

Synod Main Presentation Redress

It's a privilege to be here today, 5 years after Jo Kind stood before you as the first survivor to address Synod, and called upon you to borrow the courage of survivors to radically change church safeguarding. I'll let you judge how far you have progressed with that over 5 years.

Why Redress?

Church-based abuse is a betrayal of trust causing moral, spiritual and psychological injury as well as the harm from the abuse itself. It ruptures our relationship with our faith community and God. As Judith Herman says: **"If trauma originates in a fundamental injustice, the full healing must require repair through some measure of justice from the larger community."**

Survivors need the Church to meet us with belief, acknowledgement, apology and support to rebuild shattered lives. Redress is so much more than throwing money at survivors and hoping they will go away.

What does good Redress look like?

Some key messages from 7 survivors in the working group and those who completed the survivor survey:

Redress must be generous, timely, and non-litigious. The process must be survivor-centred, treating us with humanity and compassion, providing independent advocacy & support. There must be risk & needs assessment at the start and provision for any victims rejected by the scheme.

Non-financial redress is also important to many survivors. We are developing ideas for this, including at a corporate level:

- a Truth & Reconciliation process, public apology, memorials, and clear impact on improved practice.

At an individual level,:

- personal apology, therapy, chaplaincy, securing practical support, restorative practice.

In short - Whatever it takes to restore lives

What problems does the Board need to solve?

There are still a number of challenges for the Board to solve, including:

- ensuring the scheme offers redress to ALL survivors – not just those that reach civil claims threshold;
- finding a way of to pay for the scheme which is fair, doesn't bankrupt parishes and means survivors don't have to go cap in hand to the source of their abuse;
- creating a process that doesn't re-traumatise, especially for new disclosures;
- gaining the trust of all stakeholders, including survivors, churches, lawyers and insurers

It is vital that this is not another project like the ISB where the church promises much & delivers nothing, cruelly destroying your hope and your life in the process.

Redress represents so much more than whatever tangible support is delivered by the scheme.

To me, it represents **Freedom**: My abusers slowly destroyed my soul, telling me this is what God wants for me. Redress can bring freedom from trauma, through demonstrating that was not God's desire.

It represents **Hope**: the church response told me I don't matter, what happened to me doesn't matter & I spent much of my life believing that, after all, I didn't matter to God. Redress can bring me hope of knowing perhaps the church does care, perhaps I can find healing.

It represents **Justice**: trauma ruptured my relationship with my faith community; the moral injury is a wound we all carry. A truth & reconciliation process could offer justice and restoration not just for survivors, but the wider Body of Christ.

So, we need a commitment to whatever it takes to repair the rupture and wounds from abuse. For isn't that our mission, to restore our broken relationship with God and each other? So isn't this work where the church should be leading the way?

I don't have much faith in the church anymore. But I do have faith in God. I have faith in God to help us to live up to our part of the covenant, to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with our God.

Synod, I am asking you to support the development for the scheme. Be ambitious for survivors & for the whole church, hold the Board to account for delivering a scheme that is generous, inclusive, survivor-centred, and provides a lasting legacy that can change the culture of the whole church and offer survivors life in all its fullness.

Thank you.