

There are two survivors working as integral members of the project’s procurement sub-group as well as two survivors working as key members of the communications sub-group to advise and guide the project team.

There will be news on wider consultation soon.

Here is the regular update on the last Project Board:

On 18/1/2023 the Redress Project Board met. This Board ensures appropriate governance is in place to support the project and check that progress is being made in this vitally important and complex work for the Church of England.

The Board was chaired by Bishop Philip Mounstephen. The full membership includes two members of the Survivors’ Working Group, who have lived experience of abuse within the Church.

The Board received a update report from the Project Manager, summarising the current progress of the project.

There was then an opportunity for the two representatives from the Survivors’ Group to feed back some of the views of that Group, to other Board members. This followed on from a discussion, shortly before Christmas, where Bishop Philip had met the entire Survivors’ Group, where they were seeking some clarifications.

The Secretary General of the Archbishops’ Council made some significant points about the importance of Board members being in a position to understand the “inter-dependencies” of the scheme and how some complex strands of work will fit together to ensure success and timeliness. He asked the Project Team to present additional papers for the Board in March 2023, to allow Board members to appropriately scrutinise the plans. He also emphasised the importance of engaging internal and external stakeholders in developing the scheme.

Members then moved onto discuss a paper relating to the duration of the proposed Church of England Redress scheme. This included discussion about other Redress schemes already established elsewhere in the world and in the UK and how these were operating.

A communications paper was reviewed and a number of proposed changes and additions to stakeholder lists were made. The communications paper was informed by the Survivor Working Group sub-committee and follows the principles of communication agreed with the survivors of church-related abuse on that Working Group.

Regular updates from Board meetings will continue through 2023, as the project progresses, decisions are made and timelines are confirmed.

We also aim to keep victims and survivors informed of any updates posted on this webpage through the Survivor Engagement Newsletter. If a victim, survivor or any person with lived experience of Church-related abuse wants to sign up, they should contact engage.safeguarding@churchofengland.org