
PUBLIC STATEMENT concerning the Makin Review

The long-awaited review of John Smyth's prolific abuse of well over 100 boys and young men over 40 years in three countries is deeply disturbing, grieving and challenging. The review comprehensively highlights how Smyth was able to 'hide in plain sight', through his wealth, reputation as a high profile influential QC, and direct association with a number of different evangelical organisations, including the conservative evangelical Iwerne camps.

It is a particular grief that, despite the criminal nature of his activities being identified as early as 1982, inexcusable cover-ups and failures to follow-up concerns in the Church at the highest level failed to prevent Smyth's abuse continuing as late as 2017. Archbishop Justin Welby's decision to resign over his own part in this should not distract from the extent of the issues identified in the review, and the need for church to embed in our culture that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility, that issues such as unaccountable power, theological elitism or organisational group-think should give no place to hide for abusers.

I regret that the National Safeguarding Team's official briefing for survivors and victims, whose welfare is our primary concern, has not happened sooner, since the premature leak of the review last week; but anyone for whom this has opened up old wounds and traumas will find a free, independent, confidential safe space for support provided by Safe Spaces England & Wales, [HERE](#). Those churches in the Ebbsfleet Network will receive a slightly fuller Ad Clerum today, but the recommendations of the review will require much further reflection and response in the future. We must ensure the legacy of this review leads to lasting change, both for our network and the wider Church.