

# INDEPENDENT LEARNING LESSONS REVIEW

## JOHN SMYTH QC

*“I was once asked if I still thought about being involved with John Smyth. I replied, ‘No’, but in fact I have done, more than I realise probably, to the extent that at times I have let it define me, like letting what I see in the rear-view mirror distract me from what’s in front”.*

A victim of John Smyth, 2022

**Keith Makin**  
Independent Reviewer

18<sup>th</sup> October 2024

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Background

- 1.1 The Review has been produced in line with the terms of reference (ToR) comprising instructions to the review team. The core objective of the Review is to allow victims to describe their experiences; and to allow the Review to consider the actions of Church participants to identify good practice and failings in the handling of the allegations relating to John Smyth. It answers the questions set out in the ToR; makes criticisms of organisations and individuals; and reaches decisive conclusions about the lapses and failings that enabled John Smyth to commit sickening abuse.
- 1.2 It has taken longer than anyone would have wished to produce the Review. It has been important to do justice to victims, including by listening carefully and accurately recording their detailed accounts. A very significant amount of evidence has been generated, covering a period of some 40 years, from many more contributors (and previously unknown victims) than anticipated. New sources of evidence, running to many thousands of pages, emerged in the course of the Review. The sheer extent of the trauma generated by John Smyth required, in our judgment, that meeting with victims and other key contributors took place in person – a process hindered and delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic. The complexity of the subject-matter and the sheer extent of the abuse perpetrated exceeded the expectations of the commissioning authority such that the original timetable was shown to be unrealistic. And the many parallel lines of investigations linked to the Review, including by the police, generated requirements on the Review team to support and assist. We deeply regret that delay and the additional distress it may have caused John Smyth's victims.

### Key findings

- 1.3 John Smyth was an appalling abuser of children and young men. His abuse was prolific, brutal and horrific. His victims were subjected to traumatic physical, sexual, psychological and spiritual attacks. The impact of that abuse is impossible to overstate and has permanently marked the lives of his victims. John Smyth's own family are victims of his abuse.
- 1.4 John Smyth's activities were identified in the 1980s. Despite considerable efforts by individuals to bring to the attention of relevant authorities the scope and horror of Smyth's conduct, including by victims and by some clergy, the steps taken by the Church of England and other organisations and individuals were ineffective and neither fully exposed nor prevented further abuse by him.
- 1.5 Church officers and others were made aware of the abuse in the form of a key report in 1982 prepared by the Reverend Mark Ruston. The recipients of that report participated in an active cover-up to prevent that report and its findings – including that crimes had been committed - coming to light. There is no excuse or good explanation that justifies that decision. Different – and we strongly suspect better, for subsequent victims – outcomes would have followed had appropriate reports to the police and other statutory authorities been made then.
- 1.6 In line with the ToR, we have placed the actions of individuals and Church bodies in context, and considered against the standards of practice which applied at the relevant time. An argument which has been offered in order to partially explain John Smyth's abuses is that they were examples of over-enthusiastic corporal punishment. The conclusion of the Review is that he committed criminal acts of gross abuse.
- 1.7 Further abuse could and should have been prevented. John Smyth's victims were not sufficiently supported by the Church and their views on escalating his abuse to the police and other authorities were not sought.
- 1.8 In the period between 1984 and 2001, at which time John Smyth relocated to Zimbabwe and subsequently South Africa, Church officers knew of the abuse and failed to take the steps necessary to prevent further abuse occurring. Throughout this period – and particularly given the Church's adoption of formal safeguarding policies from 1995 – the Church had sufficient knowledge of the abuse to have taken those steps.

- 1.9 The requirements of the safeguarding policies adopted by the Church, coupled with the moral and legal responsibilities to which Church officers were subject, demanded that more be done.
- 1.10 There were individual failings by senior clergy, and clergy who subsequently became senior. That grouping includes a former Archbishop of Canterbury, Diocesan Bishops and Canons and Reverends.
- 1.11 Following specific developments in 2012, from July 2013, the Church of England knew, at the highest level, about the abuse that took place in the late 1970s and early 1980s. John Smyth should have been properly and effectively reported to the police in the UK and to relevant authorities in South Africa. This represented a further missed opportunity to bring him to justice and may have resulted in an ongoing and avoidable safeguarding threat in the period between 2012 and his death in 2018.
- 1.12 The Church's reaction to the expose of John Smyth's abuse by Channel 4 in February 2017 was poor in terms of speed, professionalism, intensity and curiosity. The needs of the victims were not at the forefront in terms of thinking and planning; the response was not trauma-informed.

### **Thematic concerns**

- 1.13 The key thematic concerns identified by the Review comprise the following:
  - 1.13.1 Abuse of positions of trust and power;
  - 1.13.2 Excessive deference to senior clergy in leadership roles;
  - 1.13.3 That the abuse was hidden in plain sight;
  - 1.13.4 Failures of leadership and accountability for safeguarding;
  - 1.13.5 Problematic and/or insufficiently examined funding sources;
  - 1.13.6 The cover-up, over an extended period;
  - 1.13.7 Radicalisation and the exploitation of theologies by Smyth;
  - 1.13.8 The abuse in Zimbabwe and South Africa.

### **Key recommendations**

- 1.14 The Church must learn lessons from the organisational and institutional failings detailed in this Review. The Review makes 27 specific recommendations, reflecting the lessons to be learned from these terrible events. In particular, those recommendations include:
  - 1.14.1 taking active measures to understand and incorporate into revised safeguarding policies the risks associated with the abuses of power by those in positions of trust, and prioritising safeguarding considerations in decision-making;
  - 1.14.2 establishing international reciprocal safeguarding procedures with other Anglican communion institutions and leaders where allegations are made against a person in a position of trust who relocates overseas;
  - 1.14.3 ensuring independent oversight of the implementation of safeguarding measures, including the development of a wholly independent body, free from direct influence by senior Church officers, to guide the development of the Church's safeguarding procedures;
  - 1.14.4 placing safeguarding measures at the centre of every Church officer's professional responsibilities, including conducting a Church-wide review of existing policies and procedures and embodying the principle of 'never not clergy' in Codes of Conduct;



- 1.14.5 reviewing donations and funding arrangements and providing additional guidance regarding overseas missionary work, including an express and enhanced requirement of due diligence irrespective of amount;
- 1.14.6 seeking independent assurance as to the robustness of the Church's whistleblowing procedures, to ensure that credible suspicions of abuse and the risks of a cover up can be reported and investigated;
- 1.14.7 considering the application, now, of mandatory reporting within future Church safeguarding policy and procedure prior to its possible introduction as a national requirement;
- 1.14.8 ensuring that the commissioning of a full independent review of John Smyth's activities in Zimbabwe and South Africa is considered by the Church.

## FOREWORD

To the victims who suffered at the hands of John Smyth, we hope that this report and its subsequent impact will help you find peace for you and your family; we dedicate this Review to you.

We feel immensely privileged and honoured to have been able to meet with those personally affected and abused by John Smyth. We are acutely aware of how difficult the decision to engage with us would have been for many victims and their families. For some people, this abuse had been carried silently for over 40 years, and for many the trauma and suffering continue. Those who were able to contribute have openly shared their experiences of the abuse as well as articulating the devastating and lifelong impact that this has had. The nature and extent of the abuse we heard about is truly shocking. We extend our thanks to all victims who have bravely participated in the Review, including those who have tirelessly researched, campaigned, and lobbied, often at a personal cost, for a review that places their accounts in the public domain. It is our hope that those involved in responding to the learning and recommendations of this Review will harness the determination and energy of John Smyth's victims who have been relentless in their search for clarity and answers from the Church of England. We hope the Church will digest the shocking details of the abuse and the responses to it, and use the learning identified in this report to influence future safeguarding systems, policy and practice, ultimately to prevent similar tragic cases from occurring.

Significant time has passed since the abuse occurred in the 1970s and 1980s, particularly since it was first fully disclosed and investigated by Church officers in 1982. The passing of over 40 years has had a significant impact on the accuracy of information available for Review. While the accounts of victims and their records of that time have been immensely thorough, likely reflecting the impact of trauma and the abuse on their lives, many of the individual and organisational contributions we have received have been negatively impacted by the length of time that has passed. Several reasons have been given for this, including the lack of records and written information kept from the time, as well as individuals' memories of events of that time. This has hampered attempts to establish the detailed facts of the abuse and the Church's responses to it.

The original ToR suggested the Review would take nine months. However, it was clear, early in the process, that this was unachievable for a case of this magnitude and impact. Regretfully, the Review has taken much longer to conclude than was intended, which has caused much additional concern and stress for the victims of John Smyth, their families and others affected.

Given the ToR covered such a long period of non-recent history there was a need to seek out and gain as much information as available. Following a public call for evidence, several previously unknown victims contacted us and there was a need to listen carefully to, and accurately record the detailed accounts of each victim who came forward.

A larger than expected group of individuals came forward to offer their contribution to the Review including Church officers, Church participants, representatives of institutions, as well as other interested parties. We received an unexpectedly large volume of evidence requiring review which was handed to us throughout the period. Restrictions placed on us all during the Covid-19 pandemic meant progress slowed and several significant activities had to pause, such as sensitive meetings in person with victims and key contributors. Where necessary, parallel investigations have taken place with relevant statutory authorities, and investigations commissioned by the Church. This has had an impact on the time taken particularly where investigators sought further information from us. The unintended delays did not impact negatively in terms of the independence of the Review or our findings.

Many people will find this report and its contents very distressing, and we would urge caution to every reader as they go through it. The abuse by John Smyth was prolific, brutal, and horrific, the descriptions that follow reflect this. His victims experienced a tragic range of abuse including physical, sexual, psychological, and spiritual abuse, his actions reaching into the realms of ritual abuse at times. A child, Guide Nyachuru, died in suspicious circumstances at one of Smyth's camps in Zimbabwe. Smyth's abuse was coercive and controlling, and he groomed all his victims to differing extents. The abuse has left lasting and irreparable scars for very many people, those directly affected as well as their families, friends and others. The descriptions which follow, may trigger painful and traumatic memories and recollections of abuse for many people. Should you require support or advice because of reading this report, please contact:

[FearFree Support](#), which provides specialist support to victims and survivors of abuse, offering trauma informed and victim led bespoke support. Its head of services has identified an experienced independent advocate for victims and survivors to deliver this service and this information has been relayed to the

survivors and victims. Contact: [nicky.gahagan@fearfree.org.uk](mailto:nicky.gahagan@fearfree.org.uk) telephone 07436795205 (Tues-Thurs)/helpdesk 01793 317482 during working hours.

Safe Spaces is a free and independent support service for anyone who has experienced abuse in relation to the Church of England, the Church in Wales, or the Catholic Church of England and Wales. You can contact the Safe Spaces team through their helpline ([0300 303 1056](tel:03003031056)), their live chat facility or by emailing [safespaces@firstlight.org.uk](mailto:safespaces@firstlight.org.uk).

Further information about support can be [accessed here](#).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Makin'.

Keith Makin

**Lead Independent Reviewer**

## **PART 1: INTRODUCTION**

*"I remember thinking 'he's going to kill me.' I was that scared..."*

A victim of John Smyth, 2022.

## 1. INDEPENDENCE OF THE REVIEW

1.0 This Review has been conducted by individuals who are independent from the Church of England and the Archbishops' Council. This Review has been commissioned and funded by the Archbishops' Council, with instructions given by the National Safeguarding Team (NST), acting on behalf of the Archbishops' Council, but the Reviewers (comprising the Lead Reviewer and Associate Reviewer) have maintained independence from the Church. The Reviewers and those involved in supporting this Review, as set out below, have no previous connection to the issues which are the subject of this Review or with the Archbishops' Council.

1.1 **Keith Makin (Lead Reviewer):** an experienced executive level manager, leader and consultant in the social care and health sectors. Keith is an ex-Director of Social Services, Chief Executive of a national improvement agency, and Chief Executive of a childcare company. Keith is a specialist in safeguarding of both children and adults, as well as the Chair of several safeguarding partnerships and leader/ author of Reviews, inquiries, and research on safeguarding issues.

1.2 **Sarah Lawrence (Associate Reviewer):** an independent consultant, reviewer, and scrutineer specialising in safeguarding and domestic abuse issues. Sarah works with charities, schools, and safeguarding partnerships.

1.3 Others supporting this Review:

1.3.0 **Dr Elly Hanson:** an independent Clinical Psychologist who has worked with the issues of abuse and trauma for over 18 years. She undertakes consultation, research, training, and assessments, working across criminal justice, education, child protection and voluntary sectors, as well as with national organisations such as the Football Association and Church of England. For ten years she worked with CEOP (the Child Exploitation and Online Protection agency; now embedded with the National Crime Agency - the NCA) and is on the NCA's database of Expert Advisors. She regularly publishes papers, reports, and chapters on the topic of abuse, including those on societal contributors and its impact. Dr Hanson is also an experienced therapist and has previously worked in an NHS drugs and alcohol service with adult survivors of abuse, an NSPCC team for children with harmful sexual behaviour, and a company providing residential care to looked after children.

1.3.1 **Administration & Support:** the Review has been well supported by independent individuals who have provided professional administration focussed on arranging the vast number of engagement sessions and transcribing meetings as well as in the process of conducting the consultation with people named in the report (the "representations" process), and in the production of a chronology to support this Review.

1.3.2 **Legal Advice:** independent legal advice was sought in connection with the preparation and execution of the "representations" process described later. Legal advice (in relation to which privilege is not waived) was also obtained on certain discrete points arising towards the conclusion of our Review. The conclusions reached and the proposed lessons learned have been respectively reached and proposed by the Reviewers.

1.3.3 **Theological advice:** Reviewers have consulted with individual advisors, both within the Church and independently, on theological matters, where this has been directly relevant to the Review.

## 2. BACKGROUND TO THE REVIEW

2.1 This report is the result of a Learning Lessons Review concerning the Church of England's response to abuses carried out by John Smyth. This Review covers the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 1970 to 1<sup>st</sup> August 2019, spanning almost five decades. The Review was commissioned by the Archbishops' Council<sup>1</sup> of the Church of England and commenced in October 2019. The original

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.Churchofengland.org/about/leadership-and-governance/archbishops-council>

announcement that the Review was being commissioned named 13th August 2019 as the start date for the Review but this was put back to the 1<sup>st</sup> October, as the resources for the Review were not fully in place until then.

- 2.2 The Review was triggered in large part by the actions of several victims, who relentlessly lobbied for the truth and learning in this case to be revealed. The Review was then commissioned following a recommendation from Bishop Peter Hancock, the Bishop responsible for safeguarding at the time within the Church, and mounting pressure for a Review to be conducted, both publicly (from the media and individuals) and at General Synod<sup>2</sup>.
- 2.3 John Smyth was a serious and prolific abuser of boys and young men, both in the UK and in Africa. Tragically for his victims, he was never brought to justice for the abuse; he died in August 2018, in Cape Town, South Africa, at the age of 75, while under investigation by Hampshire Police.
- 2.4 Given the nature of the abuse and the prolificity of the perpetrator, it is likely that many more people suffered abuse than we are aware of. Evidence submitted to the Review suggests 30 boys and young men are known to have been directly physically and psychologically abused in the UK, many more were impacted by psychological abuse and attempts to abuse. Information available to this Review suggests in the order of 85 boys and young men were physically abused in African countries, including Zimbabwe, based on the findings contained in a report by Senator David Coltart in 1993 concerning John Smyth's activity in Africa (Appendix 1) The total number of children and adults deeply affected by John Smyth's abuses likely runs much higher. The trauma experienced continues to negatively impact the lives of many of his victims and their families to this day.
- 2.5 Over the five decades since the first abuse occurred, several investigations and reviews have taken place, dating as far back as the 1980s. Reports from these earlier times were written, shared with limited audiences and organisations, away from public view and, as we examine in this report, all were unsuccessful in exposing and preventing further abuse by John Smyth. None of these previous activities identified lessons to be learned by the Church of England. Other relevant organisations have more recently carried out reviews and published reports identifying learning from the case for their own organisations. These are referenced in the report as necessary.

### **3. AIMS AND TOR**

- 3.1 The ToR detail the framework for this Review, and are set out in full at (Appendix 2). The document states the objectives of the Review which have underpinned our approach:

*"1.1 This review ("the Review") Review will allow those individuals who have indicated that they have sustained harm at the hands of John Smyth and given an account to the Church of England to describe their experiences.*

*1.2 The Review will consider the actions of Church of England participants and will identify both good practice and failings in the Church's handling of the allegations relating to John Smyth, including their safeguarding practice, in order that they can take steps to enhance and improve their response to allegations of abuse and, thereby, ensure the Church provides a safer environment for all."*

- 3.2 The scope of the Review is set out as follows:

*"2.1 The Review will focus on two related but distinct questions: (1) what did the Church of England (i.e. relevant officers and institutions) know about alleged abuse perpetrated by John Smyth, and (2) what was the response of the Church of England to those allegations."*

- 3.3 The ToR objectives require us to "Consider the actions of Church of England participants". The scope of the Review under the ToR refers to "bodies or office holders", and "relevant officers and

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<sup>2</sup> The General Synod considers and approves legislation affecting the whole of the Church of England, formulates new forms of worship, debates matters of national and international importance, and approves the annual budget for the work of the Church at national level. See <https://www.Churchofengland.org/about/leadership-and-governance/about-general-synod>

*institutions*", who we have treated as Church of England participants for the purposes of this Review. The ToR confirm that "*the meaning of the term 'church officer' is to be broadly interpreted, taking into account a range of factors including how the person in question's role may be perceived by those in any relevant parish or congregation, including children, and whether or not the role is paid*"<sup>3</sup>. We have taken a wide definition of the Church of England officer to include in this Review which correlates to the Church definition:

"A 'Church Officer' is anyone appointed/elected by or on behalf of the Church to a post or role, whether they are ordained or lay, paid or unpaid."<sup>4</sup>

- 3.4 Accordingly, we include in the term "Church officer" or "office holder" both those that are ordained and those in "lay" roles such as Lay Reader (the role John Smyth had at the time of abuse) in the Church. Defining wider "participants" and roles beyond this is complex given many individuals participate in Church activities at differing levels. Broadly we include individuals in this category where it is clear in our judgement that they have had some significant influence and impact in this case and in terms of the wider Church of England. Where this is relevant, we have explained our rationale for inclusion in this Review.
- 3.5 The "*institutions*" considered in the ToR are taken in the widest sense rather than specifically the Church's National Church Institutions (**NCIs**), to include the bodies that have relevance to this case and are part of the Church of England or because individuals that are deemed as "*Church officers*" lead or are significantly involved in their operation. This is reinforced by the fact that the Church of England is not a centralised institution. As Peter Hancock (then Lead Bishop on Safeguarding) stated to the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (**IICSA**), the Church is not a single institution but a "*family of essentially autonomous office holders and charitable bodies, including both ancient ecclesiastical corporations and modern statutory corporations*"<sup>5</sup>, and we have adopted this definition in the course of our Review.
- 3.6 The Church is divided into the two provinces of Canterbury and York, each with its own Archbishop.
- 3.7 The Archbishop of Canterbury is the senior bishop of the Church of England, *primus inter pares*, and the Monarch is its Supreme Governor. The Monarch appoints Archbishops, Bishops and Cathedral Deans on the advice of Government; the Archbishop of Canterbury has no independent authority to do so. The Archbishop of Canterbury is the ceremonial head of the worldwide Anglican Communion and is the senior of the two Archbishops in England, leading the Church of England in England alongside the Archbishop of York.
- 3.8 The Anglican Communion has no central authority; each church in the Communion makes its decisions independently. Power within the Church of England in England is also not centralised. The two Archbishops greatest power is to lead through persuasion. Both Archbishops sit on many of the Church of England's important boards or committees but are without independent legal authority to effect changes to the Church of England or with wider international Anglican Communion.
- 3.9 The Church of England has 43 dioceses encompassing England, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man (inclusive of the chaplaincies of the Diocese in Europe). Each is overseen by a diocesan bishop (inclusive of the two Archbishops). Whilst the two Archbishops are involved in the selection of diocesan bishops within their respective provinces, they have no legal powers to control or direct the actions of diocesan bishops other than through an Archepiscopal Visitation. The Diocese of Gibraltar in Europe (DiE) is the largest diocese geographically in the Anglican Communion. This diocese is headed by the Bishop in Europe. Whilst the DiE is part of the Church of England, it is autonomous in its day-to-day operations due to the wide geographical spread and diverse context. The Archbishop of Canterbury's relationship with the Bishop in Europe is similar to the English Dioceses rather than involving direct control over the DiE's routine affairs. DiE maintains its own synod and separate administrative structures.
- 3.10 In identifying what "*relevant officers and institutions*" knew of the abuse; we have developed as thorough chronology of events and activities that fall within these ToR as possible. Our analysis of the responses taken has been based on this. We have been hampered by the passing of time

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<sup>3</sup> ToR, footnote 1, paragraph 3.1(6)

<sup>4</sup> [Church of England Safeguarding Pages, 2023](#)

<sup>5</sup> [A.2: The Church of England | IICSA Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse](#)

which has impacted on individuals' recollections of events and memories as well as institutions' record keeping and archives.

- 3.11 We are tasked in paragraph 2.2 of the ToR with considering what information was available to those in scope, who had this and what was done with the information. The ToR request we also consider whether relevant Church "*bodies and office holders responded in a timely and appropriate manner*" and "*in line with child protection or safeguarding best practice in force at the time as well as relevant legislative requirements*", whether any further abuse could have been prevented, whether victims were responded to appropriately and lessons to be identified which are relevant and which might improve future safeguarding practice in the Church.
- 3.12 We have explored this and expressed criticism in this report where relevant. As we address further, it is for the Church to then decide beyond this Review whether any action needs to be taken in response to these criticisms, as well as to implement the learning and recommendations we suggest because of our findings.
- 3.13 The ToR, in paragraph 3.1, requires us to: "*(1) Place the actions of individuals and Church bodies in context, showing understanding of the underlying reasons that led to individuals and organisations acting as they did, or which might explain why they did so.*" and "*(2) Consider the actions of individuals and organisations against the standards of practice which applied at the relevant time, i.e. understand practice from the view point of the individuals and organisations at the time rather than using hindsight.*"
- 3.14 The ToR make clear that this Review is intended to focus on what the Church of England (including relevant officers) knew about the abuse allegedly perpetrated by John Smyth, and the Church of England's response to allegations of that abuse. The ToR envisage that redactions should be applied to this report only for genuinely good faith reasons and were, we understand, drafted with the intention that this report should name criticised persons, and that anonymity should only apply to victims. With this in mind, we have taken the decision to name those criticised in this report, albeit we are conscious that the majority of Clergy named in this report were already named in the public domain (including via journalist and activist Andrew Graystone's book, the media and/or on social media) such that it would be possible for readers of this report to identify those individuals, notwithstanding our decision to name them. Any alternative approach (for instance, redacting the names of criticised Clergy) would, in our view, be inconsistent with the defined objective and scope of the Review, as well as the overall spirit of the ToR. We also consider that this would, in practice, prove to be ineffective given the publicity already surrounding some already-named Clergy.
- 3.15 While receiving accounts and contributions from a wide range of individuals and organisations we have proactively sought reflections on the context and practices during the period of Review, and beyond. Our experience of reviews of this nature have led us to proactively and consciously take steps to avoid the use of "*hindsight bias*", which research suggests is a tendency to "*consistently exaggerate what could have been anticipated in foresight*"<sup>6</sup>, and to avoid application of the "*knew it all along*" effect <sup>7</sup>. In order to avoid this, we have consciously taken on strategies, for example regular exploration of possible alternative outcomes of events to those which occurred, and testing what may have influenced individuals and organisational responses with those who were practising in the Church or involved in the relevant organisations and institutions at the time.
- 3.16 We have spent long periods of time with victims of the abuse, and their accounts ground the Review in the time and provide the central point from which we analyse responses. We have also taken lengthy and detailed contributions from those who are able to provide them from the 1970s and 1980s when John Smyth's abuse was first known of, and as we have explored earlier, reflected on the national context, as well as guidance and legislation that applied to that time. It is acknowledged that some of the contributors to the Review were unable to describe their experiences without applying hindsight to their accounts, given the publicity and coverage that this case has received since 2017. As experienced Reviewers, we are confident that we have taken a balanced approach to ensure we reach informed conclusions in our analysis.
- 3.17 The NST has provided Reviewers with a policy timeline, setting out the historical development of child protection and safeguarding policies within the Church of England spanning 1988-2019

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<sup>6</sup> Fischhoff, 1975

<sup>7</sup> Vincent, 2006



(Appendix 3). This has informed our analysis of the actions of individuals and organisations where relevant.

- 3.18 In paragraph 3.1 (6) the ToR requires us also to: *“Ensure that if, in the course of [our] work [we] identify additional relevant matters (whether additional allegations or failures to respond properly by a Church officer<sup>8</sup> or Church body), that these are brought to the immediate attention of the police and other statutory authorities, the Director of Safeguarding, and Winchester College as appropriate”*.
- 3.19 In researching information for the Review, several *“Church officer”* were identified who may have *“failed to respond properly”*. As required by the ToR, the names and information regarding these individuals were brought to the attention of the Director of Safeguarding for their investigation and subsequent decision on action to be taken. This process enabled the Director to establish only whether a Church officer posed a current safeguarding risk, rather than holding them accountable for their actions at earlier points in time.
- 3.20 Where additional allegations or concerns of a safeguarding nature have been identified, these have been referred to relevant statutory authorities as is determined in statutory safeguarding guidance and wider law,<sup>9</sup> where appropriate. The NST has also been notified in cases where this relates to those in the scope of this Review.
- 3.21 As the Review progressed, it became apparent that there were several victims who, since the abuse occurred, have become Church officers. As victims, they would have known of the abuse, its severity and detail and may have *“failed to act”* according to the ToR and were therefore also brought to the attention of the Director of Safeguarding at the NST. A subsequent decision was made by the NST that they would not investigate those victims at that time, acknowledging that they would face or have faced additional challenges in having to disclose the abuse they had experienced to *“respond properly”*. This decision applied unless it was deemed that the individual posed a significant safeguarding risk at the current time, described by the Director as *“a proportionate and sensitive approach”*. This decision was based on the principle that these individuals should be considered as victims first. Where relevant, this is analysed further in this report and reflected in the learning from this Review.
- 3.22 During the Review, and in agreement with commissioners, we have explored relevant areas, adapting to new information and lines of enquiry, using the ToR as our guiding document, which states at paragraph 4.3 that: *“Where appropriate the Reviewer may, with the agreement of the Director of Safeguarding, follow up any alternate material lines of enquiry with any other potentially relevant witness or organisation, not already detailed in these ToR, which in the Reviewer’s opinion might be relevant to the Review”*. We have identified in this report where this has occurred.
- 3.23 The ToR states at paragraph 6.4 that: *“The Reviewer will not be able to make formal findings of fact but is asked to give a view, informed by his professional judgement, as to what version of events seems most likely, on the balance of probabilities.”* As a result, and in the writing of the report, we have based our analysis on evidence that we have gathered over the course of the Review. Where judgements have had to be made as to whether something took place or not and where there is conflicting or incomplete evidence, the view expressed in this report is based upon the balance of probabilities and will state that, where it has been necessary to make that decision.
- 3.24 Oversight of the Review progress took place with commissioners via Directors/Deputy Directors of the NST, with changes in those holding these roles on several occasions throughout the review period, and its Learning Lessons Review Group (LLR)<sup>10</sup> regularly receiving written and verbal updates on progress and any impediments to this. Regular feedback was also given by members of the LLR to the General Synod, with public statements communicated by the NST on the Church of England website. The NST recognised the impacts of all these factors and offered additional resources from February 2021. Additional resource helped later in the process, when

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<sup>8</sup> “A “Church officer” is anyone appointed/elected by or on behalf of the Church to a post or role, whether they are ordained or lay, paid or unpaid”, Church of England website, 2023.

<sup>9</sup> Working Together 2023, The Care Act 2014, Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

<sup>10</sup> The LLR group was an internal Church group that oversaw multiple reviews including this. Reviewers were called in to update on progress and to escalate any issues. Members of LLR over time included two lead Bishops for Safeguarding, Deputy Safeguarding Bishop, Church Media and Communications Lead, NST Directors/Deputy Director, NST Case Workers and others.

the administrative burden of collating all the material gathered in the writing of the report was greatest. Additional resource was then included and legal advisors were appointed to assist with the process.

#### **4. APPROACH**

4.1 From the start of our involvement in this Review, our strong intention has been to ensure victims are at the front and centre of the Review process, to empower them to participate in whatever form and extent they deem as appropriate. Throughout the course of the Review, we were privileged to have met many of John Smyth's victims in person, their accounts providing a central reference point throughout the chronology and the analysis of events and are central to the learning that has been identified. Victims told us that they wanted this Review to provide an independent, true, and accurate account of the abuse and the responses to this that they have experienced over the years since. We have remained in regular contact with several victims, and we hope that by engagement and involvement in the Review process as far as we have been able to, we have gone some way in achieving this.

4.2 In the process of drafting this report, we asked victims how they would like their accounts and experiences to be reflected. One option presented, and taken by many, was to provide a written impact statement, detailing the varying nature and extent of the impact of the abuse on their mental and physical health, their relationships, families, friends, faith, and careers. These accounts are threaded throughout the Review. Following discussion with those that have been able to engage in the Review, we have adopted the term "*victim*" to describe those traumatised and affected by John Smyth's abuse, whether that be psychological and/or physical and sexual abuse. This includes his own family members. While some people prefer the term "*survivor*" we hope that the use of "*victim*" will help to express the serious and long-lasting impact of the trauma they experience from the abuse. John Smyth's victims include those psychologically abused or affected and include victims' families and friends.

4.3 We have been able to harness the voices of victims in Zimbabwe through the affidavits made by victims to the courts in Zimbabwe during an attempt to bring John Smyth to justice there in 1997.

4.4 This report is supported by a detailed timeline, which lays out the known and evidenced sequence of events in a chronological order, as required by the ToR. The chronology is deliberately a summary, meaning not all detail known to Reviewers is included. This is specifically done to avoid the risk of 'jigsaw' identifying individuals. The details in the chronology reflect material which has been provided to us in the course of the Review, and the inclusion of an item in the chronology therefore does not denote that we have reached a conclusion on the matter referenced.

4.5 This Review does not attempt to comment on matters of theology, except where that is directly relevant to an understanding of a particular event and to the knowledge that the Church of England could have had at the time. Equally, the Review does not offer a whole critique of the bodies and organisations involved, or their theology, beyond matters directly relevant to this Review, for example in terms of John Smyth exploiting theological matters to enable his abuse. These matters are outside scope of the ToR.

4.6 We aim to clarify facts and dispel myths that have developed over time in relation to this case. During the Review, we have heard many hypotheses and accounts of the time that we have tested and proved or disproved to ensure as accurate as possible a chronology of events from which to draw from to ensure lessons are learned once and for all from this case.

#### **5. METHODOLOGY**

5.1 The methodology adopted for this Review is a hybrid of evidence based and tested models used in other types of safeguarding case reviews. Reviewers have extensive experience of review methodologies adapting these to suit each unique situation, adopting the approaches and key principals of Review from models such as Root Cause Analysis and Appreciative Inquiry. These methods were applied in meetings with contributors to the Review, and in terms of the specific lines of enquiry that followed. Literature was reviewed, applying critical analysis and cross referencing of evidence with other relevant reviews and investigations from within the period.

5.2 The Review has taken place in the following phases:

- 5.2.1 Information Gathering: October 2019 – October 2022
  - (a) Call for evidence and information from individuals and organisations
  - (b) Research and review of literature, historic files and papers
  - (c) Notification of review to all known victims
  - (d) Direct requests for archive files and information from within the Church and all relevant organisations in UK, Africa, and Canada
- 5.2.2 Engagement: November 2019 – December 2023
  - (a) Face-to-face meetings with victims
  - (b) Meetings with interested parties – both individuals and organisational representatives
  - (c) Meetings with Church officers
  - (d) Liaison/referral of concerns or safeguarding issues to church/statutory services.
  - (e) Reporting progress to LLR Group and NST
- 5.2.3 Chronology development: January 2021 – February 2024
  - (a) Detailed review of all papers
  - (b) Identifying significant events
  - (c) Factual accuracy checking events with participants and in historic records
- 5.2.4 Report Writing: October 2022 – May 2024
  - (a) Analysis of key events
  - (b) Fact checking and cross-referencing information
  - (c) Developing key findings
  - (d) Drafting recommendations
  - (e) Proof reading
- 5.2.5 Representations process: May 2024 – October 2024
  - (a) Engagement with criticised persons and organisations
  - (b) Factual accuracy checking and cross referencing
  - (c) Consideration of feedback, editing and proof-reading report
  - (d) Legal advice within the process
- 5.2.6 Report handover to the Church of England: 18<sup>th</sup> October 2024
- 5.3 While delivering this Review, we have gathered vast amounts of information and evidence from a wide range of sources. These are in keeping with the requirements set out in section 4.2, "Relevant Material" in the Review ToR:

*"The Reviewer will need to gather evidence from relevant Church of England bodies and office holders as set out below, so far as this is possible, to include:*

(1) *The oral accounts of those with an interest in this Review, namely survivors, clergy, and appropriate others (“Interested Parties”), to the extent that they are willing to take part in the Review; and*

(2) *Relevant documentary evidence as set out below.”*

5.4 Some material was provided to us in redacted form. It is important to note that some individuals, who are victims, have expressed a wish to remain anonymous. In summary, contributions were made and information gathered in the following categories.

5.4.1 The categories of individuals engaged in the Review are:

- (a) John Smyth’s victims in the UK
- (b) Family members of victims
- (c) Close surviving relatives of John Smyth
- (d) People (including some Church of England Clergy) who knew John Smyth through various associations
- (e) People (including some Church of England Clergy) who knew something of the abuse and who reported some matters into the Church or other bodies
- (f) People (including some Church of England Clergy) who knew of the abuse but did not report to anyone
- (g) Family members of those who knew of the abuse
- (h) Trustees of the Zambesi Trust<sup>11</sup> that supported John Smyth and his family to move to Zimbabwe in July 1984 and beyond
- (i) Those that contributed financially to Zambesi Trust and/or John and Anne Smyth’s living costs in Africa and South Africa
- (j) Others wishing to offer a contribution to the Review in the UK or overseas

5.4.2 Where Clergy are named, rather than use of full and formal titles, simply, we are referring to well-known, simple titles such as “the Reverend” or “Bishop” to ensure that the report is accessible to all.

5.4.3 Organisations engaged in the Review are:

- (a) Winchester College
- (b) Titus Trust
- (c) Scripture Union
- (d) Lawyers Christian Fellowship
- (e) The Stewards Trust
- (f) Police Constabularies – Hampshire and Isle of Wight, Thames Valley, Cambridgeshire, Metropolitan, Surrey and Sussex

5.5 Written evidence submitted:

5.5.1 A large volume of documentation has been submitted to Reviewers in a variety of formats, including several detailed files containing contemporaneous handwritten correspondence, notes, and papers. We have reviewed much-published literature in

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<sup>11</sup> The Zambesi Trust ceased to exist 10<sup>th</sup> July 2018.

the form of books, articles and blogs relating to this case written in the UK and abroad over the review period. Many written submissions and formal reports regarding this case have also been submitted and reviewed. Where there have been conflicts in the material examined, we have gone back to contributors to establish what the facts are, as far as is possible.

- 5.5.2 Over a weekend in February of 1992, exactly 10 years after the first 'investigative report' of John Smyth's abuse was prepared by Reverend Mark Ruston, a small number of victims met and discussed their experience of the abuse in meetings taking place in several sessions. These were recorded on audio tape, lasting around 11 hours, we have been given access to these recording by a victim for the purposes of this Review.

## 5.6 Links to other Reviews

- 5.6.1 At the time that the ToR were written, it was intended that the Review would encompass the responses of other organisations. It states:

*"The Review will consider the response of the Church of England and its officers to those allegations, and the response of other organisations, namely Winchester College, the Titus Trust, and the Scripture Union, to the extent that those organisations are willing to co-operate."*

- 5.6.2 All three organisations have, since the writing of the ToR, published their own reports detailing their involvement in this case, their own findings and learning for their organisations. Winchester College and Scripture Union<sup>12</sup> delivered and published independently led reviews of their responses to this case, and the Titus Trust an independent culture review<sup>13</sup> which includes reference to and learning from their involvement, reflecting knowledge also from Iwerne Trust<sup>14</sup> records.
- 5.6.3 The core purpose of this Review is to learn lessons for the Church of England, and this is the approach we have taken, referencing these other organisations, and the findings from their respective Reviews, where appropriate and necessary.

## 5.7 Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- 5.7.1 All those participating in this Review were alerted to the ToR and Privacy Notice for this Review, which protects their rights in terms of data laws.
- 5.7.2 Steps have been taken to anonymise the name of individual victims and to redact or omit information which might allow for identification. The ToR make clear that this Review is intended to focus on what the Church of England (including relevant officers) knew about the abuse allegedly perpetrated by John Smyth and the Church of England's response to allegations of that abuse. The ToR envisage that redactions should be applied to this report only for genuinely good faith reasons and were, we understand, drafted with the intention that this report should name criticised persons, and that anonymity should only apply to victims.
- 5.7.3 Some individuals named in this report are not directly part of the Church, but of institutions connected to the Church such as the Titus Trust. Details of these individuals are in many cases already in the public domain. They are named because the Review concludes that the Church was very heavily influenced by the views and representations of such individuals, despite them not forming part of the official Church hierarchy. We consider this is important in understanding the Church's handling of allegations relating to John Smyth.

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<sup>12</sup> [Review Of Abuse In The 1970s And 1980s By John Smyth QC Of Pupils From Winchester College Scripture Union John Smyth Review Executive Report 2021](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Titus Trust Independent Culture Review Report 2021](#)

<sup>14</sup> Iwerne Trust was a Christian charity predominately focussed on funding for Iwerne Camps.

## 6. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS IN THE WRITING OF THE REPORT

### 6.1 Context of 'the time'

- 6.1.1 The early period covered by the Review applies to a time when safeguarding<sup>15</sup>, as a term and way of ensuring child and adult safety, was in its infancy. This has been offered as a contributory factor explaining the lack of action or reporting of abuse to statutory services by those that knew it had occurred. This explanation has been offered as a reason to Reviewers for the lack of response to victims in the 1980s, earlier and later up to 2017, when the abuse was investigated by Channel 4 and was then known in the public domain.
- 6.1.2 Reviewers were provided with a policy timeline document, produced for IICSA (Appendix 3), setting out the historical development of child protection and safeguarding policies within the Church of England spanning 1988-2019. This has informed our analysis of the actions of individuals and organisations. We have been advised by the NST that there is no record of any earlier Church child protection or safeguarding policy or guidance that is relevant to this Review for our consideration.
- 6.1.3 However, we know that the protection of children from abuse and neglect had been established in law since much earlier than even the earliest period of this Review, for example the 1948 Children Act, and was reviewed at key points in time up to the 1970s, where this Review commences. Of significance to the period of this Review is the abusive and tragic death of Maria Colwell in 1973, murdered by her stepfather who beat and starved her. Maria's death and the circumstances of it were widely reported in national press at that time and in future years. In fact, public and media pressure led to the Government instigating a full public inquiry, and an eventual change in legislation with the Children Act 1975.
- 6.1.4 While 'safeguarding' as a term may not have been widely understood in the early period covered by the Review, and practice guidance or policy for Church did not exist prior to the earliest entry on the policy timeline provided to Reviewers, the importance of protecting of children from physical harm was a widely known societal issue of concern.

### 6.2 Child Victims

- 6.2.1 As the first 'investigative report' of John Smyth's abuse prepared by the Reverend Mark Ruston (the **Ruston Report**), detailed later in the Review, states, and our Review explores later, children<sup>16</sup> from the age of 17 and younger were known to have been seriously physically, psychologically, and sexually abused by John Smyth. This was known in 1982 and beyond, at least by those that were in receipt of the Ruston Report. We have received accounts of sexualised approaches to children age 14, and several victims that have described the abuse indicate that they were as young as 13 when contact was first made by John Smyth and 14 when they began to be regularly and persistently contacted by John Smyth. Reflecting on the abuse then perpetrated, they describe this as being the age that they began to be psychologically abused and groomed by him, for example:

*"Between the ages of 14 and 15 ..... John Smyth was very quick to pick up on our individual qualities and praise us for these.....By the time I was 16 not only were we going to his house in Morestead on Sunday's but also occasionally going there in the evening without the permission of our head of house master."*

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<sup>15</sup> Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in Government guidance as: *protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.* [Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/101311/working-together-to-safeguard-children-2023-statutory-guidance.pdf)  
Safeguarding of adults is defined in Government guidance as: *Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.* [Care and support statutory guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/101311/care-and-support-statutory-guidance.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> '...a child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday' [Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/101311/working-together-to-safeguard-children-2023-statutory-guidance.pdf), "Child" means...a person under the age of 18.' Children Act 1975 (superseded by [Children Act 1989](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/20/section/1))

*"I was groomed by John Smyth QC between the ages of 16 and 20, and violently assaulted by him at the end of that timeframe."*

### 6.3 Seriousness of abuse, Church guidance, and the Law

6.3.1 The Reviewers are not lawyers or otherwise legally trained, although our professional lives have, of necessity, involved us in considering the application of the legal framework applying to child protection measures. What follows is not, therefore, presented as legal analysis but as a reflection on (i) the legal and cultural framework in place at the times when the abuse was occurring; (ii) what contributors have told us about that framework and how they say it affected their actions or inaction at relevant times. The Review does not rely on the personal assessment of the Reviewers in terms of the law.

6.3.2 An argument which has been put forward by some is that the abuse occurred at a time when corporal punishment and caning of children within education establishments was still legal<sup>17</sup>. While this was the case, it is important to note that over a third of schools in Britain had banned corporal punishment by this point, recognising the harm and long-term impact it caused. Early investigations into the abuse made it very clear that the abuses carried out by John Smyth went far beyond what even at that time would have been deemed "*corporal punishment*". Our assessment is that this was abuse of an extremely severe nature, and it is the view of the Reviewers that reliance on the then-current legal and cultural framework is not a reasonable explanation for the level of actions taken, particularly by those that read the Ruston Report. Some contributors to the Review suggest that their knowledge of John Smyth's abuse, throughout the period up until 2017, was within the realms of corporal punishment and 'caning', rather than abuse, and that this explains their response and lack of reporting. It is evident that those informed by the Ruston Report would have been clearly aware of the grim extent of the abuse, and we hypothesise that this knowledge could have been passed on more widely as word spread among these individuals' networks and contacts. The Ruston Report, viewed by several people in 1982, states:

*"The scale and severity of the practice was horrific. Five of the 13 I have seen were in it only for a short time. Between them they had 12 beatings and about 650 strokes. The other 8 received about 14,000 strokes: 2 of them having some 8,000 strokes over the three years. The others were involved for one year of 18 months. 8 spoke of bleeding on most occasions ("I could feel the blood splattering on my legs" – "I was bleeding for 3½ weeks" "I fainted sometime after a severe beating"). I have seen bruised and scored buttocks, some two-and-a-half months after the beating. Beatings of 100 strokes for masturbation, 400 for pride, and one of 800 strokes for some undisclosed "fall" are recorded."*

6.3.3 The severity of the abuse is best demonstrated also by victims in their own words:

*"I know that my bottom bled from the beatings.... I would need to wear nappies for three or four days afterwards. Then I would have a scab that needed to heal and that might take another week or so.*

*I don't think it was long before I was having to wear nappies. It might have been the fourth time. Something like that...Smyth supplied the nappies, but I don't remember where he got them from.*

*[at College ...] they have this thing called Formal Hall. It's an evening meal where you all stand up for Grace. After Grace, you all sit down together, of course if you sat down really, really slowly, people around you would wonder what's going on. So, I perfected the art of sitting down very quickly till my bottom was about two inches above the bench. This was because they were, these were hard benches, and they weren't cushioned. I would then let myself down very, very slowly the last two inches. It was*

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<sup>17</sup> In 1986, beatings in state schools were outlawed with the Education Act 1986. The ban was extended to fee-paying schools in March 1998.

*almost humorous that I was doing that I mean I had to because it would be too painful to sit down quickly."*

*"The number of strokes increased each time up to well over a hundred....The total was between 800 and 1000 over ten visits."*

*"I was struck 30-40 times with a cane across my bottom, sometimes the cane missed my bottom and connecting with my thigh. The pain was so intense, my bottom was bleeding and despite it being red raw he would continue striking me. Each hit was very violent, and it was extraordinarily painful. Smyth was hitting me as hard as he could – he was sweating and exerting a lot of energy with each stroke.*

*During my time at Smyth's house I recall conversations in which he stated that he had broken canes during the beatings.*

*At no point did I seek medical attention following the beatings, for some years there was evidence of scars however these are no longer visible.*

*... and then he struck me. I thought until that moment that he was a nice guy, but that first strike was so brutal, there was no holding back at all, there was no mercy in it, there was no gentleness in it, it was absolutely ferocious and the sting and then the burning sensation.*

*It wasn't like anything that I had ever experienced before in my life, so I remember it very well as it literally knocked the breath out of me. I remember there was a pause after 10 lashes, but he didn't ask if I was alright because I would've said no. He then beat me for a further 10 strokes and during those strokes I remember for the very first time that my skin was probably breaking. There were 10 further strokes and at that point there was a sensation of hot blood coming to the surface of my skin and I think probably breaking through my skin.*

*John was a very strong man and using a fairly substantial stick."*

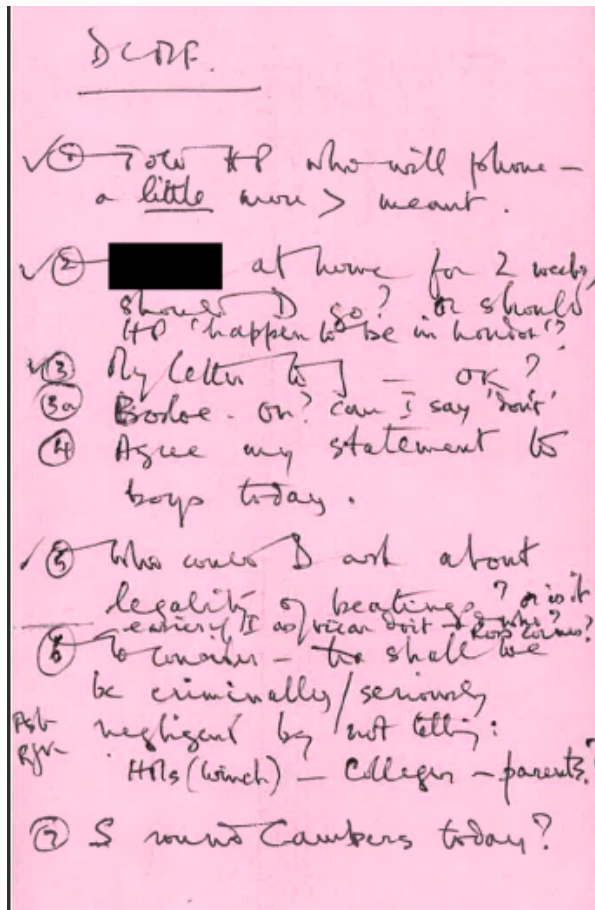
- 6.3.4 While child protection legislation may not have been in place at this time, other legislation was clearly known about and relevant in 1982 and to this case. Indeed, it was explicitly identified by the initial 'investigator' in his report that John Smyth had committed offences going as far as to give exact sections of legislation that applied, stating the abuses were: *"Technically all offences under the Offences Against The Person Act of 1861, Sec. 47"*.
- 6.3.5 The legislation (of then and now) regarding this is assault occasioning actual bodily Harm (ABH) – Section 47 Offences Against the Person Act 1861. There was clearly a breach of this section in this case. The offence is committed when a person intentionally or recklessly assaults another, thereby causing actual bodily harm. It must be proved that the assault (which includes "battery") "occasioned" or caused the bodily harm. Bodily harm has its ordinary meaning and includes any hurt calculated to interfere with the health or comfort of the victim: such hurt need not be permanent, but must be more than transient and trifling.<sup>18</sup>
- 6.3.6 This sentence, contained within the Ruston Report, suggests that some research, and knowledge or even consultation with a legal or criminal law expert had taken place in terms of the abuse. There are excerpts contained in this report, taken from notes written at the time, that suggest legal advice of some description was sought, for example, see point 5 of the document below<sup>19</sup>. This suggests that Mark Ruston was discussing *"who could D (DCMF/ the Reverend David Fletcher) ask about legality of beatings"*. The name Ross Cornes appears, likely to be Graham Ross-Cornes, a lawyer associated with a case that John Smyth also worked on, next to this point indicating he may have been consulted.

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<sup>18</sup> [Offences against the Person, incorporating the Charging Standard | The Crown Prosecution Service \(cps.gov.uk\)](https://www.cps.gov.uk/offences-against-the-person-incorporating-the-charging-standard)

<sup>19</sup> Redaction/s were applied to this document and many of the added screenshots within the report, prior to being provided to Reviewers.





6.3.7 Several of the victims' accounts indicate their experience of sexual abuse, particularly describing John Smyth kissing them, draping himself and/or his arms over them, nakedness and other indicators of sexual abuse. This is detailed later in victims' accounts and in analysis of the types of abuse experienced. Had formal legal and police consideration taken place, we consider that this could have been seen to breach of Section 15 of the Sexual Offences Act 1956, which provided that: "(1) It is an offence for a person to make an indecent assault on a man. (2) A boy under the age of sixteen cannot in law give any consent which would prevent an act being an assault for the purposes of this section." This was in force until 30<sup>th</sup> April 2004 and therefore covers most of the relevant period of the Review, including the 'early' period. This was not indicated in the Ruston Report or in any way reflected in the response at that time, or in future, to the abuse, indicating a lack of acknowledgement or understanding of this as sexual abuse of children or adults.

6.3.8 While practices in the Church of England began to be influenced in terms of child abuse and neglect from 1988, with papers and discussions taking place onwards of this time, the House of Bishops issued the first Church safeguarding policy document much later in 1995, called "Policy on Child Abuse"<sup>20</sup>. This was disseminated to all bishops, diocesan secretaries, and registrars. As a result of this policy, each diocesan bishop was expected to appoint a 'representative to advise on matters of child protection'. The relevance of this is explored in further sections of this report.

6.3.9 Prior to this, in 1991 the House of Bishops 'Standing Committee' considered information regarding ritual and satanic abuse of children following a high-profile case in Orkney and resultant official inquiry established in August 1991 by Lord Clyde. Child sexual abuse and action to respond to it within the Church was formally discussed from December 1993. At this time, a resolution was passed that urged all to work to end sexual abuse and exploitation of women and children, following "evidence of sexual abuse within the Anglican Church"<sup>21</sup>. A paper to "address the question as to whether the Church should devise formal guidelines in relation to child sexual abuse" was

<sup>20</sup> Timeline historical development of child protection and key safeguarding policies, NST, 2019 (Appendix 3)

<sup>21</sup> Ibid

produced in the same year. It is not clear if this guideline included abuse of boys and men. Again, the relevance of this in terms of the actions taken by Church officers to respond to victims of John Smyth is further explored later in the report.

- 6.3.10 The Church's July 1995 policy was prompted, in part, by Government guidance issued in 1993 (Safe From Harm). The policy is primarily concerned with child abuse but does contain guidance for Bishops on dealing with instances of adult abuse. A policy on recruitment of people into ordained ministry, lay ministry, as well as paid staff and volunteers, is included. This largely consists of the requirement on people applying for these positions to self-declare any criminal or civil proceedings they may have been involved with. These applicants were also required to self-declare whether they had caused harm to children or put them at risk (but not adults).
- 6.3.11 This 1995 policy was revised and updated in 1999, with a further updating policy issued in 2004, Protecting All God's Children. This introduced a Lead Bishop for Safeguarding and a culture of "informed vigilance". In 2006 the first policy on safeguarding dedicated to adults only was issued (Promoting a Safer Church). The 4<sup>th</sup> edition of Protecting All God's Children was issued in 2010, with no substantial revisions.
- 6.3.12 Our review of Church safeguarding policy reflects the IICSA investigation of the Anglican Church findings and reported in conclusions and recommendations, namely that prior to 2013, many of the Church's safeguarding policies had "*significant weaknesses and implementation of those policies was patchy*"<sup>22</sup>, while since 2015 this has been more comprehensive, there are still improvements to be made.

#### Scale of the abuse

- 6.3.13 Evidence considered in this Review suggests that 16 Winchester College students were physically abused<sup>23</sup>, with a further six to eight who were groomed. A further nine victims were abused who had attended eight other public schools prior to the abuse occurring – we strongly suspect that the true figure is probably greater, hence the probable total of victims from this period being in the order of 26 to 30 victims who were abused by John Smyth in the UK. Of these, at least five were recruited by John Smyth directly from universities, with no pre-existing connection to, or attendance, at Iwerne camps.<sup>24</sup> Approximately 60% of those known to have been abused went to Cambridge University, with the rest attending six other universities. John Smyth actively travelled to and recruited at these universities, mainly via the Christian Unions there, being invited to talk.
- 6.3.14 There is evidence of John Smyth perpetrating abuse against boys and young men in Zimbabwe, detailed later in this report, with evidence primarily given from an independent investigation carried out there in 1993, known as the Coltart Report<sup>25</sup>. The nature and extent of this is truly shocking and relevant to the learning for this Review. We have been passed detailed statements from people who were aware of this abuse and attempting to prevent it at the time, as well as contemporaneous papers, and from research carried out by one of the UK victims. The number of victims in Africa is estimated at around 85 to 100 male children aged 13 to 17.

#### The lasting effects of the abuse

- 6.3.15 Victims do not form a clear homogenous group – the impact upon each person is personal and cannot be generalised. A small number of victims we have spoken with (and some others reported to us through a third party) describe ways that they have come to terms with the abuse they suffered and have been able to compartmentalise it.

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<sup>22</sup> [The Anglican Church Investigation Report | IICSA Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse](#) October 2020

<sup>23</sup> The Winchester College Review of this case includes detailed accounts of the abuse experienced by students (known as Wykehamists) at the College. This Review is not attempting to reproduce detail in that Review or of those produced by other organisations that have explored the abuse. Readers are encouraged to read the Winchester College Review report to enable full understanding of the nature and extent of their involvement and the experiences of victims in relation to that as well as all subsequent learning identified. [Review Of Abuse In The 1970s And 1980s By John Smyth QC Of Pupils From Winchester College](#)

<sup>24</sup> John Smyth's involvement as a volunteer leader in Christian camps known as "Iwerne Camps" (run at Clayesmore School, Iwerne Minster, Dorset) is explored as a potential enabling factor in his access to victims and the abuse perpetrated.

<sup>25</sup> Report on Mr John Smyth and Zambezi Ministries 19<sup>th</sup> October 1993 by David Coltart – Appendix 1

A greater proportion of victims describe long lasting impacts including trauma, diagnosis of PTSD and significant mental health conditions because of the abuse. Several people articulate their experience of retraumatising events at several points in this case, most significantly triggered by investigations, reviews such as this, news reports, articles, and debates that take place on social media. The Channel 4 programmes, aired in February 2017, while viewed as a positive development, bringing the case in to the public domain, were also an immensely triggering event for many. This was the catalyst to several victims feeling they had no option but to disclose their experience of the abuse to their families, friends and even the public as a result of speculation and debate that took place as a result of the programme.

*"I told my mum, my brothers, my sister, my children - I knew that, one way or another, my name would come into the frame and everybody was incredibly shocked and very supportive. I don't know whether it felt like a relief or not, it felt very awkward and, in some ways, talking to my mum about it was more difficult than talking to anyone else about it."*

- 6.3.16 Victims have reported mixed and complex feelings because of the abuse, including feelings of worthlessness, 'Why me?', guilt 'Did I encourage this in some way? Am I to blame?' and shame 'How could I have let this go on? Why did I go back?'. More details of the abuse came to light with the publication of the *Bleeding for Jesus* book, and as reports from Scripture Union, Titus Trust and the Winchester College Reviews pertaining to this case were published. Again, victims tell us that while these have assisted in promoting public awareness of the horrific abuse and lack of responses, they were also understandably retraumatising. Victims describe how they were anxious about more details being made public, had flashbacks, and had real concerns about what their family and friends would think of them. Several victims are accessing therapeutic support, many have been doing so for several years and find this crucial to their recovery. We have heard from victims how, because of the abuse and trauma, several of their intimate relationships and friendships ended.

*"My faith had been a central part of my life, but that instinct told me I could not co-exist with it. So, I rejected my faith. It was painful and disorientating. Over many months, I was confused and frightened."*

*"When I lost my faith between 33 and 36 years of age, my life took a steep downhill dive. Divorce and alcohol dependency were the main issues, accompanied by loneliness and a lack of self-belief. I am not saying this is totally down to JS or even other outside influences. We have to take responsibility for whatever life throws at us – and at the time I wasn't taking responsibility. However, it would be a strange thing to think that he had no influence at all."*

*The impact this has had on me throughout my life is that it had impacted on my relationship with my parents, because I became very secretive."*

*"The process I went through, that compartmentalising process, that cutting off, that loss of contact with people, that loss of contact with part of your history. That denial of stuff that was really important to you, had been really important to you, that sense of having to reframe so much of life, at that point. That was quite traumatic, I suppose, and that was I think what I would still feel quite emotional about."*

- 6.3.17 Victims have detailed how they continue to experience PTSD, with many lasting and life-changing effects, including an inability to work, difficulty with family relationships and friendship, hyper-vigilance, obsessive behaviour, panic attacks. Several victims have described how they continue to have suicidal thoughts, and some victims have attempted suicide.

- 6.3.18 We have been told by several victims that their lives have been irrevocably impacted because of the abuse and the responses to it over the decades that this Review covers:

*"Basically, I just rejected everything. I rejected my friends, I rejected my faith, I rejected everything."*

*It meant also that I rejected my friends – I could not rationally justify to myself what I was doing and knew I could certainly not explain it to them in terms they would understand."*

- 6.3.19 One victim describes how tells of way the abuse impacted on his studies whilst at university:

*"At the end of my second year, I failed my exams and was strongly encouraged to leave. I could have continued, but the College's exam results overall were poor and I was led to believe that I wasn't wanted anymore. And so I left in a great deal of confusion....In retrospect, the JS saga was a huge distraction to my studying. But I was unable to put this to my tutor. As it was a secretive group.*

*Looking back on these events, I am persuaded that my future career and more importantly my relationship with my parents suffered greatly."*

- 6.3.20 The fact that John Smyth evaded justice and the thought that he could have been stopped at several points over the years, has added to these traumas, as is best explained by victims themselves:

*"It deeply troubles me and disturbs me to this day that criminal acts were committed against boys and young men and it was never reported to the Police. I'm desperately disturbed by that and wrestle with it because speaking for myself, it would've helped me enormously if I'd been able to have psychotherapy before leaving university, to get my head sorted out around these traumas."*

The impact of the abuse goes beyond individual victims, causing harm and trauma for victims' families. We have heard many examples of how the abuse caused family problems, damaging relationships with parents, siblings and friends.

*"...my relationship with my [sibling] has only now recovered from the hold that Smyth took on my life - we've talked about it - I have asked for forgiveness for the way that I moved away - and it has taken about thirty years to rebuild our relationship."*

*"...my father knew how close I had come to committing suicide on Christmas Day 2013 and my father was very concerned. He could see that I was still struggling....In the last meaningful conversation I had with my father, he was still apologising to me. I said something like, 'Dad, it's okay, everything is going to be okay, don't worry about this. Let's have a game of Scrabble'. He just wanted to go through it and talk about it again. If Justin Welby or the Church of England had exposed John Smyth's abuse in 2013 publicly, it would have been a different life or a different end of life for my father.*

*Like myself, she [my mother] was certain that the questions that I had raised would be addressed very quickly. However, they weren't and as a result she also saw a different kind of mental turmoil descend. She was baffled – she got angry towards the end at the lack of response from the Church of England. In the end it angered her so much, she said 'I don't really want to talk about it, but when you come into the room, if the Archbishop has got in touch with you, just give me a thumbs up'. She was alive until October 2017, so we had this sort of – I would just go thumbs down. She would go, 'thumbs up?'. I would go, 'thumbs down'."*

*"My mother didn't know until a couple of years ago whether or not I had been involved in the suffering that other young men had endured...she'd carried her anxiety for almost forty years."*

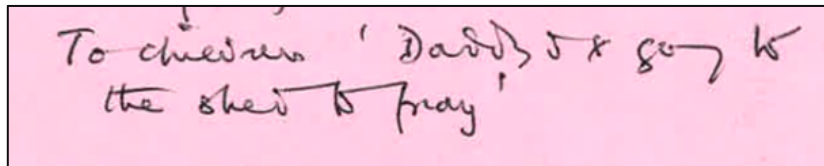
- 6.3.21 For some people, the responses they have had from organisations have been, and continue to be, traumatising. This is particularly true for some, regarding the response of 'officers', 'institutions' and 'participants'<sup>26</sup> of the Church of England. The lasting effects of this abuse are felt both by and beyond the direct victims of his physical

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<sup>26</sup> As detailed and described in the ToR for this Review.

abuse. Victims of grooming<sup>27</sup> by John Smyth, that often describe their 'narrow escape' from physical abuse, also describe the impact of the psychosocial abuse and harm caused by John Smyth's coercion and control of them.

- 6.3.22 Dr Hanson, independent Clinical Psychologist<sup>28</sup>, worked alongside Reviewers to analyse relevant material and evidence as well as speaking directly with some key witnesses on key issues to inform our analysis and learning from this case. Dr Hanson's primary findings and conclusions are fed into the relevant sections of this report and the learning that has been identified. Firstly, Dr Hanson comments on the impact and lasting effects of the abuse:
- 6.3.23 *"The toll that his abuse has taken and continues to take is immense, ranging from lost opportunities and damaged relationships to ongoing PTSD (including symptoms such as nightmares and flashbacks) to crippling worthlessness, self-doubt, and shame. This long-term impact flows from the core dynamics of his abuse.... Particularly pertinent is the invisible yet central traps and double binds that victims were caught in – for example, to withdraw from the beatings would have been narrated as weakness and seen as shameful, but to have suffered them has also been experienced as such. Of related and equal importance is John's 'mind control' – how he, through various means including charisma and gaslighting, forced onto his victims his judgemental version of the world and them, leading to pervasive distrust in oneself and eroded autonomy. And his abuse fundamentally shattered assumptions in his victims around safety and who can be trusted, leaving many without this foundation for trusting others and navigating life."*
- 6.3.24 John Smyth's own family, specifically his children (now adults and parents themselves) are also his victims. There is evidence of both psychological and physical abuse perpetrated by John Smyth in his family environment. Mark Ruston made reference to the children in a note from 1982:



To children 'Daddy' 5 x 50g to the shed to pray'

- 6.3.25 The risks posed by him to his family were largely ignored in the period covered by this Review and are analysed in this report. John Smyth's son is a victim of his physical abuse. He was abused between the ages of 7 and 11 years old. The nature and extent of the abuse mirrors the abuse perpetrated by John Smyth to other victims. The abuse is described in his own words below, he has bravely given his permission to quote these words from his journals:

*"The walk up the path to the shed was agonizing. We always held hands. It was a two-minute walk from the house. Sometimes we would walk in silence. Sometimes I would ask how many I would get this time. Trips to the shed were never quick. Quick beatings happened in the house, in his study or the upstairs bathroom. The shed was about the experience. The experience often began days before. My dad was often away all week and returned at the weekends. Mum would write my wrong-doings in "the book" in the kitchen ready for my dad to read on his return. I had days of waiting. Days of anticipating my next visit to the shed."*

- 6.3.26 The family members who have participated in this Review give good evidence of what it was like to live with John Smyth as a father:

*"I wouldn't call our home a happy home ... my dad was very domineering, very dominant. It was always his way, or the highway and he had a massive temper on*

<sup>27</sup> Metropolitan Police describe grooming 'is when a person builds a relationship with a child, young person or an adult who's at risk so they can abuse them and manipulate them into doing things. The abuse is usually sexual or financial, but it can also include other illegal acts.' [Grooming | Metropolitan Police](#)

<sup>28</sup> Psychological analysis of John Smyth and his abuse, Dr Elly Hanson, August 2022 – Appendix 4

*him, so we all knew about it when he was angry, whether it was at you or someone else, everyone knew about it."*

*"My memory of Dad is a pretty antsy guy who was prickly and difficult and pretty cross a lot of the time, and stressed, and not very present in our family."*

*"My Dad positioned himself as a spiritual authority, not just in my life and my Mum's life, but other people's lives. He had this fixation about being head of the family, so that was a big one, spiritual."*

*"I will say that he is an unbelievably persuasive man, he was... If you sat in the room with him, you pretty much believed whatever he said."*

*"He was completely unable to accept that he wasn't right, so everything was fine until there was a confrontation or a disagreement about something, and then if that person just wouldn't agree, then they went separate ways, basically and often very unpleasantly after quite a few arguments and stuff. He did never seem to be able to work something through with someone and just agree to disagree."*

- 6.3.27 In a submission to the Review, one person described how he discovered, many years after the event, that John Smyth had attended his brother's funeral. His brother had taken his own life at an early age and there is now some uncertainty as to why John Smyth would have attended his funeral, as he had only a passing and distant connection with him. A query now hangs over this for the family and people are asking themselves whether their relative was one of the people groomed and affected by John Smyth or whether there is a more innocent explanation.
- 6.3.28 Another aspect of the continuing and lasting effects of the abuse on individuals is seen in the impacts that some victims have felt from being pursued and named as victims on social media. One victim felt compelled to talk about the abuse he suffered from John Smyth, following repeated calls for him to do so by people commenting on various blog sites and on Twitter. The assertion being made was that Clergy who had been abused should reveal that abuse, for there to be transparency and to help other victims. This victim has described that he felt conflicted with a right to maintain privacy, and an associated inherent right to choose not to talk of abuses he may have suffered. A second victim has felt that he has been "outed" by references to him in published statements, against his wishes and to a point where he has felt obliged to issue his own personal statement about the abuse; he describes being deeply hurt by this. Further details of these two victims' situations cannot be given, as this would readily identify them. They have both said to the Reviewers that they wish for their position to be referenced in this Review and for there to be a recognition of the negative effect that this has had on them and their families. One of these victims has said to us that other people are in a similar position and that they are in fear of the fact that they have been abused being brought to public attention.
- 6.3.29 As Reviewers and as safeguarding professionals, we believe that victims of abuse have the right to remain silent about their experiences of abuse if they wish to. This is a matter of personal choice and is covered by the Right to Privacy under Article 8 of the Human Rights Act 1998 which incorporated the European Convention on Human Rights into domestic British law.
- 6.3.30 The use of social media by Church officers and the position of Church officers who have been abused in terms of personal disclosure are both explored further in the Learning Themes section of this Review at page.
- 6.3.31 Victims continue to be very concerned about some aspects of the events that occurred over 40 years ago. Two victims, for example, have different recollections of the sequence of events and a process was instigated to enable them to reach a resolution of those differences. This was a mediation process, coordinated by an independent person and paid for by the Church. This process concluded but further issues have reopened the issues, with the matter not being fully resolved at the current time. This is another example of the lasting effects of the abuses and the continuing trauma experienced by victims.

## 7. ABUSE IN AFRICA

- 7.1 John Smyth left the country to move to Zimbabwe in July 1984 and subsequently moved to South Africa in August 2001. Whilst in Zimbabwe, he continued to abuse boys and young men and there is evidence that abusive practices continued in South Africa until his death in August 2018. We examine the evidence for these abuses, including several major attempts to stop him in Zimbabwe, a failed trial against him and the suspicious death of 16-year-old Guide Nyachuru at one of his Zimbabwean camps. In discussion with the commissioners of this Review, we have not carried a detailed review of the abuse that took place in Africa as it was felt these sit outside the remit for the Review. We have therefore concentrated on establishing and analysing support, including financial support, offered to John Smyth, both in his to move to Zimbabwe and whilst he lived there, and in South Africa, his associations with individual Church of England Clergy and his continued recruitment of young men from the UK, using his Church connections.
- 7.2 As is explored later, a key recommendation from this review is that the Church considers options to ensure a further independent review of abuses in Zimbabwe and South Africa is undertaken, because of our findings.
- 7.3 The then Lead Bishop for safeguarding, Bishop Jonathan Gibbs, stated at General Synod in February 2022, in response to a question by Professor Helen King, that *“The Archbishop of Canterbury wrote in March 2021 to the Archbishop of Cape Town asking if he would be willing to undertake a review of the activities of John Smyth in Southern Africa, and offering his support for this. The Archbishop of Cape Town replied outlining what they knew about Smyth, but as far as we know there has not been a further investigation. In my view once the Makin review is completed, subject to any legal constraints, as much information as possible should be passed to the Anglican Church in Southern Africa, with a further offer of support for an investigation.”* A further statement regarding a review into Southern Africa was made to General Synod in July 2023 by the new Lead Bishop, Bishop Joanne Grenfell.

## 8. JOHN JACKSON SMYTH

- 8.1 John Jackson Smyth was born on 27<sup>th</sup> June 1941 in Calgary, Canada. His father, Colonel Edward Smyth, was Plymouth Brethren at that time. By profession an orthopaedic surgeon, his father is said to have been a keen mountaineer and involved in work with Indigenous people in Newfoundland. John Smyth was one of three siblings, reported to have grown up in a very strict, authoritarian family environment. The family moved to the Isle of Wight in 1948, moving away from the Brethren but remaining a strictly Evangelical family environment, with strong patriarchal beliefs in terms of women’s place, in society and religion, as well as homophobic views.
- 8.2 During our engagement with John Smyth’s family members, we were advised that he may have been attacked and possibly sexually assaulted, age nine or ten while out riding his bicycle. This is said to have taken place at the end of a pier on the Isle of Wight. Dr Hanson refers to this in her report, and gives some context to later events.
- 8.3 John Smyth attended a public school called St Lawrence. Several contributors to the Review, including family members, have reported to us that he carried a lifelong resentment that he had not gone to one of the more “elite” public schools, as recognised by the Iwerne movement. John Smyth is also said to have admired his father and sought to be his equal.
- 8.4 John Smyth went on to Trinity Hall College, Cambridge, in 1960 to read Natural Sciences, switching to Law from his second year. He graduated in 1963, then taking his LLB at Trinity Hall, graduating in 1964 (Information supplied by the Archives Manager at Trinity Hall)<sup>29</sup>. He attended his first Iwerne camp at Easter 1964, when he was 22. Contributors to the Review have noted that this was interesting in that the Reverend Eric Nash (“Bash”), who founded the Iwerne Trust and ran the camps made an exception for John Smyth, his young protégé, seeming to escalate his leadership with Iwerne despite his lack of connection to an elite public school. John Smyth did not attend the camps as a child, so had not “risen through the ranks”, but was sought out by Nash, seeing him as a strong Christian and a gifted Barrister, who would be offering something to the Iwerne camps. These observations have come from both close family members and from the statements made by victims, both to the Review and to Hampshire Police.

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<sup>29</sup> Source: Archives, Trinity Hall, Cambridge University.



- 8.5 In 1966 he met Anne Leggott (Josephine Anne Leggott, born 10<sup>th</sup> December 1944) at a Children's Special Service Mission house party in Swanage. John and Anne Smyth married in 1968 and they initially lived in Norwood, London. They had four children; their first child was born in 1969 and the last in 1978. An unusual and, in the light of what is now known, disturbing fact is that at least two of the Godparents of John and Anne Smyth's children were young men, as young as 16- years old, who were also his victims.
- 8.6 After graduating in 1964 with an LLB, he took up a pupillage at a prominent chambers in London. He qualified as a Barrister in 1965 and in 1979, went on to be the youngest Queens Counsel (QC) at the time (see listing below from *Who's Who* 2017):

**SMYTH, John Jackson**; QC 1979; barrister-at-law; Director of Zambesi Ministries, African Enterprise, Zimbabwe, since 1986; b 27 June 1941; e s of Col Edward Hugh Jackson Smyth, FRCSEd, and late Ursula Helen Lucie (*née* Ross) m 1968, Josephine Anne, *er d* of late Walter Leggott and Miriam Moss Leggott, Manor Farm, Burtoft, Lincs; one s three d. *Educ*: Strathcona Sch., Calgary, Alberta; St Lawrence Coll.; Trinity Hall, Cambridge. MA, LLB (Cantab). Called to Bar, Inner Temple (Major Schol.), 1965. A Recorder, 1978–84. *Publication*: *Discovering Christianity Today*, 1985. *Recreations*: skiing, sailing, trout fishing, real tennis. *Address*: 2 Crown Office Row, Temple, EC4; PO Box HG 167, Highlands, Harare, Zimbabwe. T: 42561.

- 8.6.1 A victim described his influence and presence at this time:

*"He [was] a charismatic personality he was the blue-eyed boy, he was Mary Whitehouse's lawyer, he was in the public domain, everybody knew about him, he was a QC, very eloquent."*

- 8.6.2 This and the analysis of the events that follow this section, demonstrates John Smyth as a highly driven and manipulative man simultaneously carrying out the prolific grooming<sup>30</sup>, exploitation and the physical abuse of his victims while holding multiple positions of power and influence, and consistently seeking new ones, both in his legal career and Christian life. It is important to contextualise this in the time, for example, recognising the limited communication methods that existed with no internet, email, mobile phones, or social media. His abuse, commitments and activities took place in person, reaching most parts of the UK.

- 8.6.3 The scale and intensity of his coercive<sup>31</sup> and controlling behaviour is very apparent in both the written materials and spoken submissions to this Review, including and beyond that of his direct victims.

- 8.6.4 John Smyth is said to have been a highly influential and, some have said, 'gifted' speaker, his reputation, and approach described to us often by victims as charismatic and is described later 'magnetic'. A victim describes their early encounters with him as follows:

*"I remember he was quite different from most of the other speakers {at the Christian Forum at Winchester College} in that he was about 20 years younger than everyone else and more dynamic. He was introduced at that time to be the youngest person to be a QC and was known to be a brilliant barrister and very eloquent speaker. When he spoke, his natural facial expression was to have a slight half grin, so to my mind even, within a charismatic evangelical Christian movement, he stood out as being maybe a little bit more charismatic than most of the other speakers."*

- 8.6.5 The Reviewers are tasked in clause 2.3(4) of the ToR with identifying what additional lessons can be learnt which are relevant and which might improve safeguarding practice in the Church of England, and it is important for future learning and improvement to fully understand the motivations for John Smyth's abuse. Dr Elly Hanson, Clinical Psychologist, has worked alongside the Reviewers to analyse relevant material and evidence as well as speaking directly with some key witnesses. From this, Dr Hanson has set out her own analysis using existing research and evidence. Clause 3.1 of the ToR provides that the Review should "Place

<sup>33</sup> See footnote 27 for Metropolitan Police definition of grooming

<sup>31</sup> This term is used to describe the behaviour perpetrated by John Smyth, recognising that this type of abuse was not fully recognised at this time. UK Government Home Office defines coercive behaviour as "an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim. Controlling behaviour is defined as a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour".



*the actions of individuals and Church bodies in context, showing understanding of the underlying reasons that led to individuals and organisations acting as they did, or which might explain why they did so.*" Dr Hanson's report has assisted the Reviewers in placing John Smyth's actions into context and in identifying lessons learned as required by the ToR, but the Review's conclusions are our own. Dr Hanson's primary findings and conclusions are listed below: understanding the abuse and motivations for it supports learning to prevent future harm and to inform responses to it by the Church. This was explored by Dr Hanson in her research for this Review<sup>32</sup>, her findings can be summarised as follows:

- (a) Several forms of abuse were perpetrated by John Smyth – physical violence, sexual abuse, coercive control, psychological abuse and emotional neglect (of his own children). These abuses interact and overlap. He used parts of the Bible and religious authority to assist his abuse, which can be seen as a distinct form of abuse – spiritual abuse – or as a layer of his coercive control and psychological abuse.
- (b) His core motives for committing the abuse - sexual gratification, pleasure from other people's pain (including their humiliation), status, a desire to be at the top of hierarchy and to be admired and revered and the dominance and control of others.
- (c) He had narcissistic personality disorder of a grandiose type and, related to this, little interest in relational connection; little ability or willingness to self-reflect; a focus on his self-interest above those of others; and little or no empathy.
- (d) He displayed exhibitionist and voyeuristic tendencies; callousness; and an ability to charm (a magnetism).
- (e) He had a sexual interest in boys and young men, not incompatible with a sexual interest in his wife.
- (f) He held several core beliefs that likely played a role in contributing to his abusive behaviour - these were that he was more important than others (i.e., a sense of entitlement); that being gay or having gay sexual experiences is a serious moral wrong; and that some people are 'elected' and endowed with special qualities to lead and be an authority over others, in particular himself.
- (g) He did not have a conception of or belief in relationships between equals, and often behaved as if his family were avatars, not full people in their own right but in some way extensions of himself.

8.6.6 Dr Hanson expands on these findings in her report and comments on the psychological effects of this abuse on others including his victims. Her full report can be found in Appendix 4, as relevant and appropriate to support the learning from this case, these are interwoven into the relevant sections of the report.

8.6.7 John Smyth posed as a "father figure" to victims, often where victims had limited contact or long separation from their own fathers. John Smyth exploited their vulnerability as children away from home and their need for a father or parent role model. A victim describes the trust placed in him:

*"I trusted Smyth completely and completely trusted his motives. What we were doing seemed to me a hundred percent, it was what God wants from me. It was like a parent telling their child in as much as the parent only tells the child what's good for them and the child accepts what the parents are telling them."*

8.6.8 Dr Hanson offers a very helpful analysis of how this enabled him to abuse:

*"...John established himself to the boys (and the wider peer group) as a Christian authority (their most important one), central to their salvation and faith, and as a father figure welcoming them into his family. In this process he drew on his charisma, intelligence, and marriage and family. And his grooming was made more effective by leaders and peers within the community buying into his projected image of himself, giving it credibility and status. In all of this, John*

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<sup>32</sup> Psychological analysis of John Smyth and his abuse, Dr Elly Hanson, August 2022 Appendix 4

*presented himself as meeting several core, unmet needs that the boys variously held: for belonging, for identity, for meaning, for love, for esteem, and for certainty."*

- 8.6.9 Of note in Dr Hanson's analysis is reference to boarding school culture and practices, in which she describes how often very young children are separated from their families for long periods of time and therefore "come to lack strong, secure attachments and an understanding of healthy relationships. This can make them more vulnerable" to exploitation and abuse, "especially when perpetrated by someone in the guise of a 'father figure'." Dr Hanson goes on to explain the vulnerability and needs of those that were targeted by John Smyth "... needs are especially acute during adolescence, and become more so when children are placed in boarding school - and furthermore it appears that John targeted those that he perceived as having deeper unmet needs (in other words particular vulnerabilities)". This explanation correlates to the experiences of several victims who described describe vulnerability because of family relationship breakdown and/or boarding school attendance.

## 9. THE IWERNE CAMPS, IWERNE TRUST, SCRIPTURE UNION & TITUS TRUST

- 9.1.1 The relationship between the Iwerne Trust, Scripture Union and the Iwerne camps during the period covered by this Review, is complex. The Scripture Union Review Executive Summary Report<sup>33</sup> and Titus Trust's documents<sup>34</sup> relating to their response describe and analyse these arrangements in further detail. In summary, Scripture Union employed at least two of the key Iwerne individuals, Reverend David Fletcher and the Reverend Tim Sterry, also Church officers - who then organised and operated the Iwerne Camps. Funding for these roles was provided by the Iwerne Trust. On paper this meant that the Scripture Union were the governing body for these staff. In practice, this seems to have differed, this was described by David Fletcher to the Reviewers, written in the Scripture Union Review as follows:

*"David Fletcher indicated that he regarded his employment by [Scripture Union] SU as a technicality as the money to pay for his camp work and salary was raised through the Iwerne Trust..."*

The Titus Trust was created in 1997, with the Iwerne Trust continuing as a facility to handle legacy funding, until 2015, when the Iwerne Trust formally ceased. Giles Rawlinson chaired the Iwerne Trust and chaired Titus Trust once it had been incorporated, as well as chairing Scripture Union Independent Schools Committee for a number of years. The Titus Trust took on the responsibility of running the camps and employing staff fully from 2000. Titus was registered separately with the Charities Commission.

- 9.1.2 The camps were run by a smaller group of individuals including these two individuals. Lines of accountability, governance and definitions of arrangements were not clear at that time. This was complicated and arguably eroded by the fact that many of the same people held positions of power and authority on several of these relevant bodies. At one point, for example, John Smyth chaired the Iwerne Trust (1974 or 1975–1982), was a trustee of Scripture Union, and also attended the Iwerne Camps as a volunteer leader.

- 9.1.3 Iwerne camps originated in 1933, founded by Eric Nash ("Bash"). The purpose of the camps was to develop young men from leading public schools (around 30 schools had an association with Iwerne) in terms of their Christian faith and to prepare them for high office, both in Churches and in wider roles in society. The camps were initially run very much along military lines, similarly to other Christian camps of the time, complete with "Adjutants" and "Officers". From the early 1940s, the "camps" were run at Clayesmore school in Iwerne Minster, Dorset, in the school buildings. The camps were non-denominational but with a strong link to the Church of England. Victims describe the approach taken by Iwerne at that time as:

*"...as a child at the Iwerne camps, it was all about getting people into the Church of England and looking to hold sway on opinions within the Church, and that wasn't hidden from us as teenagers. That was very much the emphasis, that you have been chosen, and you will go on to do great things for Jesus within the Church of England. That was part of what they were selling to us."*

<sup>33</sup> [Executive Summary of Scripture Union John Smyth Independent Case Review March 2021.pdf \(scriptureunion.org.uk\)](#)

<sup>34</sup> [Titus Trust Documents relating to the Titus Trust's response to John Smyth's abuse, 2021](#)

*"The philosophy was both at Iwerne Minster summer camps in my view, and I am not alone in thinking this, and in John Smyth's head that you could only really serve God with a dog collar around your neck in the Church of England and that the job, the mission, the task, the quest was to get boys of real promise to become ordained in the Church of England, to become bishops and archbishops, and for the Iwerne tribal, evangelical, narrow-minded brand of Christianity, which is anti-gay, as Smyth was with the Whitehouse trials, to infiltrate the whole of the Church of England and to take it over."*

9.1.4 A victim describes the approach taken by Iwerne at that time as:

*"The Iwerne Project which provided activity-based holidays for public school boys who were accepted from a list of 30 elite boarding schools in England, ...all of which had their own Christian Forum/Union organisation, run by staff member(s) at the individual schools.*

*Iwerne held three camps over the summer holidays each of which lasted for 10 days and were called A, B and C. The public schools broke up around the 20th of July and the first camp would be 10 days, then the second and third camp would follow for the same period. They were held in Claysmore School near to Iwerne Minster in Dorset.*

*The camps provided sporting activities and each morning and evening there was a talk about the Christian faith. Different people would give the talks, on topics such as sin, forgiveness and similar. There were people called leaders at the top of the hierarchy such as clergy, school teachers who were involved in Christian Union activities in those thirty leading schools and theological students, often from Ridley Hall in Cambridge or Wycliffe Hall in Oxford."*

9.1.5 As is described here, the camps placed a great emphasis on healthy outdoor pursuits and sports, which many participants to this Review have praised and reflected positively on. Victims have detailed how John Smyth was able to groom them through engagement in sporting pursuits solely with him outside of the Iwerne camp perimeters, for example hiking, sailing, and skiing activities and holidays as is detailed later.

9.1.6 An independent review regarding allegations against a different Church officer was undertaken in 2021 on behalf of a diocese and parish, this described the research and evidence relating to the term 'muscular Christianity', a term used frequently in their interviews with victims, and in our meetings with victims of John Smyth in terms of the Church arenas, organisations and institutions that he operated within. They describe research and evidence regarding muscular Christianity and how it "combines a focus on physical exercise, Christianity and manly character (Hall, 1994)". They explore how this kind of Christianity suggests "physical strength and engagement in physical exercise and sports, equates to being strong enough to be effective in sharing the gospel, and weakness makes you ineffective (Putney, 2011)", and reference that the muscular Christianity movement "arose to some extent as a response to what was seen by some as Christianity becoming an effeminate religion (Siphiwe, 2015)". The parallels in victim experiences in these two cases in the context of this are clear and inform the learning for this Review.

9.1.7 Muscular Christianity is also described as a 'conducive cultural and organisational factor' by Dr Hanson in her paper produced for this Review<sup>35</sup>. Dr Hanson presents that this may have assisted or contributed to John Smyth's abuse:

*"John Smyth's personality, the array of strategies he deployed to achieve his abuse and their interaction with conducive cultural and organisational factors and how he was treated and revered, created a formidable invisible web in which he entrapped numerous boys and young men".*

9.1.8 Dr Hanson presents 'Muscular Christianity' as being – "a version of masculinity involving endurance, toughness, suppression of vulnerability ('stiff upper lip') is valorised". The Iwerne leaders, sought attendance at camps from boys and young men who were seen as future leaders, having already demonstrated leadership qualities which others would look up to. Several victims have said that the camps provided them with an opportunity to explore their Christian journey in a deep and thoughtful way.

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<sup>35</sup> Psychological analysis of John Smyth and his abuse, Dr Elly Hanson, August 2022 - Appendix 4

9.1.9 As a victim describes below, and as is described by several Review contributors, Iwerne camps were run entirely by men, with women being present only as “*lady helpers*”. A key feature of the Iwerne camps was that women were involved often in subsidiary roles only, with this having a direct impact on the thinking and the development of the boys and young men attending the camps.

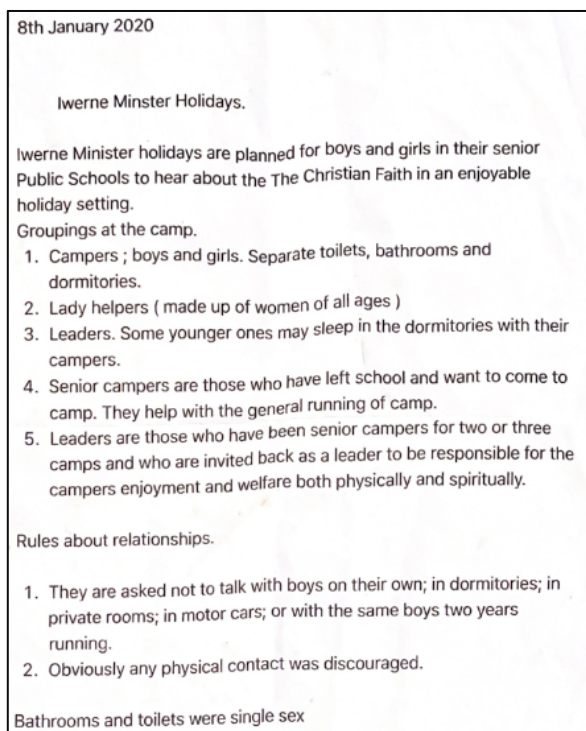
*"...it was an incredibly sexist setup, a group of people called lady helpers, many of whom were either wives of the leaders or female undergraduates. These lady helpers were kept out of sight, out of mind, they'd be doing the cooking in the kitchen, despite the fact that some of the female undergraduates might be doing the same course at the same College as the senior campers for example. Then there were the pupils from the schools."*

9.1.10 Dr Hanson also explores how this patriarchal approach in the organisations and cultures that John Smyth operated, was a conducive cultural and organisational factor, describing the impact in relation to this case:

*"Misogyny and patriarchy: men are seen as in authority over women – whilst men and women are said to be equal before God, men are granted more power than women and treated as having more wisdom and insight. As a result, John's behaviour and justifications may have been given more legitimacy; his focus on young men was not questioned; and potentially valuable perspectives from women were absent."*<sup>36</sup>

9.1.11 Contributors to the Review have described how camps for girls and for state school-based children later developed. The Iwerne Trust also ran ‘Winter Conferences’, attended by John Smyth and referenced later in the report.

9.1.12 While there is no evidence of a formal safeguarding policy or procedure within Iwerne Camps at this time, Reviewers were presented, by David Fletcher, with a rudimentary sheet describing a set of ‘rules’ that applied (see below screenshot). Contributors to the Review have also described these rules, and that these included reference to conversations having to be in public, and the banning of one-to-one meetings between camp leaders and children.



<sup>36</sup> Ibid

## **PART 2: ANALYSIS & FINDINGS**

*“I had a sense that each cane stroke had left its own mark on my body, however when I was beaten more than 30, or even as much as 100 times, there was no sense of any individual stroke marks....just a bloody mess”.*

A victim of John Smyth, 2022

## 10. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The Review follows a chronological approach, divided into distinct periods. Each section that follows represents a period, includes key findings, an analysis of what the Church of England knew about the abuse at that time and how further abuse could have been prevented if action had been taken. The periods of Review are:

### a. 1970 – end 1981 (including some references to the pre-1970 period)

This covers the period from the start of the Review period until the abuse was revealed by the Ruston Report, bringing it to the attention of people who could have acted to prevent further abuse.

### b. 1982 - June 1984

The period between the abuse being reported to some individuals and John Smyth and his family leaving the UK to move to Zimbabwe.

### c. July 1984 – 2011

John Smyth's time in Africa, up to the point where knowledge of his abuses in the UK was widened. Abuses in Zimbabwe were investigated, and an attempt was made to take John Smyth to trial.

### d. 2012 – end 2016

This period covers the time when people in the Church and other institutions knew of the abuses in the UK and Africa and took insufficient actions, both in exploring the abuse and in attempting to ensure that no further abuses took place.

### e. January 2017 – to present time

The UK and African abuses were made public in Channel 4 programmes in February 2017, following which insufficient actions were taken to fully investigate, to establish whether further abuse could be prevented and in supporting victims of the abuse.

## 11. TIME PERIOD: 1970 – 1981

### Key Findings

11.1.1 The Review ToR steer us to focus on two related but distinct questions: (1) what did the Church of England (i.e. relevant officers and institutions) know about alleged abuse perpetrated by John Smyth, and (2) what was the response of the Church of England to those allegations. For this period, in response to these questions, we have found the following:

- (a) John Smyth made at least one confirmed attempt to be ordained into the Church of England. He was refused at the selection panel (Advisory Council for the Church's Ministry (**ACCM**)). Contributors to the Review, including those that experienced or were involved with selection panels at this time suggest this indicated concerns that would have been present. It was deemed 'unusual' for an applicant as prominent as John Smyth to get to this stage and be declined at panel.
- (b) Given his attempts at ordination were prior to the revelations contained in the Ruston Report, this indicates earlier concerns regarding John Smyth, albeit not necessarily due to abuse, were known within the Church. Despite extensive research, Reviewers have not been able to establish exactly which diocese/s were involved and therefore who would have been members of the relevant selection panel/s. Church records are not sufficiently robust to allow for this research to be completed.

- (c) Winchester College was concerned enough about John Smyth's influence on boys at the school for the Headmaster to bring in a new Chaplain (the Reverend Mark Ashton) to oversee the Christian Forum. It is likely that he was briefed on the concerns regarding the forum and John Smyth. All Chaplains were also Church of England ordained clergy.
- (d) Other Chaplains (there were four in total at the time) were alerted by the Head to concerns about John Smyth and his role in the forum and with the boys.
- (e) There is a record of a postcard, containing an explicit warning about John Smyth and "the shed" sent to David Fletcher in early 1981. This is one of several likely 'red flags' or warnings regarding John Smyth's behaviour and relationships with boys that were present. However, there is no evidence that these were detailed in regard to the nature and extent of grooming or abuse, there is also no evidence that these were followed up, reported or investigated.
- (f) At this time, because of the lack of safeguarding systems and information sharing, such concerns were not shared and therefore the opportunity for combined knowledge that may have indicated greater cumulative concerns was missed. Even at this time, a greater degree of oversight, professional curiosity, and diligence in following up on such concerns could have led to the abuses being discovered, and further harm prevented.
- (g) A victim attempted to talk to the Reverend Peter Sertin, Rector at St Michaels Church in Paris, in the Spring of 1981. It is unclear what the conversation details were. However, The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Lord Archbishop Justin Welby, while not an ordained member of the Church at the time, advises that as a result of this he was warned about John Smyth by Peter Sertin. This demonstrates that Justin Welby had some knowledge of the concerns about John Smyth at that time. This awareness of a problem went on to be questioned much later, in 2013, when John Smyth was brought to his attention again.

11.1.2 The following findings should also be considered;

- (a) John Smyth made rapid progress through the ranks at the Iwerne camps and was favoured by Eric Nash.
- (b) It is not clear why the Smyth family moved from London to Winchester and a working hypothesis is that he deliberately chose to live close to a leading public school. There was no other logical or family reason to be located there.
- (c) John Smyth had strong associations with the Church of England. He was a Lay Reader and a regular preacher.
- (d) Winchester College allowed John Smyth easy and unsupervised access to the boys at the school and did not see their attendance at his house as being in any way questionable.
- (e) A Housemaster at the College was concerned enough to write to parents of boys in his house regarding John Smyth.
- (f) A boy made a serious suicide attempt because of John Smyth's abuse of him. This was not fully nor properly investigated.
- (g) The grooming of boys started early on, in 1974 or possibly earlier.
- (h) John Smyth very actively promoted the Iwerne camps to the boys.
- (i) John Smyth was an extraordinarily busy QC, but he managed to dedicate a disproportionate amount of time to his work with the boys at the College.
- (j) The physical abuse started earlier than has previously been suggested.

- (k) Between 26 and 30 boys and young men were viciously beaten by John Smyth and/or another person in this period, with a further unknown number, but probably around six or eight, “groomed” but not beaten.
- (l) The abuse took place in several locations, including on rented premises adjacent to those used by the Iwerne camps at Clayesmore School, Iwerne Minster and on trips to Cornwall.
- (m) A fine difference rests on whether the Iwerne regime was *causative* or *enabling* of John Smyth’s abuses. We have not concluded that Iwerne “caused” John Smyth to abuse boys and young men, but the regime most definitely enabled him to do so. It (the regime, the connections, the networks, the opportunities, and the power) gave him licence to operate in the way that he did and helped as a cover to legitimise his actions.
- (n) He was “hiding in plain sight” and his strong association with the Iwerne camps and the Iwerne Trust helped to protect him. On the flip side of this, we have received many representations from people who praise the camps and are thankful for the opportunities they gave them and their life-long appreciation of this.
- (o) The attempted suicide of a boy at the College was not properly investigated nor pursued. John Smyth could have been discovered as an abuser at this point.
- (p) Anne Smyth knew of the abuses and assisted with dealing with the physical consequences of them. She gave the victims bandages and ointment, as well as adult-sized nappies, to help with the stemming of bleeding.
- (q) There was at least one co-abuser working with John Smyth.
- (r) There is evidence that John Smyth’s abuses were known about as early as Spring 1981 and there is also evidence of concerns about him by the College and others earlier than that.

11.2 Suggestions from some quarters that the abuses were simply an extension of the corporal punishment common at that time in public schools does not explain the reason for the abuse. This was clearly brutal abuse on an industrial scale.

### 11.3 Chronology - Pre 1970 to 1981

Date - Year/Month	Event
<b>Pre 1970s</b>	
27 <sup>th</sup> June 1941	John Jackson Smyth born in Calgary, Canada.
January 1951	Smyth Family move from Canada to Isle of Wight, UK.
Easter 1964	John Smyth attends first Iwerne Camp (aged 22 years).
January 1965	John Smyth qualifies as Barrister.
January 1966	John Smyth meets Anne Leggott.
1 <sup>st</sup> June 1968	John Smyth and Anne Leggott get married, they are living in London.
22 <sup>nd</sup> July 1969	Nicola Smyth born, John and Anne Smyth's eldest child
August 1969	Peter Krakenberger (Later a teacher at Winchester College) meets John Smyth for 1st time.



<b>Date - Year/Month</b>	<b>Event</b>
<b>1970</b>	
1970	John Smyth becomes Iwerne Trustee.
Easter 1970	John Smyth attends Easter Iwerne Camp.
Summer 1970	John Smyth attends Summer Iwerne Camp.
1 <sup>st</sup> October 1970	Smyth family take tenancy of rented property in St Cross, Winchester.
<b>1971 - 1974</b>	
1971	John Smyth made a sexualised approach to a 14-year-old boy, whilst driving him in his car.
26 <sup>th</sup> March 1971	Peter John Smyth born - John and Anne Smyth's second child.
Easter 1971	John Smyth attends Easter Iwerne Camp.
June 1971	John Smyth begins training as Lay Reader for Christ Church, Winchester.
Summer 1971	John Smyth attends Summer Iwerne Camp.
24 <sup>th</sup> November 1971	John Smyth is a trustee of Scripture Union.
Easter 1972	John Smyth attends Easter Iwerne Camp.
Summer 1972	John Smyth attends Summer Iwerne Camp.
1973	John Smyth becomes Deanery Synod <sup>37</sup> member until 1974.
September 1973	John Smyth begins to 'get to know some of the Christian boys (at Winchester College), befriend them and train them up to be future Christian leaders'. via Peter Krakenberger at the request of Iwerne leaders.
November 1973	John listed as a trainee Lay Reader at Christ Church, Winchester.
25 <sup>th</sup> March 1974	John Smyth elected as a Sidesman <sup>38</sup> at Christ Church, Winchester.
6 <sup>th</sup> April 1974	John Smyth becomes Chair of Iwerne Trust between this date and 5th May 1975.
May 1974	John Smyth qualifies as a Lay Reader at Christ Church, Winchester.
23 <sup>rd</sup> August 1974	Smyth family purchase and move in to Orchard House in Morestead, Winchester.
December 1974	John Smyth first attended Winchester College Christian Union.

<sup>37</sup> Deanery Synods are part of the governance of the Church of England, sharing the mission of the Church in local areas, providing a communication line between Parishes.

<sup>38</sup> Providing support to the Church Warden.

Date - Year/Month	Event
December 1974/January 1975	While away on a skiing holiday alone John and Anne Smyth ask that their children's misdemeanours are recorded by a family member caring for them in a 'red book' so that John Smyth could administer suitable punishments for them on his return.
<b>1975 -1976</b>	
1975	A 'Christian revival' is said to commence at Winchester College including evangelical speakers at Christian Forum. John Smyth regularly attends Christian Forum, including when not invited as a speaker.
January 1975	Children (age 14-15 years old) who are students at Winchester College begin to be taken for Sunday lunch, by John Smyth, to the Smyth family home.
Easter 1975	John Smyth attends Easter Iwerne Camp - recorded as a volunteer leader/officer. Victims who were children aged 14-15 years old, who are also students at Winchester College, begin attending Iwerne camps at the suggestion of John Smyth.
Summer 1975	John Smyth attends Summer Iwerne Camp.
Summer 1975	Justin Welby attends Summer Iwerne Camps.
1976	Children who are students at Winchester College begin to attend meetings at Peter Krakenberger's flat in Winchester where John Smyth is also present. John Smyth no longer listed as Sidesman at Christ Church, Winchester.
1976	A victim recounts the onset of physical abuse by John Smyth when he was 15 years old.
Easter 1976	John Smyth attends Easter Iwerne Camp.
Summer 1976	John Smyth attends Summer Iwerne Camp.
Summer 1976	Justin Welby attends Summer Iwerne Camps.
<b>1977</b>	
1977	A victim is physically abused by John Smyth, describing how he was beaten using a plimsole after stealing a chocolate bar from a shop.
January 1977	John Smyth "unofficially" begins leading the Christian Forum at Winchester College taking over from Peter Krakenberger. John Smyth begins to groom <sup>39</sup> boys that are part of Kingsgate/Beloes House at Winchester College.

<sup>39</sup> 'Grooming is when a person builds a relationship with a child, young person or an adult who's at risk so they can abuse them and manipulate them into doing things. The abuse is usually sexual or financial, but it can also include other illegal acts.' Definition from Met Police <https://www.met.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/gr/grooming/>

Date - Year/Month	Event
March 1977	John Smyth takes a victim to observe a murder trial at Winchester Crown Court
13 <sup>th</sup> March 1977	Caroline Emma Smyth born - John and Anne Smyth's third child.
Easter 1977	John Smyth attends Easter Iwerne Camp.
4 <sup>th</sup> July 1977	Trial of Denis Lemon/Gay News starts - John Smyth is prosecuting counsel. Trial concludes 11 <sup>th</sup> July 1977.
Summer 1977	John Smyth attends Summer Iwerne Camp.
	Justin Welby attends Summer Iwerne Camps.
	Victim attended Iwerne camp and whilst there was invited by John Smyth to visit him in his accommodation. Victim arrived to John Smyth's accommodation in the afternoon and describes how John and Anne Smyth were both naked on the bed.
	John Smyth gives victims leather bound bibles and books such as ' <i>The Pursuit of God</i> ' (AW Tozer, 1948) and ' <i>Quiet Talks on Power</i> ' (SD Gordon, 1908)
September 1977	Mark Ashton begins to work as a Chaplain at Winchester College, employed by John Thorn to assist in managing 'tensions' arising from Christian Forum.
25 <sup>th</sup> September	John Smyth preaches at Family Service for 'West Downs' Preparatory School at Christ Church, Winchester.
<b>1978</b>	
1978	Justin Welby, while lodging with Mark Ruston, is overheard having a "grave" conversation with him about John Smyth
	Parents of Winchester College students and staff at the College raise concerns regarding John Smyth's involvement with children at school and within Christian Forum.
January 1978	John Smyth becomes an Assistant Recorder at Crown Court.
	First reported physical abuse of victim by John Smyth using a cane in his shed. Victim is 17 years old.
	Further reports of physical abuse of multiple 17-year-old victims by John Smyth including use of a gym shoe.
	Peter Krakenberger aware that John Smyth is physically abusing victims under 18 years old.
February 1978	John Smyth suggests physical abuse to a further victim. Victim describes escaping potential abuse.
	Multiple victims introduced to the idea of physical abuse as an appropriate step in their Christian progression, by John Smyth while 17 years old.

Date - Year/Month	Event
March 1978	John Smyth asks victims report back to him about 'sins' so that they can be marked by punishment.
April 1978	John Smyth attends Easter Iwerne Camp.
May 1978	A victim describes how he was physically abused for first time, in the garden shed of John Smyth's home, Orchard House. Abuse took the form of 30 strokes by John Smyth using a cane, in rounds of 10. Victim was asked to be naked from waist down, leaned over a chair. He was treated and bandaged in the shed, and then went back to the family house where he was made a cup of tea by Anne Smyth.
July - August 1978	Several victims take gap years; John Smyth coercively controls these victims via letter correspondence and telephone calls
	John Smyth attended Iwerne Summer Camp.
	Justin Welby attends Summer Iwerne Camps.
September 1978	John Smyth preaches at Christ Church, Winchester.
November 1978	Victim recounts going on 'family holidays' with John Smyth, his wife and children.
7 <sup>th</sup> December 1978	Fiona Helen Smyth is born, John and Anne Smyth's fourth child. Victims who are children (one aged 16 years old) become or are asked to be Godparents.
December 1978	John Smyth indicates a victim should self-harm regarding his sexuality leading the victim to attempt to take his own life.
10 <sup>th</sup> December 1978	John Smyth preaches at Christ Church, Winchester.
<b>1979</b>	
1979 (month unknown)	Victims take 'gap years' overseas (including other continents). John Smyth continues to coercively control them in this period. He sends letters and regularly calls them by phone and takes trips to visit them.
	John Smyth described by several victims as 'popping up' on their holidays with friends and family. John Smyth visits USA staying with a victim's father.
Easter 1979	John Smyth becomes a Queens Counsel (QC).
29 <sup>th</sup> April 1979	John Smyth preaches at Christ Church, Winchester Easter Sunday Service for West Downs School (local preparatory school).
May 1979	John Smyth speaks at a Cambridge University College's Christian Union and is said to have been introduced to further victims.
27 <sup>th</sup> June 1979	John Smyth steps down from role of Trustee at Scripture Union - reason provided was work commitments due to QC responsibilities.
July 1979	Victims describe physical abuse escalating in nature and severity in the garden shed at Orchard House.

Date - Year/Month	Event
August 1979	Sailing party takes place, John Smyth attends. He gives a talk on sex to members of a Cambridge college Christian Union at the party.
	Victim returns from gap year, travels to Iwerne Camp to visit John Smyth for 'punishment'. Abuse takes place in the bungalow that John Smyth was staying in at the camp.
	Justin Welby attends Iwerne Summer Camp for 2-3 weeks and is listed as a speaker.
September 1979	John Smyth attends York University Christian Union as a speaker.
	Several victims describe further escalation of frequency of physical abuse by John Smyth.
October 1979	Further victim describes his first experience of physical abuse by John Smyth in the garden shed at Orchard House as 60 strokes with a cane.
25 <sup>th</sup> November 1979	John Smyth listed as preacher for evening prayer service at Christ Church, Winchester
<b>1980</b>	
1980 (month unknown)	First trip to Bosloe in Cornwall, attended by university students and John Smyth. John Smyth physically abused victims in the garden shed of the property.
	John Smyth and Simon Doggart described a victim as on the 'brink to the abyss of hell' because they began a relationship at university.
	Victim recalls preaching at Christ Church at John Smyth's request
March 1980	Victims describe a trip to Hadrian's Wall with John Smyth and being physically abused before and after the trip at Orchard House, Winchester.
10 <sup>th</sup> April 1980	John Smyth attended Iwerne Easter Camp - listed as Chair of Iwerne Trust.
May 1980	Victim describes escaping further abuse and as a result, being ostracized from the group by John Smyth.
June 1980	Further victim describes his first experience of abuse by John Smyth at Orchard House with a cane, after being encouraged to do so by Simon Doggart. Victim describes frequency of abuse as three-weekly.
July 1980	Victims speak to each other about abuse from John Smyth.
August 1980	John Smyth attended Iwerne Summer Camp.
September 1980	John Smyth starts to physically abuse further victims in the garden shed at Orchard House.
1 <sup>st</sup> November 1980	John Smyth listed as a reader in Christ Church Winchester parish magazine.

Date - Year/Month	Event
16 <sup>th</sup> November 1980	John Smyth described as a Preacher for morning prayer at Christ Church Winchester
11 <sup>th</sup> December 1980	John Smyth listed as being sponsored for ordination in the Diocese of York.
<b>1981</b>	
1981	John Smyth regularly visits victims attending Cambridge University. He gives talks to students in a victim's bedroom, and at a Cambridge University College Christian Union.
	John Smyth sought ordination in Winchester Diocese. Available records suggest possibly also in Oxford and earlier in York.
1st January 1981	John Smyth attends Iwerne Winter Conference in Eastbourne – victims describe being groomed by John Smyth, to be 'back in the club' and being invited to visit John at Orchard House, Winchester.
February 1981	John Smyth attends Durham University Christian Union and a Cambridge University College Christian Union and giving talks on wholeheartedness.
March 1981	Mark Ruston records that 'Iwerne people are suspicious of' John Smyth. Anonymous 'Postcard' reportedly sent to David Fletcher with the message 'When will someone stop this disgusting activity going on in John Smyth's shed?'
March 1981	Further victim describes his first experience of abuse by John Smyth at Orchard House with a cane, with Simon Daggart present. Recalls 30-40 strokes, describes this as violent and John Smyth 'sweating with every stroke'.
29 <sup>th</sup> March 1981	Easter trip to Bosloe House in Cornwall attended by John Smyth and victims - John physically abuses victims during the trip in a shed in the garden. Victim reports seeing John Smyth in bath with another victim.
April 1981	Victim reports physical abuse from John Smyth on a weekly basis at Orchard House, Winchester.
	Frequency and severity of physical abuse escalates.
	John Smyth becomes a Judge/Recorder of the Court.
	Simon Daggart is present whilst John Smyth is physically abusing victims.
12 <sup>th</sup> April 1981	John Smyth reads at Christ Church, Winchester at evening service on Palm Sunday.
Between February and May 1981	Victims describe being coercively controlled by John Smyth in terms of his instructions to end intimate relationships.
	John Smyth visits a Cambridge University College and meets victims who he attempts to groom and manipulate into receiving physical abuse from him.

Date - Year/Month	Event
27 <sup>th</sup> June 1981	John Smyth's 40th Birthday Party at Orchard House, Winchester – majority of those present are victims.
August 1981	<p>John Smyth's last recorded attendance at the summer camps. John Smyth gave a talk on <i>'repentance and how you mark your sins, and whether you're doing enough to signify your repentance'</i>.</p> <p>Party held by John Smyth for 15 plus young men at end of Iwerne camp C.</p>
21 <sup>st</sup> August 1981	John Smyth hires house in grounds of Clayesmore School (location of Iwerne Summer Camps) – victim physically abused by John Smyth and Simon Doggart in property.
September 1981	More victims groomed and manipulated for John Smyth to physically abuse from universities and from Iwerne camps.
	New shed built at Orchard House in Winchester - the shed placed further away from house at end of the garden with sound proofing.
	Further Trip to Bosloe House in Cornwall organised by John Smyth for a week. Victim physically abused in the garden shed by John Smyth.
	Victim recalls John Smyth using a flag in the garden to indicate when abuse taking place. If the flag was up, nobody was to approach the shed.
October 1981	John Smyth and Simon Doggart began to wear 'uniforms' of white singlet, shorts and flip flops when administering physical abuse to victims.
	Victims describe frequency and severity of physical abuse increasing. Simon Doggart present and involved with physical abuse of victims. Victims describe Anne Smyth being at Orchard House during abuse and involved in discussions at dinner table after physical abuse.
November 1981	John Smyth and Simon Doggart visit victims while they are on holiday in Europe.
22 <sup>nd</sup> November 1981	John Smyth preaching at Evening Prayer Service, Christ Church in Winchester.
December 1981	<p>John Smyth takes victims on a ski trip. They stop in Paris on their way to Switzerland and on their way home, visiting St Michaels Church on both occasions.</p> <p>The Church Chaplain later warns Justin Welby about John Smyth stating, <i>'One of the boys had a chat with me'</i> and advises him to stay away from John Smyth.</p>
	Victim physically abused by John Smyth on a significant family occasion with a cane in the shed at Orchard House, Winchester.
	John Smyth warns a victim of physical abuse to be given prior to his birthday.

## Analysis

- 11.3.1 John Smyth became a Trustee of the Iwerne Trust in 1970 and went on to be the Chair of the Trust from 1974, until 1982<sup>40</sup>. This has been noted as a rapid rise through the ranks, mirrored in his position in the Iwerne Camps. Contributors to the Review have noted that he won great favour with Eric Nash (“Bash”) finding this unusual given his education and family background. John Smyth was also a trustee of Scripture Union from 1971. The Scripture Union Executive Summary report gives details of this appointment, for example:
- "The minutes of the SU Council Meeting on 29th September 1971 state that: 'Mr. John Smyth has been added to the Schools Committee with a view to Council Membership. Members of that Committee agreed he would make a useful contribution to Council discussions but wondered if his work as a barrister would prevent regular attendance at Council meetings. The General Director was therefore asked to enquire if Mr. Smyth would be able to commit himself to Council membership, in which case he should be invited to join the Council.' It makes absolute sense in terms of robust governance that the performance and behaviours of individuals are assessed in a committee role before consideration of their suitability for a Council/Trustee appointment. In Smyth's case, the process appears to have been very artificially implemented in order to expediate his appointment as a trustee which placed him in a significant position of power and influence without any prior assessment of his suitability to undertake this role."* (Page 21 of Independent Executive Summary of the John Smyth Independent Case Review by Gill Camina.)<sup>41</sup>
- 11.3.2 John Smyth was also at this time, a prominent leader at the Iwerne camps. He ran dormitories and gave regular talks, including ones which became known as the “Whole Heartedness/Consecration of Christ” talks. These were aimed specifically at encouraging the young men to commit to Christ, and to convert to Christianity. We have heard from many people for whom this was the case. These talks continued for more than 10 years. One regular and committed Iwerne attendee, a contributor to the Review, has described to Reviewers that he felt John Smyth spoke from a position of faith, but deployed what he described as “*ungodly*” skills in a “*secular*” way. He was a close contact of John Smyth, who describes an instinctively bad feeling about him at the time. He saw him as someone who was constantly trying to impress and prove himself, according with the analysis that he was struggling with his feelings about being equal to his father and having not attended an elite public school.
- 11.3.3 John and Anne Smyth, with their first child, moved to Winchester in 1971, to a rented house very close to Winchester College. They attended Christ Church, a busy evangelical Church in the city with a large congregation, at this time. John Smyth soon became very involved with Church affairs, becoming a Lay Reader and a Sidesman at the Church in 1973.<sup>42</sup> It is a matter of conjecture as to whether the family move from London to Winchester was a deliberate act, to be very close to Winchester College, or a coincidence, which later fed into forming an ideal opportunity for John Smyth to become very familiar with the school and to access students there.
- 11.3.4 John Smyth was giving talks at several public schools during this time; indications are that he gave talks at Canford School and Harrow School from as early as 1971. His connections with these schools were through Iwerne contacts. The sessions at Canford School were held in a house rented by a teacher in the grounds of the school, someone associated with the Iwerne camps.
- 11.3.5 A contributor to the Review has advised that in 1971, while at school, John Smyth made a sexualised approach to him while he was a 14-year-old boy; John Smyth was driving him in his car. John Smyth put his hand on the boy's upper thigh, scaring him so much that he jumped out of the moving car and ran off. It is very unlikely, given the knowledge of his later abuse that this was a completely isolated incident. It took place

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<sup>40</sup> Source: The Iwerne Trust - Trustees Report for the Year 1981-82

<sup>41</sup> [Executive Summary of Scripture Union John Smyth Independent Case Review March 2021.pdf \(scriptureunion.org.uk\)](#)

<sup>42</sup> Recorded in Winchester Diocese archives



in the year that his own son was born and is likely to demonstrate his predilection towards boys.

- 11.3.6 In September 1973, Peter Krakenberger started teaching at Winchester College. He was a Maths Don (the term for a teacher at the College), a keen "Iwerne man", and a significant person in this developing story, providing some insight into the detail of John Smyth's introduction to Winchester College. Unfortunately, he has declined to contribute to the Review in person and instead wrote to us stating that "*Although I have never beaten or been beaten by anyone, I believe that I am one of the victims in this case*", having been attacked over the years for his association with John Smyth. He gave us permission to review his statement with Hampshire Police as part of their investigation in 2017. In this, he describes the instruction he was given by senior leaders in Iwerne to introduce John Smyth to the College, to introduce their strong brand of Conservative Evangelicalism there:

*"...one of my objectives, presented to me by the Iwerne leaders, was to act as a facilitator on behalf of John SMYTH, who was a person of considerable note, so as to enable him to get to know some of the Christian boys at this famous school, in order that he might befriend them and train them up to become future Christian leaders."*

- 11.3.7 The Christian Forum at Winchester College was an evangelical group, led from 1972 by John Woolmer. John Smyth began visiting Winchester College to speak at the Forum from 1975. The Winchester College review into this case describes this in detail including his presence at the Forum. John Smyth is noted to have attended the Forum every Sunday, even when not speaking, despite not being a member of staff at the College. Between 1975 and 1977, the Christian Forum at the College is said to have grown to gatherings of up to 100 students, almost a sixth of the size of the school. The review describes a distinct "recruitment drive" for the Christian Forum in 1974, with three additional evening sessions being held, each attended by large numbers of students.

- 11.3.8 John Smyth became a regular and familiar face at the College. He met with boys in Peter Krakenberger's flat from 1974, part of the College but just outside the College grounds, and while at the Iwerne camps, as well as at the Christian Forum meetings. John Smyth would meet with boys in a private room on his own, victims describing that the meetings were secret and special. Peter Krakenberger describes his view of this in his statement to Police in 2017:

*"I did feel that there was something slightly intense about John's relationship with the boys he was meeting with regularly, and on one or two occasions I saw him sitting on the floor of my guestroom at another boy's feet in a position that was not very natural: instead of sitting on a different easy chair, John would sit on the floor at the boy's feet in very close proximity."*

- 11.3.9 Victims describe this time as follows:

*"...it became clear that there was this inner group of people who were friendly with him who would go out for Sunday lunch and have lunch with him and it seemed like that was a very special little group, and, naturally, you want to be part of that special little group, so I became part of that special little group."*

*"After that first year of contact with John Smyth, he moved from not only attending the Christian Forum meetings, but to coming into Winchester College to hold bible readings in the flat of Winchester teacher called Peter Krakenberger, when I was around 15 or 16 years of age. These meetings had been taking place without John Smyth, but when he started attending, I think Peter Krakenberger thought that as he himself was not particularly gifted or eloquent, he should step aside and let John Smyth take us through the bible to teach us his particular version of evangelical Christianity."*

- 11.3.10 It was during this time that John Smyth started to invite boys to his home, which was, by then, in a village some four miles from Winchester, having moved there in 1974. This was for Sunday lunches and parties, with groups of boys aged as young as 14

attending; several victims suggest that they may have been as young as 13. The school age at Winchester College is 13 to 18. They often played games in the large garden also with the Smyth children, swam in the swimming pool (which was installed after they moved into the house) in the garden of the house and sat around the dinner table, enjoying Sunday lunches prepared by Anne Smyth. Victims have described how John Smyth would read scriptures and to carry out individualised one-to-one 'mentoring' sessions with them. Many people have told us that they were converted to Christianity via John Smyth. They felt special, honoured to be invited the home of this charismatic, attractive, father-like figure, a leading QC. This is best described in contributions from victims themselves:

*"He had a young pretty wife, two pretty children in a nice house with a nice car and a swimming pool, and you couldn't have got a safer context in those days, back in the 1970s.... There was a real family atmosphere. I could be part of a normal family, as opposed to my relatively dysfunctional family, so that was a factor, and it was great fun. We did lots of things. We sailed across to Cherbourg, we went on trips. We did all sorts of things, generally speaking, with a number of other boys and it was all hale, hearty stuff. You would say now probably too intimate in terms of just too much for someone to be in so much contact with young, vulnerable people. We didn't see ourselves as vulnerable, of course.*

*He was...a serious, A-class, credible person, someone who was at the pinnacle of his profession. He had charisma, there was a lot going for him, and so to feel that you were associated with that as an older child or a younger man, it was positive."*

- 11.3.11 John Smyth was actively grooming child victims in this period. This term has been widely adopted in the UK since the early 2000s. Prior to this, perpetrators of sexual abuse were described as using 'seducing' techniques, to enable their abuse and exploitation, often of parents and carers as well as the children themselves. Grooming, or indeed 'seducing' techniques were clearly used by John Smyth, to desensitise his victims and those responsible for their care. His tactics reflect those that are now widely understood to make victims less likely to reject or report his abusive behaviour. Grooming often happens, as in this case, when there is a power differential within a relationship, which the abuser exploits for their own gratification. Victims describe their experiences of this grooming and influence:

*"I think at that time that my parents were concerned about John Smyth's influence over me, so invited him down with his family to stay for a weekend at their house. I remember my father specifically asking me whether anything inappropriate was going on so I lied to him and said no.*

*They didn't completely trust him but he had a delightful wife and children so they never suspected that anything was really wrong with him."*

*"He was a nice man, he was kind. Even now I find him hard to dislike. Probably there is a part of me that feels like, which is how I lived with this, because the story I told myself and others after when I did start telling people was, he genuinely believed this was right and he was wrong about that, but he was genuinely trying to do it for the right reasons. That's the story that I told myself and that was the story I told myself at the time."*

*"...the seductive bit was John seeing me as special, conveying to me that I was special. I wasn't just anybody else at Iwerne, I was one of the elite of the elite. It was very powerful."*

*"I don't remember him saying 'you mustn't tell anyone about this', I don't remember him ever saying that, but I just thought - how could I possibly tell my parents, for example? I couldn't even imagine how I would do it. Why would I want to? If I sat down and thought about it, they would be absolutely horrified. However, there was an allure to the secrecy of the beatings; I thought: I've been on this, and it's a means of spiritual empowerment."*

- 11.3.12 All the evidence suggests that at this time John Smyth was using his power, position within the local Church and Iwerne Trust, and influence to get close to boys at the College. Several contributors to the Review have suggested that this was simply his way of spreading the word of the scriptures. It is clear from the accounts of victims and the knowledge we have gained throughout the course of this Review that the intent was more insidious than simply spreading the word of God. For example:

*"We looked at this passage together from Hebrew's Chapter 12 which was all about how God is a father and how all fathers discipline their children. No child likes the discipline at the time but afterwards it reaps a reward in terms of good behaviour. It was at this point that he started to talk about the beatings. He said, 'A father will chastise his child and in the Bible it says, 'Do not spare the rod'. So, he brought in this metaphor of the rod, only it wasn't a metaphor because he meant it literally. He said 'And I don't believe that I should spare the rod with you either....' So I said, 'What do you mean?' He said, 'Well, with your friends, I beat them.' It was just 3 words: 'I beat them'. I thought in my head when he said, 'I beat them' that what he meant was 6 of the best, like at boarding school."*

*"I recall him talking to me in his study at Orchard House and he introduced the subject of a physical form of repentance by referring to scriptural verses from Hebrews and I believe from Samuel. He made specific references to marking your repentance by either shedding blood or I think there was a verse that talks about stripes on your body. John Smyth used these verses to suggest to us that the time had come in our spiritual growth to begin to show proper repentance for the sins that we were committing."*

*"Then after supper, let's go and have a chat, and this was all "firesidey", let's look at some verses from the Bible about how the Lord disciplines those he loves, you haven't yet resisted sin to the point of shedding your blood, from the Letter to the Hebrews. When you stop to think about it, that is so terribly twisted out of context, because that was written to Christians who had been persecuted like people in North Korea now, that kind of thing, but, of course, he had another agenda with that."*

- 11.3.13 We have been given a great deal of detail about this period and have heard directly from victims who were abused in this way when they were still legally children. It is impossible to set out all that detail in this Review, as that would risk identifying individuals who have asked for anonymity and confidence. What is very striking from all the accounts we have heard is the high level of activity that John Smyth undertook at this time. He was representing high profile clients, with national coverage, in court, including Mary Whitehouse with the Gay News trial in 1977, and, later, the Romans in Britain trials well as being involved with a range of other major criminal cases. He was regularly speaking at the Christian Forum at Winchester College, and possibly other schools and education settings, acting as a Lay Reader at Christ Church, Winchester, chairing the Iwerne Trust, a trustee of Scripture Union, a volunteer leader at Iwerne camps and grooming victims at his home. He was also a Deanery Synod member for Winchester Diocese in 1973 and 1974.
- 11.3.14 John Smyth also referred to books which, he claimed, supported his theological justification for the physical abuse. In particular, he quoted from AW Tozer, *The Pursuit of God* (1948) and SD Gordon, *Quiet Talks on Power* (1859).
- 11.3.15 Dr Hanson comments in her analysis that:

*"...the [religious] beliefs in which John Smyth operated are critical to understanding how he manipulated his victims into it, how it went on for so long, and how he evaded justice. Smyth drew on a set of beliefs that helped justify his abuse to his victims and likely also to himself. In parallel with this, his abuse is not accounted for by these beliefs (i.e. it simply being a misunderstanding or misapplication of theology)... he had deeper motivations at work, and deployed numerous strategies in service of his abuse. It should also be noted that a large variety of beliefs and values (whether they be religious, political, economic or philosophical) can be conducive to abuse when they are held 'ideologically' – followed at the expense of a core care and regard for every human being."*

- 11.3.16 Victims have told us that in the lead up to their physical abuse, often as a precursor to introducing the idea of physical punishment, John Smyth talked to them about sins. The biggest 'sin', according to John Smyth, being related to their masturbation. Given the evidence that is presented later in the report, it seems that masturbation was a reoccurring theme and perhaps an obsession of John Smyth's throughout his life, right up until he was well into his 70s, still talking with boys and men about masturbation, albeit from a different perspective later on.

*"We were encouraged to live lives which were holy and to be as good Christians as we could be. This was an attempt to remove what's commonly known as sin from our lives. Small sins like being lazy or white lies and sexual sins or what are regarded as sexual sins like lust and masturbation. He stated that God likes sex and sex is good but that there are certain rules like no sex outside of marriage and so forth."*

*"The conversation must have gone something along the lines of 'God doesn't want you to masturbate. It's not in God's plan for you and of course it's really powerful and the devil really wants to take you away from being focused on God's work and take you away from it. He will distract you with all sorts of things, including thoughts about having sexual relationships with people, with women and masturbation, so all of that is getting in the way. God is really calling you to something special."*

*"When I think about it now, the whole thing that Smyth set up was premised on the basis that everybody was going to fail the test. The idea that this was going to work and stop people masturbating was complete tosh, and so he was always going to have access to people to apply this to. It's just extraordinary, really."*

- 11.3.17 The earliest account dating the commencement of physical abuse in the form of beating with a cane, comes from a victim who has stated to Reviewers that this took place in 1977. He describes this as taking place in the main bedroom, at the Smyth family home.

*"I can remember at least once in his bedroom in his main house. I can remember that. It is possible only once, but I can certainly remember it once there."*

- 11.3.18 Others have concluded that the first physical abuse perpetrated by John Smyth was in the form of a beating with a plimsoll of a student, as a punishment for theft. This was allegedly offered an alternative to telling the boy's parents, school and potentially the police. This is said to be either late in 1977 or very early in 1978 and is an early example of John Smyth's manipulative and abusive behaviour.

- 11.3.19 As is referred to earlier in this report, John and Anne Smyth's son has publicly stated that he was emotionally and physically abused by his father from a young age, also during this time, and this included visits to the same shed location that was used by John Smyth to physically abuse boys and young men that were not his family members. This is described below in his own words:

*"Once we arrived at the shed, we would sit together and talk through what I was getting beaten for. Specificity was important to dad. When I shop-lifted some sweets, I got a set of lashes for stealing and another set for lying to mum about where I got the sweets. When I was a bad sport on the squash court, I got a set for being a bad sport, and another set for embarrassing him. When I borrowed a friend's cricket boots without asking, I got a set for stealing and a set for lying to mum about where I got the boots from. In the winter of 1979 after my first term at Prep School, I got six lashes per subject for each of my six subjects. But there was a further sub-division within each subject: three were for not trying, and three were for disrupting other students. The six separate pages from the school report were with me in the shed. Each sin was being specifically treated. By my stripes I would be healed."*

- 11.3.20 At this time, concerns were being raised at the College about John Smyth – the amount of time he was spending there and his influence over boys, these concerns are documented and well analysed in the Winchester College review. However, the Review clearly describes how the College authorities did not fully react to these concerns or investigate them in a meaningful, proactive way that prevented its

continuation. The main house at the College where John Smyth had major influence was "Beloes" (Kingsgate House). The Housemaster there (Geoff Hewitson) gave permission for the boys to go to John Smyth's family home without any form of real checking as to the safety or the probity of this. One housemaster, Jock MacDonald, did, however, refuse permission for a boy from his house to go to John Smyth's family home and this was met with an angry response from John Smyth. This was in 1979.

- 11.3.21 There was also concern within the College that John Smyth's influence generally was getting to be too great. One of the reactions to this increasing concern was for the Headmaster, John Thorn, to bring in Mark Ashton as a Chaplain to oversee the Christian Forum developments. At this time, the College had four Chaplains. Attendance at the Christian Forum was very large by then, with around 100 students attending on occasions, around 60 being the norm. Concerns about John Smyth's influence had been raised by some parents, and Geoff Hewitson discussed his growing concern with John Thorn.
- 11.3.22 Victims report that John Smyth gravitated towards and paid more attention to the better looking and "sporty" boys at the College. This has been confirmed by contributors to the Review who were contemporaries of or in contact with John Smyth, including Fiona Ashton (Mark Ashton's widow), Jill and Martin Kingston (Trustees of the Zambesi Trust until 1989) and Janet Brooks (now Thompson) (Anne Smyth's sister). It is also confirmed in correspondence reviewed. David Fletcher, when interviewed, said: "*I could tell by John's behaviour how attracted he was to boys. He took me on the boundary line at a cricket match, and he said, "Look at that boy there, doesn't he look tremendous?"*"
- 11.3.23 At this time, it is evident that John Smyth had asked a child to be a Godparent to his own child. He was the first victim to be asked to take this role for the Smyth children. The Winchester College review refers to a victim being asked to be Godparent, with his parents being "*furios*" at this suggestion, but with the outcome being that he did, indeed, become a Godparent. The close family members of John Smyth with whom we have spoken have expressed their concern about boys being recruited as Godparents. This is unusual, however viewed, and an indication of how John Smyth positioned himself in a "*parental*" and "*father-like*" role with these boys and young men. The details of this cannot be stated, as this would identify individual victims. Several boys and young men were Godparents to three of the Smyth children. Being made a Godparent had the effect of bringing the young men closely into John Smyth's family "*inner circle*". It gave them a sense of importance.
- 11.3.24 Throughout 1977, John Smyth's grooming and sexualised behaviour was becoming more explicit, reinforcing the conclusions that are reached by Dr Hanson in regard to his sexual motivations for the abuse. We have an account of a victim being asked to visit John Smyth in his 'quarters' at lunchtime, while attending the Iwerne camp at Clayesmore School. The victim knocked on the door, was called in, only to find John and Anne Smyth naked in bed together. From the description of this event to Reviewers it seems that this was deliberately set up.
- "When I got to his room, which was a room he was sharing with his wife, he was stark naked with his wife, on a mattress on the floor, and they were asleep. I was a kid of 16, 17. I walked into this and I thought, 'what the heck?', I had a meeting at 3pm. Anyway, I then went into another room down the corridor and just waited, but that was my initial encounter with John Smyth."*
- 11.3.25 On another occasion, a boy was sent to the bathroom at John Smyth's family home, to talk with John Smyth, who was naked in the bath. John Smyth told him to sit down on a chair by the bath so that they could have a discussion. Other victims describe similar occasions and detail how John Smyth often joked and bragged about his sexual prowess and talked of his and Anne Smyth's "*very active*" sex life. He would say that this was a reward for waiting to be married before having sex and he wove this into his warnings about masturbation. On another occasion, he opened a bedside drawer to show a boy many condoms.

*"He talked about his sexual antics with his wife with victims all the time, so he was talking about this "very high sex drive" supposedly allegedly that Anne, his wife, had, and how he had to keep her satisfied. He was talking like that with boys, so we all thought 'oh, he's clearly a hot, red-blooded heterosexual man, this is a kind of conventional heterosexual marriage', but that was all part, in my view, of the smokescreen, that he was trying to make us feel that he was something other than what he was, which of course he was very good at."*

11.3.26 A further contributor to the Review who was groomed by John Smyth has described how, at Bosloe, Smyth invited a victim to go to talk with him whilst he was naked in a bath. He said that they should sit right next to him on a chair. He proceeded to talk about masturbation and how to resist it and how he could help in that process. They described John Smyth as being "obsessed" with masturbation.

11.3.27 Another contributor described how he visited the Smyth family home and Anne Smyth told him that John Smyth wanted to see him, while he was in the bath. They have described how they had to go and sit in the bathroom to discuss something with him, and how this felt uncomfortable. They have described that Anne Smyth was also in the bathroom while this was taking place and that this made the event feel legitimate. This occurred when the contributor was still legally a child at the age of 16.

11.3.28 John Smyth gifted items that he considered of significance to his victims. Several victims have reported that they were given signed copies of the Bible in their early experience of the abuse:

*"Then he gave me a Bible, a leather-bound little black revised standard version Bible, which he wrote in, signed - which I threw away long ago because of its associations, its memory associations – and he started to kind of mentor me. Obviously in those very, very early moments there was nothing, to my mind, odd or theologically heretical about what he was saying, it's just that my first encounter was with him naked."*

11.3.29 In addition to gifts, John Smyth also took victims on holidays. These varied in type and included sailing breaks, ski trips and breaks to a large stately home in Cornwall, some included his family, usually trips included other victims.

11.3.30 An ex-student of Winchester College has given the Review a detailed account of his knowledge of John Smyth, whilst at the College in 1977. He and other 13-year-olds played various teenage games based on "Dungeons and Dragons", including what he describes as a "silly game" which involved using an upturned plastic cup, held by the boys, to direct them to answers to questions on a board. The questions included, for example, "will humans be able to speak with dolphins in the future?", the cup then apparently moving by its own volition to the answer "yes" written on a piece of paper on the table. The sort of game that young teenage boys engage in.

11.3.31 They stopped doing this when they got bored with it after a short while and he thought no more of it. A little later, his father, whilst driving the car with him as a passenger, stopped in a lay by and said that he had something "very serious" to discuss with him. He said that a man named John Smyth had contacted him to say that his son had been involved with other boys at the College in what he described as "satanic rituals" which involved trying to summon up the devil. He also said that they had been smoking cannabis whilst doing so, which our informant says was completely untrue. John Smyth told his father that the matter was of "grave concern" as Satanism was still punishable by death under English law. He offered to help his son to get out of this "terrible" satanic regime.

11.3.32 How John Smyth had got to know of the boy's prank is not known. John Smyth had clearly gone right past the College authorities and approached the boy's father with this frankly hugely exaggerated story. This demonstrates several things – John Smyth's obvious obsessions, his ability to flout the College's authorities and the danger he presented by offering to "help" with this boy's "problem."

11.3.33 A new shed was built in the garden of the Smyth family home in 1981, replacing the previous shed that was used. This new shed was soundproofed and had only one

window, facing towards the Church which lies at the back of the garden. The shed was situated out of sight of the house, away from the road and hidden behind a large hedge. Unusually, the door into the shed was set right up against a hedge to the side of the garden. The shed is likely to have been designed by John Smyth with the abuse in mind, including a purpose-built bench to assist in administering the abuse.

11.3.34 The earliest account of physical abuse that we have received is 1977. The physical abuse took place in the form of beatings of a ferocious nature, with a cane. His victims were wholly or partially naked, with John Smyth either partially or fully naked. They were persuaded by John Smyth that these beatings were an appropriate step in their Christian progression.

11.3.35 John Smyth justified beatings to be administered for a number of key "sins" that had been committed and listed by the victims. Victims describe being asked to write these down and bring them to John Smyth:

*"I recall having to have a list of my sins written out on a piece of paper and this paper was placed on the chair that I was leaning on. He was encouraging me to pray and repent for the sins that were listed on the sheet of paper in front of me but the pain was so intense that it that became impossible."*

11.3.36 Many of these sins related to sex and particularly masturbation. The sin of pride has been referenced by several victims. In one case, a victim, was given several lashings for "looking at a girl for too long". The statements from victims below describe the justifications given by John Smyth for the abuse:

*"The sins he particularly mentioned were normal teenage activity such as sexual references made verbally or masturbation, but he would consider these as impure, so that the sins he came up with were quite confined, they weren't the list of sins that you might expect a Sunday priest to address a child about. John Smyth then began to instil in us the principle that these sins had to be marked in a way that would mean we were repenting before God. According to John Smyth it wasn't enough to keep saying sorry for sinning then keep on repeating that sin but if it was marked in some way, then we were more likely to stop sinning in the first place and that God would think we were really repentant. I don't remember him using the word beatings but I can't think of the word he used but my impression from what he said was that sins needed to be marked by some form of physical punishment."*

*"I had a list of a dozen or so regular failings in my character and I received two strokes for each, then another ten, totalling 35 the first time."*

11.3.37 In addition to sin-related physical abuse, John Smyth also introduced the concept of "training beatings", not related to a particular sin, but as a further means of (in his terms) "getting closer to God". This was described in the Ruston Report of 1982:

*"training" beatings of some 75 strokes every 3 weeks were instituted, as being better than only going down after a "fall", though these persisted. One told me he was receiving beatings at least every 4/5 days one vacation. The custom of semi nakedness gave way to complete nakedness "to increase humility". For training beatings a man undressed himself, for "falls" he submitted to being undressed by the operator."*

11.3.38 These incidents of abuse are also described by victims:

*"...during the summer term SMYTH had initiated training beatings. I knew that by admitting to masturbation or having sexual thoughts would result in a beating but also pride, it was a catch 22 situation that if I did not admit to these thoughts I would be beaten for pride".*

*"If the period extended over 4 to 5 weeks then John SMYTH would start exerting pressure in terms of saying things like, 'look you know you've sinned, you need to come back'. So I know that the approximate timeframe between beatings was three to six weeks."*

*I also remember that it became less important to John Smyth for me to prepare written lists of my sins before each beating."*

- 11.3.39 John Smyth would drape himself over the victim, before and after the beating, sometimes kissing them on the neck or back. The accounts from victims and the details which follow, as we explore the chronology of the increasingly frequent beatings, describe an aberrated and clearly sexually motivated, sadistic, regime.
- 11.3.40 Dr Hanson describes that *"no single factor is sufficient to determine a sexual motivation to John Smyth's abuse, however various things when taken together indicate that this was highly likely to be at play in his beatings of young men and boys"*. Dr Hanson goes on to describe these factors as:
- (a) His special interest in boys thought of as good-looking, conforming to a particular type;
  - (b) His obsession with the topic of masturbation by adolescent boys and young men;
  - (c) The nudity he enforced on the UK boys and young men whilst they were being beaten, alongside his own nudity; and the nudity he also enforced on the Zimbabwe boys' camps, such as the mandated naked swims ('skinny dipping') and his showering with boys; and
  - (d) His invitation of a boy to visit his bedroom (at a Iwerne camp) at a time when he was naked with his wife, and inviting the boy in whilst him and his wife were in bed together.
- 11.3.41 John Smyth expressed disapproval of homosexuality, treating this as a sin and a 'justification' for the abuse. Dr Hanson explores that this *"does not caution against there being a sexual motive to his abuse of males, indeed research suggests that some homophobic men have homosexual interests which may in fact be contributing to their homophobia (e.g. Cheval et al., 2016)"*. She also explains that his expression of homophobia may have helped him to hide his abuse in plain sight.

This was not an extension of the corporal punishment which was still taking place in some (but not all) public schools, nor was it in any way a legitimate use of punishment somehow connected with an interpretation of scriptures. These were offences of a serious nature and against the law, as was clearly defined in the Ruston Report at that time (Section 47 of the Offences Against The Person Act, 1861). Dr Hanson explores how this kind of punishment could have been a cultural factor that contributed or assisted him to abuse. That the practice and approval of physical punishment at the time enabled his abuse to be justified *"as the harsh end of something legitimate"*.

- 11.3.42 A victim has described to us how John Smyth indicated he should self-harm after he discussed his sexuality during a meeting with John Smyth in Peter Krakenberger's Winchester College flat. John Smyth suggested this as a path to fighting sexual feelings that he was having. The victim was so traumatised by this guidance that he attempted to take his life, described in his own words below. This event was not properly dealt with by the College as detailed in the Winchester College Review. The victim advises that he approached a College Chaplain for help and support:

*"There was a plant....which grew in [the] graveyard.....I'd done some gardening there and I remember being told about this plant is dangerous... I took some of it and made a tea from it, an infusion, which I drank. I don't honestly recall exactly what happened. I was in my shared study still, and clearly one of my study mates was worried, he couldn't get a response out of me apparently, so he got ... the House Master, to come down. I don't remember anything more of that night...He knew something was up, but I wouldn't say, and that's probably when I had these sessions with one of the College chaplains...I remember very little [of the attempt], probably because I was not conscious throughout it anyway.*

*You look back and think was it my intention, but I can't tell now whether I intended to go through with it, although I do know that I saw no future. I was down the path where*



*there was no future, so I suspect it was effectively quite a serious attempt, but it may just have been a cry for help. Effectively, it became a catalyst for change, because one could see that there was no future going down that path, and therefore one was going to have to change direction. That was effectively the only option, which is why I started then breaking with Christian Forum."*

- 11.3.43 Several slightly older victims, some still under 18 years old were at this point starting their gap years or moving on to study at universities. John Smyth persisted with regular contact with them, via letter writing and also visiting them at their university or work placement or visiting and calling regularly, sometimes even when the victim was travelling abroad as part of their gap year.

*"In my first year at [university] I really wanted to experience life as a student and one of the things I've always been fascinated by is films but it was quite clear from what Smyth said to me that they were off limits. I only ever remember watching one film in that timeframe and that was Chariots of Fire which was allowed because it was about a Christian man who was an athlete.*

*Smyth came to visit me in my rooms. He got into my rooms, I let him in rather, and I can remember him standing in front of me and saying 'you've got to choose between me and [my girlfriend] and, if you choose her, you are going to Hell but if you choose me, you are going to Heaven'.*

*Throughout this time [in a gap year between school and university] I was still very much in touch with John Smyth who would check in on me every three or four days, usually by calling me and asking what I was up to."*

- 11.3.44 While visiting universities, he forged links with Christian Union groups and began to make contacts with other young men, not from Winchester College, whilst they were studying at university. He gained access to them by giving talks, taking part in Christian Union meetings. Our analysis of his activity at this time suggests he was frenetically busy, driving the length and breadth of the UK, visiting his victims, grooming others in attempts to abuse. He arranged for victims to regularly attend his family home for weekend visits, these would include introduction to and administration of physical abuse, usually taking place in his shed.

- 11.3.45 Much of this abuse is clearly documented in the Ruston Report, detailed in the next section, but the scale and the extent of the grooming, persuasion and subsequent physical and sexual abuse goes beyond what Mark Ruston established and reported on. Victims describe this below:

- 11.3.46 *"The severity of the beatings would increase, and that just got worse and worse and worse, or should I say, not worse, but more intense – the beatings were more severe, but you were frightened of going down there. I think I know what it feels like to be fearful. Also, there was a huge sense of relief after it had happened, accompanied with the belief you were serving God."*

*"It was at this time during my beatings I started crying a lot more. John SMYTH would encourage me to shout out for forgiveness during the lashes being administered but I began consciously not following his instructions and demonstrating to him by crying and shaking that, actually I was really struggling physically with the beatings. The irony was that I wasn't struggling that much physically even though the number of lashes had increased during the years that I was at university and probably around 60 at a time to anything up to 100 at a time. As the beatings increased in severity, I was starting to take aspirin in advance of them to try and reduce the pain, but other than this I found I could cope pretty well as I learnt to disassociate myself mentally from them. What was becoming almost unbearable was the anxiety and the mental trauma around the beatings.*

*I could feel blood on me and all the while he kept going. When he was doing it, he told me 'You're not allowed to turn round.' Which I didn't understand but I didn't, I did as I was told, but as he was doing it he sounded like a Wimbledon tennis player, a man serving, so there was kind of like this grunt every time he did it. And I remember*

*thinking 'he's going to kill me.' I was that scared, and I thought how am I going to get out of this? By now I was beginning to feel more and more dizzy, woozy, so I decided that I would collapse and pretend that I was fainting because I didn't see any other route out of it."*

*"I was beginning to feel a bit trapped, if I'm honest, because there was an element of spiritual empowerment, but nevertheless I was still having normal thoughts, as a young man, about girls, and so on, and I thought, I'm still having these, and I began to get the feeling that I will always need beating, because I will never be rid of this stuff."*

*"I have often asked myself the question why did I go back, why did I allow myself to be beaten and the answer is that I thought Smyth was my spiritual mentor."*

11.3.47 Sometime during 1978, Justin Welby was overheard by a contributor to this Review, having a "grave" conversation with Mark Ruston, about John Smyth, whilst lodging with him. Justin Welby has advised reviewers that he does not recall this conversation and explains he was not aware of the actions of John Smyth at this time which later came to light. He advises that he shared accommodation with Mark Ruston at this time and would have had many conversations particularly as this was in the period following his father's death.

11.3.48 Also in 1978, a meeting took place between Euan MacAlpine, Housemaster at Winchester College, and John Smyth. Information presented to Reviewers suggests that John Smyth was challenged about his influence on boys and young men (but not a challenge about "abuse" as such) at the College and he is said to have reacted by "curling up into the foetal position on the chair". These instances may give some indication that he had a degree of awareness that his abuses were wrong. An alternative explanation is that he was developing a fear of being caught.

11.3.49 The physical abuse perpetrated by John Smyth in the form of beatings, began to escalate in several ways throughout 1979 – in terms of numbers of young men involved, in terms of the severity and number of lashings received with a cane and in terms of the range of educational establishments attended by the victims.

11.3.50 There have been several accounts of the abuse in the public domain, including those reported by Channel 4 in 2017 as well as in blogs and posts on social media and in many articles and published books. It has been difficult to fully capture the real extent of the abuse. This is best described in the victim's own words:

*"As time went on it used to take about two weeks for the skin to heal, although from that first beating it probably only took a week but when I was being beaten with a greater number of strokes it would take two weeks to heal and therefore, the shortest period would've been three weeks between beatings.*

*When I was beaten 20 to 30 times, I could run my fingers up and down my bottom afterwards and I had a sense that each cane stroke had left its own mark on my body, however when I was beaten more than 30, or even as much as 100 times, there was no sense of any individual stroke marks on my buttocks, they were just a bloody mess. The rippling effect on my buttocks was still there even when the skin had repaired and I had the sense that the shape of my buttocks was being changed by the increased number of strokes I was receiving. I felt that they were flattening out and their natural curve wasn't there.*

*Sometimes immediately after a beating I would run down to the swimming pool and actually put my backside into the pool to ease the pain."*

11.3.51 The young men were left physically harmed and scarred by the beatings, bleeding badly, leaving blood on cushions and seats and having to wear adult nappies and bandages to prevent leaking of blood.

*"I would sometimes stay overnight at Orchard House following a beating and remember numerous occasions when I bled on their bedsheets."*

- 11.3.52 Bandages and other medical supplies to dress wounds were provided by Anne Smyth. Victims describe how these were kept in the shed and sometimes they were handed to victims as they returned to the house following abuse, and prior to being served tea or Sunday lunch by Anne Smyth. It is seeming likely that Anne Smyth purchased these in the knowledge that physical harm serious enough to require dressing and padding was being caused, and she could not have interpreted what was happening in any other way than to fully grasp the seriousness of the abuse.

*"As I remember it, I essentially had one dressing for each buttock, so they were passed across to me and I think Anne explained, 'We're conscious that this can result in some blood, we don't want you to have to remain like that, we don't want to be found out, we don't want you to have blood on your underpants or your clothes or whatever, so if you put one of these on each buttock for the next few days, that will prevent any blood getting onto your clothes.'"*

- 11.3.53 Physical abuse took place between early 1977 and February 1982, the majority occurring in the shed as described. Contrary to the previous reports and coverage of the case there were several other locations that the abuse took place. This includes the locations of holidays organised by John Smyth including one called 'Bosloe'<sup>43</sup>. Victims describe these holidays and how they would be referred to as an even further refined and 'special' group called 'Bosloe Boys'. Not all of John Smyth's victims were invited to attend these special breaks. There was, in effect, an "inner circle" within the "inner circle", which emphasises the extent and depth of the grooming approach that John Smyth adopted.

*"It was very relaxed because there were no beatings going to happen, and it was actually quite fun."*

*"We'd gone down to Bosloe with a few people and we'd actually had a very pleasant time there, just doing a few things."*

*"We were "Bosloe Boys ..."*

- 11.3.54 Contributors to the Review have described how physical abuse took place at Clayesmore School in 1981. This was the location of the Iwerne summer camps at this time. Indeed, the most severe physical abuse event reported to the Review was carried out there, immediately after camp had finished. John and his wife had rented accommodation within the premises and John Smyth had stayed on there. This event is said to have involved an astounding 800 lashings in one day, administered by John Smyth and another victim, Simon Doggart who was a Winchester College and Cambridge University student, a contemporary of many of John Smyth's victims. Simon Doggart was primarily a victim of John Smyth, groomed and coerced by him. The incident referred to was described to us by several victims, one of whom details:

*"I also knew that another victim had received an all-day beating of 800 strokes."*

- 11.3.55 And a further victim describes this in more detail:

*"The most serious case of physical abuse occurred to a victim on Iwerne Minster premises, just after one of the Iwerne camps had ended. The preparation for this boy receiving this abuse took place during the camp that preceded these days, and the boy in question was beaten between 700 and 800 times, between 10 o'clock in the morning and 10 o'clock at night, with a break. They were almost caught by somebody who was, I think, a groundsman or somebody local to the school."*

- 11.3.56 While no evidence has been presented to suggest that physical abuse took place on site while a camp was in operation, it is clear from this statement that John Smyth was able to exploit his position and access to the victims while the camp was operating.

- 11.3.57 This victim describes how the "preparation" for the abuse took place during camp. On this occasion, it is also clear that he was also able to use the premises hired while

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<sup>43</sup> We understand this to be a large country house, near the Helford River in Cornwall, that John Smyth hired for group holidays.

camp was in operation to provide the location for serious physical abuse. There is little doubt that his leadership role in the Iwerne Trust provided him with an opportunity to groom and abuse his victims. He used his position in the Iwerne Trust and camps to influence others to allow him to have uncontrolled, regular contact with victims. His senior role and regular attendance at the camps allowed him to persuade and encourage the same boys and young men to attend and thus enable increased his access to them. It is likely that there were culture and organisational factors within Iwerne and the camps that may have assisted or contributed to John Smyth's abuse, as is explored by Dr Hanson in her report. He was able to exploit his links to Iwerne and this enabled his grooming and abuse to take place. The connections, the networks, the opportunities, and the power he obtained through Iwerne gave him licence to operate in the way that he did and helped as a cover to legitimise his actions.

- 11.3.58 It is clear from the information considered in this Review that Simon Doggart was groomed and abused by John Smyth and later became involved in perpetrating abuse. He was particularly used by John Smyth to recruit young men from universities to be abused. Simon Doggart died in 2017 shortly after the abuse was investigated by Channel 4 and we were therefore unable to meet with him as part of this process. Simon Doggart's role in the abuse at this time is described by victims as follows:

*"I saw Doggart's presence there as almost reassurance someone to say 'I've been through it and I'm ok'"*

*"Throughout this time the beatings would continue but the number of lashings I was getting was increasing. My punishments were often compared to that of Simon Doggart who Smyth would tell me was now receiving say 60 strokes, so the number I received increased in line with this".*

*"Simon Doggart visited me at university once. I saw this contact as a way to encourage me to stay within the circle".*

*"I was beaten by both John Smyth and Simon Doggart. I was given approximately 50 strokes from John Smyth and I don't remember how many strokes from Simon."*

*"I agreed to go with Simon Doggart, while Anne and John Smyth remained in the kitchen and literally saw us off from the kitchen door."*

- 11.3.59 We have been told that at times, John Smyth and Simon Doggart wore similar "outfits" of white shorts and short sleeved shirts while administering physical abuse. A victim describing this as their "uniform." A victim described to us how John Smyth would treat physical abuse as a routine event:

*"It was as if, for him, it had become rather like servicing your car, that's what I remember of it, going down and having a beating is part of the regular discipline."*

- 11.3.60 It has been suggested that at least one other young man, also a victim, was similarly targeted by John Smyth to "recruit" and physically abuse other victims. We have been unable to verify this with any additional information. We have also been made aware that other victims were used by John Smyth to introduce victims to him, particularly at universities, we have information that suggests several other victims were also used to endorse John Smyth's approach and to encourage 'doubters' to participate in his physical abuse, explored as relevant later in the report.

- 11.3.61 In mid-1979 a Winchester College housemaster wrote to some parents of boys in his house, describing "irresponsible behaviour" by John Smyth. There was a growing concern at his attendance at the College and the influence he was having over the boys there, via the Christian Forum. This is described and examined in the Winchester College review, and we will not explore that further here<sup>44</sup>.

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<sup>44</sup> [Review into the abuse by John Smyth of pupils and former pupils of Winchester College 2022](#)

- 11.3.62 One boy at the school has said that he considers that he had what amounts to a narrow escape from physical abuse. With hindsight, he thinks that he was being actively groomed by John Smyth. His mother was suspicious of John Smyth and his father directly confronted him about his concerns. John Smyth did not pursue him further, but the impact on him has been significant. He says that relationships within his family have been permanently damaged. He uses this experience to educate and prevent similar situations from occurring in lectures that he now delivers to students at a theological college.
- 11.3.63 A teacher at Winchester College, John Woolmer, described concerns that John Smyth had far too great an influence and he was concerned about the direction the Christian Forum was taking, especially that it was taking attention off the Sunday morning Chapel. He commented that he thought John Smyth was “*dead behind the eyes*”, despite his apparent charisma. John Woolmer was approached by a student at Oxford University in either late 1981 or early 1982 to say that he was worried about something “*very serious*” which involved abuse. John Woolmer did not pursue this and has reported to Reviewers that he has regretted that since. He has written about this, expressing his regret at not doing more at the time. His account of this is appended (Appendix 5). He has stressed to reviewers that he was told of this under a strict understanding that he must not pass this on. He considered himself to be under the “*seal of the confessional*”, which he would not break and that he understood the report to be about corporal punishment of the type that was still apparent at the time.
- 11.3.64 In January 1981, John Smyth attended a Iwerne winter conference. An anonymous person contacted the independent reviewer for Scripture Union, claiming to have overheard conversations about the abuses at the conference. We have not been able to substantiate this but victims' accounts also describe how their “*recruitment*” by John Smyth and other victims took place at this conference.
- 11.3.65 Shortly after this, the same anonymous contributor advised that he also sent an anonymous postcard to David Fletcher as a warning about John Smyth, asking how he could “*allow this disgusting practice to continue*”. David Fletcher participated in this Review prior to his death<sup>45</sup>. In his feedback on this point he stated that he couldn't recall ever receiving this postcard.
- 11.3.66 A further indication of earlier knowledge of concerns regarding John Smyth comes in the form of a handwritten note, contained in the contemporaneous files handed to Reviewers by David Fletcher, seemingly written by Mark Ruston in February 1981:

Peter helps tel . 12/1/81

D. needs help -  
aged  
worried over John  
God father to JSS's children

H.P. didn't know whether  
to tell David . re [redacted]  
[redacted] has said it to  
John 'lay off' - for present.  
H.P. has told JSS re [redacted]

<sup>45</sup> David Fletcher met with Reviewers on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

- 11.3.67 This suggests that some warnings were being exchanged between the two men and another individual written as “HP”. It is likely that these initials refer to the Reverend Hugh Palmer, as later documentation in the same bundle of papers submitted to Reviewers refer to Hugh Palmer and his initials as HP. This note is entitled: “*Peter Wells<sup>46</sup> tel.*” indicating a telephone call took place, it suggests that ‘D’ (likely to be David Fletcher) is concerned about John Smyth, as detailed above. There has been suggestion from some contributors to this Review, including victims, that a report was written, sometime in 1981, about the abuse. We have not found any evidence of this in the course of our Review. A potential author of this report was named and we have explored this, including with the Church of England, as far as possible without being able to confirm this took place.
- 11.3.68 While this information does not fully establish that there was detailed or widespread knowledge of the nature and extent of the abuse prior to 1982, it does indicate serious concerns regarding John Smyth’s activity and relationship with young men earlier. These concerns were seemingly discussed by at least two influential evangelical Church leaders, ordained clergy, much earlier than February 1982, when the abuse was clearly and undeniably disclosed by multiple victims to Mark Ruston.
- 11.3.69 Victims’ testimony to this Review and to Hampshire Police<sup>47</sup> details how the physical and psychological abuse continued to increase, in both frequency and severity throughout 1981, and a victim has given an account that John Smyth started to use a thinner cane sometime during this year:
- "Thinner canes were used as they were less likely to scar. The skin got thicker each time which helped. Sometimes a cane broke."*
- 11.3.70 The bar for punishments also steadily lowered, with, by the end, “*nearly masturbating*” attracting 40 strokes of the cane in his scale of punishment for atoning sins.
- 11.3.71 At this time, it is also evident that new victims were being recruited by John Smyth and, at times, other victims including Simon Doggart as described earlier.
- 11.3.72 John Smyth spoke at three Cambridge University colleges, Corpus Christi, Magdalene, and Trinity. He also visited and spoke at Bristol, York and Durham universities. He visited Oxford University, but there is no evidence of him giving a talk there. The invitations to speak at universities came from the relevant Christian Union at the university/college. At Cambridge, the individual colleges extended the invitations, but it does not seem that the coordinating body across colleges, the Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union (CICCU) had a role in this. College Chaplains apparently had a quite distant role in this organisation and we have been told that their main concentration was on the College chapel and the services conducted there. The Christian Unions were evangelical and outside of this mainstream. Chaplains, the university authorities and CICCU could have had a part to play in ensuring safeguarding at the university. Indeed, they should have. These Chaplains were and are employed by the College, with a dotted line relationship with the diocese and the diocesan Bishop. Changes have taken place since that time in university awareness of safeguarding, with a particular focus now on external speakers attending them.
- 11.3.73 A victim of John Smyth has described to Reviewers that he was groomed and subsequently abused as a direct result of attending one of these talks at his college in Cambridge.
- 11.3.74 Victims have described how the topic of the physical abuse to repent from sins was discussed and “*offered*” by John Smyth following a period of grooming. Some victims describe ways they were able to escape the situation and avoid physical abuse, and how from this point John Smyth would often expel them from his ‘group’, from invitations to parties, holidays and family events. John Smyth is said to have attempted

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<sup>46</sup> Peter Wells was Scripture Union Field Staff Worker (Iwerne Minster) – according to the Scripture Union John Smyth Independent Review Report

<sup>47</sup> As part of their investigation of John Smyth and the abuse, named Operation Cubic, from 2017.

ordination in 1981, and that this application was refused at a late stage of the process. This point has been widely reported and is also referenced in several victim testimonies to this Review, by family members and in Police witness statements by those close to John Smyth at the time. Many describe his reaction to being declined:

*"...when JS was turned down for Ordination) ...he was really angry about it. He generally very rarely showed anger about anything, but that was a time I remember thinking – I was hopeful I wasn't going to have a beating, because if he was angry then it would be even worse than it was normally."*

- 11.3.75 The information presented to Reviewers suggests he sought ordination and was unsuccessful on more than one occasion and in different dioceses, it is suggested in other reviews that this included Winchester diocese, other commentators have also suggested Oxford. Church of England archive records (see below) on this matter are not comprehensive; however, they do make a reference to an attempt at ordination by John Smyth, with York diocese, on 11<sup>th</sup> December 1980:

Name	Reference number	Status	Diocese	Date of Sponsorship	Date of birth	Gender
SMYTH J J	<a href="#">196450</a> <a href="#">09</a>	GM	York	11/12/1980	27/ 6/1941	M

- 11.3.76 A family member has told us that he had said that he was thinking of pursuing a life in Ministry, rather than continuing as a Barrister:

*"John at that stage was wondering whether to become ordained and he actually went on whatever it is you go on for a weekend or two or three days and nights and wasn't accepted. He was quite surprised about that."*

*He said: 'You know, I think I should tell you that I don't think God will want me to be a barrister all my life and I would love to think that I could be effective in some way as Billy Graham<sup>48</sup> is, not on that big scale but I would just love to be able to preach and teach and do that sort of thing rather than being a barrister'."*

- 11.3.77 The records show that his application got as far as a selection panel, but, despite extensive research, we have not been able to confirm this or factually establish why it did not proceed beyond this point. Reviewers have been advised that someone of John Smyth's stature getting to the point of a selection panel and then for an application to be ceased, would have been highly unusual. It is of note that applications have to be sponsored by a diocesan Bishop. Despite in-depth research involving Church of England archives and staff, we have been unable to establish the reasons for this. Many ordained individuals were suggested to us as being potential panel members, or Diocesan Directors of Ordinands (DDOs)<sup>49</sup> at relevant dioceses at this time. All surviving potential panel members and DDOs were contacted, none of these individuals had a memory of John Smyth's application and therefore offered no explanation of the reasons for his application failing to progress.
- 11.3.78 Several contributors have suggested that his extreme theological views were unacceptable to the panel/s. One contributor suggests he was told by a Bishop that John Smyth's application did not progress due to suspicions about his character.
- 11.3.79 In the summer of 1981, John Smyth is said to have preached at a Iwerne camp, with the entire camp listening, about "marking and signifying repentance for sins".

<sup>48</sup> Billy Graham was an American evangelist whose large-scale preaching missions brought him to international prominence (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2023)

<sup>49</sup> A Diocesan Director of Ordinands (DDO) is appointed by the bishop to oversee, on their behalf, the process of selecting, training, choosing an appropriate curacy, and ordaining of new ministers into the Church of England.

- 11.3.80 He makes references to Scriptures to justify his argument, as he was doing with boys and young men throughout. A victim we have spoken with thinks that this was Smyth attempting to justify his abuse.
- 11.3.81 Around Easter of 1981, John Smyth took a group of four victims on a skiing trip to France. All four young men were at this time victims of psychological, sexual, and physical abuse by John Smyth. They were travelling in John Smyth's car and stopped off in Paris on the way. Accounts presented to Reviewers suggest the purpose of this was for John Smyth to attend an evangelical Church in the centre of Paris – St Michael's Church, close to the Champs Elysée. He knew the Rector there, Peter Sertin (now deceased). Justin Welby, at that time worshipped at the Church and was working for an oil company based in Paris. He was not, at that time, ordained. Peter Sertin knew that Justin had connections with Iwerne and mentioned he was there. This event is described by the Archbishop to Reviewers in his own words:
- "While we were in Paris, and this I do remember, John Smyth came through Paris, stayed the night in Paris on his way to Switzerland with a group of Iwerne boys, senior campers, and they came to St Michael's Church which we attended on a Sunday morning.*
- ...I had no idea he was coming and when we arrived, Peter Sertin, the Chaplain, said 'Oh, didn't you used to go to Iwerne?' I said 'Yes', and he said 'Oh well, there's a man called John Smyth here. Do you know him?', and I said 'Oh yes, how interesting!', there was a group of boys, lads, and so I went up to him at the end of the service as one does over the coffee and said 'Hi John, it's Justin', and I can still remember, he was extremely offhand..."*
- 11.3.82 The group then travelled on to the ski resort for a week's skiing. One of the victims present on this trip commented to us that:
- "...the skiing was good and the week was relaxing, but only in the sense that we knew we would not be beaten during the trip."*
- 11.3.83 This is a disturbing and chilling insight into the power and coercive control that John Smyth perpetrated on victims at the time. One of these victims was severely physically abused following the trip and believes that this was triggered by something that he did or said whilst on the trip.
- 11.3.84 Peter Sertin confided to Justin Welby that one of the "boys" had "spoken to him" about John Smyth and Peter Sertin warned Justin Welby that John Smyth was not a good man and to "stay away from him". Again, this is described in Justin Welby's own words:
- "I was travelling, I was in Nigeria, they came back apparently, went through and when I got back from Nigeria, I used to go every month for a week, ten days, I saw Peter who was a good friend, the Chaplain and he said 'You know that Smyth fellow?', and I said 'Yes', he said 'He came back through', I said 'Oh, really?' He said 'Yes. Not a nice man, really not a nice man'.*
- He said 'One of the boys had a chat with me'. I don't know who it was and I wouldn't remember if he'd told me but he wouldn't have told me, he would have kept it strictly confidential, but he said 'I wouldn't have anything to do with him if I were you', but no more than that."*
- 11.3.85 In a submission to reviewers, Justin Welby has commented that the warning from Peter Sertin was vague. He thought that it was based on incompatible personalities and there was no indication given of the abuses which later came to light. It does demonstrate, however, that Justin Welby had some knowledge of John Smyth, with a concern being expressed about him. He carried this knowledge into later life, when he did become aware of the serious concerns.
- 11.3.86 While no detail was given, it is seemingly likely that one of the victims had attempted to confide in Peter Sertin, out of fear and to seek help perhaps in anticipation of the physical abuse that was imminent.



- 11.3.87 The Parisian Church is part of the Church of England (within a Diocese known as “Gibraltar in Europe” or more generally known as “the Diocese in Europe”), with Peter Sertin being a member of the Church of England. This is important in terms of understanding what the Church of England could and should have known about potential abuse. He failed to report being told of a concern by a young man. At the time, the Church did not have robust procedures in place, but, as has been outlined earlier in this Review, there was enough awareness of abuse to have meant that alarm bells should have been sounded. Peter Sertin was concerned enough to raise the matter with someone who was a parishioner at the time, warning him off John Smyth, but without being specific enough to indicate the potential depth of the concern.
- 11.3.88 We have explored with Justin Welby his relationship at that time with John Smyth. He knew John Smyth from the Iwerne camps and was in John Smyth’s dormitory for two camps. He has described being “*impressed*” by John Smyth and reacting to his apparent power of intellect and charismatic (in the lay sense) personality. He says that they were never close, however. He remembers a time when he delivered boat keys to John Smyth’s family home, but says that this was “*incidental*” and that he was “*just doing a favour*” and that this is not indicative of any deeper friendship or relationship.
- 11.3.89 Justin Welby says that he and John Smyth “*exchanged Christmas cards*” for several years whilst he was in Paris and on his return to the UK for a period. This included the time when John Smyth was living in Zimbabwe. He characterises this as something that was “*usual for the time*” and as one of many very casual exchanges of cards with people. This was more about people being on a Christmas card list, with quite formal sending and receipt of those cards, rather than a more active and personal Christmas greeting as between friends.
- 11.3.90 Justin Welby says he recalls “*making donations*” to John Smyth to help with his Ministry in Zimbabwe, but cannot remember the details of this, timing or amounts. Again, he says that this was within a “*typical and usual pattern*” for the time, with gifting to prominent people heading Ministries and the like being common and unremarkable.
- 11.3.91 John Smyth took young men, in small groups, on several different holiday trips. This skiing trip (we believe there were others), sailing trips on his yacht out from Lymington, and trips to Bosloe, a holiday home in Cornwall. These trips constituted a key part of his abuse of the young men, being, ostensibly, “*fun*” trips with a “*manly and muscular*”<sup>50</sup> nature but having an ulterior motive of abuse and grooming, and drawing them into his close circle.
- 11.3.92 John Smyth physically abused victims while on these trips. For example, the Winchester College Review of this case describes an incident of physical abuse while on a trip to Bosloe: *‘[He].. participated in the trips to Bosloe...the first Bosloe holiday was in 1980 and was attended only by those who were then at university. Smyth rented a large National Trust property for a “Christian house party”. Victim 002 was beaten by Smyth in a shed in the garden of Bosloe House.*<sup>51</sup>

## 12. TIME PERIOD 1982 – MAY 1984

### Key Findings

- 12.1.1 The Review ToR steer us to focus on two related but distinct questions:
- (1) what did the Church of England (i.e. relevant officers and institutions) know about alleged abuse perpetrated by John Smyth, and: (2) what was the response of the Church of England to those allegations.
- 12.1.2 For this period, in response to these questions, our research, detailed below, has shown that a significant number of ordained Church of England Clergy knew of the abuse between March 1982 and July 1984, some may well have known or suspected it even earlier than 1982 although information confirming this is not available. One of these was very senior, a Bishop, and several others were well known influential

<sup>50</sup> See earlier analysis of ‘Muscular Christianity’ under ‘The Iwerne Camps, Iwerne Trust, Scripture Union & Titus Trust.

<sup>51</sup> Page 38 of [Winchester College John Smyth Report 2022](#)

leaders within Iwerne networks and the wider Conservative Evangelical world. Several not ordained, but powerful and influential leaders in Evangelism were also aware of the abuse.

- 12.1.3 An example relates to Hugh Palmer, who states that he was fully aware of the purpose of his visit to a victim who made a serious and almost successful attempt on his own life, at a time when details of the abuse were emerging and being notified to several individuals. He says that he did not realise that this was connected with abuse. Hugh Palmer maintains that he cannot recall who asked him to go to the hospital and has speculated that it could have been one of several people, including David Fletcher or Mark Ruston. Handwritten notes from this time give some indication:

To DCFP on phone 14/1/82.  
 Tell D. re [redacted] Yes. <sup>David</sup>  
 HP Palmer to [redacted] scriptoria

H.P. didn't know whether to tell David. re [redacted]  
 [redacted] has said it to him "lay off" - for present.  
 H.P. has told [redacted]

DCF.  
 ✓ Tell HP who will phone - a little more meant.  
 ✓ [redacted] at home for 2 weeks  
 [redacted] should [redacted]

[redacted] might have been.  
 [redacted] says better HP to see [redacted] <sup>MRS</sup>  
 sit on well - scp for camp - [redacted]

DCF 260  
 [redacted] HP  
 Day before visit  
 [redacted]  
 Bank & all fallen  
 to G. father.  
 [redacted] ?  
 Change relate w  
 [redacted]  
 Letters to group

- 12.1.4 Hugh Palmer is also unable to recollect the circumstances or detail of any continued contact with the victim, in contradiction to the victim's account of that time. While it is recognised that these events occurred in a period approximately 40 years ago, it is felt that the significance of the events surrounding the two hospital visits and the circumstances of the ongoing support might lodge in a person's memory. Hugh Palmer describes his contact with the victim as being "not unusual" and "certainly not limited to the Iwerne network". He says it would have been part of a natural concern for someone moving from home to a student situation, not for any oversight or restriction to be put on people.

- 12.1.5 If the Ruston Report in 1982 had resulted in a report being made to the police (in terms of the assertion that a serious crime, or crimes, had been committed) and this had been investigated, the wider Church would have known of the abuse. In attempting to keep the matters secret, the number of people directly initially knowledgeable of the abuse was limited to those to whom the report was circulated. However, as we have detailed later, this “*secret*” became a very poorly kept one indeed, with many people knowing of the abuse, including ordained people throughout the time, as analysed in this Review.
- 12.1.6 Our conclusion is that members of the Church did know of the abuse. The wider Church organisation could have and should have known of the abuse and, furthermore, a sufficiently large number of prominent people within the Church did know of it. Significant enough to say that the Church of England “*knew*” in the most general sense, of the abuse.
- 12.1.7 At the time, there were no policies in place which required individual Clergy (or others connected with the Church) to report abuse to their Bishop within their Diocese. The position is now different, and we analyse the current safeguarding arrangements later in this Review.
- 12.1.8 We concur with commentators and participants in this Review that “*safeguarding*” was not an understood concept used to aid the protection of children or vulnerable adults<sup>52</sup> as it is now, but the stark circumstances of these abuses, the fact that a crime had been uncovered and law identified, and the sheer extent and nature of the abuses committed, should have transcended any semantic arguments about whether this constituted serious abuse, which needed to be reported and dealt with formally.
- 12.1.9 If a different question is posed, say, “*did the Archbishop of Canterbury know of the abuse at the time?*”, or “*was the abuse known about outside of the immediate circle of Iwerne men?*”,<sup>53</sup> the conclusion has to be that, no, the Church of England, if defined formally as an “*institution*”, did not “*know*” of the abuse as such. We contend that could and should have been the case – the then Archbishop of Canterbury and the wider Church could and should have been informed, and that would have led to very different outcomes. John Smyth would have been, at the least, “*outed*” more publicly and actions taken to curtail his continuing abuse in Africa. Whether or not any police inquiry would have led to prosecution is a secondary issue.
- 12.1.10 The following findings should also be considered;
- (a) The abuse was uncovered in February 1982, with disclosures from victims, correspondence to David Fletcher and a serious attempted suicide by a victim. The Ruston Report was written in early March 1982, and shown to a small group of Iwerne people.
  - (b) The decision was made that the authorities will not be informed (most importantly the police) and that the matter will be “*held secret*” by this small group.
  - (c) The reason given for this is that it will be in the best interests of the victims, as their lives would be ruined by the abuse being made public. Canon David MacInnes has told reviewers that he was called by a parent of one of the victims. He made it clear that their family did not wish the reports of abuse to be taken any further.

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<sup>52</sup> The Care Act 2014 defines that safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs);
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

<sup>53</sup> Reviewers have been told of the concept of the “Iwerne man” or of “Iwernites”. This is a reference to people who attended the Iwerne camps and say that they have been influenced and shaped by these experiences, throughout their lives. People talk of this in warm and positive terms.

- (d) The evidence from the time, which includes a great deal of contemporaneous correspondence between the people shown the Ruston Report, shows, clearly, that there were several possible reasons for the non-disclosure:
- (i) To protect the reputation of the Iwerne movement.
  - (ii) To protect the wider reputation of Conservative Evangelicalism.
  - (iii) To protect the reputations of the individuals involved with Iwerne.
  - (iv) To protect the reputations of the victims' parents.
- (e) In an interview with us, David Fletcher said: "I thought it would do the work of God immense damage if this were public."
- (f) A claim is made that the parents of the victims were consulted, and they agreed to this non-disclosure. The truth is that only three sets (possibly four) of parents were consulted, with one of these favouring disclosure to the authorities.
- (g) There is no attempt to consult with the victims as to their views on this. It is worth noting here that the victims were treated as "boys" and are referred to as such. The emphasis throughout is firmly on considering the wishes of the victims' parents. These were, by this point not "boys" but adult men, who were not given agency in this whole process.
- (h) A psychiatrist is consulted and there is some evidence that legal advice may have been sought. The Ruston Report clearly states that offences had been committed. The choice is explicitly made to withhold the knowledge of offences potentially being committed from the police.
- (i) There was little support offered to the victims. Indeed, there is evidence of Mark Ruston being critical of some victims when questioning them. There is also evidence of what amounts to "*victim blaming*" in some of the correspondence.
- (j) John Smyth was assisted by one of his victims, Simon Doggart (now deceased), as a co-beater. The notes from the time make a reference to the possibility of there being at least one other co-beater, in addition to Simon Doggart. There is a very weak attempt at curtailing John Smyth's activities. He openly flouted the several conditions laid on him, continued to preach as a Lay Preacher, continued to see the young men he had agreed to not see and continued to challenge people in an aggressive and manipulative way. He attended a Stewards Trust house party with two victims in tow, along with his own family.
- (k) There is a worrying pattern of deference to John Smyth from the people dealing with the fallout from the Ruston Report. They defer to him and are led by him, sharing their thinking with him. There is one reference to maintaining his "*Christian usefulness and commitment*". The discussions are about how he can continue in some way with the Iwerne Trust and camps, rather than how he can be stopped from committing further abuse. Even within the context of the time and the policies in place, both within the Church and in wider society, their clear responsibility was to report serious crimes to the police.
- (l) All decision-making during this period regarding investigating and responding to the abuse was 'managed' by a group of men that included ordained Clergy and prominent Evangelicals.
- (m) We must reach the conclusion that this constituted a cover-up of the abuse by those few individuals who were told at the time. This interpretation of what occurred has been questioned by many, but our firm conclusion is that a serious crime was covered up. The correspondence includes words and phrases associated with "*keeping things quiet*" and "*secrecy*".
- (n) There is no reference to the welfare of the victims at the important meeting at the Carlton Club, where decisions were made as to how to proceed.

- (o) There is no reference whatsoever, in any of the correspondence we have seen to the potential risk that John Smyth may be posing to his own family and children. Sadly, we now know that John Smyth's son was directly abused by him from the age of seven, including canings in the shed at Orchard House.
- (p) A warning was given to the Reverend David Jackman by David Fletcher when John Smyth and his family began to attend the Above Bar Church in Southampton.
- (q) It is suggested to John Smyth that he should consider moving to another country or to another location in the UK.
- (r) The Scripture Union was informed of the abuse during this period.
- (s) Warnings are issued by individuals not directly connected with the nine people who saw the 1982 Ruston Report, raising the question of just how "secret" this was being kept by them. A clergyman (Reverend Michael Green) at St Aldate's Church, Oxford, said that he was told of the abuse by a curate at Winchester College and was "sworn to secrecy."
- (t) A housemaster at Winchester College is told of the abuse by Peter Krakenberger, who also informed four other people of the abuse, outside of the "inner core" who were shown the Ruston Report.
- (u) A victim alerted the Reverend Richard Bewes at All Souls Church, Langham Place, to the danger that John Smyth posed when he was going on a Mission to Malawi with African Enterprise.
- (v) The Right Reverend George Carey (now the Right Honourable Lord Carey), as Principal of Trinity Theological College, Bristol, was informed of the abuse and sent a copy of an outline of the Ruston Report but he denies seeing it.
- (w) The Chair of a selection conference for ordination for a victim of John Smyth, was informed of the abuse and there is no evidence of any follow-up or action because of this. The Chair, Reverend John Trillo, the Bishop of Chelmsford at the time, is now deceased.
- (x) The attempts to intervene in John Smyth and his family moving to Zimbabwe were weak and wholly ineffective. This includes several ordained clergy, who were involved in failed attempts to prevent his working, ultimately with children, in Africa.
- (y) Two psychiatrists knew of the abuse but did not report this to authorities. It is outside the remit of this Review to explore this in detail.
- (z) Several Church officers and ordained persons, including a Bishop are included knew of the abuse by mid 1984. Following this period, and prior to 2017, many more people, including Church officers, ordained Clergy and Bishops, in the UK and Africa, are made aware of the abuse.

#### Chronology – 1982 to May 1984

Date - Year/Month	Event
<b>1982</b>	
January 1982	John Smyth attends Iwerne Winter Conference in Oxford and gives a talk on spiritual discipline; he mentions the "rod of discipline", a select group of victims attended. Jonathan Fletcher, David Fletcher, and Peter Krakenberger also in attendance.

Date - Year/Month	Event
	<p>Victim describes engagement to his girlfriend as "<i>final escape from John Smyth's clutches</i>".</p> <p>John Smyth introduced to new victims. Simon Doggart also continues to physically abuse a victim on his own and alongside John Smyth. Anne Smyth reported to give dressings to victims for their injuries.</p> <p>The number of victims, the intensity and frequency of physical abuse perpetrated by John Smyth increases.</p>
28 <sup>th</sup> January 1982	Letter sent by a victim under pseudonym to John Smyth and David Fletcher exposing physical abuse from John Smyth.
4 <sup>th</sup> February 1982	Victim attempts to take his own life.
5 <sup>th</sup> February 1982	Hugh Palmer visits victim twice in hospital.
7 <sup>th</sup> February 1982	Approximate date of John Smyth's last appearance as a speaker at Winchester College Christian Forum.
12 <sup>th</sup> February 1982	First victim visits Mark Ruston to tell him about abuse received from John Smyth.
Mid-February 1982	Mark Ruston meets with 13 victims who report abuse from John Smyth.
	Mark Ruston speaks to small number of influential parents of Winchester College students.
14 <sup>th</sup> February 1982	Mark Ruston meets with John Smyth – John Smyth asks Mark Ruston to " <i>try and put him first</i> ".
15 <sup>th</sup> February 1982	Mark Ruston meets again with John Smyth – John Smyth is in a highly emotional state.
	Reverend David Fletcher discusses John Smyth abuse with Dr Ian Lodge-Patch, Psychiatrist.
16 <sup>th</sup> February 1982	Mark Ruston and John Smyth speak over the telephone. Notes from this telephone call show a discussion about who David Fletcher could talk to about " <i>legality of beatings</i> ", suggesting Graham Ross-Cornes.
	Mark Ruston meets with John and Anne Smyth in Royston.
17 <sup>th</sup> February 1982	Mark Ruston meets with John Smyth and Simon Doggart. John Smyth agrees to cancel trip to Bosloe House planned for September.
18 <sup>th</sup> February 1982	List of victims of John Smyth abuse written by Simon Doggart describing their experiences. Note indicates victims were " <i>allocated</i> " to either David Fletcher and Mark Ruston for reasons unknown.
19 <sup>th</sup> February 1982	Simon Doggart sends a letter to Mark Ruston apologising for everything that has happened.
	David Fletcher telephones Mark Ruston and describes John Smyth's abuse as " <i>passive masochistic homosexual activity</i> ".
20 <sup>th</sup> February 1982	John Smyth resigns from Iwerne Trust as Chair, advising he will step down from his role in the Romans in Britain trial and his role at Christ Church in Winchester.

Date - Year/Month	Event
21 <sup>st</sup> February 1982	John Smyth reads at Christ Church, Winchester, during a morning service.
Late February 1982	Mark Ruston continues to meet with victims to gather testimonies and information.
4 <sup>th</sup> March 1982	David Fletcher meets a victim – he tells the victim about the anonymous letter received and about another victim who attempted to take his own life.
6 <sup>th</sup> March 1982	Mark Ruston sends his report regarding John Smyth's abuse with covering letter to seven recipients.
8 <sup>th</sup> March 1982	Mark Ruston receives responses from recipients of letter 'acknowledging his memo and horrific nature of report'.
8 <sup>th</sup> March 1982	David Fletcher and Mark Ruston given advice and guidance by John Smyth on next steps.
9 <sup>th</sup> March 1982	David Fletcher and Mark Ruston prepare list of questions to be considered at planned meeting on 16 <sup>th</sup> March to discuss Report by Mark Ruston.
10 <sup>th</sup> March 1982	John Smyth writes to David Fletcher (copy sent to the Reverend John Eddison) and provides a list of points to be made to advisors who think that John Smyth's behaviour is " <i>abnormally gross</i> ". John Smyth also states himself, Simon Doggart and Anne Smyth take responsibility.
12 <sup>th</sup> March 1982	Letter from John Eddison to David Fletcher suggesting John Smyth cannot return to Iwerne camps unless they can be sure of the " <i>whole matter being sealed off</i> " and " <i>no more leaks</i> ".
13 <sup>th</sup> March 1982	Letter from Peter Wells to Mark Ruston - Peter suggests him and David Fletcher have " <i>lived with the problem, in one form or another, for several years.</i> "
15 <sup>th</sup> March 1982	Trial of Romans in Britain starts, and John Smyth withdraws as QC representing Mary Whitehouse. Reason for John Smyth's withdrawal given was he had succumbed to a virus.
16 <sup>th</sup> March 1982	Meeting to discuss Report by Mark Ruston, with its recipients at The Carlton Club in London.
	Meeting notes from David Fletcher detail restrictions and response to Report by Mark Ruston for John Smyth. John Smyth's behaviours noted as being " <i>grossly abnormal</i> ".
20 <sup>th</sup> March 1982	David Fletcher visits John Smyth to deliver response to Report by Mark Ruston. John Smyth agreed to leave camp work but did not agree to other conditions proposed.
21 <sup>st</sup> March 1982	John Smyth preaches at morning prayer service at Christ Church in Winchester
	John Smyth writes to David Fletcher and acknowledges David Fletcher's apology to him and Anne Smyth. John Smyth is requesting for trip to Bosloe to be reinstated.
22 <sup>nd</sup> March 1982	David Fletcher writes to Mark Ruston about meeting with John Smyth on 20 <sup>th</sup> March. David Fletcher states he did not explain to John Smyth that the conditions were the price for their silence and that the next step would

Date - Year/Month	Event
	be to refer matter to the Scripture Union Council if John Smyth does not agree.
23 <sup>rd</sup> March 1982	John Eddison writes to David Fletcher and suggests telling John Smyth about reputation risk and personal integrity they (Ruston Report recipients) are risking by not reporting abuse to Winchester College or to authorities, therefore John Smyth must abide by the conditions.
25 <sup>th</sup> March 1982	David Fletcher writes to John Smyth detailing four conditions to be imposed on him. David Fletcher also urged John Smyth to seek professional help.
26 <sup>th</sup> March 1982	John Smyth resigns from Iwerne Trust Camp work.
27 <sup>th</sup> March 1982	John Eddison writes to David Fletcher stating John Smyth's acceptance on conditions is (Ruston Report) recipient's " <i>price of our silence</i> ".
31 <sup>st</sup> March 1982	Letter from Richard (Dick) Knight to John Smyth, requesting a meeting with himself and Anne Smyth.
	John Eddison writes to David Fletcher following telephone call with John Smyth where he told Eddison it would be " <i>quite impractical for him to give the undertakings (conditions) we ask for</i> ".
	Mark Ruston writes to John Smyth explaining he does not regard anything victims have told him as " <i>coming under the seal of the confessional</i> ".
March 1982	John Smyth attempts to contact victim Simon Doggart. Simon Doggart described as acting like an " <i>agent</i> " for John Smyth.
	John Smyth contacts Mark Ruston to check who told him of abuse.
	John Smyth contacts a victim and wants to know if he was the one who told Mark Ruston about the abuse.
	Mark Ruston sends a letter to David Fletcher with details of contingency plans if parents of Winchester College students find out.
2 <sup>nd</sup> April 1982	John Smyth writes to John Eddison. Both John and Anne Smyth do not agree with all the conditions to be imposed.
	Telephone call from John Smyth to Dick Knight to discuss what Dick should say to victim's parents.
3 <sup>rd</sup> April 1982	Victim writes to David Fletcher and describes abuse from John Smyth as a " <i>very spiritual thing</i> ".
4 <sup>th</sup> April 1982	John Eddison writes to David Fletcher and suggests " <i>if he (John Smyth) had no family commitments it would be advisable for him to leave the country for a few years or go to a completely different part of the UK.</i> "
6 <sup>th</sup> April 1982	John Eddison writes to John Smyth, includes paragraph about John Smyth moving abroad if he " <i>had been younger, perhaps, and were not a family man...</i> ".
7 <sup>th</sup> April 1982	Easter Iwerne Camp takes place – notable that none of the victims that were camp leaders or regulars at Camp were in attendance.
Easter 1982	Victim writes to David Fletcher and states advice given to Fletcher about John Smyth abuse being " <i>non spiritual</i> " was " <i>off target</i> ". Also discourages



Date - Year/Month	Event
	visit to John and Anne Smyth who are described as being " <i>at breaking point</i> ".
11 <sup>th</sup> April 1982	John Smyth writes to John Eddison, Dick Knight and David Fletcher to advise he has sought advice from Anglican layman who is an expert on authority within Church.
12 <sup>th</sup> April 1982	Anne Smyth writes to John Eddison, Dick Knight and David Fletcher – Anne Smyth asks them to accept both her and John Smyth's letters as the last word on the matter and for them to leave her and her family alone.
7 <sup>th</sup> April 1982	John Smyth starts to attend Above Bar Church in Southampton.
14 <sup>th</sup> April 1982	Alan Martin (General Director of Scripture Union between 1978-1986) writes memo - indicates he was " <i>at a disadvantage, although I know John Smyth. I do not know the others involved, and therefore lack the background knowledge which obviously affected decisions which have been made.</i> "
14 <sup>th</sup> April 1982	David Fletcher advises some victims to stay away and not to contact John Smyth. John Smyth continues to try and contact victims.
April 1982	Hugh Palmer visits victim.
	John Smyth reapplies for Iwerne Trust membership.
	John Smyth speaks to victim on the telephone to invite to another victim's birthday party in the Summer which John Smyth is organising at Orchard House in Winchester.
14 <sup>th</sup> April 1982	John Eddison, Dick Knight, Mark Ruston, David Fletcher and Tim Sterry write to John and Anne Smyth asking them to keep the terms/conditions as agreed it will be easier to defend them.
7 <sup>th</sup> May 1982	David Fletcher visits John Smyth in Winchester. David Fletcher refuses to tell John Smyth who he has told about abuse.
9 <sup>th</sup> May 1982	David Fletcher writes to Mark Ruston providing update on visit to John Smyth in Winchester.
9 <sup>th</sup> May 1982	Simon Doggart writes to David Fletcher - tells him he thinks it is appalling that David Fletcher is persisting with allegation of homosexuality against John Smyth and the rumour that Simon Doggart has left Iwerne Camps because of his dependence on John Smyth.
13 <sup>th</sup> May 1982	David Fletcher writes to Mark Ashton describing their meeting the day before, enclosing a list of victims and those with knowledge.
14 <sup>th</sup> May 1982	John Eddison writes to Simon Doggart addressing his concerns about how John Smyth has been treated.
15 <sup>th</sup> May 1982	Mark Ruston meets with Peter Krakenberger. Peter Krakenberger feels guilty and John Thorn (Head of Winchester College) " <i>should be told</i> ".
16 <sup>th</sup> May 1982	Mark Ruston meets with Mark Ashton. Notes state " <i>head on block for John Smyth</i> ", " <i>better that John Thorn should think it was 'ordinary'</i> ", " <i>will become public.</i> " Iwerne Camps " <i>would not feel the need to tell John Thorn if no Wykehamists</i> ".

Date - Year/Month	Event
13 <sup>th</sup> May 1982	John Smyth writes to John Eddison about feeling " <i>betrayed</i> " by him.
14 <sup>th</sup> May 1982	John Eddison writes to John and Anne Smyth, asking if Anne understands the extent of abuse John Smyth subjected victims to. John Eddison also highlights he is aware of John Smyth continuing to contact victims despite agreeing not to.
19 <sup>th</sup> May 1982	Anonymous Letter sent to David Fletcher – John Smyth has implied to them that " <i>total exclusion</i> " sanctions have been lifted.
20 <sup>th</sup> May 1982	Simon Doggart writes to Mark Ruston, he is upset that Mark Ruston has described John Smyth's actions as homosexual.
26 <sup>th</sup> May 1982	John Smyth visits a victim who is on holiday in Europe.
May/June 1982	Peter Krakenberger reports he was told about abuse and shown the Report by Mark Ruston.
1 <sup>st</sup> June 1982	Simon Doggart writes to John Eddison and states John Smyth never denied the abuse but did not admit to it due to confidentiality. Letter signed off by Simon Doggart, John and Anne Smyth and others whose names have been redacted.
1 <sup>st</sup> June 1982	John Eddison writes another letter to Simon Doggart and states he reassured a Winchester College School Master that John Smyth was to be trusted.
9 <sup>th</sup> June 1982	John Eddison writes to Simon Doggart – John Eddison asks Simon Doggart to use his influence with John and Anne Smyth to try and resolve the situation. John Eddison thinks any outsiders will consider John Smyth's motivation for abuse as homosexual. Copy of this letter was sent to David Fletcher, Dick Knight and Mark Ruston.
9 <sup>th</sup> June 1982	David Fletcher produces written statement regarding John Smyth as a record of intentions and actions against potential full disclosure of John Smyth's abuse.
29 <sup>th</sup> June 1982	Dick Knight writes to Simon Doggart and states they have no responsibility to tell Winchester College School master's and student's parents about John Smyth abuse.
30 <sup>th</sup> June 1982	Victim meets up with John Smyth throughout Summer 1982, on one occasion Simon Doggart also joins them.
Summer 1982	Victim's father is said (by a victim) to have told John Thorn (Winchester College Headteacher) about John Smyth abuses. (This is not agreed by Winchester College as being the case).
July 1982	Hugh Palmer visits victim - he tells victim he was extremely sympathetic to abuse suffered at hands of John Smyth.
	John Smyth holds birthday party for victim at Orchard House in Winchester, garden shed still up in the garden, and somebody commented John Smyth should take it down.
	Victims visiting John Smyth and staying with him for weekends. Victims start to withdraw from Iwerne Camps due to John Smyth being prevented from returning.

Date - Year/Month	Event
Summer 1982	Telephone call from John Smyth to Dick Knight. John Smyth discusses how he and Simon Doggart were hoping for his parents did not have to be told about abuse.
6 <sup>th</sup> July 1982	David Fletcher writes to Mark Ruston confirming John Smyth has made contact with victims.
12 <sup>th</sup> July 1982	Communication between Iwerne trust Officers/Trustees about meeting John Smyth. John Smyth described as being scared of exposing Simon Doggart and Anne Smyth.
Mid-July 1982	John Smyth attended Stewards Trust 'House Party' at North Foreland Lodge with Anne Smyth and their children. Two victims attend as guests of the family, helping to run the young people's aspect of the event. Also attended by Anthony Cordle, John Smyth's adviser in 1982. David MacInnes was a guest speaker.
20 <sup>th</sup> July 1982	John Smyth writes to John Eddison, David Fletcher and Dick Knight to advise he does not want to meet with them at present.
24 <sup>th</sup> July 1982	Peter Wells meets a victim and tells the victim that <i>"it's no good taking it to the Church now, because they're not going to do anything about it, but rest assured that when Iwerne people are in senior positions in the Church - which was always their aim – John Smyth will be brought to account for what he has done"</i> .
August 1982	Peter Krakenberger writes Winchester College Christian Forum newsletter.
	Peter Krakenberger writes to several people talking about John Smyth signing a paper and being expelled from Winchester College, he gives reason for not telling police as being the parents' wishes.
	John Smyth warns a victim off close contact with Jonathan Fletcher.
	Attendees of Iwerne Summer Camp describe <i>"great consternation"</i> about John Smyth. Peter Wells approaches a camp attendee and presses them about John Smyth and whether they knew about abuse or not.
	Mark Ruston and others continue to debate issues and actions to be taken with John Smyth, who continues to contact victims despite agreeing not to.
	Warnings given to young men by people outside of Ruston Committee about John Smyth <i>"severely beating"</i> boys in a shed in Winchester.
	Mark Ruston writes to some victims explaining what is happening concerning John Smyth following his Report.
13 <sup>th</sup> August 1982	John Smyth writes to David Fletcher continuing to try to control situation and criticises Iwerne (e.g. being <i>"sectarian"</i> ).
17 <sup>th</sup> August 1982	John Eddison writes to Alan Martin (General Director of Scripture Union between 1978-1986) about John Smyth's proposal to put the matter in his hands. John Smyth is refusing to meet and discuss the conditions.

Date - Year/Month	Event
18 <sup>th</sup> August 1982	Alan Martin writes to John Eddison - he thinks previous concerns about John Smyth should have been followed up and that he will encourage John Smyth to seek professional help.
23 <sup>rd</sup> August 1982	Alan Martin sends a memo to 1982 Report by Mark Ruston Committee - he thinks John Thorn should be told about John Smyth and " <i>extreme pressure</i> " should be put on John Smyth to seek professional help.
24 <sup>th</sup> August 1982	David Fletcher writes to Mark Ruston..." <i>dare we tell John Smyth whom we have told and then say we will inform his legal superiors unless he sees a Dr?</i> "
25 <sup>th</sup> August 1982	Mark Ruston writes to Alan Martin, states that he is working on the assumption the practice of physical abuse has stopped but thinks Alan may still believe the beatings are continuing.
	John Eddison writes to Mark Ruston and sends him a copy of his and David Fletcher's response to Alan Martin. David Fletcher is concerned about what information John Smyth might share with Alan Martin.
	Letter received by a person (not a victim) from Anthony Cordle. Anthony Cordle asking recipient to not repeat what they had been told about John Smyth abuse.
September 1982	Peter Krakenberger states that in Autumn 1982 he " <i>felt it necessary to tell Winchester College authorities</i> ".
	Governing Body Meeting held at Winchester College. John Thorn reportedly stated " <i>we are not going to discuss this [John Smyth's abuse]</i> " at the meeting - this was after John Thorn had 'consulted' parents who agreed they wanted to be kept a secret.
	John Smyth continues to meet victims regardless of the 'undertakings' (conditions) that had been produced.
	Victim speaks to The Reverend Canon, Andrew Cornes, about abuse from John Smyth.
	John Eddison writes to Mark Ruston confirming John Smyth has agreed to meet David Fletcher with Anthony Cordle and David MacInnes.
13 <sup>th</sup> September 1982	John Thorn is informed of John Smyth abuse after discussion with Mark Ashton and Mark Ruston. John Smyth is banned from Winchester College.
Between 13-17 <sup>th</sup> September 1982	Winchester College Housemasters meeting - David Conner and John Thorn should be informed if anyone hears of John Smyth making contact with boys.
17 <sup>th</sup> September 1982	Dick Knight writes to Simon Daggart's parents to explain Simon's role within John Smyth's abuse.
20 <sup>th</sup> September 1982	John Eddison writes to Dick Knight – John Eddison has met with Peter Wells, Jonathan Fletcher and another person at Iwerne. They think members of Headmasters' Conference should be told. John Eddison reports Michael Green, Rector from St Aldate's, was told about John Smyth's abuse by a curate from Winchester College but was sworn to secrecy.

Date - Year/Month	Event
29 <sup>th</sup> September 1982	John Smyth no longer listed as a Lay Reader in Winchester Diocese.
October 1982	John Smyth goes on a Mission to Malawi with African Enterprise. A victim raises concerns about this with Richard Bewes of All Souls, Langham Place.
	Correspondence indicates that several victims are controlled by John Smyth, being signatories on letters asking for him to be reinstated in Iwerne Camps.
6 <sup>th</sup> October 1982	John Eddison writes to David Fletcher advising he has spoken to Anthony Cordle who think parents of victims should be told.
10 <sup>th</sup> October 1982	Simon Doggart writes to Mark Ruston apologising and admitting he made mistakes.
11 <sup>th</sup> October 1982	John Thorn and some parents of Winchester College students visit John Smyth with the purpose of him signing the undertaking. Copies of this document/undertaking 'kept' by John Smyth and John Thorn. The document suggests two other copies are also kept by two of the victim's parents.
12 <sup>th</sup> October 1982	John Smyth meets Dick Knight to discuss 'Undertaking' document.
18 <sup>th</sup> October 1982	John Smyth writes to David Fletcher asking for forgiveness and confirms he has signed the undertaking.
27 <sup>th</sup> October 1982	Peter Krakenberger writes to Mark Ruston. Peter Krakenberger thinks knowing anything about this business has been a <i>"disastrous security risk"</i> .
9 <sup>th</sup> November 1982	A meeting between Anne Smyth and Sue Fletcher (wife of David Fletcher) was cancelled by John Smyth in an <i>"unpleasant"</i> telephone call.
17 <sup>th</sup> November 1982	Anthony Cordle writes to state that John Smyth visited a psychiatrist.
20 <sup>th</sup> November 1982	David Fletcher is contacted and asks to <i>"what extent should the links to (John Smyth) be severed"</i> .
25 <sup>th</sup> November 1982	Mark Ruston meets with several victims who report no contact with John Smyth has taken place. Victims explain how John Smyth used a list of sins to inform beatings.
December 1982	Peter Krakenberger recalls being told by a Winchester College parent that John Smyth was provided with an ultimatum, to either leave the UK or he would be reported to the police.
<b>1983</b>	
January 1983	John Smyth joins Above Bar Church in Southampton, offering his services as a Barrister. David Fletcher and Mark Ashton warn David Jackman as leader of the Church about John Smyth. Discussions about recruiting John Smyth to an assistant minister role ended before any formal proposal was made.
13 <sup>th</sup> February 1983	Letter sent from Peter Krakenberger to David Fletcher suggesting that John Smyth wants reconciliation with David. Peter tells David he has

Date - Year/Month	Event
	apologised to John Smyth for mentioning " <i>secret activities</i> " to five people who did not already know.
8 <sup>th</sup> March 1983	David MacInnes writes to David Fletcher stating he is " <i>seriously worried about John Smyth</i> ", advising he has had a letter from one of the victims suggesting John Smyth had been in touch (with the victim). Also concerned that John Smyth is thinking of working with David Jackman (Above Bar Church, Southampton).
13 <sup>th</sup> March 1983	Mark Ruston receives a letter from a victim suggesting John Smyth had been in touch and that he had stated that the " <i>agreed time for break in communication had run its course</i> ". Advised " <i>Andrew Cornes has been told about the situation and was able to talk it over with him</i> ".
	David MacInnes writes to Mark Ruston advising he has been in touch with Dr Ian Lodge-Patch and David Jackman, stating that there is "a clear understanding about the situation among the leaders of Above Bar", and " <i>no risk at the moment of [John Smyth] being appointed</i> ". He also advises that he is seeing John Smyth soon with Anthony Cordle.
March 1983	David MacInnes suggests to a victim that he speaks to someone other than him about John Smyth. The victim saw psychiatrists as a result including Dr Ian Lodge Patch.
13 <sup>th</sup> April 1983	John Smyth applies starts theological study for a term at Trinity College in Bristol. It is here that John Smyth meets Andy Shaw.
Spring / Early 1983	David Jackman was contacted by Mark Ashton, with a follow-up by David Fletcher warning that John Smyth should not be given any sort of leadership role or public ministry, and that he had been removed from Iwerne leadership as a result of his unacceptable behaviour towards young men. David MacInnes later sent David Jackman an outline of the Ruston Report.
May 1983	A typed summary of the Ruston Report is produced by David Fletcher.
May 1983	John Smyth approaches Martin and Jill Kingston, David Pope and Michael Beardsmore to become trustees to support him in setting up Zambesi Ministries in Zimbabwe.
17 <sup>th</sup> May 1983	Mark Ruston writes to David Fletcher regarding a summary of the Ruston Report which David Fletcher has written to send to others.
June 1983	Mark Ruston informs Selection Conference Chairman, John Trillo, of John Smyth abuse.
	John Smyth was challenged by a victim about his plan to work in Africa.
15 <sup>th</sup> June 1983	David MacInnes writes to David Fletcher referencing a letter he has had from George Carey " <i>who is going to try and take what opportunities he can</i> ", and that he hopes they will hear " <i>any reactions that there may be from that end</i> ".
July 1983	John Smyth attends Evangelist Conference in Amsterdam and meets the leader of African Enterprise Zimbabwe (Chris Sewell, now deceased). John Smyth is encouraged to join in a Pan African Mission/African Enterprise and to move to Africa with his family.
September 1983	John Smyth joins a committee to support Billy Graham's 'Mission England' tour.

Date - Year/Month	Event
October 1983	John Smyth visits South Africa to attend Pan African Mission. Delivers a talk with Michael Cassidy and Bishop Festo Kivengere.
November 1983	John and Anne Smyth visit African Enterprise teams in Zimbabwe and Nairobi.
	Member of committee supporting Billy Graham's 'Mission England' tour was warned away from inviting John Smyth to be part of this, by a colleague/friend who said to 'get rid of him'. The same person was also told about John Smyth's abuse by David Fletcher.
<b>1984</b>	
Early 1984	John Smyth leaves Billy Graham's 'Mission England' tour committee following a confrontation by a member of the committee regarding the abuse and information given to him by David Fletcher.
	John Smyth visits Peter Krakenberger to apologise.
20 <sup>th</sup> January 1984	Orchard House is sold and the Smyth family move to Alresford, Hampshire, where they lived until moving to Zimbabwe.
March 1984	John Smyth writes to Mary Whitehouse and advises he has been ill and will be back working soon.
1 <sup>st</sup> April 1984	John Smyth sends a 'round-robin' letter describing that he has relinquished his practice at the Bar and resigned his Recordship at the Crown Court due to taking up a position in African Enterprise. Letter suggests they have received an 'official invitation' to join Africa Enterprises in Zimbabwe.
May 1984	Michael Cassidy writes to friends of Africa Enterprises sharing " <i>his vision for John and his family</i> " and explaining the setting up of a UK trust and requesting funding to support John Smyth's stay in Zimbabwe. The letter suggests flights are booked for the family to move to Harare on 10 <sup>th</sup> August 1984.
	John and Anne Smyth visit Harare in Zimbabwe looking for accommodation.
18 <sup>th</sup> May 1984	David MacInnes writes to David Fletcher to inform him John Smyth has been appointed in post with Africa Enterprise. David MacInnes indicates attempts to contact Michael Cassidy.
22 <sup>nd</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup> May 1984	David MacInnes writes to John Smyth as he concerned Michael Cassidy is unaware of John Smyth's abuse in UK.
	David MacInnes writes to David Fletcher, including copy of correspondence to John Smyth and advising that Michael Cassidy wants more details of John Smyth situation. He suggests he may " <i>again need a copy of Mark R's confidential account of the boy's stories</i> ".
	David MacInnes describes a lengthy conversation with Michael Cassidy describing the " <i>arrangements for John to go there [as] far too advanced to be reversed</i> ".

## Analysis

- 12.1.11 1982 was a significant year in the history of this case. It is the year in which there is unequivocal evidence that John Smyth's abuses are first disclosed fully in person by a victim to an ordained member of the Church of England Clergy, Mark Ruston. At a similar time to this, another member of the Clergy, David Fletcher, is warned again by post of the abuse and the need for it to end.
- 12.1.12 This period commences in January 1982, with John Smyth attending the Iwerne Winter Conference, also attended by a select group of the victims, encouraged by him to attend.
- 12.1.13 A victim has told us that at this time, he "escaped John's clutches" by getting engaged to his girlfriend and fleeing from the abusive regime he had been involved with.
- 12.1.14 At this time, Simon Doggart began to be actively involved and carrying out abuse unassisted by John Smyth.
- 12.1.15 A victim of John Smyth attempted to take his own life and was hospitalised as a result. The victim described to Reviewers and in his police witness statement that:

*"Very shortly after enduring that beating John Smyth told me that my next one, which was going to mark my 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, was going to be special and more severe than those I'd suffered before. I thought this meant I was going to be getting two of three hundred strokes as I was aware by then that one of the other victims had been beaten with 400 strokes. I also knew that another victim had received an all-day beating of 800 strokes.*

*I thought to myself that I had to end the beatings, but I hadn't actually thought about how this was going to happen. It was January 1982 and I couldn't concentrate on anything to do with my studies, it was bizarre because it was my 21<sup>st</sup> birthday and my parents had laid on a party which I couldn't enjoy. I was aware from somewhere, although can't recall how I knew, that my special beating would include both Simon Doggart and John Smyth carrying out the beating. So, after my birthday I deliberately made-up excuses to John Smyth over the telephone as to why I couldn't go down for another ten days and it was then that I came up with a plan to escape the beatings.*

*I thought of sending two letters signed by a fictitious person. I wrote the letters between my birthday and the date of the beating which I think was in early February 1982. I wrote one letter to John Smyth at Orchard House and one to David Fletcher who I saw as the managing director of the Iwerne Minster Christian camps. I hadn't been to the camps for a number of years but I thought that if anyone could exert any control over John Smyth it would be David Fletcher. I wrote a very cursory letter to both of them saying that I had become aware that John Smyth had been beating young men and that if it didn't stop immediately the police and media would be told. I honestly thought that the threat of exposure would prevent John Smyth from beating me again and hoped that as soon as David Fletcher read the letter it would put an end to everything. I left it for about two days but was quite surprised that no friends or John himself hadn't got in touch with me to say that something was happening as a result of the letters being received.*

*I then rang John Smyth the night before I was due to travel down for the special beating and had my usual conversation about train times. I realised that my plan had not worked and I felt I was staring into an abyss which bought a certainty with it in a way in that I knew that I just couldn't go ahead with the beating, so I decided that I was going to kill myself.*

*I went out to a number of chemists and bought two bottles of 50 Aspirin. I also bought razor blades. At the time I was living with friends in a flat but that night they had gone out for the evening I then started with cutting what hair I had on my head off and went around the bedroom chopping my face out of family photographs.*



*Then I went to the toilet, locked myself in and cut my wrists. I can't remember if my flat mates had returned or I waited for them to come back before I did anything, because I think there was part of me that wanted to survive.*

*I then swallowed the bottles of pills but either in swallowing the second bottle or after I put it down on the sink, it fell on the floor and a friend who was passing asked if I was alright. I don't remember saying anything but they must have sensed that something was wrong because they smashed the door down and called an ambulance. The next thing I remember was being in Norwich hospital and having my stomach pumped."*

12.1.16 His fear of the horrific abuse that was ahead of him led him to taking a large overdose of pills and cutting his wrists. He was found by flatmates and rushed to hospital.

12.1.17 Hugh Palmer (referred to earlier and in papers handed to Reviewers as 'HP') visited this victim in hospital the day after his suicide attempt, on 5<sup>th</sup> February 1982. He also visited him on another occasion in July 1982 in Norwich, both the victim and Hugh Palmer describe these as pastoral visits. The victim says of Hugh Palmer; *"He was always kind to me. I appreciated his sympathy and his kindness, his visits to me, two visits to me in the hospital."*

12.1.18 The victim at the centre of this has also indicated to Reviewers that a previous and future pastoral relationship existed with Hugh Palmer, however, including his attendance at Church services led by Hugh Palmer followed by lunch or coffee, discussing his faith and Christian journey. Hugh Palmer has a different recollection of this occurring. In the victims' own words:

*"I used to go and see him maybe once a university term at his suggestion. I appreciate now that that was either Iwerne or more likely John Smyth keeping tabs on [me]... my actual faith had disappeared by then but I did attend the odd service at Holy Trinity. I always sat in the back and normally once a term he [Reverend Palmer] would invite me to have lunch and we would talk generally about Christian matters. I'm not quite sure how his spiritual mentoring of me began. It certainly wasn't instigated by me. I don't remember, but my guess is it was either an instruction from John Smyth or from Iwerne, most likely from John Smyth who couldn't visit me that often, thank God."*

12.1.19 Hugh Palmer *"utterly repudiates"* this version of what happened and says that his contacts with the victim were *"driven only by genuine concern."*

12.1.20 This victim received a telephone call from Hugh Palmer, shortly after the Channel 4 programmes were aired in early 2017. His account of this is:

*"Hugh Palmer called....He was sure that he came to see me twice in hospital. First time was day after or day after that. He was pretty clear that I hadn't talked about the abuse at all but that he 'knew' a little by his second visit although it wasn't until the Channel 4 reports that he knew the full extent.... I believe this last bit but not that he wasn't filled in before then. Crucially, around who told him, he accepted that this had to have been someone from the Iwerne network or 'quite possibly' John Smyth himself."*

12.1.21 After his discharge from hospital, the victim advises that he was encouraged, by another victim, to telephone John Smyth. He describes this in the recording of a meeting between victims in 1992:

*"I went home...[names another victim] came and visited one day, and when he came up and visited he said 'John wants to say something to you'. He said, we're going to give him a ring....we rang him up. I can remember, because I was sitting in the, not the sitting room but one of the bedrooms, bedroom next door to it, and all I said was 'Hello John', and he said, '... how are you?', he said 'We've been so concerned'. I said, 'I'm absolutely fine', He said, 'I just want to say that I am really sorry', he just said, 'I'm really sorry'. He never said that it was wrong, and he said it should never have happened, and he blamed himself for not seeing things earlier.*

*He said, 'Anne would like a word', and she said exactly the same thing....That was their idea of making their peace.....and he said to me, I'll never forget, he said, 'I will*

*never get in touch with you again', but then he also added, in a typically John way, 'unless you get in touch with me first'."*

12.1.22 Later in February 1982, Mark Ruston set about interviewing men who had been abused by John Smyth. We have ascertained that there were three likely triggers for his investigation and resulting report:

- (a) An anonymous letter sent to David Fletcher on 28<sup>th</sup> January 1982. This was written by one of John Smyth's victims anonymously and using the name "W Hiller").
- (b) A victim attempting to take their own life: 4<sup>th</sup> February 1982.
- (c) A disclosure directly made to Mark Ruston by a John Smyth victim: approximately 12<sup>th</sup> February 1982.

Bromsgrove,  
WORCS.

Thu Jan 28,

Dear Sir,

I have been informed, recently, of some disturbing facts about a John Smyth Q.C. ( who I am told acts as a referee for your Scripture Union camps ) which I feel obliged to pass on to you. It appears that many students from some of this country's top universities are in the habit of travelling down regularly to Mr Smyth's house in Moresteed: where in some hut in his garden he inflicts upon them a severe measure of corporal punishment, ' a thrashing ', in the name of Christianity.

I, and other people I have told in confidence of this, find this disgusting and would like to see this sadistic 'practice' cease immediately. I'm sure I do not need to tell you the harmful effect that any adverse publicity could do to the Scripture Union and your camps in particular. However, if this matter cannot be ended privately then I will be forced to expose @ it in a considerably more public arena....

Yours Faithfully,

*W. Hiller*  
W. Hiller.

12.1.23 From the information presented to Reviewers it is likely that the cumulative impact of these events, coupled with previous suspicions and concerns as highlighted earlier in the report, spurred both David Fletcher and Mark Ruston to attempt to investigate and address John Smyth's abuse. The disclosure by the victim, on or around 12<sup>th</sup> February, led to further victim disclosures to Mark Ruston and this seems to have been the final trigger. What then followed was proactive contact by Mark Ruston with all known victims and an investigation, including meetings with and disclosure by almost all the victims of the abuse at that time.

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Circulation RJBE, RJK, TJS, PGLW, DCMF, RMC, CMR, DBW.

1. As I was on the spot, and as one of those involved came to see me on February 12th, I have now talked at length to thirteen of the twenty-two young men involved, and one who was on the verge of joining in. So it seems sense that I should get some of it on to paper before we meet on March 16th.
2. The practice began in 1978, with J. offering a 17-year old the choice of a beating from him or being reported to parents/school. He chose the beating given with a cane in the summer house. *to strip/strip*
3. For a term or two, it continued with four 17-year olds, on the bare bottom with a gym shoe (because it leaves less evidence) but was voluntarily accepted as a deterrent to masturbation. Beatings varied from a dozen to 40 strokes. (In all mention of figures I quote what they have told me, in every case taking the lower figure). These were technically all criminal offences under the Offences Against the Person Act of 1861, Sec.47.
4. Since summer 1979 it has gradually escalated, in frequency and severity of beatings and in the number of men involved.
5. The motives were always seen as good by operators and participants - the sanctifying of young Christian men, and the blessings of fatherly discipline. I believe this but cannot really understand it. Prayer, praise and loving Christian concern in Christ's name were evident at every point. There was never the slightest evidence of overt sexual excitement or interference. But the psychiatrist describes it as suppressed masochistic sexual activity (or sadistic I suppose in the operators). Several men simply said 'I trusted J' 'I went into it on trust'.
6. The scale and severity of the practice was horrific. Five of the 13 I have seen were in it only for a short time. Between them they had 12 beatings and about 650 strokes. The other 8 received about 14,000 strokes; 2 of them having some 8,000 strokes over the three years. The others were involved for one year or 18 months. 8 spoke of bleeding on most occasions ('I could feel the blood spattering on my legs' - 'I was bleeding for 3 1/2 weeks' 'I fainted sometime after a severe beating'). I have seen bruised and scored buttocks, some two-and-a-half months after the beating. Beatings of 100 strokes for masturbation, 400 for pride and one of 800 strokes for some undisclosed 'fall' are recorded. The beatings were with garden canes, with some sort of a handle. S, wanting 'to be the best for God' beat as hard as he could. A year or so ago 'training' beatings of some 75 strokes every 3 weeks were instituted, as being better than only going down after a 'fall', though these persisted. One told me he was receiving beatings at least every 4/5 days one vacation. The custom of semi nakedness gave way to complete nakedness 'to increase humblity'. For training beatings a man undressed himself, for 'falls' he submitted to being undressed by the operator.
7. By design or by circumstances, the system seems to have 'conned' men into accepting the beatings. There was a first talk on Wholeheartedness with great emphasis on naming sins and making a list of one's personal failings, a second talk on Sex adding to the pressure, and then one or two personal talks when for the first time it was suggested that the list should be shared. Then there would be mention of the 'blessing' to be had through this system and a fair amount of pressure ("You want to be the best, don't you? Let me be a helper to you ...") and the invitation to visit. At this stage the beating was often thought of as 'six of

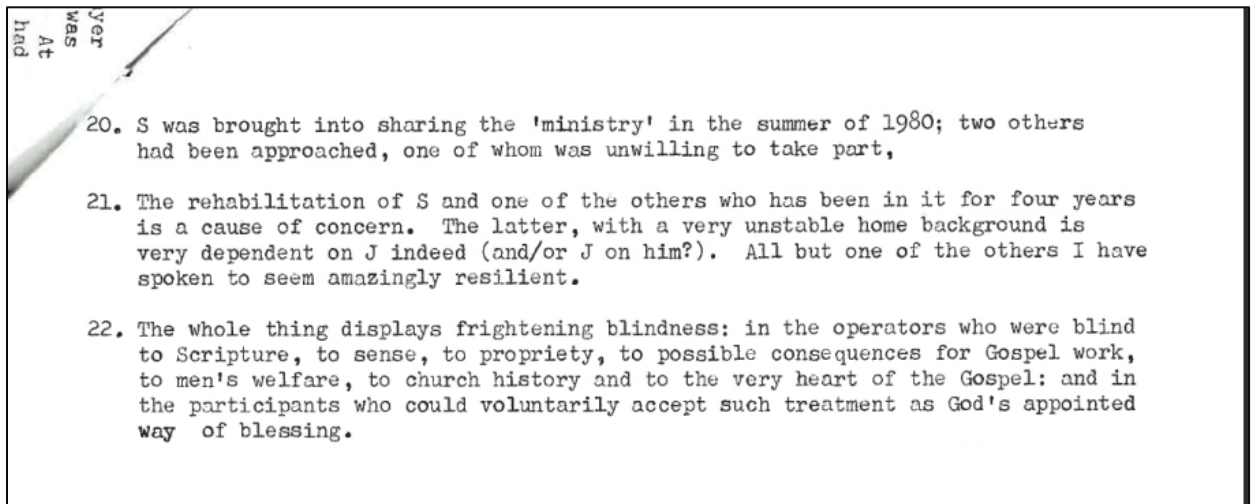
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the beat on the seat of the pants'. It was usually not until arrival, prayer and talk, and actually reaching the shed that the severity of the beating was mentioned, and the benefits of nakedness as a self-humbling was disclosed. At that stage there was considerable persuasion for anyone who held back. It had almost become a cult, with a powerful group dynamic.

8. Immediately after the beating the man lay on the bed, while J and/or S would kneel and pray, linking arms with him and kissing him on the shoulder and back.
9. Quite separate from these post-beating embraces, several have spoken of J's putting his arms around them at emotional moments, and one of being kissed on the neck.
10. Setting aside one's sense of the outrage against human dignity and the cruelty of all this in the name of the Lord, numbers of reasons against the practice emerge. Those I have seen are as follows:
11. Scriptures used commonly were: Hebrews xii.5-11, 2 Samuel vii.13, St Luke xii.47, and many 'spare the rod' and 'fathers and sons' verses in Proverbs. But none would have suggested the practice to anyone not already emotionally committed (cf. the hold the cults have), the fathers and child verses do not apply (they were neither sons nor children).
12. Similar practices (not exactly the same, to my knowledge) are known and regarded as aberrations in church history.
13. All Christian leaders would condemn the practice.
14. J and S saw this as a 'ministry' from God. But the 'ministry' of discipline in this sense, was secret, self-appointed and never approved by other Christian leaders (cf. Acts xiii.1-2), and of course unknown in lists of ministries (cf. Ephesians iv.11, etc.).
15. The knowledge of other people's sins, and 'power' over them through their humiliation, nakedness and beating, is exceedingly bad for the operators.
16. There was a very frequent association with sexual sins of a comparatively minor kind (masturbation and impure thoughts) and too many sexual overtones, though it is clear that there was never any overt sexual activity.
17. The practice destroys the direct access of the believer to the Lord (Hebrews x.19 etc.) and makes the way to be always through one of the operators with whom sins were shared. This seems to strike at the great Reformation truth, and is very akin to the Roman Catholic system of confession and penance, with the list of sins to be shared with J and S, and the severity of the beatings being proportionate to the seriousness of the fall as they saw it.
18. It signifies sins of thought and other little daily failures and consequently builds up a guilty conscience when everything is not shared with J. Apart from the known suicide attempt, another man got as far as writing a suicide note and sitting looking at a bottle of pills because he could not go on with the beatings and 'this was the only way of holiness'. And another is still suffering pangs of guilty conscience over failings of seven years ago, revived through this practice.
19. It keeps young men as children (the cane and the cuddles might be suitable between a father and a small boy). It keeps them immature and unable to make their own judgments and fight their own battles.

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(“J” refers to John Smyth and “S” to Simon Doggart)

- 12.1.24 It is clear from the papers we have received that relate to this period, that advice was sought from contacts of Mark Ruston and David Fletcher to support his findings. The purpose of this advice seems to have been to help identify John Smyth's motivations (from a psychiatrist, Dr Ian Lodge Patch) and to establish the legality or otherwise of his abuse potentially through Graham Ross-Cornes. At some point in this period and beyond, a decision was made to not report the abuse to the police. Victims should have been advised by Mark Ruston to report the abuse to the Police, however, there is no evidence that suggests he did.
- 12.1.25 Instead, John Smyth is approached, and he agrees to sign an undertaking to not have contact with his victims, not to work again with young men and to seek help from a psychiatrist. He stands down from the Iwerne Trust, resigns as chair and stops attending the Iwerne camps.
- 12.1.26 In his investigations, Mark Ruston spoke to 13 men as he gathered the details of abuse. Contemporaneous notes of meetings and telephone calls with victims have been reviewed and it is evident that there was much frenetic activity around this, with the research carried out and his report produced at speed.
- 12.1.27 Several contributors to this Review, indicate that Mark Ruston's interviews with victims at this point were sympathetic and of a pastoral and positive nature. We have been told by several victims that their memory differs and that the tone of their initial meetings with him did not feel supportive, describing feeling blamed for the abuse. One victim told us:
- "I wasn't sure what was going to happen, but I was struck at that point when he said, 'how on earth could you let this happen?' ... That was when I was a bit shocked..."*
- 12.1.28 The Ruston Report, hard as it is to read and to absorb, presents only a part of the full scale of the abuses in the UK. It leaves the reader with the impression that the abuse was experienced by victims with links to Winchester College and those that attended a small number of Cambridge University Colleges. This could be accounted for by Mark Ruston reaching out to those attending university in Cambridge, the area in which he was based.
- 12.1.29 We are aware that John Smyth abused boys and young men from a far wider group, involving other elite public schools and other universities. The Channel 4 programmes first shown in February 2017 (and when the abuses first became known to the general public) reinforce this perception.
- 12.1.30 Although the Ruston Report partly describes the horror of the abuse, it is interesting to note that the author did not give a full description of the nature and intensity of the abuse in his report, as it was known to him. For example, his working notes from the time make references to accounts from victims that indicate the trauma and physical



harm experienced. Including the level of bruising and length of time wounds took to heal:

FACTS :- Are you admitting?  
1800 strokes - 9 people 7-175  
Blood often - 3½ weeks  
2 w bruises 2½ months 2 wks

c. 1800 strokes - on 33 ~~see~~ sessions, from c. 7 - 1975  
Blood on many occasions - one for 3½ weeks.  
2 boys w. bruised buttocks - 2-3 months - 1 week.

- 12.1.31 And, again in notes from meetings with victims, descriptions of defecating when taking off trousers:

No ~~trouble~~ excitement? as so to  
but. describe. chest. gulp -  
Emission - emission - pee - defecate  
as you undid trousers pants

- 12.1.32 Within his report, Mark Ruston reveals his attitude towards corporal punishment describing "the cane and the cuddles might be suitable between a father and a small boy", while not an uncommon attitude at the time, corporal punishment still being allowed and practised at public schools. He also shows a basic lack of appreciation of the lifelong potential for harm caused by abuse, stating "All but one of the others I have spoken to seem amazingly resilient".

- 12.1.33 The report was then shared with the following individuals, their initials are stated at the top of the original report. Six of these men were Church of England ordained Clergy. All were associated with the Iwerne camps, seven were formal members of the Iwerne Trust body. Why these particular people are selected is not known, it is reported by contributors to the Review, and knowledgeable of the Iwerne Trust at the time, that these individuals represented the "inner core" influential members of the Trust. Several of these recipients are now deceased as indicated above. Where possible, Reviewers contacted surviving recipients and met with them to discuss their involvement and reflections on the abuse and their role in the response to it. The individuals and their corresponding initials who received the report were as follows:

- (a) Mark Ruston - deceased (CMR)
- (b) David Fletcher - deceased (DCMF)
- (c) John Eddison - deceased (RJBE)
- (d) Tim Sterry - deceased (TJS)
- (e) Roger Combes (RMC)
- (f) David Wilkinson - deceased (DBW)
- (g) Dick Knight - deceased (RJK)
- (h) Peter Wells - deceased (PGLW)

- 12.1.34 Roger Combes claims that he was handed the report at the end of a meeting that Mark Ruston attended. Roger Combes suggests that his memory is that he held this unopened on his knee, realised the seriousness and the nature of the report and chose not to read it, handing it back to Mark Ruston, unread. The Ruston Report is shown in full earlier in this report.
- 12.1.35 Roger Combes has suggested that he declined to read the report and felt that the victims would be embarrassed if he knew the details. Roger Combes suggests he did not know how serious the allegations were until he watched the Channel 4 documentary in 2017, and that he was unaware that John Smyth had gone to South Africa until about 15 years after he left. It is our view that even a quick scan of the front page would make the severity of John Smyth's alleged behaviour obvious. On the balance of probabilities, therefore, it is very likely that he knew of the seriousness of the abuse from that point.
- 12.1.36 Roger Combes described to us he was aware of "*short little snippets*" of what Mark Ruston was looking into from conversations with him, including that John Smyth had been beating boys, to do with Winchester. Roger Combes was given the impression that Mark Ruston had spoken to a consultant psychiatrist who had said to him the abuse was "*sexual but it's not criminal*". Roger Combes described another conversation later with Mark Ruston in which he said that he was going to have a lunch on a Saturday with John Smyth and his wife at a pub somewhere, adding grimly, "*if anything happens to me the papers are in the church safe*". Roger Combes reflected that he did not think he meant it seriously but not light heartedly either. In another conversation, Roger Combes recalled that Mark Ruston had said that John Smyth had agreed not to have anything to do with children's work in the future. This clearly demonstrates that at the time of Mark Ruston's investigations into the abuse, it was being discussed freely among Church officers, in an apparently casual way.
- 12.1.37 Tim Sterry was invited to contribute to this Review process and declined on grounds of poor health to engage, he is now deceased.
- 12.1.38 A psychiatrist, Dr Ian Lodge Patch, was either shown the Ruston Report or given enough detailed information to form a judgement on John Smyth. Dr Lodge Patch concludes that John Smyth presents a danger and should not work with young men again. He describes John Smyth as demonstrating "*passive homosexual activity*" and, later, said that he had "*sado-masochistic*" tendencies. This is as reported in the correspondence at the time between David Fletcher and others:

v. much on borderline -  
 'couldn't ordinarily  
 be said to be gay  
 consent voluntarily'  
 Some <sup>would</sup> prosecute.

'Consenting adults', ~~under~~  
 under 18 - could still be  
 charged.

'implication of the enquiry is  
 injurious to the public'  
 offences against the Persons Act  
 1861 Sec. 47

- 12.1.39 While Mark Ruston is clearly stating that, in his opinion, the law has been broken (Section 47 of the Offences Against The Person Act 1861), it is curious that there is no firm evidence of legal advice being sought at this time. A note from Mark Ruston speculates the detail of and as previously indicated, as where legal advice could be sought.
- 12.1.40 We suspect that some form of legal advice was sought from Graham Ross-Cornes, and this has been suggested by several contributors to the Review. However, no further clear evidence of this advice has been identified.
- 12.1.41 One hypothesis posed by contributors to the Review is that, even if 'legal' advice was gained, at that time it is unlikely that the matter would be pursued by the police if reported, as this would have been viewed as being acts of punishment between consenting adults. Mark Ruston identified clearly that several victims were aged under 18 at the time of physical abuse. As this note above demonstrates, there could have been a chance of prosecution. This is a theory that been posed throughout the Review period as a reason for lack of reporting to police.
- 12.1.42 At that time, in 1982, that may well have been a potential outcome of a report to the police. It is clear, however, that this should not have been their decision to make without consultation with relevant statutory bodies. Even at that time, this would have been a decision for police.
- 12.1.43 On balance, it is likely that the decision to not report to the police was taken for other reasons including protecting the reputation of the Iwerne network and that of the individuals involved as well as avoiding further exposure to wider criticism. This is evidenced in the words of those involved and in documents we have seen. For example, this letter from John Eddison to David Fletcher:



FROM  
THE REV. R J B EDDISON

DURHAM LODGE  
CROWBOROUGH  
EAST SUSSEX TN6 1EW  
TEL. (08326) 2606

31st March 1982

My dear David,

I've just had JJS on the telephone at great length and in a great state about my letter.

1. He says that it is quite impracticable for him to give the undertakings we ask for, and asked what he is supposed to do about people who ring him up, or call, or write. Is he to leave letters unanswered, &c., &c?

I said that what we wanted was an undertaking in principle, and we accepted the fact that it might take time for him to untangle himself from these personal relationships in such a way as not to give offence or cause embarrassment. I told him that I would tell you that I had agreed to this, but that you and I would want to come and talk with him as soon as possible after camp was over. He doesn't want the others, and I don't think they are necessary. This satisfied him.

2. He then wanted to know why we were so concerned about ourselves and our integrity if the thing got out, because he said that we clergy are bound by the law of secrecy and have a duty not to divulge to anyone else, even the police, what has been told us in confidence. If he is right, and he seems very sure of himself here, it does mean that we are covered, and that our silence is obligatory. Would you know about this?

He was on the point of writing again to you and of coming to see me, but I think I have forestalled that until you and I have had the chance to talk. I just hope you agree with the distinction I have made between principle and practice.

With regard to EJHN, I am asking the CEN and the Church Times to file an Obituary which I have prepared. I felt it better than trying to cobble something together in a hurry at the last moment.

Yours ever,

*John*

- 12.1.44 The approach to a psychiatrist who is known to and trusted by the Iwerne people is evidence of the wish to keep these matters hidden and contained within the very tight Iwerne circle. A similar comment can be made regarding the lack of an open approach to anyone for legal advice on the matter.
- 12.1.45 There then follows a period of intense discussion between the men who have read the report. Mark Ruston meets with John and Anne Smyth on 14<sup>th</sup> February to confront him.
- 12.1.46 A victim has told us that he recalls Mark Ruston saying that he had discussed his investigation with the then Bishop of Ely (Reverend Peter Walker, who died in 2010), but we cannot confirm this with other evidence.
- 12.1.47 Around this time, John Smyth was planning a further holiday trip with some of the victims to Bosloe in Cornwall. However, due to pressure from David Fletcher and Mark Ruston to cease contact with victims, he reluctantly cancels it. Three sets (or possibly four sets. This is the figure considered to be correct by Winchester College) of parents, of students who had previously attended Winchester College, are said to have been spoken with by David Fletcher at this time. Throughout the period of review, since 1982, a stated explanation for the lack of reporting of the abuse by those that were aware of it is that 'the parents' of victims did not want this to happen, and they were acting on their wishes'. Of the three (or four) sets of parents consulted, one is said to

have argued for the police to be informed, attempting to present his case for this at a meeting of Governors of the school. The recollection of one victim is:

*"I didn't actually tell my parents about the John Smyth abuse until July 1982. They had four quite traumatic months trying to work out what had happened. When I did tell them, my father contacted John Thorn who was Headmaster and John Thorn said that he would discuss it with my father at the next Governing Body Meeting. At that time, my father was on the Governing Body of Winchester College. I don't know the date of that meeting but I assume it was around September, October 1982. That would seem to be right historically. When my father arrived at the College and he arrived early, John Thorn told him '... we are not going to discuss this in the Governing Body Meeting'. He told Dad that he had consulted all the other parents and that everyone wanted it to be kept a secret, that it wasn't going to be discussed at the Governing Body Meeting and my father acquiesced to that. John Thorn was lying. To my knowledge he only consulted with [two sets of parents – names removed]"*

- 12.1.48 This suggests that the true number of victim's parents opposed to police contact is two. Given that Mark Ruston was aware of 22 victims, this seems a very disproportionate response. We have no evidence of those making the decisions that victims themselves were asked at any point what they would have liked to have seen happen in this regard. (David Fletcher told us that "One parent was keen that the whole thing should go to court").
- 12.1.49 As no other parents were approached for their views on this, it is impossible to conclude what the general attitude towards reporting would have been, if they were asked. It is likely that many will have preferred for the abuse to not be reported. This is, however, not necessarily of primary importance in the decision-making at the time. The fact is that a decision was made to not report a suspected crime to the police and this should have been done, whatever the views of parents.
- 12.1.50 We have found no evidence that the victims were consulted as to whether the abuse should have been reported to the police and other authorities. They were adults (by this time) and should have been given a proper opportunity to comment and to have agency and influence in this decision making. Some victims we have met have said that they would not have wanted the abuse reported at the time, as they would have been in fear of this disrupting their careers and their lives in general. In the context of the societal norms in 1982 and, in particular, within the elite world occupied by the victims, whether or not this is the case this does not, however, justify the non-reporting at the time. It was known that crimes had most likely been committed against young men and children. A positive decision was made to not report and, by so doing, cover-up those crimes.
- 12.1.51 We have been told by a victim that John Smyth destroyed the canes and the nappies. This indicates his concern that the abuse was being exposed and the destruction of evidence as a result. There is evidence that at this time, John Smyth was withdrawing from activities linked to the abuse. For example, his last appearance as a guest speaker at the Winchester College Christian Forum is recorded in the Winchester College Review as being on 7<sup>th</sup> February 1982.
- 12.1.52 Despite pressure from Mark Ruston, David Fletcher and John Eddison, John Smyth persisted in his contact with victims throughout this time.
- 12.1.53 There is reference to a victim taking John Smyth a present. This has been recently flagged by a commentator in a letter to the *Church Times* and in representations to us, and offered as 'proof' that victims were not traumatised or harmed by the abuse, and wanted to maintain contact. This shows a still existing lack of understanding of power and abuse, as well as the nature of grooming, psychological abuse and the complex relationship between a clever, manipulative and narcissistic abuser and his victim.
- 12.1.54 John Smyth, in correspondence with Mark Ruston on 20<sup>th</sup> February 1982, and in others, consistently pleads for allowed on the 20<sup>th</sup> February: "... please do not stop the young men ringing up if they wish – I long to say sorry to them and to hear they are alright." (Appendix 6)

- 12.1.55 In the Autumn of 1982, a victim, who had been interviewed by Mark Ruston, discussed the abuse with The Reverend Canon, Andrew Cornes, who he knew and had offered him support in the past, to tell him about the abuse. He was the first person that this victim spoke to about the abuse. Andrew Cornes told the victim he was unsurprised that John Smyth had homosexual tendencies when he was told of the abuse by the victim. This is not to suggest that he had those thoughts when at Iwerne with Smyth. There is no evidence to suggest that Andrew Cornes took action to respond to this, he suggests that he thought the matter was being dealt with.
- 12.1.56 In a meeting with Reviewers, Andrew Cornes described how he later spoke with Mark Ashton. Andrew Cornes proactively wrote to a different victim of the abuse during the 1980s, to say that he knew “*all about*” the abuse and to offer his pastoral support. The victim advises:
- "I basically, read this letter at breakfast...and it just felt like a weight lifted off my shoulders, that somebody knew."*
- 12.1.57 The victim is not able to recall if he received this letter prior to meeting with Mark Ruston or after, suggesting it could well have been prior to this given the level of relief he felt on receipt of the letter:
- "What I remember is...tremendous relief. That suggests that was the first time I knew anybody else knew about it. That's why I would be fairly confident that was the first contact I had had with him about it."*
- 12.1.58 The same victims contacted Andrew Cornes in more recent times to enquire what action if any had been taken to stop John Smyth from perpetrating abuse, he reports:
- "I have contacted Andrew recently, in about the last year, I wanted to know if he'd done anything, because he obviously knew that at this point, and he hadn't, and he in hindsight was rather apologetic about that, because of what happened – I don't think he knew there was a police inquiry, or anything like that".*
- 12.1.59 At this time, John Smyth wrote to David Fletcher to confirm that he had severed all links to Wykehamists (the name used by Winchester College alumni), cancelled all speaking at the local Church and ceased “coaching”. He continued to read at a Christ Church, Winchester, service the following morning, preaches there on 21<sup>st</sup> March and attends a weekend Mission from 3<sup>rd</sup> April. He also maintained contact with several Wykehamists. This, and later actions by John Smyth, demonstrate that the informal agreement, and any potential enforcement of it had no strength or success in controlling John Smyth’s actions.
- 12.1.60 Contemporaneous notes made by David Fletcher (see screenshots below), and correspondence between those that had received the Ruston Report, evidences minimisation of the abuse – there is a degree of victim blaming, for example, “... *the victims are penitent, not broken*” being one example). This could be a possible explanation for the lack of effective action in preventing further abuse, and John Smyth’s continued contact with victims. This indicates assumptions made that the abuse was between consenting ‘adults’, despite the knowledge from the Ruston Report, regarding the extent of physical injury perpetrated by John Smyth to those as young as 17. Given victims were known to be under the age of 18, and therefore children, this is an example of adultification.

To D 18.2.82 .

penitent - not broken . kept: 'Blauk cheque'  
story as others -

slowly into training, then into beating  
J & S conferred on number of strokes, prayed for  
400 pms 100 or in (guidance).

undress - a late addition - so is bed  
'putting yourself into God's hands'

Beating - horrifying no's . S 12 people 80-800!  
wants me to know.

S. D 25.2.82

JSS in Camb 24<sup>th</sup> - royal tennis &  
pays w Simon for all the men!

beatings did increase in frequency &  
severity. ? bec. ineffective?

Men had their own days - S. would  
on to go down, once a week  
much expense - no help.

Gave men an idea of how many  
strokes to come.

Yes - he beat as hard as he could  
'to be the best'

No incriminating documents.

Never really thought was going on  
all over!

Reasons - he gave. Ser. Secrecy &  
deception (main one), self app. min'g.  
rbs you of direct touch.

Group dependence - Cuddling (admitted  
but not really got clear) & cainip  
& immaturity. Cut out cuddles.

In knew later of Homosex. bib at sch.  
knowledge of Hoxe wld not rate a beating

Winch 'most know what I am defend'g  
of baboon went up.  
Not the boy at sch. since Dec 79.  
Always gymshoes \*  
[redacted] (1st) } for  
[redacted] (? over 18) } most in  
[redacted] was after US - 8 over 18

Not illegal - adults, vol, private,  
beating out [redacted] v good  
wines  
glad to be - good  
v. glad to be out  
heard; with - saw  
but accepts  
Never in  
Thought we happy!

12.1.61 A handwritten note by Mark Ruston details "the effect on evangelism" of the beatings becoming known more widely:

The Rev. Canon Mark Ruston,  
37 Jesus Lane,  
Cambridge,  
CB5 8BW.

questions  
Did no. of stickers increase over the years?  
In last year at sch. was beating seen at meetings  
when did you address. for address you?  
Did you watch a bit before beating on numbers - did you count pretty accurately, having decided clothes when beating?  
Don't drift sch. in at effect on evangelism.

12.1.62 This indicates a possible explanation for the type of actions that are taken in response to the abuse. There is a general theme throughout this correspondence that denotes a



fear that Iwerne beliefs and culture will be challenged and potentially damaged by this abuse becoming known.

- 12.1.63 On the surface, it seems as if Simon Doggart had co-authored several letters from this time and is also the sole author of other letters to victims, encouraging, and on occasion arranging, contact between them and John Smyth. The same applies to Anne Smyth, several letters co-signed by her in correspondence to John Eddison, David Fletcher and Mark Ruston. Writing in this way, with co-signatories, indicates a possible attempt at adding strength and justification to the letters. They are not just from John Smyth. The research referred to in Dr Hanson's report shows that abusers use coercive control to bring people into their circle of influence.
- 12.1.64 Despite one of the 'conditions' given to John Smyth, by those 'leading' the response to the abuse, it is evident that he attempted to maintain contact, even using a victim (Simon Doggart) to facilitate this, throughout at least the remainder of 1982. This again highlights the lack of success of the informal agreement and indicates continued risk to the victims, from their abuser.
- 12.1.65 A victim reports to us that he was "tracked down" by John Smyth around this time, and we suspect he was also in contact with several victims to try to ascertain who it was reported the abuse to Mark Ruston and David Fletcher.
- 12.1.66 The tracking down of a victim included an occasion when he telephoned hostel accommodation that a victim temporarily resided at while working away from home. The victim reports that John Smyth was able, through his contacts, to establish where he was staying and the telephone number of a payphone in the accommodation.

*"I was still very much involved with Christian Union stuff and I went and worked as a volunteer at...an inner-city Church project.... I worked as a volunteer and they had a hostel for people like me and there were about four or five others. They had a pay phone in the hostel.*

*Smyth phoned me up on this pay phone at one point to say 'Somebody has told people about what's happening. Was it you? Have you been talking to people about all this?'*

Tell Dr RF.

JSS phoned wanted to come - 'but I specifically said I shd visit each one, & we were ~~strongly~~ discussing who shd visit [redacted]. I said if breaking a love affair very unfair to condemn me unheard & to brain wash these men w/out hearing my reasons.

JSS did not know [redacted] has spilt the beans. thought I had told me of letter & I was then interrogating.

- 12.1.67 John Smyth resigned as Chair of the Iwerne Trust on 20<sup>th</sup> February 1982, his reasons for leaving are stated in the letter below:

Twyford (0962) 713438

Orchard House  
Morestead  
Winchester  
Hants SO21 1LZ

20th February 1982

Dear Mark,

Iwerne Trust

I have been under a lot of pressure recently and have been advised to cut back very substantially on my commitments including for the time being professional ones.

Alas I think I must give up the Chairmanship and my Trusteeship of the I.T. and it seemed right to inform you as the senior trustee.

I would like my resignation to take effect immediately but I wonder if you might find it convenient to delay drafting a new deed until Andrew Dalton is back in the summer. I would prefer this because I have as you know I have particular professional commitments with Graham Ross-Cornes at the moment and I would be happier if he did not know of my resignation for a few months time.

I am sorry to leave when you need a new Trasurer also; if I have any ideas I will of course let you know.

May I leave it to your discretion as to when to let Lionel and the other Trustees know; there is of course no meeting for some time.

Yours sincerely,



- 12.1.68 He also stood down from the Romans in Britain trial, which he has been working on as Mary Whitehouse's barrister since mid-1981. The reason given in court for his withdrawal from the trial is that he had been diagnosed by a doctor as a having a "viral infection". Contemporaneous notes in relation to this event show that he did consult a doctor but this explanation to the court was fabricated. Information submitted to the Review suggests that he continued to support Mary Whitehouse and that he actively supported her again, sometime later when he is in Zimbabwe.
- 12.1.69 By October 1982, John Smyth also ceases to be a Lay Reader at Christ Church in Winchester. Up until this point in time, John Smyth had been holding a formal position as a Church Officer in the Church of England. His association with the Church was, therefore, strong. It added to his credibility in the eyes of those he had dealings with, including Winchester College, officers within the diocese and, importantly, with the boys and young men he was grooming and abusing.
- 12.1.70 Mark Ruston sends the report to the selected individuals named above on 6th March 1982. A response from Tim Sterry, Richard Knight and John Eddison dated 8<sup>th</sup> March acknowledges the "horrific nature of the report".
- 12.1.71 There is evidence of several letters between Iwerne leaders and John Smyth which demonstrate a form of 'consultation' with him, the alleged perpetrator, effectively involving him in decisions about the next steps and "what to say to advisors who say

that [the abuse] was such grossly abnormal conduct" suggesting that this was a "spiritual venture demanding great faith and not a physical obsession" for example. At other times, John Smyth responds to correspondence in a tone which seems to be attempting to divide and conquer Iwerne leaders, critiquing their individual responses in detail and highlighting any conflicting statements. This, effectively, begins to give control back to him, the abuser. Far from being in any way ashamed by the uncovering of his abuses, John Smyth's responses indicate defensiveness and attempts to justify his actions.

JTS did not know [redacted] has spilt the beans. thought I had told me of letter & I was then interrogating not blamed H.P. (lost his no!)  
 RJK fills in [redacted]'s letter.  
 [redacted] - sad it's over - shaken

D.C.M.F.  
 John wishes to see - please forgive -  
 Apologise - Duplicity ++++  
 Don't cast you off - from camp -  
 men want me back. 'John  
 & D would understand -'  
 Back as driver -

12.1.72 A series of communications between those in receipt of the report follow, aimed at setting up a meeting to discuss in full and to make decisions about the next steps to be taken. The meeting is planned for 16<sup>th</sup> March 1982, at the Carlton Club in London; correspondence suggests this was "John Eddison's club". The agenda for the meeting was:

Private

- 1) What should John's relationship be vis-a-vis Camp?
- 2) For how long should this be?
- 3) What reasons for this should be given publicly?
- 4) How should they be publicised?
- 5) What should we say to John himself?
- 6) Who knows?
- 7) J's relations with the group
- 8) Simon.

Barlow

12.1.73 It is clear in the review of the agenda that this includes no victim focus and, astoundingly, starts off on the premise that John Smyth still has a future with them.

12.1.74 Present at the meeting are:

- (a) Mark Ruston
- (b) John Eddison
- (c) David Fletcher



- (d) Dick Knight
- (e) Peter Wells
- (f) Tim Sterry
- (g) Dr Ian Lodge Patch was invited but did not attend.
- (h) David Fletcher makes notes of this meeting.

12.1.75 Correspondence suggests that David Fletcher then visits John Smyth to deliver what is described in as "*our message*" on 20<sup>th</sup> March 1982.

Private & confidential

4 Burfield Road  
Chorleywood  
Herts.  
WD3 5NS

Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March.

My dear Paul,

At our meeting of on Saturday I delivered our message to John. He said he would give the greatest consideration to the points I listed. He then read a letter which he had written to me, but which he had not yet posted. In it he said he no longer believed I cared for him, that I was a fake "love" and that he could no longer place himself under my spiritual leadership.

There then followed a very calm discussion in which I simply said how sorry I was: that I did care for him, that I thought he had evidence for God but I was saddened he it was not convincing enough. I think I did a little to correct his strongly emotional reaction.

It meant he was fully ready to accept he was to leave camp work but he has not committed himself to abide by any of the points. I think he ought to do this on paper. I did not make the points conditions for our set-up. I preferred to appeal to his promise to go the second or third week. I wonder whether referring the matter to the S.V. council could be the next step we take if he does not agree to our points. This would save having to tell parents & housemasters: it would keep it within Christian circles: it would reach one or two legal men whom I guess John is anxious that they should not know.

I would value your advice as to whether to about this & whether to send a letter in your name or mine to the enclosed. Or would you find it easier to have a letter in an name from R.D. or from all of us? Should the question of taking the matter further in print or by a phone call?

Thank you for your wisdom and support.  
I think most things were overruled.

P.T.O.

Your ever  
David

CMR 128

12.1.76 Unabashed, John Smyth preached at Christ Church, Winchester on 21<sup>st</sup> March 1982. John Smyth becomes increasingly belligerent, including some references to what can be described as emotional and spiritual blackmails against David Fletcher. This is evidenced in contemporaneous letters seen by reviewers:

Gly + D.C.M.F

Personal and  
Confidential

10-5-82

Dear John and Anne,

We have now had the chance to consider very carefully, both individually and together, the letters you wrote to us on 12th April.

We are obviously distressed that you should think that you have been dealt with so badly and unlovingly by us, and that you are giving this impression to others. We believe this could have been avoided if only you had allowed us to come and talk everything over with you. We are not, as you seem to feel, your enemies, by whom you need feel threatened, but your friends who want to support and encourage you at this time, as well as to protect the work.

We are glad to have your assurance, and we take this to mean that with the exception of Deggart, [redacted] and [redacted] you will not try to maintain contact with the young men involved; and we feel that in the present circumstances it would be most inadvisable for you to re-establish relations with [redacted].

At the same time we appreciate the fact that there may be occasions which will make a meeting with these men unavoidable, or for some other reason essential. We accept this, but ask only that you would kindly let us know afterwards.

We feel sure that you will readily understand that it will make it very much easier for us to explain matters should we ever be asked to do so, and to defend you, if we can say that you have loyally kept the agreement which we have outlined above.

As we say, we were sorry that you both felt unable to see us on April 15th. Had you done so, you would not have misinterpreted us or deprived yourselves of the chance we would have had to show our love and support. We feel that conversation is a much better way than correspondence of clearing up misunderstandings. We hope therefore that when the dust has been allowed to settle, perhaps sometime later in the summer, you will agree to meet us so that we may review the situation together in a calm and objective way, and in the same friendly spirit in which we hope you will receive and interpret this letter.

Meanwhile we would like to assure you both of our prayers and good wishes.

Yours ever,

D.C.M.F.  
R.B.E.  
C.A.R.  
L.J.K.

- 12.1.77 Remarkably, an apologetic letter is sent from David Fletcher to John and Anne Smyth. The correspondence clearly shows that John Smyth is powerful and largely in control of this whole saga. We can only speculate that David Fletcher and his group are still in awe of John Smyth. It was probably the case that they feared legal retribution against them. The talk is of "keeping things quiet", "protecting Iwerne", "avoiding telling parents".

12.1.78 John Eddison writes to David Fletcher on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April, suggesting that they tell John Smyth that they are taking reputational and personal risks in not reporting this to Winchester College nor "the authorities".

12.1.79 A letter dated 25<sup>th</sup> March refers to conditions which are to be imposed on John Smyth but these have exclusions (one is for Godparents – bear in mind that some Godparents are victims - and another is that John Smyth can continue to work with "young marrieds" but not young men).

4 Burfield Road,  
Chorleywood,  
Herts,  
WD3 5JH.  
25th March, 1982.

Private  
copy

Dear John,

Following David's conversation on Saturday evening, we thought we ought to write to put on paper the points we wanted to make.

We won't put the reasons on paper, except to say that it is the very serious nature and extent of your behaviour which make it necessary to ask for the following:

1. There must be a complete break with camp.
2. You have already promised not to "cover" anybody; this must include not inviting boys, senior campers or officers to Morestead, phoning them, encouraging them to phone, writing to them or visiting them.
3. Bosloe must be discontinued.
4. You must not speak at school or university C.U.s.

The exceptions to (2) are Simon Doggart, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], as godparents of the children.

In fact, as friends, we strongly recommend and urge you to seek professional medical help - which you could certainly do in confidence - and to change your fields of Christian service. You certainly ought not to engage in Christian work with young people or students for a long period: we feel that you might well find a fruitful field of service among "young marrieds", possibly through your local Church.

You have generously said that you will go the second or third mile in helping to put things right, and of course we accept that assurance. We feel, however, that we must have a written undertaking from you that you will abide by the above four points. We are genuinely concerned to help you: but you will, we are sure, realise that in remaining silent about this matter we are taking a risk: for by failing to report what has happened to parents or school authorities or the S.U. Council, we could be accused of covering up something which is actionable. It is, therefore, imperative that you agree to abide by the conditions we have outlined. If you find you cannot give your agreement, we would ask you to meet a number of us so that you can explain your reasons.

We want to assure you of our continuing friendship and prayers. We are acting not only in the interests of the men concerned and camp generally, but also in your own interest.

With best wishes,

Yours ever,  
*David*

AP John Eddison,  
David Fletcher,  
Dick Knight,  
Mark Ruxton,  
Tim Sterry,  
Peter Wells.

Twyford (0962) 713438

26th March 1982

Orchard House  
Morestead  
Winchester  
Hants SO21 1LZ

My Dear David,

Anne and I want to say again how grateful we were for your apologies and obviously very real repentance in respect of the letters you wrote. This is a great comfort to us because it means not only that we need not part for any sort of personal reason, but that our friendship can remain intact and you would be free to invite us back to the Iwerne work in the future should you ever wish to do so.

However we cannot but repeat our reservations about the inherent lack of love and concern for individuals at Iwerne, which we and so many others have been so conscious of over the years.

But what gives us absolutely no choice but to resign unequivocally from camp work ( and therefore from being subject to your authority) for the present is the attempt by your committee to subject us to rules and regulations about the use of our home, telephone, holidays etc. which we have no doubt would constitute a ' yoke of slavery' contrary to Galatians 5.1. It is all terribly reminiscent of the Exclusive Brethren; we do pray camp is not embarking on the same road as that sect; believe me, it is a very slippery slope.

In conclusion let us comment on just 3 matters arising out of your meeting:

1. You told us that the vital decision whether to accept our offer to withdraw for a year and then review the matter, or to impose a ban was in effect left to the doctor ! What an extraordinary derogation of responsibility.

2. You disclosed my name to the doctor. There can be no good reason for this whatsoever; we are appalled at this breach of confidence.

3. You said you discussed disclosure to ' parents and headmasters ' (sic). I cannot believe you have forgotten the moral and legal duty which rests on a clergyman not to disclose what has been told him in confidence by a person of full age. The principle is in no way diluted because you are told something which occurred before the person was of full age. I have no doubt whatever that everyone involved, including of course Simon and I, said what we did to you and Mark in fullest confidence - and each of you knew it. There is ample authority for the proposition that an injunction at law will lie to prevent a doctor, lawyer or clergyman breaching a confidence. One of the older men involved who was here yesterday ( not Simon) confirmed that he would certainly not have said one word had he not been sure it would be treated in confidence, and indeed he had no doubt that he was being asked in complete confidence.

Our deepest thanks for all you & Camp have given us over the years. We gladly reciprocate the closing words of your last letter and send to you and Susie more love than ever.

~~J.C. M.P. P.H.S. J.S. D.K. C.M.R.~~

John

Will leave you  
to let Cam<sup>th</sup> know.

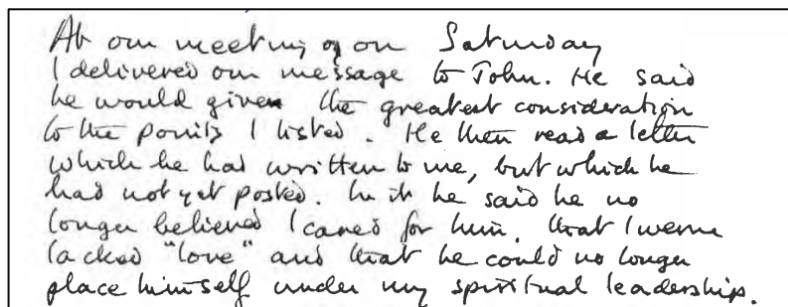
CMR 133

- 12.1.80 John Smyth formally resigns from the Iwerne camps on 26<sup>th</sup> March, citing pressures of work as the reason. John Smyth is actively attempting to manipulate the situation at this point. He becomes aggressive towards David Fletcher, accusing him of acting illegally, he talks of protecting Peter Krakenberger and of the protection of the reputation of Iwerne. There is no mention of victims nor any recognition of their needs. All the focus is on reputation management.
- 12.1.81 Dick Knight wrote to John Smyth on the 31<sup>st</sup> March to say that the "priority" is the long term welfare of the men involved, as well as safeguarding the reputation of Iwerne and maintaining John Smyth's "Christian usefulness and fulfilment". On the same day, John Eddison writes to David Fletcher to say that he has spoken with John Smyth. John



Smyth said that the Clergy are bound by the law of secrecy and should not even divulge to the police.

- 12.1.82 During this month, April 1982, David Fletcher is actively telling victims to not have anything to do with John Smyth. At the Easter Iwerne camp, none of the victims are in attendance. We have heard conflicting reports as to whether there was speculation as to why John Smyth, formerly very apparent as a leader at the camps, is suddenly not there. The general accepted "*truth*" is that the version given out (John Smyth being too busy as a top QC) is accepted, but we have heard differently from a few individuals who have told us that there was great speculation as to why John Smyth had suddenly disappeared from the Iwerne scene.
- 12.1.83 There is a possibility that a few people were, indeed, given some information as to why this had happened, with possible references to "*perverted corporal punishment*", but the evidence is too slim to fully confirm this.
- 12.1.84 During this month, John and Anne Smyth start to attend the Above Bar Church<sup>54</sup> in Southampton. Reverend David Jackman, a minister who presided over the Church, not ordained by the Church of England, was later contacted by Mark Ashton and David Fletcher who warned David Jackman about John Smyth. David Jackman described to Reviewers that David MacInnes later sent him a "memo" about the abuse, which was most likely to have been a summary of the case, based on the contents of the Ruston Report. David Jackman described to Reviewers that on hearing and reading of this, John Smyth was asked not to attend and described him being agitated at being rejected by Above Bar Church.
- 12.1.85 On 6<sup>th</sup> April, John Eddison wrote to David Fletcher, saying "...if he had no family commitments it would be advisable for him to leave the country for a few years or go to a completely different part of the UK".
- 12.1.86 He then writes, on 7<sup>th</sup> April, to John Smyth (Appendix 7) with a list of matters, including a suggestion that one of the options John Smyth may wish to consider is to move, with the suggestion of moving "*abroad*" being included. There has been a great deal of speculation about whether pressure was put on John Smyth to leave the country and a lot of loose talk about this being a given truth. The only evidence we have found of this is contained in this one letter from John Eddison. It has even been suggested that John Smyth and his family were "*deported*" to Africa. There is no evidence whatsoever of this.
- 12.1.87 John Smyth arranged a birthday party for a victim during this month, thereby openly flouting his supposed agreement to step back and to having nothing more to do with the victims (or, indeed, boys and young men in general).
- 12.1.88 It is of note that John Smyth re-applied for Iwerne membership during this month. Mark Ruston and David Fletcher are in correspondence in this month about the "*contingency plans*" that they need to have in place, should John Smyth not comply with their demands of him. John Smyth is actively negotiating with them about what his plans are – he is clearly still in control and steering the ship. He talks in a letter of a "*lack of love*" from Iwerne in a letter to David Fletcher. Simon Daggart wrote to Mark Ruston expressing a similar sentiment:



At our meeting on Saturday I delivered our message to John. He said he would give the greatest consideration to the points I listed. He then read a letter which he had written to me, but which he had not yet posted. In it he said he no longer believed I cared for him. That Iwerne lacked "love" and that he could no longer place himself under my spiritual leadership.

<sup>54</sup> This is an independent Church part of the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches

- 12.1.89 In this month, an “*undertaking*” for John Smyth to (a) seek psychiatric counselling, (b) never to visit Winchester College and (c) not to work with boys and young men is drawn up and is supposedly agreed by John Smyth, but there is no record of a signed copy of this agreement being in existence. Later on (after John Thorn is formally told of the abuse), this signed version of the undertaking states that it should be held on College premises, however, the document has never been located by the College.

The following undertaking is given by Mr John Smyth Q.C to Mr John Thorn, Headmaster of Winchester College and Vice-Chairman of the Headmasters' Conference on this day of October, 1982.

1. I undertake unequivocally to break completely with those I have implicated in a practice I now accept as misguided and wrong. I accept that “completely” implies no steps to approach them and no steps to allow them to approach me.
2. I undertake to receive specialist medical advice at once and to receive treatment if so advised.
3. I now accept that my mission can no longer lie with boys and young men, and I undertake not to take on again the rôle of spiritual counsellor to them.

I accept that a copy of this undertaking will remain with the Headmaster of Winchester College and his successor(s); and also that access to it may be given to [REDACTED]

signed .....

and endorsed by .....

- 12.1.90 Sometime in 1982, with the exact date unknown, Mark Ashton (who was by then no longer a Chaplain at Winchester College, now in Balham, London, in a Curacy) received a telephone call telling him that John Smyth had been discovered as having beaten boys and young men at Winchester College. His widow, Fiona, recalls him being “*ashen faced*” and “*rushing off*” to see John Thorn, driving down to Winchester immediately. This does not tally with the other accounts from this period, however, and the timing of this event may have been mis-remembered.
- 12.1.91 On the 20<sup>th</sup> July, John Smyth, along with his wife and children, attended a House Party organised by the Stewards Trust, at North Foreland Lodge, Kent. We have been told by contributors to the Review who attended this house party, with some certainty, that John Smyth brought two of his victims along with him to the house party and that they held some responsibility for the youth work going on there. This very clearly demonstrates the ineffectiveness of any “*undertakings*” that John Smyth had agreed to, regarding working with boys and young men and maintaining contact with victims.

- 12.1.92 In August of this year (1982), a note made by David Fletcher says that he shared the Ruston Report with Scripture Union in what he describes as “*very redacted form*”. In addition, a round robin newsletter (“*prayer letter*”) from Peter Krakenberger to Winchester Christian Forum alum, also references the abuse around the same time.

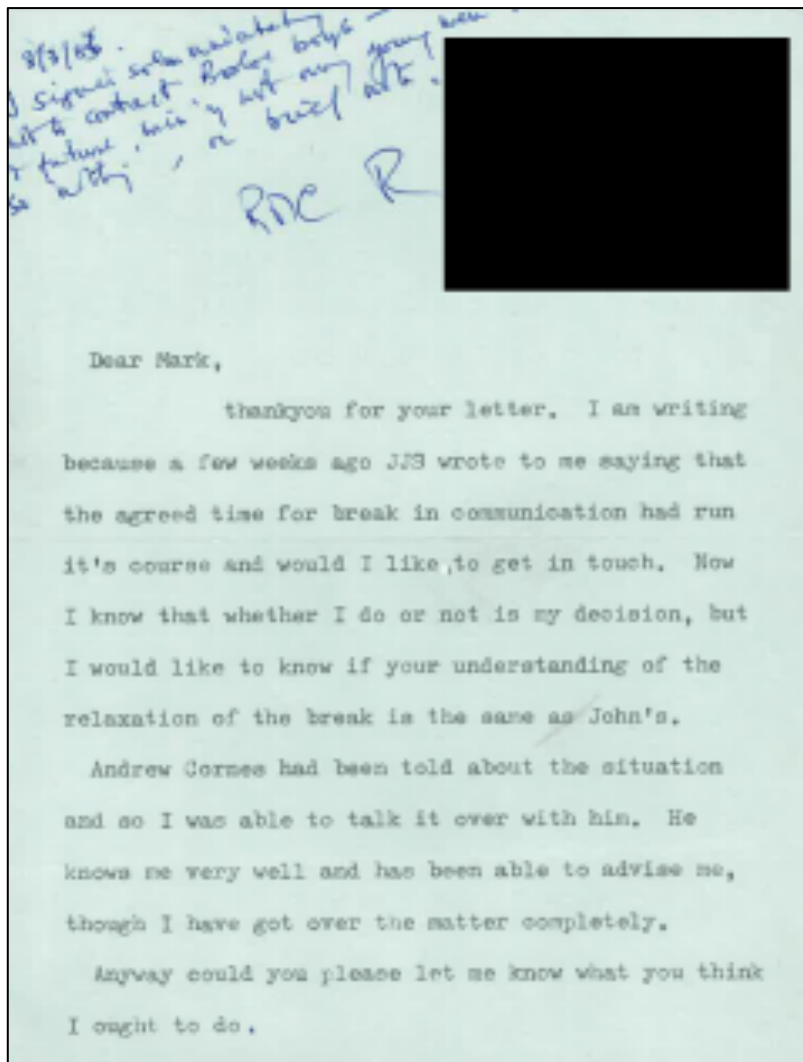
“... Round about the beginning of term, the time seemed propitious in the eyes of the Iwerne Committee for news of the JJS b\*\*\*\*\*s to be broken to John Thorn, Geoff Hewitson and [the father of Victim 001]. (Ever since Feb DCMF, CMR etc all knew that at some stage those 3 would have to be told). At that stage [Victim 002] had left JJS and only [Victim 001] was left in close ties with JJS. [Victim 002] asked MHA to tell his dad, [the father of Victim 002]. [The parents of Victim 001] were informed by [Victim 001] (reluctantly) and Dick Knight. Thorn was put in the picture by MHA and myself, and I informed Hewitson. Basically everyone's reaction was magnificent & just what we could have hoped for. After the initial shock & horror, all parties are agreed that discretion is by far the best policy and that there is no merit in the information being spread any further.

Various groups of people have been calling on JJS – some Iwerne leaders, some non-Iwerne evangelical leaders, some non-evangelical men like Thorn & [the father of Victim 001]. The upshot is that last Thursday (14<sup>th</sup>), JJS at last (after 8 months of persuasion by various senior men in the know) has bound himself to the following conditions: (1) that he will never again see or contact any of the 22 men he implicated in what he now realises was a misguided and wrong practice. (2) That he will submit to undergoing expert psychiatric treatment. (3) That he will never again act as a spiritual counsellor to young men whether undergraduates or schoolboys.

- 12.1.93 This reference includes comments on John Smyth signing a paper agreeing to certain conditions and stating that the reason for not contacting the police as being in line with parents' wishes. In his statement to the Winchester College Review, Peter Krakenberger stated that he had received a copy of the Ruston Report from David Fletcher.
- 12.1.94 At this time and with breath taking hypocrisy, John Smyth warned a victim of another individual, Jonathan Fletcher. He said to him that it was wrong for the Iwerne camp people to allow Fletcher to attend camps, whilst he was barred from attending.
- 12.1.95 Peter Wells took this same victim out for dinner in London. He states: “*I asked him what was happening, and he said, and I remember this very clearly, ‘it’s no good taking it to the Church now, because they’re not going to do anything about it, but rest assured that when Iwerne people are in senior positions in the Church – which was always their aim – John Smyth will be brought to account for what he has done’.*”
- 12.1.96 A further contributor to this Review has advised he was approached by Peter Wells, who proceeded to press him to talk about John Smyth following the contributor's attendance at the house party. The contributor now thinks that Peter Wells was trying to establish whether he knew about John Smyth's abuses or not.
- 12.1.97 Mark Ruston continued to write regularly to several victims in this period, the intention of which is not entirely clear excepting to try to manage them and their contact with John Smyth. There is contemporaneous evidence that individuals, including several of the original ‘recipients’ of the Ruston Report were assigned to provide oversight of victims. On first review, and as described in contemporaneous correspondence from those involved, this seems to have been an offer of ‘pastoral’ support. However, there is indication in information submitted to this Review that suggests this may have had a different purpose. One hypothesis is that this support was provided for ‘oversight’ reasons, ensuring that word of the abuse was not disclosed widely or as a result of victims' discussions with others. There are several examples of this follow up with victims occurring, that leads to this conclusion.



- 12.1.98 Several individuals providing this role were aware of the abuse and had been made aware of the detail in the Ruston Report, for example, David Fletcher and Mark Ruston himself. Elsewhere in this Review, there is reference to this role being carried out by two individuals at this time by Hugh Palmer and Andrew Cornes. Hugh Palmer visited and remained in contact with the young man who attempted suicide, inviting him to his Church and to Sunday lunch. Andrew Cornes kept in touch with another young man who had been abused by John Smyth and had been interviewed by Mark Ruston:



- 12.1.99 Victims have told us that this contact was not requested by them, but that it was proactively made by the individual clergy, by letter or phone, at the time feeling surprised by this and recalled how this was an unusual step, not something they had previously experienced, except in terms of John Smyth's approach to their grooming. At the time they felt it was offered in a supportive way but with hindsight, they reflected this may have been offered more for reasons of oversight and monitoring. Interestingly, for this Review, neither of these Clergy were able recall having this 'pastoral oversight' role with victims when they met with Reviewers.
- 12.1.100 The suggestion that there was an "oversight" of people who had been abused by John Smyth has been vigorously denied by those people we have spoken with. Both Hugh Palmer and Andrew Cornes have been clear that they were not asked to undertake this role and that there was never any organised approach, orchestrated by anyone. The victims we have spoken with have reached this possible conclusion based on their recollections.

- 12.1.101 A contributor to the Review has advised that around this time, while he was at school, as a result of a series of coincidences, he was told of the abuses by a GP, who was also a family member.
- 12.1.102 In the summer of 1982, he attended a Stewards Trust house party at which John Smyth and his family were present. He already knew John Smyth from having attended Iwerne camps and was surprised to find John Smyth at this house-party at a time of year when he would normally have been at Iwerne.
- 12.1.103 This same contributor described to us that, just a few days later, he attended a Iwerne camp. He chatted freely about the fact that he had seen the Smyth family and soon became aware that this was causing consternation among the leaders of the camp. He was approached by Peter Wells, who probed him for more information about what he knew about the absence of John Smyth from Iwerne and for any other information he had learned while at the Stewards Trust house party
- 12.1.104 Travelling home from Iwerne, he visited his relative, the GP (now deceased), who, coincidentally, also knew John Smyth. The GP wanted to warn the contributor and a friend off having contact with John Smyth. He described that John Smyth was severely beating boys with a cane in a garden shed, with these beatings being about punishment for the sins they had committed. When the contributor to the Review got home, he realised that the GP had rung ahead and told his parents (who both knew John Smyth as they had been involved with running Iwerne Camps) that he had been warned off having anything to do with John Smyth in future. It is not known how this GP had obtained the information about the beatings. He could have alerted authorities about his knowledge at that time and, had he done so, the matters may have been explored more thoroughly, potentially leading to different outcomes.
- 12.1.105 Shortly after this, the contributor advises that a letter arrived from Anthony Cordle (the sponsoring parent at the house party), asking him not to talk to anyone else about what he had been told about the abuse. It is not known whether Anthony Cordle understood the gravity of the abuses being perpetrated by John Smyth. He honoured that but didn't really understand what was going on. He says that he has no idea how Anthony Cordle would have known about him being told. He understood that it was a highly sensitive matter and not to be freely shared but did not know why Anthony Cordle would have an interest in keeping the matter quiet. This contribution clearly demonstrates both the wide reach of information about the abuse, and lack of action taken in response, way beyond those who were readers of the Ruston Report, and even beyond the Church of England.
- 12.1.106 During this period, John Smyth persisted in his contact with several of the individuals who were aware of the abuse, and were linked to Iwerne, including John Eddison, Mark Ruston and David Fletcher. The purpose of this seemingly to be expressing his anger at the way his situation is being handled and referring to Iwerne as being "sectarian" because of their responses to him. Within this correspondence he regularly suggests that the decisions re his future should rest with Alan Martin who was the General Director of the Scripture Union at the time. This is relevant because he was able to control, in effect, the handling of the concerns about him by "*dividing and conquering*" the Iwerne leaders, by the potential involvement of the Scripture Union.
- 12.1.107 John Eddison subsequently wrote to Alan Martin, advising him that John Smyth thinks the matter should be put into his hands as leader of the Scripture Union. He references the fact that John Smyth is now refusing to meet with the small group who are trying to enforce the conditions they have set out for him. He also refers to "*covering up*" for John Smyth in the past. John Smyth is clearly manipulating this situation and is effectively in control, of what happens and when.

East Sussex  
16th August 1982.

My dear Alan,

I am afraid we are still having considerable difficulty with John Smyth. He refuses to meet our small group who want to discuss with him the conditions we laid down about seeing boys and young men, and also to encourage him to seek medical advice. He has now rounded on Iwerne, writes of it as 'sectarian', and says that as a meeting with us is impossible says that he 'proposes to put the whole matter in the hands of Alan Martin where the real responsibility for the Iwerne work lies'.

We do not in the least mind if he does this, being confident that you will know exactly how to handle things; but I felt it might be helpful if I made one or two points.

1. It will be worth remembering that until the beginning of this year he was very closely involved in the running of Iwerne, and almost David's right hand man, and one of his longest serving officers. It is true that David and others were worried by certain aspects of his pastoral work, and some officers resented his 'poaching', but David often commented upon his loyalty, and there is no doubting his commitment. Therefore he had a very big hand in shaping the policy which he now professes to dislike so much. I don't think he ought to be allowed to get away with this double-faced behaviour.

2. My guess is that when you ask him why David had to ask him to leave, you will get a very diluted version of the gruesome truth we had to impart to you. Here again, I think it may be necessary to hammer away until you get the sort of admissions from him which may enable you to say, 'You cannot expect us to take seriously criticisms coming from someone who has behaved in this way, and acted behind the back of his leader in a manner of which you must have known he would not approve.'

3. From here it may be possible for you to suggest that it would be in his own best interests to allow our group (there are four of us - David, Dick Knight, Mark Ruston and I) to meet him to talk, and also that he should seek medical advice.

He obviously thinks he is threatening David by suggesting that he goes to see you, but it is a completely harmless threat as you are in possession of all the facts. David I think will be writing to you himself, but I know how busy he has been, and when camp is over will I think be taking a holiday. He also has this memorandum of the whole wretched business which Derek Warren suggested to us should be filed with you. I hope he can let you have this soon.

I shall be here off and on for the next few weeks, so please don't hesitate to get in touch with me if necessary. I have the complete correspondence on the whole matter should you want to refer to it, but I don't think it adds verbiage to what you already know. What I may not have told you is the number of times David, I and others had to cover up for John in the past, and defend him against the suspicions of parents and others. Unwittingly we perjured ourselves in advance.

I spent two very happy nights at Iwerne, and it is evident that David enjoys the complete confidence and loyalty of his officers, though one or two of the young men who have been under John's spell haven't yet quite found their feet again. The whole atmosphere and spirit of the place was an inspiration.

With every good wish,

Yours ever,

I took the liberty of writing to Alan to prepare him for the possible approach of JJS. I managed to resist the temptation to write to John himself.

- 12.1.108 Alan Martin subsequently replied to John Eddison, suggesting that John Smyth will "find no comfort from the Scripture Union". He says that he will encourage John Smyth to seek professional help. He asks for details of the abuse, in readiness for the matter potentially becoming public. He writes a memo to John Eddison, David Fletcher, Peter Wells, Dick Knight, Tim Sterry, Mark Ruston and Mark Ashton. He clearly states that

he thinks John Thorn should be informed and that “*extreme pressure*” should be put on John Smyth to seek professional help, suggesting a different doctor, rather than Dr Lodge Patch.



From the General Director, Alan C.N. Martin

Scripture Union House, 130 City Road London EC1V 2NJ  
Telephone 01-250 1966

ACNM/LS

23rd August, 1982

The Rev. John Eddison  
Durham Lodge  
Crowborough  
East Sussex

cc David Fletcher

Dear John,

Many thanks for your letter of the 18th August. I am very sorry indeed that JS is still proving a problem, and we must go on praying that the devil will not be able to use this situation to hinder the Lord's work at Iwerne in any way. It is good to know that this year's camp have gone so well, although I am sure that this particular cloud has been hanging over David to some extent, and I feel very much for him.

David rang me the other day to warn me that JS might get in touch with me, and he is kindly sending me the documents so that I am fully in the picture. You can be absolutely sure that I will support you to the hilt, and that John will find no comfort from this quarter. If he does come to see me, I will certainly do my best to encourage him to seek professional help, but I don't suppose that I will have any more success than anyone else along that line.

What does concern me slightly in your letter is the reference to parents and others who have apparently voiced suspicions to you in the past, and who were reassured by you that JS was a person of complete integrity. I am sure that this was said in complete good faith, and it is of course easy to be wise after the event; but I do just wonder if some of the queries should have been followed up, as of course any hint of the type of problem we are talking about in the Iwerne context could be fairly lethal.

Having said that, I know how difficult it is to make any meaningful enquiry into that kind of situation, and I am sure that you did your best to satisfy yourselves that everything was in order. It would be helpful to know what queries were raised, so that a proper answer could be given to anyone who turns on us should the matter become public.

We must pray very much of course that this will not happen, but if JS is unrepentant and if he carries on as before, it is almost inevitable that the balloon will go up sooner or later.

Thank you for keeping me in the picture, and do be assured of my wholehearted support.

With warmest greetings.  
As ever,

(dictated by Alan, and signed in his absence)

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DCMF 157

- 12.1.109 Around this same time, John Eddison wrote to David Fletcher suggesting that John Thorn (Headmaster of Winchester College) should be informed of the abuse, agreeing that John Smyth should be seen by a doctor. He suggested that Mark Ashton should be the one to inform John Thorn.



17th August 1982

My dear David,

This latest letter of John's is outrageous. Have you noticed how tendentious he is twisting every argument in his favour? A private note to Simon is 'in order to divide friends...', while when you tell anyone you are speaking 'against' him.

I suggest you reply as follows: 'I won't comment upon the allegations which you make about camp, except to say that it is strange that you never mentioned them to me during all the years you came to camp; but if you would prefer to be free to say anything you like about us to others, then please do so, and we shall reserve the right to exercise the same sort of freedom ourselves.'

I agree with you about Ashton's seeing Thorn. I think you should get that memo. into Alan Martin's hands as soon as possible. I am very glad we saw him when we did, at our own suggestion and in our own time, and not as a panic measure in self-defence. I don't think Alan has a very high opinion of John, and we can be quite confident that he will support us, but I think you ought to warn him that John is on the war path, and that he will attack the good name of camp. Alan should simply ask him how long he has been connected with it himself and had a share in shaping its policy.

I'm not in the least bit afraid of anything that John can say or do, and if he does approach Alan, some such letter as I have suggested above will justify our having got in first with Alan.

I'm going to have a difficult 24 hours resisting the temptation to reply to such a monstrous letter, and I'm not sure that I particularly want to succeed. I shall take my swimming trunks with me...

Yours ever,

*John.*

- 12.1.110 As is evident in the description above and in further detail within Appendix 8 to this report, there is frequent and detailed correspondence between those who know of the Ruston Report, who are ordained Clergy. There is no evidence that risk to John Smyth's own family, including his young children is considered or discussed. This is not mentioned at all in any of the information, reviews, or correspondence that we have been party to relating to this case in either the UK or Africa. The entire concentration of effort at this point is seemingly preventing a 'leak' of information outside of the small group, including focussed on John Smyth's behaviour. Attempts to manage John Smyth are ineffective – there is clear evidence of his ignoring all agreements, including those made in writing, to not have contact with victims. There is no effective action taken to prevent his abusive behaviour, rather the actions seem to be more focussed on engaging with him and negotiating with him. A handwritten note at the bottom of one of the many letters at this time demonstrates the approach and its ineffectiveness: "If JJS<sup>55</sup> suggests a meeting, I, like you, will warmly encourage rather than freeze him off at once. It might achieve what all of us have wanted, around the table meeting with JJS".

<sup>55</sup> John Jackson Smyth

if JS does suggest a meeting I hope you will warmly encourage rather than freeze him off at once. It might achieve what all of us have wanted - a round the table meeting with JS!

12.1.111 David Fletcher and John Eddison eventually agree in further correspondence that they feel that there is little point in further pursuing a meeting with John Smyth, discussing that they should, now, write to him to suggest that he goes to see Alan Martin instead. David Fletcher, at this point, indicates his reluctance to refer to Alan Martin suggesting that John Smyth may say things about Iwerne Trust to Alan Martin that David Fletcher does not want him to know. These specific fears are not described further, but perhaps indicate concern about the reputational damage that John Smyth could cause. This could be an explanation for the limited action that was taken to adequately respond to the abuse.

25th August 1982

My dear Mark,

David Fletcher and I have both been in touch with Alan Martin since JJS's last threatening letter, and I would be grateful if you could study his replies before we meet next week.

David and I both feel that there is no point in pursuing John any further on this matter of meeting with the four of us, and that it might be better to write and tell him that we would like him to go and see Alan himself. He (JJS) admits that Alan is responsible for Iwerne, and this of course fully justifies us for having spoken to Alan and Derek Warren. In fact Alan said, 'I would have been very annoyed if you had not done so'.

I think David's only fear in encouraging this confrontation with Alan is lest John has things to say about camp or David which we would not want Alan to know. He can hardly criticise the former, since he himself until early this year was responsible for shaping its policy, or at least partly so.

I am seeing Dick during a visit to Monkton on September 11-12, and I thought I would get his views as well. The point is that we still have September 14th as a day set aside to meet John, and presumably we could agree to meet (the four of us) on that day in London. On the other hand David and I are meeting on September 15th at No.10 to have a final check up, and if I can by then have got your own and Dick's views on what ought to be done next, it might make a meeting of the four of us on the 14th unnecessary. (Or was it the 13th, I rather forget? I have failed to note it in my diary.)

Alan takes a very tough line, as you can see; and I'm bound to say I find my attitude hardening. It seems that [redacted] wants to see Mark Ashton, and I think Mark is still determined to see Thom, if only to clear his own lines. I can see no reason for restraining him.

Derek Warren also writes, 'Have you written an official letter to JJS unequivocally dissociating yourselves from his practices, &c., &c' I think in his mind is the need for camp to be totally in the clear if things do come out, as everyone seems to think that sooner or later they will.

When I call on Wednesday afternoon about the car parking we can perhaps fix a time when we can talk about this.

With every good wish,

Yours ever,

John.

David writes to say he is sending you a copy of Alan Martin's memo, so I have removed that from the envelope.

- 12.1.112 During the Autumn of 1982, further evidence within contemporaneous files suggests that people knew about the detail of the abuse and were halted from attempting to warn others. For example, an individual who had been warned about John Smyth at a previous Stewards Trust house party, referenced earlier, received a warning from Anthony Cordle to "not repeat what you have been told".
- 12.1.113 Peter Krakenberger describes in his statement to Hampshire Police in 2017, that he "... did feel it was necessary" to tell the Winchester College authorities of the abuse by John Smyth. He details how he told Geoff Hewitson, Housemaster of Beloes House, and that John Thorn, the Headmaster, was told shortly after, as is detailed in the Winchester College Review report. John Thorn later claimed that he had consulted parents and that they wanted to keep the matter from the police. The objective evidence, as presented earlier, is that it is most likely that only three sets of parents were consulted about this and that one of those sets of parents took the view that the "authorities" should be informed.
- 12.1.114 Throughout this period, John Smyth persists in his contact with victims, corresponding by letter, telephone and also meeting with several victims in person. This is despite written requests and an agreement drawn up explicitly stating this, highlighting what the limits to relying on such informal non-statutory means for managing a prolific and coercive perpetrator such as John Smyth.
- 12.1.115 John Smyth agrees at this point, to meet with David Fletcher, along with two of his "own advisors"<sup>56</sup>; Anthony Cordle and David MacInnes. A letter from Dick Knight to Simon Daggart's mother suggests that Anthony Cordle was "fully in the picture" as regards John Smyth's abuses. Anthony Cordle does not recall this meeting and contests that he was fully in the picture.

<sup>56</sup> As described in below document, CMR221

FROM  
THE REV. R. I. B. EDISON

DURHAM LODGE  
CROWBOROUGH  
EAST SUSSEX TN6 1EW  
TEL. (0432) 2021

13th September 1982

My dear Mark,

Thank you for your letter. My plan has now been overtaken by events which have moved very fast this last week.

1. Mark Ashton rang to say that he had got JJS to agree to a meeting with David and his own two advisers (Anthony Cordle and David MacInnes) and that John has agreed to abide by their decision. Mark had seen both of these advisers who of course saw the wisdom of the course of action we were taking.

2. The next day Peter Krak. rang me (having failed to get you). The upshot was that the housemaster of the house to which Peter is attached had asked to be told the full facts, and Peter had given them to him. This meant that Thom too must be told, the only question was by whom. In the event Mark Ashton was the obvious man, and he goes there today.

The housemaster (who had had Simon in his house) wants to get in touch with him about it all, and of course Hubert Daggart himself will now have to know, and it will probably be Dick who had better tell him.

3. Meanwhile David Fletcher is back from holiday and has been brought up to date. He feels, and I think I agree, that it may now be unnecessary for this group to meet JJS. We both think that Mark Ashton may be able to get Thom, as a price of his silence, to endorse the conditions we have laid upon JJS.

4. On Saturday I had supper with Dick, and I think all are now agreed that events must be allowed to take their course.

I think David will probably be the best person to keep you up to date from now on. He wants to see Cordle and MacInnes in order to stop John from villifying camp which he is continuing to do. I have written to him sharply on this point. He was Chairman of the IT until this year, and one of David's closest advisers. Has camp become so rotten since he left? If not, why didn't he leave earlier, or at least inform David about the things of which he is so ready to accuse him now?

With every good wish,

Yours ever,

*John.*

Sorry about the packet of stuff from RJ. No hurry. Could you bring it to the next IT meeting?

CMR 221



(Copy of letter in R.J.K's - legible ? - hand)

Sherwood, etc  
Sept. 20th, 1982

My dear Sue,

I thought I would drop you this short personal note. Hubert is away anyhow till late in the week, and I felt so heavy of heart when I saw your distress yesterday afternoon. Perhaps I said too much - if so, I'm sorry. What's done is now of the past, and once acknowledged is best forgotten. At least everyone now admits the wrongness of it - the amazing feature to me (as to you, I know) is that anyone could ever be so self-deceived as to imagine it could be justified.

The future is what matters, and honestly I think we can afford to be hopeful. Simon's own faults - when all is said and done - were gullibility (for he was obviously led by John S. all the way and soon lost sight of his normal bearings), and excessive loyalty, when he felt he must stand by John in what he saw as his "hour of need".

If John can now be persuaded to see that he owes it to Simon to encourage the long break we discussed, I believe all will be well. I promise my good offices - for what they are worth - to urge John this way; and I do think that the shocks of the last few days ought to make him readier to take the point. If only John sees this, I guess Simon will readily accept - for John's sake, to give him a needed new start as much as for his own. I should love the chance of a chat with Simon if he'd like it - on or off a golf course. Do suggest he phones after the weekend. And Hilary adds - "why doesn't Sue come over too and see me while you play/talk with Simon?". That would be super.

I've thought a lot about what we ought to have done to help Simon these past few months, and I asked David Fletcher what he thought when I spoke to him (to confirm that Anthony Cordle is fully in the picture - as he is). David assures me that he has spoken with Simon, and of course that Mark Ruston has done so too. As you know, I have exchanged a couple of letters - but these were chiefly to put the

case for his speaking to you and Hubert. But I am afraid the truth is that he felt convinced that he were all being so harsh and heartless to John, his friend, that it was almost impossible to get through.. I'm immensely relieved that he did eventually screw up his courage to speak; and I hope he'll be reassured by your understanding.

I can see a little of what upset Simon - it was of course that David Fletcher and others decided that whatever they could not do to induce John to discontinue friendships with younger men, they could at least ask him not to come to the Iwerne camps and form similar links there. This "ban" Simon and others saw as "heartless" - rejecting John just when he needed support. In fact, my experience is that David and the others have been falling over backwards to help John, and show understanding - in an impossibly difficult situation.

I so enjoyed our chat. Let me know of anything I can do.

- 12.1.116 John Thorn made an announcement to staff in the Common Room on 17<sup>th</sup> September 1982 about John Smyth and advising he was then banned from the College and its grounds. This was repeated in a written briefing for College Housemasters, who were instructed that if they saw John Smyth within the College they should inform either himself or one of the Chaplains. This is detailed in a circular of meeting notes, passed to Reviewers by Winchester College. This shows the initials of those that housemasters are to report sightings of John Smyth on to as JLT (John Thorn) and DJC, who we understand to be David Conner, a Chaplain at the College during this time.

17 September 1982: "John Smyth: if any housemasters hear of Smythe [sic] making any contact or approaches to boys in their houses, would they please inform JLT [Headmaster] and/or DJC [Chaplain], and do anything they can to discourage such contacts."

- 12.1.117 It is unclear what detail regarding the abuse was communicated at the meeting. The Right Reverend David Conner when participating in the Winchester College review of this case<sup>57</sup> said that he was told, by John Thorn, of "*corporal punishment*" being inappropriately administered by John Smyth, and this was repeated by Reverend Conner to Reviewers in his engagement for this Review.
- 12.1.118 The Reverend Vernon Wilkins, a House Tutor at Beloes at the time, told Reviewers that "*all the Housemasters were aware of everything*". He advises that Peter Krakenberger told him about the abuse and, at a later point, that John Smyth had moved to Zimbabwe. John Smyth paid an unexpected visit to him when he was studying at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, (exact date unknown, but sometime between September 1986 and June 1989), just for a very quick chat. He now assumes that this was John Smyth attempting to see various contacts, to be able to say that he was still in favour with them, or to be potential referees or future supporters as necessary.

<sup>57</sup> Page 76 - [Review into the abuse by John Smyth of pupils and former pupils of Winchester College 2022](#)

12.1.119 Given the information presented by Vernon Wilkins it seems likely that those being asked to report sightings of Smyth at the College were told some detail of the concerns regarding Smyth, this includes those that were at this time Chaplains at the College. Another Winchester College Chaplain described (in an email to a participant in the Review) that he was briefed about the situation as Chaplain, at least to some extent.

12.1.120 Others were aware of the abuse at this time. For example, a letter from John Eddison to Dick Knight references a meeting with Peter Wells, Jonathan Fletcher and another person at Iwerne, where consideration is given to informing members of the Headmasters Conference<sup>58</sup> of the abuse, the intention of this is stated in the letter:

*"...this would completely cover ourselves against any charge of secretiveness".*

Copy to CMB

29/1/82.

My dear Dick,

What a good party that was on Saturday! I did enjoy it, and it was splendid to see such a gathering of the clans. It was all arranged so nicely too, and I hope Richard and Sally feel they were given a really happy send-off.

I have just returned from a tour - Iwerne, Swanage and Marsh Court. At Iwerne I found myself sitting up half the night talking to Wilkie, Jonathan and James Larcombe who wanted to know how I had got on with [REDACTED] (a protege of JJS) in the long (and on the whole quite good) talk I had with him the same morning.

They are very strongly of the opinion that we ought to tell some member of HMC. They feel that in this way we will completely cover ourselves against any charge of secretiveness (which has been the age-old complaint against the VPSC) should the whole matter come out. Someone will be able to say, 'I was told all about it, because the VPSC felt someone in authority should know, but I was asked not to eat anything for the sake of the young men concerned'.

I think I have come round to this way of thinking myself. The question would be whom do we tell? I think it might put Thom in an embarrassing position (ought he to tell parents?). My choice would be Dennis whom you and I both know so well and who is so senior and to whose school JJS is sending his son. David Mallins and David Fletcher I think both feel the time has come for this sort of action.

It would be quite different if John had given us the assurances we ask for, but he hasn't done so, and a very curt note received by David (the morning after my talk with these men) said that he wouldn't see us, but might think about it in the winter if circumstances change. I enclose a draft of the sort of letter I thought we might send him over the signatures of you, Mark, David and me. It might have the desired effect of forcing him to meet us. Incidentally, it now transpires that Michael Green (St Aldate's) has known all about it for some time but was sworn to secrecy. It came to him via one of his curates who used to teach at Winchester. I think DCMF will be writing to you, but I thought I would do so myself.

<sup>58</sup> The Headmaster's Conference, now known as the [HMC - The Heads' Conference](#)

12.1.121 John Eddison also states that Michael Green from St Aldates (Oxford) was told of the abuse "some time ago" by a curate who taught at Winchester College and "sworn to secrecy".

There - but I have the day ahead now.  
Presumably the point questions are:- does

we keep it as quiet as possible? and  
what of the future of JFS at camp?

12.1.122 As the descriptions above demonstrate, the knowledge of the full nature and extent of the abuse was not confined to a small group of individuals. A high number of people were aware of the abuse end of September 1982, this includes a small number of parents of victims. At least one Bishop and several Reverends knew by this time. We have spoken with several spouses of these individuals who have confirmed that they were told of the abuse at the time. This number increases over future years, as John Smyth continues to abuse boys and young men in Zimbabwe and South Africa.

12.1.123 There is a common misconception that the abuse was a closely guarded secret, held tight by a very small group, without direct connections to the Church of England. The revealed truth, based on objective evidence presented to Reviewers, shows there was a growing number of individuals aware of the abuse at this point. As earlier correspondence suggests this was deemed to be a 'secret' nevertheless.

12.1.124 John Smyth went on a mission to Malawi, with African Enterprise<sup>59</sup> during October this year. A victim raised a concern about this with Richard Bewes (deceased) of All Souls Church, Langham Place. The reaction to this is not known, however it is another example of an ordained clergyman being alerted to the abuse and not acting on that alert.

12.1.125 Simon Doggart wrote to Mark Ruston; he apologises for his actions and says that he made "a lot of mistakes".

<sup>59</sup> [African Enterprise International website](#)



COPY

dated 10th October 1982

Tyndale House  
Selwyn Gardens  
Cambridge

Dear Mark,

Thank you for your letter - I really can say that I don't feel bitter now. I realise that I have made a lot of mistakes - many since last February - and I am truly sorry for harmful things I have said to you.

I do believe that I need a completely fresh start in my Christian life. It is now not out of bitterness that I don't come to the Round or will not be coming to Iwerne, but because I feel that God wants me to have a fresh start in a different field of service. I am very seriously considering some sort of Christian work abroad for next year.

The fellowship at Tyndale House is very encouraging, even though some of the talk is a little too *audible*. I hope I have made my position a little clearer. Thank you for being so forgiving to me when I have been so blind and stubborn.

Yours in Him,

Simon

- 12.1.126 There is evidence of some victims writing to Iwerne leaders, representing, and speaking on behalf of, John Smyth to seek his reinstatement at the Iwerne camps. Victims have described how they were persuaded (it is thought by Simon Daggart) to write these letters or be signatories to them, expressing to us their regret in doing this as they began to realise and appreciate the full extent of the abuse that they had suffered. This is a clear demonstration of the psychological abuse and coercive control that John Smyth perpetrated on his victims
- 12.1.127 A letter from John Eddison to David Fletcher from this time, references a conversation with Anthony Cordle, in which Anthony Cordle says that he thinks that the parents of victims should all be told of the abuse. Anthony Cordle describes actively preventing John Smyth from talking at the Christian Union at Durham University, by threatening that John Eddison will report the abuses to the Christian Union leaders there. In this letter, John Eddison remarks that he is amazed at the extent of Anthony Cordle's knowledge of the situation.
- 12.1.128 Correspondence from this time (Appendix 9) suggests that a meeting between John Thorn and John Smyth took place, with the aim of ensuring that the previously mentioned written undertaking aimed at directing John Smyth to adhere to certain restraints on his activities and behaviour, was signed by him. It has been suggested<sup>60</sup> that the signed version of this undertaking was then held by David Fletcher and John Thorn at Winchester College so that he could make this available to any successive Headmasters at the College. A signed copy of the paper has not been located despite searches at the College and a review of David Fletcher's files relating to this matter. A

<sup>60</sup> Source: Page 75 of Winchester College Report, and Page 3 of The 1993 report by David Coltart

victim's account of this time, as told by his father, suggests also that the undertaking was signed and kept in a locked safe at the College.

- 12.1.129 Contemporaneous papers from this time indicates John Smyth's attempts to control the narrative regarding the abuse and the course of actions taken. For example, correspondence exists showing that John Smyth challenged the contents of the undertaking document in a subsequent meeting with Dick Knight. John Smyth claimed at this time to have been worried that the document implied an admission that he committed abuses and that could be used against him in court.
- 12.1.130 In further correspondence, this time to David Fletcher, John Smyth states that he "*ascribes my activity to a misreading of the Scriptures*" and in another letter John is also asking for his forgiveness:

Copy

Orchard House  
Morestead  
Winchester  
Hants SO21 1LZ

Twyford (0962) 713438

28th February 1983

Dear Peter,

As you know, at your request we had [redacted] for Saturday night to enable him to speak at Christian Forum on Sunday.

Anne and I were very surprised to hear from him on his return to us, that you had alleged that we were in breach of an undertaking given to Mr.Thorn by sending our regards via [redacted] to two boys you invited to tea with him. You apparently told [redacted] that you had seen a document containing such an undertaking.

For my part I know of no undertaking in any document which could by any stretch of the imagination relate to this. However it appears that you think otherwise and we suggest therefore that you take up the matter with Mr.Thorn.

Before writing this letter I took careful advice from Anthony Gordle who as I think you know has been advising us in these difficult matters. He strongly advised that I should send a copy of this letter to Mr.Thorn and this I have done.

We were also very distressed to think that you should be continuing to gossip to Christian Forum speakers about very confidential matters which do not concern them in any way.

We send our love, and would like to say again how much we enjoyed your hospitality over dinner,

John

Private

Dear David,

I find it very difficult to analyse the rights and wrongs of March to September this year but am sure that my attitude to you, John Ed, and Mark R. has been wrong and embittered for part of the time. I want to ask your forgiveness for this and theirs - I wonder if you would kindly pass this on to them, as I do not want to re-open correspondence.

I am sure you will understand that Anne and I very much need privacy and quiet at this juncture in order to make critical decisions about our future and we would rather not receive any letters.

I am so glad that Anne and Susie are arranging to meet up.

With our love,

(signed) John.

- 12.1.131 John Smyth subsequently cancels a meeting between his wife, Anne Smyth, and John Eddison, because he felt that David Fletcher had not apologised to them, moving from seeking forgiveness to seeking apology to him. This again evidences John Smyth's attempts to control those with knowledge of his abuse.
- 12.1.132 There is an active discussion at this time as to whether John Smyth can continue to be connected to Iwerne in some way, rather than him being banned from involvement. The Coltart Report suggests<sup>61</sup> that John Smyth was assigned two people to counsel him – David MacInnes and David Jackman; neither are able to recollect that being the case.
- 12.1.133 Peter Krakenberger stated in his police statement that "... as the weeks went by, and it became evident that JJS was not following advice", he was offered an ultimatum by a parent of a victim, prominent in society at that time, that he should leave the UK by a certain time or he would be reported to the police and prosecuted for child abuse. No further information has been presented to Reviewers to corroborate this claim.
- 12.1.134 It was also at this time that Eric Nash ("Bash"), the founder of the Iwerne camps, died. A large memorial service, hosted by the Reverend John Stott, was held, and was attended by several senior Clergy from the Church of England. A book<sup>62</sup> was published containing chapters written by prominent Anglicans about 'Bash'. A comment on the back cover of the book, from the Church of England Newspaper states of 'Bash' that: "*His influence within the Church of England during the last fifty years was probably greater than any of his contemporaries*". A victim described to us that it was "*very clear to those of us who are going (to the Iwerne camps) that this is run by people who are Anglicans, Anglican clergy, and that it is for the reformation of the Church of England*".
- 12.1.135 In early 1983, Iwerne officers are told of John Smyth's departure from the Trust and camp work, remarkably late given that knowledge of the abuse and subsequent Iwerne-related actions were taken from February of the previous year. The reasons for this information being passed to a wider circle of individuals is unknown but could

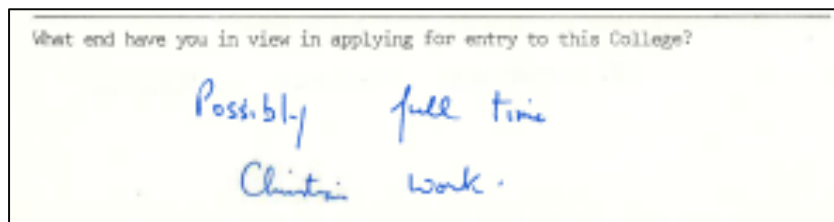
<sup>61</sup> Source: Page 3 of 1993 report by David Coltart, Appendix 1.

<sup>62</sup> "Eric Nash: A Study In Spiritual Power"



indicate wider knowledge and a keenness to manage information and rumour regarding the reasons for his absence from camps in the preceding months.

- 12.1.136 Throughout this period, John Smyth continues to regularly pursue and contact victims. We have evidence that this took place by phone and letter. We know that John Smyth attempted to seek reconciliation via Peter Krakenberger. Peter Krakenberger apologises to John Smyth for mentioning “*secret activities*” to five people who did not already know about it (Appendix 10). The word “*secret*” figures regularly in correspondence reviewed that was sent by and to those that knew of the abuse at this time, including several ordained Clergy.
- 12.1.137 David MacInnes was approached by a victim, and suggests that he speaks to someone else, rather than him, about the abuse. This victim went to see a psychiatrist for several sessions during March of 1983. This psychiatrist then wrote to the victim’s place of study, asking for some allowances to be made, given the trauma he has experienced. The victim then moved on to seeing Dr Lodge Patch up until 1986.
- 12.1.138 John Smyth applied for a place at Trinity Theological College, Bristol; his application form to study there was passed to Reviewers by the College. David Jackman of the Above Bar Church in Southampton is given as a referee for John Smyth on this form. In his account to Reviewers, David Jackman does not recall this being requested and suggests that John Smyth did this without his knowledge. David Jackman implies that John Smyth may have chosen to study at Trinity as this had been the establishment that ministers at the Above Bar Church had attended to study theology. At this time, George Carey<sup>63</sup> was the principal of the College.
- 12.1.139 John Smyth enrolled on a tailored course, which lasted for three terms from April 1983. The reason for applying stated on his application (Appendix 11) is that he was considering “*possible full time Christian work*”:



- 12.1.140 It has been suggested that John Smyth stood down from his legal work at this time to pursue this theological course full time. As is evidenced later, he continued to use his Chambers (workplace) address on correspondence, even once he had left the UK.
- 12.1.141 David Jackman’s account to Reviewers referred to John Smyth wishing to pursue a career in Ministry and this has been confirmed by close family members. At Trinity College, John Smyth met Andy Shaw, a young man studying at the College. The exact sequence of events is not clear, but a combination of John Smyth already considering Ministry abroad (as confirmed by close family members), coupled with his earlier visit to Malawi with African Enterprise and now his association with Andy Shaw, led to his eventual move to Zimbabwe.
- 12.1.142 John Smyth approached Martin and Jill Kingston, early in 1983, to ask them to help him form a group to support him and his family to set up a Christian Ministry in Zimbabwe. He knew Martin, as he had offered him a pupillage at his Chambers when Martin was starting out on his legal career. He went on to be a prominent person in the Church of England and served as a member of Synod for some years. Martin and Jill got to know Andy Shaw and his wife, Pam, very well and went to visit them in Zimbabwe on several occasions.
- 12.1.143 It has been reported to us that John Smyth was challenged about his plan to move to Zimbabwe. He was asked whether he had told African Enterprise, or the people he

<sup>63</sup> George Carey was later Archbishop of Canterbury, 1990 – 2002, and is now Lord Carey of Clifton.

was going to work for, about the physical abuse in the UK. He proceeded to dismiss this suggestion as he felt this was nothing to do with them.

12.1.144 David MacInnes sent the following letters in mid-1983 to David Fletcher. These letters are of significant interest as they describe David MacInnes' contact with David Jackman and George Carey regarding this matter.

12.1.145 David MacInnes indicates that he has sent a 'memo' (referred to as "*Mark's memo*") to them both regarding John Smyth and the situation. David Jackman has described this memo in a submission to Reviewers:

*"I was sent an outline of the Reverend Mark Ruston's report, by Reverend David MacInnes, which alerted me to the extent and very serious nature of his actions. I knew Reverend David MacInnes from student ministry circles – he worked as a missionary for the Church of England and was involved in student missions, as I was from time to time. He told me that Reverend Mark Ruston had written a longer report but I never saw it. I just saw the summary Reverend David MacInnes sent me which, as I recall, was only a page or so in length. I was told that the authorities at Winchester College and the Iwerne camps were working together with the young men and their parents to deal with the matter. I think I was sent the document as they were concerned about both the well-being of my Church and the ongoing pastoral needs of JS and his family, as they were currently attending Above Bar Church."*

12.1.146 David MacInnes described that the purpose of this was to alert them both to the abuse and the risks that John Smyth posed.

12.1.147 George Carey met Reviewers regarding the potential lack of action taken at the time in responding to concerns raised with him about John Smyth. This matter is being elaborated as it is relevant to the ToR and is a demonstration of how much may have been known about John Smyth by very senior and prominent people in the Church.

12.1.148 There are three principal matters of relevance to this Review regarding George Carey in relation to John Smyth – (a) knowing he was at the College, (b) receiving a copy of an outline of the Ruston Report and (c) being named as a member of a 'Council of Reference' for the Zambesi Trust. Taking these in turn:

#### **Point (a)**

12.1.149 George Carey says that he did not know of John Smyth's attendance at the College. On the balance of probabilities this seems highly unlikely. George Carey told us that he personally interviewed people applying for courses, John Smyth was a very well-known and prominent QC as well as Evangelical leader, very well known in Evangelical circles. He was also very much in the public domain at the time, having been prominent in the Gay News trials of 1977, representing Mary Whitehouse. This was widely reported on the television and in the newspapers, throughout 1979 and when the case was considered by the European Court for Human Rights in 1982. It seems unlikely that he would have gone unnoticed in a small College. George Carey must have known of a person as prominent as John Smyth. This understanding has been challenged in responses by Lord Carey to reviewers. He does not agree that John Smyth was a prominent figure at the time. George Carey clearly recalled Andy Shaw and remembered that he "*suddenly left*" the College to join John Smyth in Zimbabwe. There is a contradiction here – on the one hand, not remembering John Smyth at all, but knowing that he had an influence over Andy Shaw. (The fact is that Shaw did not "*suddenly leave*" the College as Carey recalls, but completed the Diploma he started. He subsequently returned to the College a few years later, accompanied by his wife, to complete a degree course).

#### **Point (b)**

12.1.150 George Carey says that he did not receive any version of the Ruston Report. David MacInnes also states that he cannot remember precisely what he sent to him. The contemporaneous correspondence is clear, however, on this. An outline of the Ruston Report or a "*memo*" as referred to above, was sent to David Jackman at around the

same time and, on the balance of probabilities, given correspondence we have seen from the time, this is likely to be what was sent to George Carey. This outline "memo" or note, although not the full Ruston Report, contained enough information about the abuses to signal a need for action regarding John Smyth. It is likely, given papers we've received from this time, that the document below is the outline or 'memo'<sup>64</sup>:

May 1983

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL.

1. The practice of beating began in 1978 and continued until 1982 when it stopped. It started with X offering a 17 year old the choice of a beating ~~from~~ <sup>from</sup> him or being reported for shoplifting.
2. For a term or two it continued with four 17 year olds on the bare bottom with a gym shoe. It was voluntarily accepted as a deterrent to masturbation. Beatings varied from a dozen to 40 strokes.
3. From the summer of 1979 the frequency and severity of the beatings and the number of men involved gradually escalated.
4. The context of the beatings was entirely that of a holiness meeting; prayer, praise, and loving Christian concern were expressed at every point.
5. In all about 20 men were involved, some for a short time, others longer. The beatings were with garden canes and took place in a specially furnished garden shed. Beatings of 200 strokes for masturbation, 400 for pride and one of 800 strokes for some undisclosed fall were administered. 8 men received 14000 strokes, 2 of them having some 8000 strokes over 3 years. 8 men spoke of bleeding on most occasions ("I could feel the blood spattering on my legs" - "I was bleeding for 3 1/2 weeks" - "I fainted ~~sometimes~~ after a severe beating"). There was one attempted suicide.
6. "Training beatings" of some 75 strokes were introduced. One man was beaten every 4/5 days one vacation. Semi nakedness gave way to complete nakedness "for humility". For a training session a man undressed himself: for falls he was undressed by the operator.
7. There was never the slightest evidence of overt sexual genital excitement or activity, though immediately after the beating the man lay on the bed while the operator knelt and prayed; linking arms; kissing him on the shoulder and back. Separate from these post beating embraces men have spoken of X putting his arms round them at emotional moments and one of being kissed on the neck.
8. There was frequent association with sexual sins of a comparatively minor sort (masturbation and impure thoughts).
9. X was the chief operator, though from the summer of 1980 one other helped.
10. The men submitted voluntarily, simply trusting X, who said he was helping them to be the "best for Jesus". A psychiatrist described the beatings as homosexual sadistic activity.

11. X dominated the young men by visiting them and phoning them frequently. He encouraged them to phone him regularly and ask advice and almost permission for most things they did.
12. Everything was done in the utmost secrecy so that it was almost a secret society. Although X held a very important position in a particular Christian work the young men were told by X never to tell the leader about the beatings.
13. The beatings stopped when the leader of the Christian work received an anonymous letter about them and, at the same time but independantly, some of the young men involved sought advice from a Church leader and brought everything to light.

Copy 1. Copy 2. Copy 3.

<sup>64</sup> A handwritten version of this, written by David Fletcher, with annotations made by Mark Ruston can be seen at Appendix 12

- 12.1.151 In further correspondence dated 15<sup>th</sup> June 1983 David MacInnes writes to David Fletcher stating "I had a very good letter back from George Carey and he is going to take what opportunities he can. I hope we shall hear of any reactions that there may be from that end":

THE REV. CANON DAVID R. MACINNES  
DIOCESAN MISSIONER

32 SALISBURY ROAD,  
MOSELEY,  
BIRMINGHAM. B13 8JT  
TEL: 021-449 1479  
643 1984

15th June 1983

The Rev. David Fletcher,  
4 Burfield Road,  
Chorleywood,  
Hertfordshire WD3 5NS

Dear David,

I think it would be good if you could get in touch with David Jackman, direct. I am sure he wouldn't be in any way disturbed by it, and it would be helpful to have someone else keeping him in touch with the way things are going on.

I had a very good letter back from George Carey who is going to try and take what opportunities he can. I hope we shall hear of any reactions that there may be from that end.

With warmest good wishes,

As ever,



dictated by David MacInnes  
and signed

- 12.1.152 This correspondence dated 7<sup>th</sup> June 1984 from David MacInnes is suggesting he had sent "Mark's memo" to George Carey:

THE REV. CANON DAVID R. MACINNES  
DIOCESAN MISSIONER

32, SALISBURY ROAD,  
MOSELEY,  
BIRMINGHAM. B13 8JT  
TEL. 021-449 1479

7th June 1984


The Rev. David Fletcher,  
4 Burfield Road,  
Chorleywood,  
Hertfordshire WD3 5NS

My dear David,

Many thanks indeed for sending the copy of Mark's memo. I shall try to discover what happened to the two copies that I previously had. It may be that I never got them back from David Jackman and George Carey. Alternatively, it is possible that I have mislaid them in my excellent filing system!

I am so glad that you saw J.S. again. He and Ann were very upset by my not having consulted them before having rung Michael C. It may have been a mistake not to have confided in Ann first, but as John was in Africa at the time, and it seemed important to get on with it urgently, I don't think that I made a mistake. However, the more that John and Ann can be encouraged and helped, the better. I think that I am the real ogre at the moment!

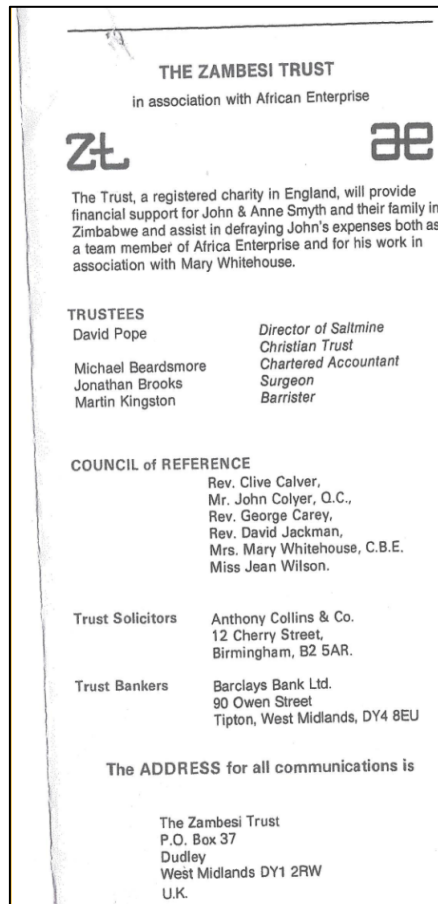
As ever,



- 12.1.153 This is in the context of an exchange of letters between David MacInnes and David Fletcher between June 1983 and September 1984 which deal with the attempts being made to warn people about John Smyth. The only reasonable conclusion from reading this extract from the letter of June 1983 is that George Carey had been alerted to the risk that John Smyth posed and sent a typed version of this document.
- 12.1.154 It is possible, although not probable, that George Carey did not physically receive the report, however information available to reviewers does suggest it was sent to him and to David Jackman (who confirms he received this).

**Point (c)**

- 12.1.155 George Carey says that he did not know that he was named as being on the Council of Reference for the Zambesi Trust. It is, again, possible but not probable that this was the case. It could be that John Smyth simply included his name in the list without consulting him, but this seems unlikely on balance, given at least one other person named, His Honour John Colyer, has informed us that they were formally approached for their agreement to be part of this. Below is a copy of the leaflet naming those members of the Council of Reference:



- 12.1.156 John Smyth attended an Evangelist conference in Amsterdam in mid-1983. It is thought that the leader of African Enterprise (Chris Sewell, now deceased) invited John Smyth to join African Enterprise at this point.
- 12.1.157 We have heard from a victim that, during the 1980s, he was asked about John Smyth during a Selection Conference for his ordination. Mark Ruston had written to the Selection Conference Chair, Albert "John" Trillo (now deceased). We have been advised that this included a specific reference to the abuse perpetrated by John Smyth. The reason given by Mark Ruston for writing to the Chair in this way was that it demonstrated how well the victim had adapted and recovered from the abuse. It is thought that only the Chair saw the reference. It is significant that the Chair of the conference, a senior member of the clergy, did not act on this information or seek to report this further. Even within the context of the time, with no formal Church of England safeguarding guidance, this clearly demonstrates a lack of understanding of safeguarding, both by Mark Ruston and by the Bishop.
- 12.1.158 In 1983, John Smyth attended Billy Graham's "Mission England" tour and is said to have sat with Billy Graham at the 'top' table during a mass event for his visit to the UK at Bristol football stadium.
- 12.1.159 Later that year, in November 1983, the psychiatrist referenced earlier, actively warned Dr Peter May about John Smyth joining the local Mission Solent committee. He told him to "*get rid of him*". David Fletcher also visited Peter May to warn him (and his wife) off enlisting John Smyth on the committee. Peter May thought that the police had been informed. Peter May and his wife then confronted John and Anne Smyth, telling them of the approach from David Fletcher. John Smyth's response to this was to try to justify the beatings as "*spiritual discipline*" and this was reported back to David Fletcher by Peter May. John Smyth did not participate in the Mission Solent committee from this point on.
- 12.1.160 In July 1984, a newsletter was sent by John and Anne Smyth to their contacts and followers, describing their planned move to Africa. The text from this suggests that they were "invited" by African Enterprise to join their Zimbabwe team. The newsletter reads: "*Over the last ten months God has led us in a series of most remarkable events, an account of which must wait for another occasion.*"
- 12.1.161 In early 1984, John and Anne Smyth travelled to Vancouver, with John Smyth probably attending a short course at the Regent Theological College there. It is thought that he wanted to hear a lecture from Jim Packer, a leading Conservative Evangelical at the time. Reviewers contacted the College who were unable to advise if records could confirm this, however. This is a demonstration of how free John Smyth was to travel and to continue to develop his wish to form a Ministry.
- 12.1.162 Just prior to the Smyth's leaving for Zimbabwe, Reverend Peter Marshall, in an interview with us, said that he was told, by David Fletcher, of "*a terrible thing,*" involving "*sadomasochism*". He said that he took no further action because David Fletcher had assured him that the parents and the young men wanted no action taking, that the Governors at Winchester College and the Trustees of the Iwerne Trust were dealing with the matter and that he would have had insufficient information to pass on to the police in any case.
- 12.1.163 The Smyth family house near Winchester was sold early in 1984 and the family move into rented accommodation in Alresford, Hampshire, where they lived until their relocation to Zimbabwe in July 1984.
- 12.1.164 Michael Cassidy, a Director of African Enterprise, sends a round robin letter to people connected with African Enterprise, asking for donations to enable John Smyth and the family to move to Harare, Zimbabwe. He also references the planned Zambesi Trust. David Fletcher is informed by David MacInnes of this planned move and John Smyth's appointment to African Enterprise. David MacInnes tries contacting Michael Cassidy to warn him about John Smyth. David Jackman also confirms the problems he has experienced regarding John Smyth. Michael Cassidy's response to these warnings is

to say that the move “*is too far advanced to be reversed*”, but he would like “*more details of the JJS situation*”. He says that John Smyth will be “*on probation*”. John Smyth is in South Africa at the time of these exchanges. Michael Cassidy declined to be interviewed for this Review.

- 12.1.165 David MacInnes also confirms, in a letter to David Fletcher, that he has sent the Ruston Report to David Jackman and George Carey and that John and Anne Smyth are “*upset*” at the contacts with Michael Cassidy.
- 12.1.166 John Smyth attended an AE Mission in Zimbabwe but took no active part. In the visitor’s book, he lists his roles as “*Vice Chairman and Finance*” and “*Mission England Liaison*” despite other people being clearly listed as fulfilling those roles. This demonstrates that he was, in effect, “*over-claiming*” his importance to African Enterprise.
- 12.1.167 At this time, a vote was taken by the Lawyers Christian Fellowship<sup>65</sup> (LCF) London members which agreed to offer general, but not financial, support to John Smyth in his work in Africa. They considered and rejected the idea that they would be there to show support on his leaving at the airport. A leading person in the LCF, His Honour John Colyer, told the Review that he had an “*uneasy feeling*” about John Smyth and the Mission, but was not sure what that was based on at the time. This illustrates a growing concern about John Smyth in wider circles.

### 13. TIME PERIOD: JUNE 1984 – 2011

#### Key Findings

- 13.1.1 The Review ToR steer us to focus on two related but distinct questions: (1) what the Church of England (i.e. relevant officers and institutions) knew about alleged abuse perpetrated by John Smyth; and (2) what the response of the Church of England to those allegations was. For this period, in response to these questions, we have found the following:
- (a) By 2012, a significant number of people knew of the abuse perpetrated by John Smyth in the UK and Zimbabwe, including those individuals who are known to have seen the Ruston Report, that were told of it, were told by a third party, or had direct knowledge of the abuse. We are also aware that several spouses, family members and friends of these individuals were also told about the abuse.
  - (b) This does not include the parents of boys and young men abused in the UK and Zimbabwe (and possibly South Africa) and, of course, the victims themselves. A figure in the order of between 26 and 30 in the UK and around 85 in Zimbabwe. Added to this are people who were “*groomed*” as boys and young men, as well as the families and friends of those. Added to this, there are people who were “*groomed*” as boys and young men, as well as the families and friends of those.
  - (c) This dashes a claim that only a small and tight caucus of people knew of the abuse and that it was kept ‘secret’ as was stated in correspondence between the individuals that led the response to the abuse in 1982 and has been repeated to us during this Review.
  - (d) There is definite evidence that many Church Officers, including a Bishop knew of the abuses in the UK in this period. In addition, it is probable that another Bishop knew of the abuse, with a further Bishop being told a partial account of the abuse by a victim.
  - (e) A significant number of those that were aware of the abuse at this time were very senior figures within the Church of England, or went on to very senior positions including Archbishops and Queen’s Chaplains. Powerful evangelical Clergy knew

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<sup>65</sup> Lawyers Christian Fellowship is a international membership organisation described as... ‘Bringing together and supporting lawyers who trust Jesus as Saviour and follow him as Lord, so they make a gospel IMPACT in the legal world’



of the abuse – including David and Jonathan Fletcher, Mark Ashton, Mark Ruston.

- (f) A small but important number of Lay people, holding influential and powerful positions within the Conservative Evangelical network, knew something of the abuse. One of these was a member of the General Synod.
- (g) Three psychiatrists in the UK and two in Zimbabwe knew of the UK abuse in detail.
- (h) This abuse should have been reported to senior figures within the Church of England and to the relevant authorities, including the police. Safeguarding policies and procedures that gave a framework for reporting by Church officials were not in place within the Church of England until 1995. However, as time goes on, with new policies and procedures coming into force, this becomes less valid as a reason for lack of action. Throughout this period, that before and after, there was a moral duty to act on knowledge of abuse and as argued previously, a duty to report crime.

John Smyth was able to abuse boys and young men in Zimbabwe (and possibly South Africa) because of inaction of Clergy within the Church of England.

### Chronology – June 1984 to 2011

Date - Year/Month	Event
<b>June 1984</b>	
7 <sup>th</sup> June 1984	David MacInnes writes to David Fletcher to confirm receipt of the typed document known as " <i>Marks Memo</i> " - a summary version produced by David Fletcher of the Ruston Report. David MacInnes advises he is trying to establish what happened to the two copies he previously had, suggesting " <i>It may be that I never got them back from David Jackman and George Carey</i> ".
23 <sup>rd</sup> June 1984	Mission England with Billy Graham took place in UK - John Smyth signed visitors book giving a Zimbabwe address. He states he is " <i>Vice Chairman &amp; Finance</i> " and " <i>Mission England Liaison</i> " despite not being officially in these roles and other people being clearly listed as fulfilling these.
12 <sup>th</sup> August 1984	The Smyth family move to Zimbabwe. John Smyth begins working for Africa Enterprise in partnership with Michael Cassidy. Visited Andy Shaw on their first evening having moved to Zimbabwe.
August 1984	John Smyth working as a Missionary in South Africa.
	LCF voted on whether to offer support John Smyth in Zimbabwe. Agreed to offer general, but not financial support.
	Anthony Cordle visited Smyth family in Zimbabwe. On one occasion he meets with a lawyer (Tim Tanser) to advise him that it would be unwise to engage with John Smyth, as there was active talk of concerns about something that had " <i>gone wrong</i> " in the UK with John Smyth.
	David Jackman speaks with Michael Cassidy, to advise of John Smyth's appointment's suggesting they " <i>did not discuss John Smyth's past in any great detail but I was asked to confirm his gifting, repentance and changed behaviour, which at that time was still positive as far as I knew</i> ". David Jackman received a letter from David MacInnes to inform him that he had spoken in more detail to Michael Cassidy, so that he had been made more fully aware of the whole matter.

Date - Year/Month	Event
14 <sup>th</sup> September 1984	David MacInnes wrote to David Fletcher confirming he has spoken to Michael Cassidy who is said to be glad <i>'full events have not been concealed from him'</i> . David MacInnes mentions <i>"chance meeting at NFL"</i> (possibly North Foreland Lodge) Stewards Trust 'house party' location.
15 <sup>th</sup> November 1984	Zambesi Trust UK registered. Starting actively operating in 1986.
<b>1985</b>	
1985 (month unknown)	His Honour John Colyer asked by John Smyth to be named on Council of Reference for Zambesi Trust.
	Martin and Jill Kingston visit Smyth family in Zimbabwe. Also visiting Andy Shaw. They describe that John Smyth was in state of <i>"constant near nakedness"</i> and spending a lot of time with young men.
	Victims recount the continued impact of the abuse at this time in terms of their relationships and university education.
	John Thorn leaves Winchester College and it is reported that a signed copy of the John Smyth's undertaking would be left for the next headteacher. No record of this signed document can be found at the college.
	John Smyth advised Scripture Union Zimbabwe that he plans to run missions and camps in independent schools in Zimbabwe.
April 1985	John Smyth returns to UK to briefly represent Mary Whitehouse at an appeal hearing.
<b>1986</b>	
1986	Victims report further impacts of abuse including disclosure to family members and loved ones.
	John Smyth identifies various funding supporters for Zambesi Ministries
	John Smyth founded Zambesi Trust, listed as General Director until 2001. Zambesi Trust was set up in the UK and Canada to support the work of Zambesi Ministries.
	Board members of the Zambesi Trust (United Kingdom) are reported to have <i>"felt a slight unease concerning Mr Smyth's attitude to use of money (lifestyle) and his reluctance to seek or accept an effective pastoral oversight by a local senior Christian"</i> and <i>"that Mr Smyth would not appear to have a 'sending church'."</i>
	John Smyth meets with David Cunningham (previously National Director of Scripture Union in Zimbabwe) to discuss a plan to deliver ministry in Independent Schools in Zimbabwe. John Smyth states he has no plans to run holiday camps.
17 <sup>th</sup> January 1986	Michael Cassidy sends a generic letter to Zambesi Trust Trustees and others requesting funds for John Smyth's work and children's school fees.
24 <sup>th</sup> April 1986	David Pope sends a letter on behalf of Trustees from Zambesi Trust thanking a supporter for their financial contribution to John Smyth's work.

Date - Year/Month	Event
	Also sending an invitation to meet with John and Anne Smyth in London to hear about the work.
End of April 1986	John and Anne Smyth visit Canada (Calgary) and USA (Washington DC) and then London.
20 <sup>th</sup> May 1986	John and Anne Smyth hold informal meeting in a supporters London home for supporters, regarding their Zambesi Trust mission and work in Zimbabwe.
June 1986	Anthony Cordle visits Zimbabwe with three MPs (Simon Hughes, Alistair Burt, Peter Pike) and meets with John Smyth for a full day of meetings including a meeting with President of Zimbabwe.
1 <sup>st</sup> July 1986	Smyth Family Newsletter states John Smyth has handed over office and leadership of Africa Enterprise on 30/06/1986 to Luke Klemo.
August 1986	First recorded camp by Zambesi Ministries at Peterhouse School, the school attended at this time by John Smyth's son.
September 1986	Zambesi Ministries started by John Smyth and Andy Shaw.
	John Smyth spends a week in Nairobi visiting different Seminaries and educational establishments.
	Zambesi Holiday Camp for boys at Lake Mcllwaine - Andy Shaw present, it is not clear if John Smyth attended.
October 1986	John and Anne Smyth attend Lomagundi College for five days addressing pupils in different Christian talks school.
November 1986	First Zambesi Ministries newsletter published. John Smyth continues to preach and minister at Highlands Presbyterian Church. Zambesi Holidays programme of camps organised with Andy Shaw.
<b>1987</b>	
January 1987	Victim visits Mark Ruston in Cambridge, Mark puts victim in touch with a psychiatrist.
April 1987	John Smyth starts to explore expansion of ministry in Zimbabwe and Malawi.
17 <sup>th</sup> June 1987	Letter sent from Michael Cassidy (Africa Enterprise) to Jonathan Fletcher in response to letter from him. Michael Cassidy explains his motivation for allowing John Smyth a fresh start with his organisation (Africa Enterprise), describes how later John Smyth's " <i>control syndrome</i> " manifested itself and led to the team leader stepping down and John Smyth taking control. Describes how John Smyth has now stepped out and is starting his " <i>own show</i> ". Michael is seeking advice about who should caution John Smyth about his work with children asks that he is advised as he needs their " <i>counsel and wisdom</i> ".
August 1987	Young men from UK visit Zimbabwe and stay with Smyth Family. John Smyth was witnessed to baptise a young man in their swimming pool whilst they were both naked.
1 <sup>st</sup> September 1987	First birthday celebrations take place for Zambesi Holidays.

Date - Year/Month	Event
23 <sup>rd</sup> September 1987	John and Anne Smyth return to UK for 2.5 weeks to explore fundraising opportunities for Zambesi Ministries.
September 1987	Zambesi newsletter published.
26 <sup>th</sup> October 1987	Letter from Michael Cassidy to Jonathan Fletcher, stating that he does not feel able to share knowledge of John Smyth's abuses in UK with John Smyth's trustees or colleagues in Zambesi Trust. He states he feels that the communications should take place from those in the UK who have better knowledge and understanding of the abuse. Offers to write to John Smyth.
30 <sup>th</sup> November 1987	Mark Ashton writes to David Fletcher asking if they should " <i>do anything more on that front</i> " regarding Michael Cassidy's letter to Jonathan Fletcher.
11 <sup>th</sup> December 1987	David Fletcher responds to Michael Cassidy to suggest he should write to Trustees of Zambesi Trust via Jonathan Brooks and suggest that they can then contact Mark Ashton for full details. David Fletcher suggests something should be done and he could write himself if Michael Cassidy is reluctant.
	David MacInnes writes to David Fletcher to advise he has explained some detail to Martin Kingston suggesting he felt it right to " <i>hold nothing back</i> " from Martin as there is a " <i>degree of risk</i> " given John Smyth's work with young people in Zimbabwe.
18 <sup>th</sup> December 1987	John Smyth addresses Zimbabwean Institute of Public Relations and gives Evangelical Christmas Talk.
31 <sup>st</sup> December 1987	John Smyth and Anne Smyth permit to work in Zimbabwe due for renewal.
<b>1988</b>	
5 <sup>th</sup> January 1988	Michael Cassidy sends handwritten note to David Fletcher expressing he is still of the view that he " <i>should not be the one to write</i> " to UK trustees but that he is happy to write to John Smyth himself.
27 <sup>th</sup> June 1988	Note on a Iwerne pre-paid invitation postcard is sent to Tim Sterry with message: " <i>Miscreants should be brought to justice not sent abroad to save face; there they will no doubt find other victims. I am tempted to go public. Never bother me again.</i> "
29 <sup>th</sup> June 1988	Copy of postcard sent by Tim Sterry to David Fletcher and Mark Ruston.
4 <sup>th</sup> July 1988	Letter from David Fletcher to Mark Ruston. David speculates if postcard is from same person as the one sent in 1982.
31 <sup>st</sup> July 1988	Young man from UK volunteers with Zambesi Ministries as gap year student, until Easter 1989, supporting the 'teenage mission'.
15 <sup>th</sup> August 1988	John Smyth replies to David Fletcher about the postcard Tim Sterry received on 27 <sup>th</sup> June, John Smyth states he has no knowledge of the person who sent it.
<b>1989</b>	

Date - Year/Month	Event
30 <sup>th</sup> January 1989	John Smyth meets David Pope and Michael Beardsmore at London Gatwick Airport to challenge John Smyth and to ask him to stop working with boys and young men.
Early February 1989	John Smyth writes to Zambesi Trustees in UK to advise of book due to be published by John Thorn.
	John Smyth visits John Thorn, John Smyth tells John that because he had moved out of the country, he felt that the promise/undertaking he had made then could be ignored.
23 <sup>rd</sup> February 1989	'The Road to Winchester' by John Thorn published.
15 <sup>th</sup> March 1989	John and Anne Smyth receive copy of extract from John Thorn's book.
	John Smyth writes to Mark Ashton, suggesting factual inaccuracies in John Thorn's book. He suggests " <i>only a few dozen people</i> " knew of the abuse, and disputes he was driven away from England, and that this was a decision he made in June 1983 " <i>whilst doing a term at Theological College</i> ".
18 <sup>th</sup> March 1989	John Smyth writes to David Pope, about book publication. He states he was badly let down by John Thorn who he describes as a man " <i>utterly breaking his word</i> ". He sends a 'statement to correct factual errors' and advises he has sent on to: Judge Arthur Mildon (his former head of chambers) John Colyer QC, Christopher Smyth (his brother), Charles and Jane Auld, Jeremy Maurice and Michael Hubbard QC, Johnathan and Janet Brooks, Jamie Colman.
19 <sup>th</sup> March 1989	Statement regarding John Thorn book content about John Smyth sent to Zambesi Trustees in UK.
	Following the publication of 'The Road to Winchester' by John Thorn, and the release of John Smyth's statement to Zambesi Trustees on the content, David Pope (Zambezi Trust UK board member) " <i>contacted David Mackinnes (sic), David Fletcher and Mark Ashton who confirmed the bare bones of the matter. David Mackinnes (sic) provided a copy of Canon Ruston's report.</i> " <sup>66</sup>
13 <sup>th</sup> April 1989	LCF discuss John Smyth's attendance at LCF conference in Birmingham in September.
21 <sup>st</sup> April 1989	John Smyth writes to John Colyer saying he is unable to attend LCF conference due to being overcommitted and unable to fund his ticket.
25 <sup>th</sup> April 1989	Letter from David Pope to David Fletcher stating Zambesi UK Trustees were unaware of John Smyth's history when Zambezi Trust was formed.
April 1989	Telephone call between John Smyth and a member of Zambesi Trust UK Council of Reference. John Smyth is questioned about abuse and his response is that things had been " <i>completely exaggerated</i> ", and that no serious physical abuse had taken place.
19 <sup>th</sup> May 1989	Letter from David Fletcher to David Pope reiterating that John Smyth does not understand how horrific his abuse was.
May 1989	Andy Shaw leaves Zambesi UK Trust.

<sup>66</sup> Source: [Report written by David Coltart in 1993](#)

Date - Year/Month	Event
11 <sup>th</sup> June 1989	Sermon given by Mark Ruston titled ' <i>Suffering and Glory</i> ' in which he refers to abuse from John Smyth.
22 <sup>nd</sup> June 1989	Zambesi UK Trustees write to John Smyth advising that if he didn't withdraw from personal involvement with youth work they would resign en masse.
	Jamie Colman asks Zambesi UK Trustees to continue their support of John Smyth.
14 <sup>th</sup> July 1989	Zambesi trustees resign due to John Smyth not meeting conditions as requested.
	Richard Johnson, Chairman of Zambesi Trust in Zimbabwe, sends letter on behalf of John Smyth to Zambesi UK Trustees rejecting their proposal for John Smyth and accepting their resignation.
19 <sup>th</sup> July 1989	Mark Ashton writes to John Smyth to decline offer to chair Zambesi Trust UK.
July 1989	Jamie Colman approached by John Smyth to set up new Zambesi Trust UK board of Trustees.
September 1989	Jamie Colman becomes Chair of Zambesi Trust UK. He contacts most of the trustees who resigned in June to try to convince them to support John Smyth.
November 1989	Smyth family given a three-year residency permit for Zimbabwe.
December 1989	Zambesi Holiday camp for boys takes place.
1989	Reverend CJ Davis discussed John Smyth abuse with Jonathan Fletcher, after being told of this by Reverend Richard Coombs. Jonathan Fletcher reflected narrative that victims did not want any action taken, Headmaster and parents knew and didn't want any action taken or to be made public. Jonathan Fletcher stated there were concerns about John Smyth reoffending in South Africa/Zimbabwe.
<b>1990</b>	
'Early' 1990	Jamie Colman and Sue Colman visit camps in Africa staying with John Smyth and family.
January 1990	George Niven from Peterhouse School in Zimbabwe writes to David Fletcher, responding to letter from him 24 <sup>th</sup> December 1989. George Niven advises that there is nothing he can do to prevent 'the mission' and that he will ensure that John Smyth is not welcome inside boarding houses. Identifies problems about challenging John's mission and his confidence that 'lord will come up with a plan'.
January 1990	Zambesi Trust Newsletter ' <i>Zambesi Currents</i> ' published. Names Jamie Colman as new chair and mentions his visit to Zimbabwe. Document also describes " <i>storms for Zambesi Ministries</i> " during 1989.
February 1990	Mark Ashton writes to John Smyth suggesting he has " <i>no peace with the matter</i> " of John Smyth continuing his work with young people. Mark Ashton raises concerns about the lack of " <i>pastoral oversight</i> " of John Smyth in Zimbabwe who has " <i>knowledge of what went on at Morestead</i> ".

Date - Year/Month	Event
3 <sup>rd</sup> March 1990	Reverend Patrick Whitworth, of Christchurch Gipsy Hill, contacts David Fletcher asking for advice regarding John Smyth's fundraising for Zambesi Ministries in the parish, requesting further details of his " <i>past activities</i> " asks if John Smyth is trustworthy and should they be gifting the money.
23 <sup>rd</sup> March 1990	Mark Ashton writes to Jamie Colman to express concern about John Smyth's activities in Zimbabwe highlighting how he " <i>deceived all his Christian Colleagues back at Morestead</i> ". Quoting his own letter to John Smyth that stated " <i>worry about you [John Smyth] establishing over-intense relationships with younger male colleagues in ministry</i> ", and his dependence on those relationships.
26 <sup>th</sup> March 1990	Jamie Colman replies to Mark Ashton's letter. Jamie Colman advises that John Smyth is now within a " <i>pastoral arrangement</i> " with an ordained minister (Richard Johnson), and " <i>The Traceys</i> ". He questions, of John Smyth's history of abuse, if " <i>once fallen in a particular fashion are you thereafter disqualified until the very end of the game?</i> "
April – May 1990	Zambesi Ministries holiday camps take place for boys and girls, victims report being physical abused by John Smyth with a table tennis bat (known as TTB), as well as John Smyth wandering around naked in front of them and talks by John Smyth on sex and manliness.
Summer 1990	Justin Welby attends Summer Iwerne Camps.
7 <sup>th</sup> June 1990	David Fletcher writes to George Niven in Zimbabwe sending the Ruston Report and communications with John Smyth on this in 1982. Gives detail of history, including that Michael Cassidy knew of the abuse after appointing John in Africa but understood he was not working with children, that " <i>Anne [Smyth] knew of the beatings and how much in general the boys suffered</i> ". David Fletcher asks that this is shared only with George Niven's wife and also John Bell.
29 <sup>th</sup> July 1990	George Niven replies to David Fletcher, talks of concerns that " <i>recent developments in the running of camps may indicate history is repeating itself</i> " and plans that he and John Bell have to approach concerns with John and others in Zimbabwe.
6 <sup>th</sup> August 1990	Confidential memo sent from Zambesi Trust UK to Zambesi Trust Canada which detailed John Smyth's abuses in UK including, as is referenced in the Ruston Report, that these were " <i>technically all criminal offences</i> " under Offences Against the Person Act of 1861, Section 47'.
20- 27 <sup>th</sup> August 1990	Zambesi Holiday camp for boys and girls takes place.
1 <sup>st</sup> September 1990	Zambesi Holiday camp split into single sex groups for first time. Boys camp takes place.
5 <sup>th</sup> September 1990	Mark Ashton writes to David Fletcher advising he thinks David's concerns about how John Smyth's work is developing should be expressed to Jamie Colman as chair of UK trustees.
14 <sup>th</sup> September 1990	Jamie Colman writes to David Fletcher in response to a letter from David concerned about John Smyth running a boys camp in Zimbabwe. Jamie states that he is " <i>operating in the open</i> ". Jamie states he is unsure what David means about John Smyth being in charge of " <i>boys single sex camps</i> " and that he (Jamie) is aware of how serious the events were and the devastation they are still causing, deferring to God to determine the " <i>way</i> " and offering to meet.



Date - Year/Month	Event
16 <sup>th</sup> September 1990	David Fletcher writes in response to Jamie Colman. Clarifying he had read that John Smyth was running single sex boys camps in his 'Zambesi Currents' newsletter. David flags his concern again and states that he considers the situation " <i>dangerous</i> ".
16 <sup>th</sup> September 1990	John Smyth writes to George Niven following a meeting they had, John Smyth advises he is " <i>grateful to you for bringing to a conclusion in my mind this difficult matter of whacking the unruly day scholars on camp with the table tennis bat</i> " he advises that he has decided " <i>we must manage without it in the future</i> ".
18 <sup>th</sup> September 1990	Jamie Colman writes to David Fletcher to confirm arrangements for boys camps are as he understood. He asks David for more explanation of the " <i>danger</i> " and why the situation is now more dangerous. He suggests that the Board in Harare is very much behind all that is happening.
21 <sup>st</sup> September 1990	David Fletcher replies to Jamie Colman explaining that " <i>each person that I have revealed all the facts has been horrified and immediately seen the danger</i> ", and that those in Harare may not be in possession of all the facts. He goes on to explain how an " <i>eminent psychiatrist</i> " described John Smyth's abuse as homosexual sadistic activity, explaining the danger in more detail.
26 <sup>th</sup> September 1990	Jamie Colman replies to David Fletcher advising he has " <i>been told of the matters you refer to</i> " and the risk of " <i>danger depends upon opportunity</i> " before there is an unacceptable risk. He advises that the local board are aware of the day-to-day activities and consider themselves in control and support John in his work. He concludes that a meeting would not take them further forward and thanks David for his concern, but suggests no need to continue with correspondence if David disagrees.
30 <sup>th</sup> September 1990	John Smyth visits UK.
29 <sup>th</sup> October 1990	Richard Johnson meets with concerned Zimbabwean Clergy and teachers regarding John Smyth's abuse in UK, Richard has been shown a copy of the Ruston Report. Prior to the meeting John Smyth threatens one of the people about their career.
11 <sup>th</sup> December 1990	Zambesi camps for boys and girls take place.
12 <sup>th</sup> December 1990	Peterhouse School (Zimbabwe) cease all involvement with Zambesi Ministries because of their concerns about John Smyth being dismissed by Richard Johnson.

Date – Year/Month	Event
<b>1991</b>	
1991	Zambesi holiday camps led by John Smyth take place throughout the year.
1991 (month unknown)	Reports of physical abuse of boys attending camp including beating with a table tennis bat. Reports also of enforced nudity during camps.
	John Smyth develops close relationship with several boys outside of the camp. Inviting them to play squash and taking them to school in the mornings.
	John and Anne Smyth visit UK and stay with Jamie and Sue Colman. John Smyth said to have been in the UK attempting to recruit more trustees for Zambesi Trust.
Summer 1991	Justin Welby attends Summer Iwerne Camps.
Late August/Early September 1991	Sue Colman visits the Smyth Family in Zimbabwe, visiting a Girl's Zambesi holiday camp.
December 1991	John Smyth purchases a house in Zimbabwe, names this Zambesi House. Zambesi Ministries offices are set up in the house. A wing of the house is set up for guests.
	John Smyth starts his own 'Church' at Zambesi House, regularly holding services on Sunday nights at half-past six.
<b>1992</b>	
1992	At least six Zambesi holiday camps take place throughout the year, led by John Smyth. Reports of regular abuse by John Smyth including; beating with table tennis bat, enforced nudity, naked swimming, and showering. John Smyth gives regular lectures about masturbation. He sleeps in dormitory area with boys rather than in the separate staff quarters.
	Justin Welby was ordained as a Deacon in the Church of England.
February 1992	Several UK victims meet to discuss John Smyth and the abuse they experienced 10 years previously.
April 1992	Zambesi holiday camp takes place, John Smyth gives a talk on adolescence and masturbation.
Summer 1992	Reports that young men begin to spend their gap year with John Smyth working with Zambesi Trust and camps.
August 1992	Zambesi holiday camp takes place.
December 1992	Zambesi holiday camp takes place. John Smyth gives a talk on adolescence and masturbation. John Smyth perpetrates physical abuse and enforces nudity of boys during the camps.
15 <sup>th</sup> December 1992	Guide Nyachuru, a 16-year-old boy, tragically dies whilst at Zambesi Holiday Camp. He is found in the swimming pool by a gardener early in the morning.

31 <sup>st</sup> December 1992	John Smyth officiates at Guide Nyachuru's funeral in Zimbabwe.
<b>1993</b>	
1993 (month unknown)	John Smyth attends Christian Mission in South Africa with a 'team of young men'. He is said to have slept in rooms with boys and taken showers with them.
	Jamie and Sue Colman visit the Smyth Family in Zimbabwe, attending Zambesi holiday camps.
14 <sup>th</sup> April 1993	Zambesi holiday camp takes place. Victims report competition to see who could get the most 'TTB's'. Shortly after this camp a parent notices bruising on child. A doctor examines the child and details age and size of bruising.
23 <sup>rd</sup> April 1993	Further Zambesi holiday camp takes place - John Smyth perpetrates physical abuse. He enforces nudity of boys, naked swimming during the camps.
26 <sup>th</sup> May 1993	Parents of boys who had attended Zambesi holiday camps complain to Christian pastors (Bulawayo pastors) about abuse perpetrated by John Smyth. They seek legal advice from David Coltart of Webb, Low and Barry.
27 <sup>th</sup> May 1993	David Coltart also contacts David Fletcher and is sent a copy of The Ruston Report. David Fletcher then contacts a victim to ask for a report on his experience of abuse to send to David Coltart. David Fletcher said to have visited John Smyth in Zimbabwe during 1993.
June 1992	Nick Stott stayed with John and Anne Smyth while on a gap year, for approximately six months.
23 <sup>rd</sup> June 1993	Webb, Low and Barry write to John Smyth setting out allegations of physical abuse. Invite John Smyth to respond and instructing him to cease Zambesi camps.
29 <sup>th</sup> June 1993	Meeting takes place between John Smyth and Christian (Bulawayo) pastors at Webb, Low and Barry offices. John Smyth denies or minimises all allegations. John Smyth admits to taking photographs of naked boys but that photos were " <i>from shoulders up</i> " for publicity purposes.
30 <sup>th</sup> June 1993	David Coltart contacted by a lawyer, Tim Tanser who has been instructed by John Smyth asking that all " <i>dealings</i> " are between David Coltart and Tim Tanser, warning that Christian (Bulawayo) pastors should " <i>be careful as they may face defamation action</i> ".
7 <sup>th</sup> July 1993	Letter sent to David Coltart from a UK victim describing John Smyth's abuse, describing his use of religious verses in the abuse.
8 <sup>th</sup> July 1993	David Coltart receives an account from Jonathan Brooks regarding resignation of previous Zambesi Trust Board following concerns about John Smyth and abuse.
10 <sup>th</sup> July 1993	Meeting takes place between Tim Tanser and David Coltart, Tim Tanser hands over a formal letter responding to allegations made by Christian (Bulawayo) pastors, rejecting allegations of criminal conduct and detailing steps being taken in camps to ensure no " <i>misunderstanding</i> ". Pastors stress the need to meet with Zambesi

	Trust Zimbabwe Board as it was felt " <i>they did not appreciate seriousness of allegations</i> ".
20 <sup>th</sup> July 1993	David Coltart receives a notification from John Smyth lawyers that Zimbabwe Ministry of Home Affairs rejected John Smyth's appeal against refusal of permanent residence permit - the appeal had been going on for many months and John Smyth was directed to attend immigration to make arrangements to leave. His lawyer suggests now no reason to meet with Zambesi Trust's current board members. David Coltart rejects this reason and pursues a meeting.
21 <sup>st</sup> July 1993	Phone call between David Coltart and Tim Tanser advising Zambesi Trust Board not prepared to meet but would write stating their position. They advised Jamie Colman would be in Zimbabwe shortly and may be prepared to meet with Christian (Bulawayo) pastors.
24 <sup>th</sup> July 1993	Jamie Colman meets with David Coltart, Christian (Bulawayo) pastors and two parents about concerns. Jamie Colman stated " <i>substance of allegations</i> " correct, in context of " <i>weak church</i> " and " <i>discipleship</i> ", that Zambesi ministry was " <i>aimed at portraying manly rugged Christianity</i> ".
28 <sup>th</sup> July 1993	Christian (Bulawayo) pastors meet with Zambesi Trust Zimbabwe Trustees - both parties agreed not being in dispute of allegations of abuse against John Smyth – but being in dispute about interpretation of those actions. Agreed that there would be no TTB or beating of any kind, no nudity and no access by John Smyth to showers or dormitories at camps and that John Smyth would seek psychological support within 30 days of the meeting.
30 <sup>th</sup> July 1993	John Smyth writes letter to parents of boys due at Zambesi Holiday camp to justify physical abuse and mandatory nudity within camp. Describes himself as a " <i>father figure</i> " at camp.
August 1993	John Smyth is given detail of the agreed conditions following the meeting between the members of the Zambesi Trust Board and the pastors. He is said to have " <i>strongly reacted to them</i> ".
August 1993	Two Zambesi Holidays camps for boys take place. John Smyth is reported to have perpetrated further physical abuse, including with TTB, and that he showered naked with boys at the camps.
17 <sup>th</sup> August 1993	John Smyth refuses to see a psychologist face-to-face despite request from David Coltart, Christian (Bulawayo) pastors, and other people in Zimbabwe.
10 <sup>th</sup> September 1993	Webb, Low and Barry write to Consultant Clinical Psychologist, Margaret Henning, requesting opinion and analysis of John Smyth and abuse perpetrated by him. She is sent the Ruston Report, UK victim statements, letters from Zimbabwe victim parents, and copies of John Smyth's letters to parents.
20 <sup>th</sup> September 1993	Letter sent from Richard Johnson to a pastor, giving view of Zambesi Trust Board regarding John Smyth suggesting that he " <i>is not sexually or psychologically disturbed</i> " and that " <i>failure in Britain should not cloud the successful works</i> " stating that they continue to support his work.
October 1993	Tim Tanser advises a minister in Zimbabwe that John Smyth has been granted permanent resident status in Zimbabwe.
5 <sup>th</sup> October 1993	Margaret Henning report sent to Webb, Low and Barry. Conclusion that John Smyth should desist from work with children. Dr T Brown, a second psychologist, compiled a report alongside Margaret Henning,

	agreeing with her conclusions that John Smyth should cease work with children.
19 <sup>th</sup> October 1993	Report written by David Coltart, known as 'The Coltart Report' is completed and sent to relevant parties including Christian (Bulawayo) pastors. Report details John Smyth's history of abuse in UK and continued abuse in Zimbabwe and includes psychologists' conclusions.
<b>1994</b>	
1994 (month unknown)	A couple who were members of the congregation at St Mark's Church, Battersea Rise, London, aware of John Smyth's abuse, informally met with Reverend Paul Perkin and Jamie Colman to object to the Church's funding of Zambesi Ministries.
1994 (month unknown)	Schools in Zimbabwe stopped allowing John Smyth to advertise Zambesi Holiday camps and banned John Smyth from using their premises for camps.
February 1994	Reports that Zimbabwe Minister of Home Affairs states he will either deport John Smyth or file charges against him.
April 1994	Reports of smaller Zambesi Holiday camps taking place a Zambezi House - English and Canadian students also reportedly attend.
May 1994	John Smyth receives notice of cancellation of Residency Permit.
8-9 <sup>th</sup> June 1994	John and Anne Smyth receive deportation notice and meet with Acting President of Zimbabwe and other government ministers. Decision made to place a stay on their deportation notice until Minister for Home Affairs is back from leave.
August 1994	Reports of smaller Zambesi Holiday camps taking place a Zambezi House - English and Canadian students reportedly attend.
19 <sup>th</sup> December 1994	Minister for Home Affairs advises John Smyth he is being investigated as first report of alleged crimes is made to Attorney General.
<b>1995</b>	
1985	Zimbabwe authorities continue to investigate death of Guide Nyachuru including review of information gathered by David Coltart in his report.
August 1995	House of Bishops issued the first safeguarding policy document - ' <i>Policy on Child Abuse</i> '. This policy was drafted to safeguard the welfare of the children with whom the Church works. The policy stated 10 policy commitments, including that allegations of abuse would be taken seriously, and reiterated that the Church would collaborate fully with the statutory and voluntary agencies concerned with child abuse.
September 1995	John Smyth charged with culpable homicide in respect of Guide Nyachuru and crimen injuria, in respect of physical assault on boys at Zambesi Holiday camps.
September 1995	Smyth family placed on temporary residency visas.
<b>1996</b>	
March 1996	Prosecution against John Smyth commences in Zimbabwe.

April 1996	John Smyth visits UK for two weeks - spends time with young men convincing them to return to Zimbabwe with him to join Zambesi camps.
15 <sup>th</sup> April 1996	Zambesi holiday camp takes place.
April 1996	Nick Stott visited John and Anne Smyth and attended camps, witnessing “ <i>surprising</i> ” behaviour on camp.
August 1996	Zambesi Holiday camps take place.
	Several unsuccessful attempts made by Zimbabwean Police to talk to John Smyth.
November 1996	Director for Public Prosecutions in Zimbabwe instructs prosecuting barrister to move John Smyth's case to trial.
<b>1997</b>	
February 1997	Zimbabwean Police make two attempts to arrest John Smyth, but are told by house sitters that he is away in Cape Town.
25 <sup>th</sup> March 1997	John Smyth's trial date is postponed.
1 <sup>st</sup> May 1997	John Smyth interviewed by Marondera Police under caution.
June 1997	John Smyth's trial date is postponed for a second time.
	The House of Bishops (Church of England) considered revisions to the 1995 Safeguarding policy. It was decided that this should seek an Enhanced Criminal Record Certificate for all clergy, lay workers, and retired Clergy with permission to officiate (“PtO”). Revised safeguarding policy was suggested and it was agreed that all dioceses should use their own policy.
12 <sup>th</sup> September 1997	Marondera Police third unsuccessful attempt to arrest John Smyth.
15 <sup>th</sup> September 1997	John Smyth arrested and placed on remand at Harare Magistrates Court.
17 <sup>th</sup> September 1997	Zimbabwean Newspaper, <i>The Herald</i> , features front page coverage of the crimen injuria case against John Smyth.
13 <sup>th</sup> October 1997	John Smyth's trial opens in Harare's Supreme Court.
1 <sup>st</sup> December 1997	Day one of John Smyth's trial.
	Titus Trust was set up as a charity and company, and the Iwerne Trust's assets were gifted across. Titus Trust took on financing of Scripture Union Independent Schools work from Iwerne Trust.
9 <sup>th</sup> December 1997	Day two of John Smyth's trial.
<b>1998 to 2002</b>	
January 1998	Affidavits from John Smyth's victims in Zimbabwe are prepared.
1999 (month unknown)	Robin Weekes informed by Reverend Iain Broomfield while speaking either at a Christian Forum meeting or Iwerne Camp that there was a “ <i>previous issue</i> ” regarding John Smyth and that “ <i>something bad</i> ” had happened at Winchester College.

January 1999	The House of Bishops (Church of England) produced the second edition of the safeguarding policy document entitled "Policy on Child Protection" (the "1999 Safeguarding Policy").
December 1999	Nick Stott 'considered' he was a trustee of the UK Zambesi Trust in December 1999. Trust arrangements included restricted funds specifically for support to John and Anne Smyth. Nick attended several meetings with Jamie Colman and Nix Smyth. Nick Stott was later told by Jamie Colman that papers were never filed with the charity commission.
1 <sup>st</sup> January 2000	The Titus Trust took on the responsibility of running Iwerne Camps.
2000 (months unknown)	UK victims of John Smyth advise of continuing trauma and symptoms of PTSD as a result of the abuse.
May 2001	John and Anne Smyth leave Zimbabwe for extended period described as a 'sabbatical' trip to UK and then Canada. They were unable to return to Zimbabwe and were refused re-entry, so moved to Durban after their trip.
May 2001	Nick Stott leads Zambesi Trust work on behalf of John Smyth. Zambesi Trust continued to financially support John and Anne Smyth while in South Africa.
mid 2001	John Smyth turns 60 hosting a birthday party. John Smyth hands leadership role of Zambesi camps to Nick Stott.
2002 (month unknown)	John Smyth publishes second edition of ' <i>Discovering Christianity today</i> ' and ' <i>Why Choose Heterosexuality?</i> ' Nick Stott met with the Rector at Peterhouse School, regarding a possible school mission, finding him "very angry and resistant". John and Anne Smyth move to Durban, attending His People Church, Glenwood, Durban.
1 <sup>st</sup> December 2002	John Smyth appointed as National Director to Board of the Christian Lawyers Association of South Africa (until 2003).
<b>2003</b>	
2003 (month unknown)	John Smyth starts role legal Advisor and spokesman for Doctors for Life International. John Smyth introduced as new National Director for Christian Lawyers Association South Africa ( <b>CLASA</b> ) in CLASA Newsletter.
17 <sup>th</sup> January 2003	John Smyth introduces himself via email to Mark Mullins, member of National Committee of the LCF in the UK.
22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2003	After discovering John Smyth was nearly deported from Zimbabwe due to abuse allegations, Mark Mullins contacted CLASA to have him removed from post.
April 2003	Within Church of England, the responsibility for safeguarding moved from the Board for Social Responsibility (BSR) to the General Secretariat of the Archbishops' Council.



May 2003	LCF National committee took decision to terminate John Smyth's membership giving John Smyth a right to respond .
2 <sup>nd</sup> June 2003	John Smyth gives lecture on democracy in Johannesburg for the CLASA.
24 <sup>th</sup> June 2003	Mark Mullins describes John Smyth in his statement to the LCF as " <i>not a fit person to be a member of the LCF in the absence of any true repentance from these activities</i> ".
4 <sup>th</sup> August 2003	John Smyth writes to LCF Committee and encloses a dossier entitled 'The answer to Bulawayo document of 1993' – John Smyth tells them it demonstrates the Bulawayo document was discredited at least five years ago.
12 <sup>th</sup> September 2003	Mark Mullins sends LCF Committee a copy of 1993 Report written by David Coltart and the Ruston Report of 1982.
14 <sup>th</sup> -22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2003	Email correspondence between LCF Committee, Bulawayo Pastors and David Fletcher discussing John Smyth's attempts to " <i>cover himself and maintain Christian respectability.</i> " As well as his residency issues and Government interventions in Zimbabwe.
<b>2004 to 2010</b>	
February 2004	House of Bishops (Church of England) produced a third version of the safeguarding policy document entitled " <i>Protecting all God's children,</i> " This integrated those experiences with changes in the law and developments in good practice.
2005 (month unknown)	John and Anne Smyth living in Cape Town and attend Church on Main.
	John Smyth is listed as Amicus Curiae (Impartial Advisor) to Constitutional Court making written and verbal submissions on Same Sex Marriage.
	John becomes involved in Justice Alliance South Arica (JASA), working pro bono giving legal advice and acting as a 'figure head' for them.
24 <sup>th</sup> October 2005	John Smyth's father, Colonel Edward Smyth dies in UK.
2006 (month unknown)	Anthony Cordle moves to Cape Town and meets with John Smyth – Anthony Cordle tries to talk to John Smyth about abuse in UK but John Smyth refuses.
	John Smyth takes part in Doctors for life International v Parliament, asking constitutional court to strike down choice on Termination of Pregnancy Amendment Act.
17 <sup>th</sup> March 2006	John Smyth speaks at Colloquium, University of the free state on Legal Ethics, on topic of Churches and legality of abortion in South Africa.
August/ September 2006	Joint arrangements within Church of England for national work on Safeguarding between the Church and the Methodist Church in Britain were agreed in 2006 for a period of three years up to August 2009.
November 2006	The Church of England House of Bishops produced the first policy for safeguarding adults, entitled ' <i>Promoting a Safe Church</i> ' document was part of the wider safeguarding policy framework introduced by the Church, which included responding to domestic abuse.

17 <sup>th</sup> March 2007	Zambesi Trust Canada has charity registration cancelled and all privileges taken away by Canadian Government due to failure to file taxes.
2008 (month unknown)	John Smyth sells house in Harare, Zimbabwe.
2008 (month unknown)	Victim emails John Smyth and tells him about trauma he is suffering with from the abuse, John Smyth responds by telling victim he has depression.
July 2009	JASA registered as a non-profit organisation in South Africa.
October 2010	Church of England Safeguarding Guidelines relating to Safer Recruitment were introduced in 2010.
November 2010	The Right Reverend Paul Butler (then Bishop of Southwell & Nottingham) succeeded the Right Reverend Anthony Priddis as the Lead Bishop for Safeguarding (Church of England).

### Analysis

- 13.1.2 John Smyth and his family moved to Harare, Zimbabwe, in August 1984, where he began working for African Enterprise in partnership with Michael Cassidy.
- 13.1.3 Anthony Cordle visited Zimbabwe in this period and met with a lawyer there (Tim Tanser) to advise him that it would be unwise to engage with John Smyth, as there was talk of something “*going wrong*” in the UK. Anthony Cordle told us that Tim Tanser ignored his advice but that was probably because he was not “*emphatic enough*” about the warning. Tim Tanser went on to represent John Smyth as his lawyer. This is evidence of a person trying to influence decision making in Zimbabwe, but without the benefit of this being within a more formal context.
- 13.1.4 John Smyth, with the support of African Enterprise, set up the Zambesi Trust, this was first incorporated as an organisation on the 15<sup>th</sup> November 1984.
- 13.1.5 The bulk of financial support for the Trust came from African Enterprise funders. These were individuals who were responding to funding requests that they received directly from John Smyth through circular correspondence such as newsletters. Several individuals have described their support in this way, including His Honour John Colyer who advised us that he provided some modest personal financial support to the Trust and was included in the ‘Council of Reference’ for the Zambesi Trust. An example of funding requests includes a specific plea made in one of the funding request communications to meet the school fees for John Smyth’s son:

May 1984

Dear Friend,

THE ZAMBESI TRUST

You will have recently received a letter from John and Anne Smyth asking for your prayers for them and their four children as they make preparations to leave the UK and join us in Southern Africa. May I share with you something of the vision I have for John and his family and the work to which I believe God is calling them.

The river Zambesi rises on the borders of Zaïre and Angola; it flows across Zambia and thunders over the Victoria Falls into Zimbabwe. From there it flows eastward through the southern part of Malawi and eventually out into the Indian Ocean in Mozambique. These are the countries of central and southern Africa where we believe God is calling us to push back the frontiers in making disciples and serving the churches, and where we particularly need John's skills.

But these are relatively poor countries; unemployment is high and inflation rampant. We have had to give an assurance to the government of Zimbabwe that John's support will be raised outside the country. The cost of living is extremely high, the two teenage children at least will need private schooling in Harare; furthermore I feel sure it is right that John should have the freedom to use his gifts as widely as possible as time permits in the international scene, for instance in pursuing his work with Mary Whitehouse. For these reasons we have decided to set up a trust fund in the UK to support the family and provide travelling expenses.

The Zimbabwe Board of AE of course accept their responsibility to support John as far as they are able. For the coming year they have set aside a sum from their international quota which will provide a rented house and a proportion of salary. The salary will be fixed by the trustees in the UK in consultation with the AE treasurer in London and with me. Funds will be remitted to Zimbabwe as required, and the trust will be administered as a registered charity according to English law.

We anticipate that the majority of our support will come from modest covenants. For instance 100 people covenanting £70 p.a. will produce £10,000 p.a. The most immediate need is for nearly £10,000 to cover the relocation and removal costs of John and his family. So you can see the need is quite pressing. A deed of covenant form and banker's standing order is enclosed.

I am also enclosing a brochure about Africa Enterprise. May I thank you for your help and fellowship with us. We shall keep you informed by regular mailings from the UK office.

Yours very sincerely in Christ

*Michael Cassidy*

MICHAEL CASSIDY

Stop-Press John has just returned from Harare. The visa has been granted and schools arranged. Thank you for your prayers. Please continue to pray for a home. Flights are now booked for the family to move out on August 10th.

- 13.1.6 Martin and Jill Kingston have advised us that they visited the Smyth family in Zimbabwe during 1985, with Jill Kingston commenting to Reviewers that she was disturbed by John Smyth being constantly in a state of near nakedness and his predilection for spending a great deal of time with young men. Jill Kingston also described overhearing a terrible row between John and Anne Smyth and the way in which John Smyth only paid attention to his son and not his daughters.
- 13.1.7 There was a great deal of effort expended on the promotion of Zambesi Ministries, including a visit by Anthony Cordle and several UK MPs (including Simon Hughes and Alistair Burt), who are said to have been "whisked" through a full day of appointments, which included a meeting with John Smyth. One of the meetings was with Robert Mugabe, President of Zimbabwe. This demonstrates the strong links with those in leadership roles in Africa and in the UK, with a continuing legitimisation of the Ministry that John Smyth led, enabling his contact with further child and adult victims.
- 13.1.8 John Smyth returned to the UK briefly to represent Mary Whitehouse at an appeal hearing, again demonstrating a continuing and strong link with the UK and people of influence at this time.
- 13.1.9 During 1986, the Zambesi Trust was further promoted in the UK, with John and Anne Smyth travelling to the UK for fundraising events. One such event was held in May, where a short video entitled Good News in Harare Mission was shown. John Smyth

was Director General of Zambesi Ministries until 2001. The Zambesi Trust was founded in both Zimbabwe and Canada. It is not entirely clear why a Canadian Trust was set up, but it may have been simply because of family connections there.

- 13.1.10 A newsletter published in November 1986 was the first formal communication from the newly formed Zambesi Ministries, with John and Anne Smyth and Andy and Pam Shaw leading the Ministry.
- 13.1.11 Jamie Colman, a trustee of Zambesi Ministries, was very closely associated with John Smyth at this time and had strong connections to a Church of England Church called St Marks, Battersea Rise. Jamie Colman's personal support for John Smyth and his family was very important in enabling John Smyth to develop his Mission in Zimbabwe.
- 13.1.12 Jamie Colman's support for John Smyth, his Missions and his family are documented in this Review to ensure that the full story is told, is in the public domain and fully analysed. This is to enable the Review to establish the lessons learned from the analysis and to help to make recommendations to the Church, aimed at preventing serious serial abusers being able to abuse.
- 13.1.13 Jamie Colman did not agree to take part in this Review during the evidence gathering phase, and we have, therefore, not been able to fully ascertain his version of events. It is not within the scope of the ToR for the Review for us to offer a critical opinion of Jamie Colman's support for John Smyth whilst he was not an active Church participant. We, therefore, reach no conclusions on this period. Jamie Colman did become an active Church participant later and we do make comment on his actions during that period.
- 13.1.14 John and Anne Smyth travelled extensively during 1986, promoting the Ministry and seeking funding. This included a round trip, taking in Canada (Calgary), the US (Washington DC) and London. It is of note that Anne Smyth presented one of the main talks whilst in Canada.
- 13.1.15 Family members have commented that tensions rose between John Smyth and Michael Cassidy, and John Smyth eventually split off from African Enterprise at the end of June 1986, with the role being handed over to an individual called Luke Klemo. Michael Cassidy confirmed, in a later letter to Jonathan Fletcher, that John Smyth had split from African Enterprise, because of his "*control syndrome*" leading to the Team Leader stepping down and "*John stepping up*" and then subsequently, following disagreements over leadership roles, setting up his "*own show*". Michael Cassidy seems to be seeking advice from Jonathan Fletcher and "*fellows over there*" to advise about who should "*caution*" John Smyth on his work with young people. This is another example of the ineffectiveness of attempts to stop John Smyth working with children.
- 13.1.16 John Smyth remained as an associate of African Enterprises, but from this point on was now free to pursue his "*own show*" and work with young people once again. He continued to develop camps that enabled further contact with children and young men in Africa<sup>67</sup>, despite signing the 'undertaking' in the UK following the abuse, in 1982. Michael Cassidy had knowledge of the abuse following briefings and information passed to him by Church Officers in the UK. Following John Smyth's departure from African Enterprise he was now leading camps for children with no monitoring nor oversight from those with the knowledge of the risk he posed.
- 13.1.17 The relevant points for this Review during this time relate to the contacts that were maintained by John Smyth regularly with Church officers, Church participants and with parishes in the UK. This is significant as he returned to the UK, using properties owned by some participants as accommodation in the UK to support his fundraising visits, for example in London in May 1986. John Smyth received funding to enable his work to continue in Africa because of the visits, his regular 'circulars' and newsletters and support he gained from several individuals. It is likely that some funders may have had some knowledge of the abuse perpetrated, several of those contributing to this review

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<sup>67</sup> Further details of this period are available, learning beyond that for the Church of England was considered to be outside of the remit of the ToR for this Review.

that supported him financially have suggested that they had not realised the seriousness of the abuse until the airing of the Channel 4 investigations in 2017.

- 13.1.18 Initially, John Smyth discussed his plans for the development of missions in independent schools. He said that he would not be running camps himself. However, in August he ran a camp for Peterhouse School - an independent school attended by John Smyth's son. Both John and Anne Smyth were involved in activities involving children and young people at this time, including school visits. We have information suggesting their attendance at other educational establishments including to Lomagundi College by Anne Smyth and a week in Nairobi, visiting seminaries and educational establishments by John Smyth.
- 13.1.19 The newsletter (Appendix 13) from the Zambesi Trust in November 1986 names a quite different list of supporters, now a "*Board of Reference*" as opposed to the "*Council of Reference*" originally set out. His Honour John Colyer describes knowing this but also feeling as if his name and reputation was being "*used*", simply being deployed as a cynical legitimisation of the Trust.
- 13.1.20 In September 1987 John Smyth discussed the possible expansion of the Ministry to include Malawi (Appendix 14), with an Academy to present a feasibility study to a Clergy conference in Resthaven. This was a busy period with the Ministry increasing in strength and scope, but this will not be analysed as it is outside of the remit of this Review, but does set the context for what was happening in Zimbabwe at the time.
- 13.1.21 Young men were visiting John Smyth in Zimbabwe from the UK. One young man, who was two months in Harare on a work placement, was invited and went on a canoeing trip down the Zambezi River, which included Martin and Jill Kingston and seven or eight others. This young man witnessed a "*baptism*" of a young man in the swimming pool (both wearing swimming trunks) at the house, which struck him as unusual as John was doing this without any reference to, or under the auspices of, the local Church. Also, as part of the canoeing trip, John Smyth encouraged the visiting young man and others to watch him bathe naked in an open-air bathroom overlooking the River Zambezi. This contributor has realised, with hindsight, that John Smyth was continuing to "*groom*" and behave in an exhibitionist manner and describes how he was left unnerved and disturbed by the experience. This denotes John Smyth's continued attempts to groom and seek sexual gratification through abuse, as referenced by Dr Hanson in her report.
- 13.1.22 John Smyth returned to the UK in October 1987, to explore funding sources. He stayed in the UK for two and a half weeks.
- 13.1.23 During October and through to mid-December 1987, Michael Cassidy describes in correspondence how he does not feel able to confront him directly, nor to approach the Zambesi Trust trustees. Further correspondence takes place at this time, between David Fletcher, Jonathan Fletcher and Mark Ashton with Michael Cassidy, about how to deal with their fear that John Smyth is developing youth work through his Ministry. David Fletcher is asked to write to the UK Zambesi Trust trustees about John Smyth engaging in youth work again. Michael Cassidy agrees to write a "*note of caution*" to John Smyth, to advise him that there are concerns from the UK trustees about his youth work.

At that point in the development of things, I obviously ceased to have any formal control, as it were, over John who was now independent in his own autonomous operation. That his ministry has had a youth component is something which has not been lost on me, and yet I have honestly now known how, or if, or whether I should intervene or caution him in any way. Being far away from Harare and only very rarely there, in which case I am generally tied in intensively on AE activities, I am not in a good position to step into John's world with strong cautions or whatever. But maybe you would feel that I owe that to him or else you may feel that some of his friends in England who are better acquainted with the history than I am, should send word to him that given the apparently youth nature of his work, as you have heard about it, you feel you should issue the appropriate cautions.

13.1.24 David MacInnes confirmed in a letter to David Fletcher on 11<sup>th</sup> December 1987, as below, that he had spoken to Martin Kingston (at this time the Chair of the Zambesi Trust) about John Smyth's background, stating he felt it was right to "hold nothing back" identifying a degree of risk in "the fairly extensive work amongst young people there now".

**Saint Aldate's Church**

The Parish Office,  
94 St. Aldate's,  
Oxford,  
OX1 1BT  
(0865) 249423.

From: The Rector, David MacInnes  
(Tel: 244713)

11th December, 1987

The Revd. David Fletcher  
St. Ebbe's Rectory  
Pennyfarthing Place  
Oxford

My dear David,

The work of John Smyth in Zimbabwe

This is just a quick note to say that two or three weeks ago I had the opportunity of explaining in some detail the background of John Smyth to the man who is the Chairman of the Zambesi Trust. I don't know whether you know Martin (6 ~~Bill~~) Kingston, but he is a very successful barrister living near Worcester.

He has been out to Zimbabwe and spent time with John & Ann Smyth. I find that they were not completely unaware of the situation but had no idea of the seriousness of it. I felt that it was right to hold nothing back, as there obviously is a degree of risk in the fairly extensive work amongst young people there now.

I thought you might like to know this,

*As ever*  
*David*

*p.s. I think you talk to Gordon  
Pusa. Helped enormously, and saved  
us some difficulties!*

13.1.25 Reverend Rico Tice (prior to his ordination) was told of the abuse by Peter Krakenberger in 1987, when he came to see him at his flat, with four to five flatmates present. Peter Krakenberger said that he wanted the abuse "out" and known and he went into some detail about the scale and the nature of the abuse. Rico Tice says that he was also asked by Reverend Martin Seeley (who went on to be Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, now a member of the Lords Spiritual), in an interview for the discernment process for ministry, about John Smyth. Bishop Seeley says that he has no recollection of asking such a question, or being asked to do so.



- 13.1.26 From 1988 onwards, although the Church did not issue a safeguarding policy until July 1995, the issues surrounding child abuse (and, to some extent, abuse of adults) were being actively debated by the House of Bishops. The Cleveland report 1988 (Judge Butler-Schloss) and the Orkney Inquiry 1993 (but with media attention from 1991) (Lord Clyde) were the subject of intense public (indeed international) debate, and these issues will have been very well known within Church circles and certainly by Bishops in dioceses at the time. In the absence of a “policy” as such, the legal position (Children Act 1989), Government guidance’s (various), as well as individual moral responsibilities will have been apparent to all in Ministry, ordained or lay.
- 13.1.27 The policies that did begin to be introduced in the Church from 1995 were centred on children (although they do make mention of what people should do in the event of being told of abuse of an adult). One of the features of the perception of the abuse carried out by John Smyth was that it was within the context of “consent” and “between adults”. It is likely that people, even having been told of the abuse, would have not immediately have thought of referring to these “children’s” policies. Many of the people being told of his abuses knew that children were included (the Ruston Report says so) and there was no excuse for this position to be taken. There is a key learning point of current relevance and this is explored in the Learning section of this Review.
- 13.1.28 The abuses being revealed in Zimbabwe and becoming known to Church officers in the UK, were clearly against children, not adults, albeit in another country.
- 13.1.29 Early in 1988 a pre-paid Iwerne invitation postcard is sent to Tim Sterry, with a handwritten note on it, saying: “*Miscreants should be brought to justice, not sent abroad to save face; there they will no doubt find other victims. I am tempted to go public. Never bother me again.*”
- 13.1.30 There is a name on the postcard. Despite extensive searching, including looking at the Iwerne listings from the time, we have not been able to locate this person. This is evidence of the wide knowledge of the abuse by the late 1980s.

DIAMOND 60 JUBILEE APPEAL

rec'd 27/6

THE IWERNE TRUST

I shall/we shall attend the reception at: gave cheque 11/7/819

Royal Commonwealth Society, London on Friday September 16th

St Swithun's School, Winchester on Monday September 19th

Monkton Combe Junior School, Bath on Thursday September 22nd

St Peter's College, Oxford on Friday September 30th

Maidwell Hall, Northampton on Thursday October 6th

Reformed Club, London on Monday October 10th

Bolton School, Bolton on Friday October 14th

(Please tick appropriate box)

I am unable to attend a reception but would like to receive a brochure.

Name and initials [redacted] (please print clearly)

Kindly remove my name from your mailing list. Miscreants should be brought to justice, not sent abroad to save face; there they will no doubt find other victims. I am tempted to go public. Never bother me again.

- 13.1.31 The postcard is then shared with David Fletcher and Mark Ruston. Their response is remarkable seeming to be driven by a need to seek out the person and justifying reasons for no further action and prevention of further abuse. Mark Ruston writes he is “... unsure who the note is from. Suggest writing back and explaining why we didn’t go public”. They speculate as whether this could be from the same person who wrote anonymously in 1982. There is no lasting evidence from the correspondence we have seen of the discussions that lay behind this.



Canon Mark Ruston  
12 Beaufort Place  
Thompson's Lane  
CAMBRIDGE CB5 8AG  
Tel. (0223) 357931

4.7.88

Dear David,

Thanks for this. I do not recognize it at all. I guess he (? she) must be a [REDACTED].

Although he says 'Never bother me' should we not write and give outline reasons why we did not 'go public'? or offer to go and see him?

I will ask [REDACTED] & one or two others if the name is familiar, or [REDACTED], as being

- 13.1.32 They speculated as to whether John Smyth should be told of the postcard. David Fletcher later contacts John Smyth to see if he can identify the author. He responded to state he has no memory of this person. This is one of the clearest demonstrations of the Church Officers at the time seeking advice and actions that suggest potential collusion with him rather than prevention of further abuse by him.

Africa Enterprise  
Box 4309  
Harare, Zimbabwe  
Telephone 707077

John Smyth, Q.C.  
6 Wilmar Close  
Greendale North  
Harare, Zimbabwe  
Telephone 42561

2 Crown Office Row  
The Temple  
London, EC4Y 7HJ  
Telephone 1-583-8155

15/8/88

Dear David,

Thank you for your letter. I have racked my brains for any memory of the name you quote & come up with absolutely nothing. I have never known anybody of that name. I'm so sorry; & sorry to hear about this letter.

Do hope all goes well with you all, but + best for usual holiday in France?

Our love to you all,

John

- 13.1.33 According to the Reverend Christopher Davis a victim approached Reverend Richard Coombs in March 1989. He was told about the abuse by this victim in Cambridge. Christopher Davis went to see Jonathan Fletcher about this, and he says that Jonathan Fletcher was "regretful" that Christopher Davis knew, making it clear that people were to know of the abuse only on a "need to know" basis and he didn't consider this to be the case in this instance. Jonathan Fletcher told Christopher Davis that the victims did not want any action taken, the Winchester College Headmaster and parents knew and, equally, did not want any action taken. Christopher Davis says that this influenced his own actions thereafter. He also said, when we spoke with him, that he would not know where to go in any case at the time. Jonathan Fletcher also spoke about the concerns about John Smyth reoffending in Zimbabwe.
- 13.1.34 In his contribution to this Review Jonathan Fletcher advises "although I knew John Smyth, were not friends. On a couple of occasions he was very critical of me publicly", and "I attended Iwerne Minster for 60 consecutive years and although I was not as [ ] as John Smyth when he joined, yet nonetheless I attended every "camp" when he was an "officer". Jonathan is said to have also collaborated over who should offer continuing pastoral care to a victim (of John Smyth) and to have been part of the key discussions regarding John Smyth in Zimbabwe.

13.1.35 Another victim says that he was encouraged by Jonathan Fletcher in his Christian journey, whilst at university, in 1981. We have been told by this victim that he also met with Jonathan Fletcher many years later. Jonathan Fletcher has been a highly influential person in the Conservative Evangelical world. He was Curate at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Cambridge (more commonly known as the Round Church) before becoming the vicar of the Emmanuel Church, Wimbledon, in 1982.

13.1.36 On 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1989, John Thorn (Headmaster of Winchester College) published his autobiography '*The Road To Winchester*'. The relevant extract from the book reads:

*"And then a neighbouring barrister, a Queen's Counsel, a happily married man, began to take an interest in the group. Many of them went out to his home for Sunday Lunch. It gave them relief from boarding-school life in the atmosphere of a loving home. I could not be very worried, even when housemasters told me they were. I spoke to the barrister. He undertook to keep me in close touch with his doings. He asked me to join the family for lunch one day. I didn't. And the numbers in Christian Forum grew. In the mid-seventies it could claim about eighty attending members. In a way, they seemed a kind of backbone of virtue in the place. They seldom smoked or drank. They were above suspicion of any involvement in drugs. Many were people of great influence in the school, and it seems a good influence. How could a school which claimed to be Christian refuse at least to tolerate a group who wished to take the commands of Christ literally and not just give to Him the lip-service which seemed enough for the ecclesiastical establishment? It was uncomfortable of course, they spoke so much of conversion, of 'Becoming a Christian', a phrase smacking of intolerance and doctrinal exclusiveness; uncomfortable that they were inclined to be secretive, that they would in their worship have nothing to do with those they called 'unsound', among them two of the chaplains, most of the local clergy, all the housemasters and the headmaster. They were public about it and would reason with you about it, but no discussion with them resulted in any change or view or policy.*

*Many parents of the boys in the group became worried. The boys sometimes became estranged from their families. Their moral tutors, as it were, were not parents or most of the schoolmasters but the few who controlled the group and some people outside who rain things called 'Varsity and Public School Camps; for similar-minded boys solely of the middle class, it was interesting to note) at a school in Dorset. I shared these worries, but I was reminded that this kind of thing was just what Jesus Christ Himself has prophesied for His devoted followers.*

*Then the storm broke. I was told the extraordinary news that the neighbouring barrister has gained such personal control over a few of the senior boys in the group, and has kept it after they left the school, that he was claiming to direct their burgeoning relationships with girls, and was, with their consent punishing them physically when they confessed to him, they had sinned. The world of conservative evangelicalism was left in twain. Absurd and baseless rumours were circulated that he was an unhinged tyrant, the embodiment of Satan. He must be banished. And – quietly but efficiently – he was. He left the Winchester district and then the United Kingdom. He departed for Africa with his family and, by me, has not been heard of since."*

John Smyth was sent an extract from the book and we have been told he proceeded to make a "panicked call" to Jonathan Brooks, one of the Zambesi Trust Trustees, saying that the book was exaggerated and untrue. John Smyth wrote to David Pope and others in response to this. He stated he felt he was badly let down by John Thorn who he describes as a man "utterly breaking his word". He sends a "statement to correct factual errors" and advises he has sent on to a number of recipients including: Judge Arthur Mildon (his former head of chambers), John Colyer QC, Christopher Smyth (his brother), Charles and Jane Auld, Jeremy Maurice and Michael Hubbard QC, Johnathan and Janet Brooks and Jamie Colman.

13.1.37 Reverend Steve Wookey described to us how Jonathan Fletcher spoke to him about John Smyth's abuses in the early to mid 1990's. Steve Wookey recalls being horrified by the accounts of the abuse and that during the conversation with Jonathan he understood the abuse had been "sounded out informally" to see if a crime had been committed. He also recalls that people in Africa had been warned about him. Steve Wookey was not aware by whom. This is inconsistent and illogical – if the abuse had

not been of a “*serious*” nature, then why would it have been reported to the police (it wasn’t, of course) and why would people in Africa been warned?

- 13.1.38 David Pope wrote to David Fletcher on 25<sup>th</sup> April, saying that the Trustees were not informed of the abuse when they took on the role.
- 13.1.39 Jill Kingston flew to Zimbabwe to confront John Smyth. Up until this point, the Trustees had been told some of the detail, but not all, of the abuse in 1987. She was given short shrift by John Smyth and returned to the UK determined to close the Zambesi Trust and the Ministry in Zimbabwe down. She has since reflected, in an interview with us, that she wished she had taken a step further in Zimbabwe and approached the Trustees of the Zambesi Trust.
- 13.1.40 Michael Beardsmore and David Pope, Trustees of Zambesi Ministries UK, met with John Smyth at Gatwick airport as he was returning to Zimbabwe after a fundraising trip to the UK. David Pope advised us that their intention was to confront John Smyth. Martin and Jill Kingston state that the purpose of this meeting was to challenge John Smyth and to ask him to stop working with boys and young men (with the work to be handed over to Andy Shaw, John Smyth continuing with other Ministry work). David Pope advises that John Smyth “*flatly refused our request for him to discontinue in ministry with young people*”, he also “*refused to make himself accountable to authority*”. He is also said to have become agitated and angry, denying all allegations and threatening legal action against the Trustees.
- 13.1.41 The Coltart Report states that this meeting took place to discuss John Smyth’s involvement in youth work, as well as achieving effective pastoral oversight and making the UK Board fully aware of the earlier abuse in the UK. The UK Trustees were concerned that John Smyth had not sought professional help between 1982 and 1989 (one of the conditions of the – failed – undertaking he supposedly signed). Jonathan Brooks consulted with “*Christian colleagues in psychiatry*” (we do not know who exactly but one was said to have treated two of the victims), whose opinion was that John Smyth should be stopped, any risk to John Smyth or his family being outweighed by the potential risk to young men.
- 13.1.42 John Smyth then wrote to John Colyer of the LCF regarding the imminent publication of the Thorn book, saying that he felt “*badly let down*” by John Thorn. He also asked if he should still go ahead with a planned talk at an LCF conference in September 1989. The decision was made by the LCF to not go ahead with John Smyth as a keynote speaker at the conference, in light of the publication of the book. It is not known whether the LCF understood the severity of the abuses at this point in time, especially as the book is not explicit about it:

*Copy*

18th March 1989

PO Box 86167, Highlands, Harare

CONFIDENTIAL

*Ex ditto copy*  
[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Dave Pope Esq.  
26 Robert St  
Lower Cornal, Dudley  
West Midlands, UK DY3 2AY.

Dear Dave,

The extract from Thorn's book arrived here 15th March. Anne and I took counsel from three of our Board members, and we were very quickly of one mind that bold and immediate action was called for. I am sorry that we have not been able to communicate with you and the other Trustees, but your letter which arrived yesterday indicated you would not be available; and since we were unanimous as to what action we should take and confident that you would support it, we have proceeded as follows:

(a) Statement to correct factual errors. We have drafted a statement not for general circulation, but to be used in Zimbabwe or UK whenever queries are raised. (Enclosed)

(b) Zimbabwe This morning I visited the headmaster of Peterhouse who is now Chairman of the Zimbabwe Independent Schools Headmasters' Conference and shared the whole matter with him. (He had already ordered his copy of the book which is being brought out next week.) He was entirely supportive and offered to handle any queries which might arise in the future in Zimbabwe. I offered to visit the HM of every school in which ZM regularly works; he advised against this.

(c) UK There can be no doubt that in the Winchester area at least this book will be read by folk who put two and two together very quickly, particularly amongst the legal fraternity. We recognise that there is a fine line between the need to forewarn certain people before the gossip starts and giving the book publicity. Accordingly I have prepared a short-list of folk who I would like to forewarn immediately, and to each I have sent a copy of the two pages from the book and a copy of the statement undercover of a short handwritten note. These people are: Judge Arthur Mildon (my former head of chambers), John Colyer QC (Chairman of Lawyers Christian Fellowship), my brother Christopher, Charles and Jane Auld, Jeremy Maurice and Michael Hubbard QC; also Jonathan and Janet Brooks and Jamie Colson.

Although this is a most extraordinary example of a man utterly breaking his word, we believe it will be seen to be a Romans 8.28 situation, and we particularly rejoice in the timing of it. I do hope the fact that some most responsible people here now know of the matter will lift a burden from your shoulders. When queries are raised in the future we trust and pray that you will not have to do more than send them a copy of the statement, and perhaps an assurance that the matter is in responsible hands out here. But we shall still need your support as much as ever!

With warmest greetings,

*John*

c.c. All trustees  
David Fletcher  
Mark Ashton

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CONFIDENTIAL

Zanbesi Ministries  
PO Box HG 167  
Highlands  
Harare

Zanbesi Trust (U.K.)  
PO Box 37  
Dudley  
West Midlands DY1 2RW

Board Chairman: Rev. Richard Johnson

Chairman: Mr. Dave Pope

Statement with reference to pages 154/5 of The Road to Winchester  
by John Thorn, published February 1989

1. Within a few days of the matter first coming to the attention of older Christians in February 1982, John accepted that what he had been doing was entirely wrong and he has never sought to justify it since. By reason of pressures of professional and Christian work he had for some years previously become completely dependent on sleeping pills, and there is no doubt that this extraordinary aberration of judgement was in some way linked with that.

2. The writer is incorrect in implying that the whole evangelical Christian world knew of this. The matter was kept within a relatively small group.

3. The writer is also entirely wrong in saying that John and his family moved to Africa in response to pressures from others. Although throughout their married life John and Anne had always believed God would one day call them to full-time Christian work, they had absolutely no thought of going to Africa until June 1983 when John did a sabbatical term away from his practice at theological college. There John's interest in Africa was aroused and during the course of visits to southern Africa later that year John and Anne became confident that God was calling them there. Those with whom John had been engaged in Christian work prior to 1982 played no part whatsoever in the decision to move to Africa; indeed John and Anne made quite sure that nobody who knew of the events in question played any part in their decision; and most were not aware of it until after the decision had been made and John announced his retirement from the Bar.

4. The writer is further in error in suggesting that the family left the Winchester district before moving to Africa. Except for the last few months when they moved to a rented house very near-by (having sold theirs) they remained in the house which had been their home for many years; three of the children remained at day schools in Winchester until they moved to Africa in August 1984.

N.B. Please regard this as a confidential document, NOT for general circulation. It is intended only for the eyes of those who raise queries about the matter in the book.

Harare.  
March 1989

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- 13.1.43 His Honour John Colyer detailed to us that he subsequently rang John Smyth to confront him. John Smyth proceeded to disregard the allegations as (according to John Colyer's recollection in an interview with us), "*completely exaggerated*", stating that no serious physical abuse had taken place. Later, John Smyth claimed to John Colyer that

his non-attendance at the LCF conference was due to being over committed and an inability to fund the plane fare.

- 13.1.44 Andy Shaw left the Ministry and the Zambesi Trust at this point. This followed serious disagreements with John Smyth. John Smyth's son comments that: *"(My father) was meddling, at best, with Andy and Pam in their relationship, which absolutely fits: we know a few couples who, once you are married, the wife is a threat. Dad basically didn't want people he was disciplining to get married or if they did, he wanted them to marry someone like my mum, who was a small self, so that my dad's narcissistic personality could fill all. Wives and girlfriends were basically seen as a threat, and I think that was a main reason that Andy pulled out, influenced by Pam"*.
- 13.1.45 Pam Shaw was able to participate in this Review over email. Pam Shaw states that John Smyth became very controlling of Andy Shaw, so Andy Shaw wrote to John Smyth telling him it was *"untenable"* to continue working for Zambesi Ministries.
- 13.1.46 Very sadly, Andy Shaw was murdered some years later in 1995, at the age of 34. Chillingly, Pam Shaw's first reaction on hearing of his death, was to think that John Smyth had murdered him. This evidences the fear that some had of John Smyth, reflecting the power and control he exerted over people.
- 13.1.47 David Fletcher wrote to David Pope, reiterating that John Smyth does not understand how horrific his abuses were. This is yet another example of the minimisation that took place by David Fletcher. He is seeking to criticise John Smyth, but not to have any real impact on his continued abusive threat to boys and young men (Appendix 15).
- 13.1.48 On 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1989, the Zambesi UK Trustees wrote to John Smyth<sup>68</sup>, threatening that, if he did not withdraw from personal involvement in youth work they would resign, with a deadline of the end of July being given. Jamie Colman spoke at this point with some of the Trustees, asking them to continue. Jamie Colman was in regular touch with John Smyth at this time, (much later, John Smyth went on to thank him for his support in a guidebook he published). The Trustees resigned en masse, stating their reasons as being: (a) John Smyth had not sought psychiatric/medical help as he had promised; (b) there was no effective accountability structure around him; and (c) they considered that he should cease his youth work immediately.
- 13.1.49 John Smyth then wrote to Mark Ashton to ask him to chair the UK Trust. Mark Ashton declined this offer, stating he wanted to ensure that there is proper oversight and because he has continuing concerns about John Smyth's work with young men. Despite taking this stance, he still did not take any other action to stop John Smyth from continuing:

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<sup>68</sup> Source – Report written by David Coltart in 1993, appendix 1





## The Round Church · Cambridge

(Holy Sepulchre with All Saints)  
The Revd Mark Ashton, Vicar,  
The Round Church Vicarage,  
Manor Street, Cambridge CB1 1LG.  
Tel: 0223-327331

19/7/57

My Dear John,

It was very kind of you the other day to telephone me with the invitation to consider ~~my~~ chairing your English trustees. I am sorry that I could not take it on, but I was touched to have been asked and I want to make my position clear as I believe I wrote a letter back in ~~April~~ February which, you say, gave you a different impression.

As I thought I had made clear to you and Anne, <sup>already</sup> I personally believe that your future ministry should not lie in the area of youth and children's work after what happened at Morstead. I believe you and Anne have tremendous gifts and, if they are exercised in obedience to God, He will be able to continue to use you to His own glory. But I think you

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must come under the pastoral responsibility of a Christian leader (or leaders) who is fully aware of the past and to whom you are properly answerable. Morstead would never have occurred had you kept yourself pastorally answerable to your colleagues in ministry (You were convinced of the rightness of your actions then only because you did not discuss them with others). It is my earnest endeavour to ensure now that your Christian work has proper oversight, so that it is not vulnerable to errors of judgement or other attacks by the devil.

I am ready to accept that my judgement about your continuing in youth work may not be absolute. But I remain <sup>sure</sup> ~~that~~ that you must be working under somebody who knows all the past and, in the light of that, is happy with the direction of your present ministry, and <sup>who</sup> has real authority to change the direction of that ministry if he or she (or they) should feel it wise. As I said over the phone, you have never been an easy person to advise against your will! But you do need someone who can play that role, <sup>when</sup>

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## The Round Church · Cambridge

(Holy Sepulchre with All Saints)  
The Revd Mark Ashton, Vicar,  
The Round Church Vicarage,  
Manor Street, Cambridge CB1 1LQ.  
Tel: 0223-327331

you trust and respect enough, and who trusts and respects you. Your ministry is too important and too valuable to be conducted in any other way.

Dave I make one or two suggestions?

It is important that any new trustees you establish over here should be fully informed about the past (Norsted) and the present (Zimbabwe). They need to know why your last trustees have resigned: might not a meeting between Dave Pope and his <sup>possible</sup> successor be a *sine qua non* for this? Should not such a successor also have talked at length to someone like Mark Ruston, David Fletcher or myself, before accepting the post?

You stressed the importance of people seeing the work on the ground in Zimbabwe and catching the vision for it. I agree. I could also want to stress the importance of your board chairman in Zimbabwe fully understanding the position of people like myself over here who

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do not think you should be continuing in your youth work. We are not your enemies, some Satanic mafia committed to thwarting the work of the Zambesi Trust! We are your friends (some of your oldest in Christian work, I guess) who are committed to your welfare and deeply concerned for you and all the family, and for your future ministry. It would be a very much healthier situation if the Board chairman <sup>(in Zimbabwe)</sup> had met one of us and understood your position.

Since I have used their names in this letter, I will let Dave Pope, David Fletcher and Mark Ruston know that I am writing like this; so you can pick up on my suggestions if you want to.

You continue high in my prayers. do hope we can meet when you are next in England. Fiona & I value your friendship so much and would love to see you all gain.

With love to all the family from all of us,

Mark

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- 13.1.50 John Smyth then approached Jamie Colman to ask him to set up a new Zambesi Trust Board. Jamie Colman asked his wife, Sue Colman, to sit on the Board. Sue Colman was later ordained and became a Church officer; however, she was, at the time of being a Trustee, not in this position. Sue Colman has advised us that she was aware of the allegations of abuse at the time she became a Trustee, was reluctant, and was

persuaded to take up the role by her husband Jamie, and to support Nicola (Nix) Smyth (who was John and Anne Smyth's oldest daughter, now deceased). Sue Colman has explained her reasoning for agreeing to be a Trustee, despite knowing of the abuse in the UK, as twofold; (a) If no Trust was continued, John Smyth would have no way of supporting his family; and (b) there was a continuing need for someone from the UK to have oversight of his activities in Zimbabwe, as the Zimbabwean people were unlikely to be able to do so. The view was to recruiting people on the ground in Zimbabwe and to join the Board as soon as possible. Sue Colman advises that she did not know the full details of the abuse in the UK, but that she was told that some level of abuse had taken place. Sue Colman advises that she was not asked to declare knowledge of such abuse at that time of ordination, nor was information about it offered. The carrying of safeguarding information in this case, over many decades, not formally reporting or acting on it is of interest and relevant to the learning in this case, explored later in the Learning section of this report. It is likely, on the balance of probabilities, that both Jamie and Sue Colman had significant knowledge of the abuses in the UK and Africa, given their positions as Trustees.

- 13.1.51 From August 1989, therefore, a newly formed UK Zambesi Trust was created, with Jamie Colman as Chair.
- 13.1.52 This was another pivotal point. The information about the abuse was now out in the "*public domain*", albeit to a relatively small public but certainly now widely known within Church and other circles. At the least, everyone at and connected with Winchester College would now be alerted to the abuse. This represented a moment when the curiosity of people should have been raised and a moment when it could have reasonably been expected that someone, either lay or ordained, would have taken the opportunity to raise their concerns with authorities.
- 13.1.53 It is of note that Mark Ruston made a reference to the abuse in a sermon<sup>69</sup> he gave, on 11<sup>th</sup> June 1989, mainly attended by Cambridge students. The sermon was entitled '*Suffering and Glory*'. He talks about the suffering of Christ and argues that Christians "*must share in that suffering*". His reference to the abuse describes it as an "*experiment*" that young Cambridge students took part in "*some years ago*". The relevant extract from this sermon is transcribed below with timestamps:

### Suffering and Glory

[32 minutes]

Seriously, don't court trouble and suffering. The strangest thing, I think, in all my ministry, but then I discovered that a group of students, they might be like you years ago, were voluntarily accepting severe physical chastisement, beating, in order for the purifying of the flesh. They were seeking something, you see, because they thought the pain and the suffering is what would help them. So, it's not of course it's sought, but to be accepted if it comes, and soberly as well of course, because you think of the lightness of the suffering that begins with the household of God, and the terror of the suffering which will be the end of those who do not obey the Gospel of God - disobedience.

[End 33 minutes]

<sup>69</sup> Link to audio recording of sermon [Suffering and glory \(1 Peter 4:12-19\) - St Andrew the Great \(stag.org\)](https://www.stag.org.uk/sermons/suffering-and-glory-1-peter-4-12-19)

- 13.1.54 It is our view that this demonstrates the feeling earlier referenced by several victims that Mark Ruston's approach was dismissive in tone, feeling victim "blaming" and also evidences to the widening level of public knowledge of the abuses. It is possible this sermon was in response to the publication of John Thorn's book.
- 13.1.55 In January 1990, the Zambesi Ministries newsletter (*Zambezi Currents*) was published, saying that "1989 saw plenty of storms for Zambesi Ministries". Jamie Colman is named as the new Chair of the UK Trust. David Fletcher received a letter at this time from the Head of Peterhouse School, saying that the Zambesi Mission was going ahead as planned, despite John Smyth not being welcomed in their boarding houses and will be kept under "close supervision". "The Lord will come up with a plan", he says, attempting to stop John Smyth's activities. John Smyth is clearly in control of this situation. Mark Ashton also writes to John Smyth, asking him to stop working with young people and says that he will write to the Zambesi Ministry Trustees if he continues to do so.
- 13.1.56 The Reverend Patrick Whitworth, of Christ Church in Gipsy Hill, South East London, wrote to David Fletcher in April 1990, saying that his Church was committed to raising £4000 for the Ministry but a member of the congregation was concerned about John Smyth's previous history. He is seeking advice from David Fletcher about what John's 'past activities' were and whether to proceed with the funding. The decision was made to not agree to the funding for a Land Rover. This again indicates a wider suspicion of John Smyth within the Church.
- 13.1.57 There are several references in this Review to funding from the UK from Church congregations and individuals. We do not have a fully comprehensive list of all these funding sources, but we do have accounts of people not appreciating that they may be contributing to a person who is the subject of suspicion and criticism.
- 13.1.58 There is correspondence between people at this time about the importance of pastoral oversight. For example, in a letter from Mark Ashton to Jamie Colman, he says that John Smyth's abuse would have been prevented if proper pastoral oversight had been in place. In this, he quotes paragraphs from a letter he sent to John Smyth regarding friendships with young men:

*David,  
Copy of a letter I handed  
to Jamie Colman (now chairman  
of ZT over here) last week.  
Dave*

CONFIDENTIAL

Jasie Coleman, Esq.  
12 Eland Road,  
London SW11 5JY.

23rd March 1990.

Dear Jasie,

I did enjoy our meeting a while back. Thank you for taking the trouble to come up and see me, and I hope your car recovered from its encounter with our wall: I'm glad to say I have had that gap widened since!

I am writing now because I was talking to David Fletcher last Saturday, and, in the light of your and my conversation, I thought I ought to remind you of two things, and David mentioned a third.

Looking over the newsletter for January, I think I am right in saying it makes no mention of any Christian work other than schools work. This appears to be the sole focus of ZM now.

Second, that work is now being divided along sex lines into a boys work and a girls work.

Third, and this is the point that David suggested I mention, J.S. deceived all his closest Christian colleagues back at Morestead. He is a very difficult person to advise against his will. (You alone will know if you have ever changed his mind on a major matter). What happened at Morestead would never have happened had he kept himself pastorally answerable to his colleagues in ministry, as you know.

I am not sure whether I ever told you how I wrote to him after your and my meeting, but let me quote one paragraph from that letter - 'I do continue to worry about you establishing over-intense relationships with younger male colleagues in ministry. You know how dependent you became at Morestead on certain friendships and how that turned to grief when the strains and pressures built up on you. Just as none of us who were close to you at that time realised the danger you were in, I hope your present board know you better and are wiser than we were. I hope you will not grow too dependent on individuals much younger than you who may not have the wisdom or maturity to give you the support you need in times of crisis. I hope you will not be persuasively urging young men to join you in ministry; but, after what happened in the past, that you will wait for God to provide you with the colleagues of His choosing'.

I want on to say that I am aware how strongly he feels that God is leading him in the way he is going. But I remember vividly how equally convinced he was that God was leading him in the past - and to what disastrous consequences.

Forgive me for bothering you with this, but my conscience is rarely easy in this matter and I think you probably understand my concern.

With very best wishes,

Yours,

The Revd Mark Ashton

- 13.1.59 This is an example of stark naivety. This pastoral oversight is now cited by Jamie Colman as one of the key controlling influences on John Smyth in Zimbabwe. We argue that the obverse is more likely with a clever and determined perpetrator of abuse – that the apparent “oversight” offered is more likely to be deployed as a cover for abusive activity, than as something preventative. The abuser is in plain sight and able to operate freely under the guise of compliance.



David  
reply from  
Jamie Coleman  
to my letter:  
not v. satisfactory  
M

~~Confidential~~

12 ELAND ROAD  
LONDON SW11 5JY  
01-228 1006

26th March, 1990.

Dear Mark,

Thank you very much for your letter. I was sorry not to have had the opportunity to see more of you at Paul's; a small house with a large crowd enjoying good food is never the right environment to spend time with everyone you want to!

Your letter was a timely missive, with an inspired comment, so thank you. Resolution of a number of issues is not complete, and I understand your concerns, although with time to reflect on the matter, I regret the conclusion that you have reached.

John is indeed committed to schools work, and there is undisputed demand for it in Zimbabwe. No one else is working in the Schools where John has been invited, and no one will fill the vacuum immediately if John were to depart. The point you make about the News letter is correct, although the conclusion is slightly in error; that is in my view of little relevance, because the issues raised relate to the principle of John ministering to Boys.

The separation of the camps on sex lines has now been done because both sexes indicated a preference for the single sex Camp; that is surely no surprise! The similarity to the work at Iwerne is striking, but again that is not really in issue. The area for concern if there is to be one is in a secret personal work with a small number of boys. What happened in the past, and by implication what could conceivably happen in the future would have to be done in secret, and could not be perpetrated at Camp. I do not see the relevance of a division in the Camps.

The third point that arises is, of course, the crux of the issue. Under Pastoral care and authority, under the noses of many concerned and wonderful people, John managed to deceive, and persuade, to allow the unacceptable to happen.

I am satisfied that, principle apart, the situation is now so different, that the work should be encouraged to continue, and John's involvement endorsed and protected. He is within a pastoral arrangement, praying very regularly with an ordained minister (Richard Johnson), that person point I think is that he is no pushover. John also meets with and prays with 2 senior people, older and wiser, and immensely strong, the Traceys. He considers himself 'under' them, and they consider it necessary to join with him in considering many practical details. The one thing that is lacking, which I would want to see introduced for John's own health as such as anything else, is someone to share the personal work so that there are always two people directly involved.

The point of principle I mention is not reconciled to any particular set of facts, namely that once fallen in a particular fashion are you thereafter disqualified until the very end of the game? Since the scriptural answer is 'no', then agreement on the criterion to permit reentry is necessary; is everyone working on finding the right formula for reentry for John, or in fact committed to prevent it? Although I do not doubt sincerity and good will, I fear that the latter is more the case than the former, and I regret it, for the Kingdom and for John & Anne.

I would dearly love to see a renewed effort to set out the criterion for John, together with the support and commitment that is necessary to see it through. I am planning with John a visit to the UK and wonder whether that would not be a good time to discuss that further in certain quarters. If you have views I would greatly value them.

On the last point you raise, you are, of course absolutely right. John is a very strong willed person not easily deflected from the path he considers to be right whatever anyone else says. However, I am able to say that he has respected my views and changed his approach to matters. He is by nature now more ready to be accountable; and significantly, the errors and sin of the past occurred because secrecy prevented anyone discussing his behaviour with him. I am convinced that the seed of that terrible error and wrong was secrecy, and that in the Light, whatever 'tendency' may or may not exist, can not reoccur. I put as high as I can the demand that John should work out in the open, to me and to the Board in Zimbabwe. I see every evidence that that is happening, and wish it to continue.

Wishes regards  
John

- 13.1.60 Jamie Colman responds above to Mark Ashton with a strong defence of John Smyth. He says that John Smyth is reformed, is following rules, is subject to strong oversight and that the situation is different from the UK. He thinks "John's work should be endorsed and protected".
- 13.1.61 He wants to discuss the criteria set out for John Smyth's work in Ministry and says that he will be visiting England with John Smyth, suggesting meeting with David Fletcher.
- 13.1.62 George Niven, of Peterhouse School, contacted Reverend John Bell in April 1990, asking for details of the concerns raised in the UK. John Bell had been involved with the camps. David Fletcher is also copied in to this. He reports that he has heard that two boys have been beaten with TTB (a table tennis bat) for what is described as "persistent disobedience" at Zambesi holiday camps. David Fletcher then shared the 1982 Ruston Report with George Niven and John Bell. There is increasing concern about John Smyth's behaviour at the camps, including the beatings with a TTB for minor matters such as untidiness and "pranks" as well as nakedness around the boys.
- 13.1.63 A full explanation is given to George Niven about why the abuses were not made public in the UK and that Michael Cassidy had been warned about John Smyth. David Fletcher thinks that the parents should be made aware and also that the Headmaster of Peterhouse School should be warned and the Zimbabwe Council of Reference for the Zambesi Trust should be informed.
- 13.1.64 Throughout July, August and September 1990, much correspondence between David Fletcher and John Bell takes place in the UK and with George Niven in Zimbabwe, as well as a warning being sent from the (past) Trustees of the UK Zambesi Trust to the Zambesi Trust, Canada. We were told that the warning to the Canada Trust was in regard to continued funding, which they considered should be stopped. It is not known what the reaction was from the Trustees in Canada. Mark Ashton is advising that Jamie Colman should be contacted again and David Fletcher does so. The Trust in Zimbabwe continues to be supportive of John Smyth, despite the warnings. This



culminated in several meetings with John Smyth, which included John Bell and John Smyth agreeing to manage the camps "*without whacking unruly day scholars with the TTB*".

- 13.1.65 Jamie Colman wrote to David Fletcher to say that he was aware of the UK beatings, that the Trust had been made aware and that they continued to support John Smyth in his Ministry, including the camps. He does not want to meet with David Fletcher and thinks that there is no value in continued correspondence with him about John Smyth.

12 ELAND ROAD  
LONDON SW11 5JY  
071 228 1006

26th September, 1990

Dear David,

Thankyou again for your letter. I have been told of the matters you refer to, and, although it would not be true to say that I did not react in the same way as the others to whom you have imparted the information, the 'fact' of tendency and the risk of 'danger' depends upon opportunity (as you point out) before there is an unacceptable risk.

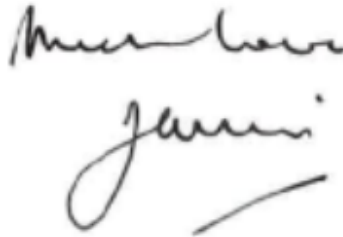
For example having come thru' the school system I am aware of many who had much stronger tendencies, but who could not, and did not succumb, because opportunity was not presented.

John's current situation and opportunity is now very different - although I believe Mark Ashton does not accept this - he is working closely with his local Board, who have been told all that you refer to, including the suggestion of a tendency (though' they may not have seen the original letter, as I had not, it does not convey any new information to that already revealed). They are sufficiently aware of day to day activities to consider themselves in control and support John in his work.

Given this local support and understanding, I have been trying to see how with UK support, the work can be helped to grow, under Christ, and such additional support and protection as is necessary,

be put in place - as for example, encouraging a Chaplain to go out to one of the schools. But I seem to be swimming against the tide in this regard.

I do not think a meeting will take us much further forward, but thank you again for your concern. I trust I can rely on your prayers for John (and myself). Please do not feel you need to continue the correspondence, and respond to the comments with which you disagree! I would be taking up far too much of your time, but I am grateful for the time you have taken.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Richard Johnson', with a horizontal line underneath.

- 13.1.66 Richard Johnson was the Chair of Zambesi's Board at the time. He describes his involvement to Reviewers as:

*"I first met John Smyth when he and his family arrived at St Luke's Greendale in Harare, Zimbabwe. He was charming, with a lovely family, and he became an active member of the congregation. He was a good preacher. I was a non-stipendiary priest with the Diocese of Harare, providing supportive ministry on a very part-time basis ...at some point John founded Zambezi Ministries ...The then rector of St Luke's... was impressed with the camps and at some stage I was asked to join John's advisory board, for Zambezi Ministries, and then became chair – for a while."*

- 13.1.67 Richard met with George Niven and John Bell at the end of October. They both left the meeting with the strong impression that Richard Johnson had at that time not accepted the seriousness of the abuses in the UK. His view is that the abuse reports are "*not properly founded and an overreaction*". He puts John Smyth's "*recent behaviour*" down to "*... his prickly character and lawyer's instincts*". George Niven states that he is scared of John Smyth's threats. John Bell and George Niven write up their concerns about John Smyth and present this to Richard Johnson in mid-November. Suggestions are made for a Christian psychologist to meet with John Smyth.

- 13.1.68 Richard Johnson in his contribution to this review, details that the first he had known about John Smyth's history was "*either an email from his former colleagues in the UK or John himself meeting with me as chair to tell me about what had happened in the UK and to give me the book to read*". Richard states that John Smyth "*was very open about it*" and that he "*put it down to being on various medications for stress*". Richard advises that he was assured by John Smyth that this would not happen again.

- 13.1.69 Richard recalls that the email from the UK demanded John Smyth's ministry ended, that he discussed this with the board and the board felt that the "*successful ministry of Zambezi Ministries should not be stopped, but we would carefully monitor John and the camps, as best we could*".

- 13.1.70 In summary, several people were extremely concerned about John Smyth, and approaches were made to him, but the Trust Board continued to support him. This was largely on the advice of Jamie Colman, who viewed John Smyth as being repentant and with sufficient effective controls on his behaviour, despite all the evidence being to the contrary. John Bell and George Niven cease all contact with the Mission.

- 13.1.71 Into 1991, several camps are in operation<sup>70</sup>, for both boys and girls (largely, by now, single sex, with the boys' camps overseen by John Smyth), the reported incidents of nudity increasing and new, distinctly concerning, rules are being introduced, including the banning of wearing of all underwear by boys. A letter sent by a parent later relates back to this period – 1991/2 - relating the fact that John Smyth developed “*close relationships*” with boys in Harare, playing squash with them, taking them to school. In late August or early September 1991, Sue Colman met with a group of the female camp leaders and they did a bible study together.
- 13.1.72 Early in this year, John and Anne Smyth went to stay with the Colman's at their house in London. A person, who cannot be identified, but who describes himself as someone who was “*groomed*” by John Smyth, was visited by the Smyth's on this occasion and asked to become a Trustee, which he declined. He reports that Jamie Colman was very keen on him joining the Board, despite his expressed reluctance to do so.
- 13.1.73 John Smyth began to run a Church-style service on Sunday nights at Zambezi House. This was a purpose built accommodation for young men working with the Mission to stay at, located in the grounds of the Smyth household in Harare. It was funded by donations, including large capital sums from the UK and funds raised via Church of England parishes and dioceses. This accommodation was occupied by up to six young men at any one time, whilst working in the Mission, typically on gap years between school and university, or as undergraduates.
- 13.1.74 Early in 1992, a prominent Human Rights lawyer in Zimbabwe, David Coltart (now Senator David Coltart) wrote to John Bell, following an approach by concerned parents of boys attending the camps. John Bell responded with a detailed letter about the Zambesi Trust and the concerns of the (former) Trustees.
- 13.1.75 David Coltart became very heavily involved and carried out extensive investigations which culminated in a report known as ‘*The Coltart Report*’, which was published in October 1993<sup>71</sup>. While it is outside the scope of this Review to go into full detail about this period, (a key recommendation, as referenced earlier, is for an investigation to be considered into the African abuses), the importance of the regular contacts with people from the UK, including Clergy, is noted. The Coltart Report describes the practices at the camps run by John Smyth and indicates serious levels of abuse against boys, mainly aged 13 to 16 years old.
- 13.1.76 They include:
- (a) Regular beatings with a table tennis bat (and sometimes a larger bat – a “Jokari”) which were sufficiently painful to make the boys cry and to leave marks. The beatings were given for minor matters and were described by John Smyth as being a “*playful*” part of the regime at the camps and being “*welcomed*” by the boys. Competitions were held to see which boy got the most beatings. One boy received 20 such beatings in a single day;
  - (b) Lectures from John Smyth on masturbation (as noted in Dr Hanson's report, these lectures turned the tables on John Smyth's protestations against masturbation whilst in the UK, now extolling the virtues ...);
  - (c) John Smyth being naked and taking naked showers with boys;
  - (d) Enforced “skinny dipping” which included a naked parade from the dormitories to the pool;
  - (e) Boys being banned from wearing underwear; and
  - (f) John Smyth sleeping in dormitories with the boys, whilst other staff (including Anne Smyth) slept in separate quarters. This is an indication of the unsafe

<sup>70</sup> Zambezi Holiday camps were, at this time, were held at Ruzawi School in Marondera with 2 mixed gender (boys and girls) camps taking place 6 times year during school holidays. However, from December 1990 onwards, following a decision from John Smyth, there were separate camps for boys and girls.

<sup>71</sup> Report on John Smyth written by David Coltart in 1993 - Appendix 1

practices in place on the camps, an adult man choosing to sleep with boys, whilst not allowing others to do so.

- 13.1.77 A terrible and troubling event took place at one the camps. On 15<sup>th</sup> December 1992, 16-year-old Guide Nyachuru was found dead, in the swimming pool of a Zambesi Trust camp, by the gardener in the early morning. John Smyth was charged with culpable homicide in September 1995 and, later, in April 1997 with five counts of criminal injury, when five boys were harmed. The prosecution was pursued but discontinued when it was successfully argued by John Smyth's legal team (largely led by John Smyth himself) that the prosecutor had a conflict of interest. It is thought that both the culpable homicide case and the criminal injury case were postponed indefinitely, with the charges never being withdrawn. The Reviewers extend their deepest sympathy to Guide's family for their loss.
- 13.1.78 In 1993, the camps continued, with John Smyth pursuing some other Mission-linked activities, including a Christian Mission at Hilton College in South Africa, John Smyth being accompanied by several young men. He stayed separately from the young men but joined them in the showers as it "*helped me to relate to the boys*". The attempts at curtailing his camp activities and the (failed) prosecution over the death of Guide had done nothing to thwart John Smyth's predilection for spending time with boys and young men. John Smyth's son recounts his father strongly denying the accusations about the abuses in the UK, with him saying "*... it is just lies, gross exaggeration*". He was said to be taking sleeping pills during this period and describing it as "*not my finest hour*", "*but it is just nothing like they are making it out to be*".
- 13.1.79 Sue Colman (as stated earlier) was made a Trustee of the UK Zambesi Trust when the former set of Trustees resigned en masse at their concerns about John Smyth and their worry about his continued abusive behaviour. She, however, stood down from the Trust about 18 months later (therefore around mid 1991), triggered by what she described as an uneasy feeling about John Smyth and his activities. She claims to have not known of the seriousness of the abuse in the UK until the much later revelations in 2017. Sue and Jamie Colman later also funded the Smyths (particularly Anne Smyth) via another, personal, Trust. Sue Colman has said that this was on one occasion in 2012.
- 13.1.80 Parents of boys attending camps became increasingly alarmed at John Smyth's activities during 1993. In summary, legal advice was sought from David Coltart's legal practice (Messrs Webb, Low and Barry) and the 1982 Ruston Report was sent to David Coltart by David Fletcher. A letter was sent to John Smyth, laying out the allegations and asking him to respond (23<sup>rd</sup> June 1993). John Smyth agreed to meet at the legal offices, along with his son, advisors and others (including four clergymen). John Smyth denies or minimises all of the allegations. He says that he does not want the contents of the 1982 Ruston Report to be discussed in front of his son. One of John Smyth's responses is interesting (but patently untrue) – he agrees that his actions in the UK were wrong, but he had suffered a breakdown and had received medical treatment. He said he thought that David Fletcher was "*... jealous of my successful work in Zimbabwe*". The conclusion of this meeting was for all present to meet with the Zimbabwe Board of the Trust. John Smyth initially agreed to this, but cancelled later that day with Richard Johnson also saying that he was "*too busy*" to meet.
- 13.1.81 Richard Johnson has advised Reviewers that: "*The first red flag came when John advised the board he was taking photographs of boys in the showers for the camp brochures. I opposed this, asking John why and asking him to stop. There was no need for that kind of photograph in a brochure, I told him. I then learned he showered with the boys and again, asked for that to stop, which he declined to do.*"
- 13.1.82 Communications then took place between people in the UK, solicitors representing John Smyth and David Coltart. Family members have told us that John Smyth was taking a defensive and aggressive stand throughout. At this same time (according to information given us by close family members) the Zimbabwean Ministry of Home Affairs was refusing to renew John Smyth's permanent residence permit and he had been appealing the decision for many months. Pastors in Bulawayo were trying to persuade the Trustees to meet with them, as they felt that, based on the evidence received by David Coltart, the Board did not appreciate the seriousness of the matters.

Tim Tanser (solicitor representing John Smyth) advised that Jamie Colman would be travelling to Zimbabwe shortly and may be prepared to meet with the Bulawayo pastors. On 24<sup>th</sup> July, he did, indeed, meet with the pastors, along with two Zimbabwean parents. Jamie Colman agreed that the “*substance of the allegations is correct*”, but whilst John Smyth’s behaviour was odd, there was nothing improper about his conduct. Furthermore, he said that Zimbabwe had a different attitude to beating and it would not be viewed as serious by some sections of the Zimbabwean communities. The source of some of this information is the Coltart report. Jamie Colman has reported to reviewers that he did not agree with the perception that the camps were based on “*rugged Christianity*” and that he has never taken this stance. He says that he was not shown the minutes of the meeting that commented in this way. This was recorded by David Coltart in his report, as the minutes of a meeting held at the Petra Primary School, 24<sup>th</sup> July 1993.

- 13.1.83 Four days later, the pastors flew to Harare to meet with the Trustees of the Zambesi Trust Board. It was agreed that there was no dispute over the allegations against John Smyth, but they fundamentally disagreed about the interpretation of those actions. As is detailed in the Coltart Report, Richard Johnson said in a letter, that “*It is our belief (the board) that he (Smyth) is not sick or sexually or psychologically disturbed, but is instead a strong, forceful Christian with deep commitment to converting and disciplining young men*”. He also stated that “*Smyth’s ‘failure in Britain’ should not cloud the successful works before abuses at Winchester occurred*”.
- 13.1.84 The Bulawayo Ministers interpreted John Smyth’s actions as being manifestations of sexual sadism, voyeurism, exhibitionism and sexual deviation. Both sides did agree, though, that John Smyth had a psychological problem. It was agreed, with immediate effect, that there would be no beatings at the camps, no nudity by John Smyth or the boys and no access for John Smyth to the showers and the dormitories. The Trustees and the pastors would attend a camp and psychological help would have to be sought by John Smyth within 30 days of the meeting. Again, the source of this information is the Coltart Report.
- 13.1.85 Richard Johnson again describes his recollection of that time to Reviewers as follows;
- “A second red flag was not long after that when he told us about using a table tennis bat for disciplinary purposes – exactly as he wrote in the letter to parents. I said to him, no, this must stop, given his history. I noticed the agitation he showed about this, and he tried to justify his actions from Hebrews 12.*
- I made the obvious point that the reading from Hebrews was not about physical discipline but spiritual, and he did not need to beat boys, even with a table tennis bat, to maintain discipline. He did not agree – forcefully.*
- Later, he came to see me about this, and again, with some agitation, wanted my support for using the bat. I refused. He said he could not run the camps or maintain discipline without that. I disagreed.”*
- 13.1.86 This was history repeating itself – people finding extreme difficulty in agreeing how to control a known abuser, whilst leaving the control in the hands of the abuser. Even following this meeting and these supposed “*agreements*”, John Smyth wrote a letter to the parents of the boys at camps, justifying the nudity and the beatings at the camps.

## ZAMBESI MINISTRIES &amp; ZAMBESI HOLIDAYS

PO Box HG 167 Highlands Harare Zimbabwe

John Smyth  
Tel 42561 44527

July 1993

Fax 263-4-44527

Dear Parents of new Campers,

I am looking forward to having your son on camp for the first time this next school holidays, and I would like to tell you a little about how we run camp and the special atmosphere that has made our Ruzawi camps so popular with so many boys.

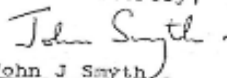
You will have read in the brochure that "we try very hard to create a relaxed family atmosphere." Ruzawi is a lovely school in which to hold the camps, but I am determined that we should avoid a school atmosphere as far as possible. I am not a school-master; I try instead to be something of a father figure to the camp, encouraging the younger leaders to care for their campers in the way the best of big brothers should. To this end, we use Christian names all round. The younger leaders sleep in the dormitories with their campers, and we all (including myself from time to time) have our showers with the boys.

We must however have good discipline and experience has shown that with so many high-spirited boys we need some form of sanction. I never cane the boys, but I do whack them with a table tennis bat when necessary. Such are the opportunities for pranks that I sometimes have to use this fairly liberally to deter high-spirited naughtiness and to ensure obedience and reasonable standards of tidiness. Although most of the boys regard TTB (as it is affectionately known) as little more than a joke, I try to keep a balance between making it a sufficient deterrent and not allowing it to spoil the happy atmosphere of camp. Very occasionally if a boy offends in a more serious way, I will whack him with a slightly bigger bat which the boys call "Jokari."

Last thing at night the dormitory leaders will sometimes take their group for a short swim in the pool - or just a plunge if it is chilly. Very strict safety rules operate for after dark swims. The boys run down in their towels and skinny-dip. Occasionally we have a day-scholar who finds this a bit strange, but having done it once, he discovers it is all part of the all-boys-together fun of camp.

Our objective is to look after your son individually, and to give him the best possible holiday. I always greatly appreciate comments, criticisms and suggestions from both campers and their parents after camp.

Yours sincerely,



John J. Smyth

- 13.1.87 As is detailed in David Coltart's report, later published, Richard Johnson suggests at this point, that there may be a parting of the ways between John Smyth and the Trust Board; he is very concerned about the TTBs but not the nudity. He said he would write a letter to John Smyth, but stated that it was an advisory board and John Smyth could still do what he wanted.
- 13.1.88 A week later, on 10<sup>th</sup> August 1993, John Smyth attended a Zambesi Ministries camp at Ruzawi School, where he held a meeting with the camp leaders, themselves young men aged 17-18, telling them that he was being personally attacked by Bulawayo pastors and they were trying to blackmail him.
- 13.1.89 According to the Coltart Report, on 10<sup>th</sup> September, a letter was sent from Coltart's legal practice to a consultant clinical psychologist, Margaret Henning, enclosing the 1982 Ruston Report, UK victim statements, letters from Zimbabwean victims' parents and copies of John Smyth's letters to parents. She was also advised that the Board did not see a connection between Zimbabwe and the UK abuses.
- 13.1.90 John Smyth refused to see a psychologist, another example of him ignoring advice and decisions.

- 13.1.91 Richard Johnson described to Reviewers that around this time, he discovered John Smyth had also sent a letter in his name suggesting that he and the board supported his use of TTB as a form of discipline. He states *“this was fraudulent, as he had taken my signature from a previous document and pasted it at the bottom of his photocopied letter”*.
- 13.1.92 On 1<sup>st</sup> October, John Smyth’s lawyer, Tim Tanser, met with one of the pastors and advised that he and the Board were absolutely convinced that John Smyth was not sexually or psychologically disturbed and therefore, Ministry should continue, the allegations being a personal vendetta. Bulawayo Ministers should take whatever course of action they see fit. John Smyth and family were also granted permanent residence status in Zimbabwe.
- 13.1.93 Margaret Henning did complete her report, this was presented to David Coltart alongside another report from Dr T Brown, a psychiatrist. The conclusion drawn was that John Smyth should desist from all work with young people, the *“current abuse being more subtle, potentially equally damaging, as at a younger age”*.
- 13.1.94 The Coltart Report was published on 19<sup>th</sup> October 1993, recommending that John Smyth should stop all work with young people, receive medical or Christian or pastoral counselling, Headmasters should stop him coming to schools and terminate all contact, with any young people coming in contact with John Smyth to be monitored.
- 13.1.95 At this time, the only listed Trustees of the UK Trust are John Smyth and Jamie Colman.
- 13.1.96 Around 1994, a couple who were members of the congregation at St Mark’s Church, Battersea Rise, London, and aware of the concerns about John Smyth’s alleged abuse in the UK and in Zimbabwe, informally met with Reverend Paul Perkin to object to the Church’s funding of Zambesi Ministries. Their concerns went unheeded, and, in a subsequent meeting with Jamie Colman, he acknowledged that there were serious issues over John Smyth’s behaviour but that he believed the only way to maintain any influence over him was to continue funding. The couple had made annual contributions to the Ministry but cut their own funding after the rebuttal. Paul Perkin denied that he was responsible for this funding when we met with him. He says that he had no knowledge of the severity of the abuses until the airing of the Channel 4 programmes in 2017. The parishioners have advised Reviewers that they deeply-regret that their concerns were not heard and acted upon. Reverend Perkin does not agree that their concerns went unheeded, as they left the church about a year later and that gave insufficient time for the matters to be concluded.
- 13.1.97 From this period onwards, Jamie Colman is clearly a participant in the Church, given his central and influential role within St Mark’s Church, Battersea. The definition of a Church “participant” was described in a Church guidance note in 2012:

*“worshipping community” (participants) of a church is defined as anyone who attends that church (including fresh expressions of Church) regularly, for example at least once a month, or would do so if not prevented by illness, infirmity or temporary absence. It includes activities such as fellowship groups and other activities that have a distinct act of worship or prayer. It also includes acts of worship not on church premises (e.g. at a school or community centre). We include those who:*

- *come to midweek services;*
- *are ill and unable to come to church;*
- *are away on holiday or business;*
- *have home communions;*
- *are part of a regular ‘fresh expression’ of church;*



- *live in care or residential homes and would consider themselves to be full members of their church;*
- *give regularly to their church;*
- *lead worship (e.g. clergy).*

- 13.1.98 Reviewers are aware that later, Paul Perkin refused to support Nick Stott (later ordained) who was seeking to work with John Smyth in Zimbabwe, warning him off John Smyth. Paul Perkin says that he has a vague memory of a parishioner approaching him after a service regarding John Smyth, but he maintains that this was not a formal meeting, the parishioner gives the following version:
- 13.1.99 They advise they had a formal meeting with Paul Perkin, and that they later bumped into Jamie Colman and their conversation again made it clear that he knew of the allegations about John Smyth, but he was sure that the situation in Zimbabwe was safe and under scrutiny. He said to her that he was personally supporting John Smyth financially and that he was *“in this with him”* in terms of his own personal reputation.
- 13.1.100 At this time, schools in Zimbabwe stopped allowing John Smyth to advertise his camps (Peterhouse at Marondera, Falcon College at Esigodini and St George’s College in Harare – all fee-paying schools). The camps were originally held at Ruzawi School in Marondera but they banned John Smyth from using their premises at this time, as they were concerned about his abusive behaviour.
- 13.1.101 In March 1994, a woman attending a Christian rock band event, was approached by an older woman, as she was standing with others discussing the concert at the end. She freely said that she had enjoyed the concert but was concerned that there was a connection with John Smyth and *“... wasn’t it terrible about those boys?”*. The others nodded knowingly and clearly knew what she was referring to. She said that she didn’t understand what was being said and that no one would clarify it for her. She felt it was *“creepy”* and *“conspiratorial”*. She thinks the reference was probably to the camps in Zimbabwe and not to Winchester. An open secret indeed.
- 13.1.102 In April, there was probably a mini camp at Zambesi House in Harare. It is thought that both English and Canadian students (thought to be children) attended this camp. Despite warnings and rejections, John Smyth was still continuing to host camps.
- 13.1.103 In September 1995, as a result of John Smyth being formally charged with the culpable homicide over the tragic death of Guide Nyachuru, John and Anne Smyth had their permanent residency in Zimbabwe revoked and replaced with temporary residence visas. At this time, John and Anne Smyth travelled to the UK to attend their eldest daughter’s wedding. According to a close family member, John Smyth took the opportunity to do a “sales pitch” for the Zambesi Mission as part of his father-of-the-bride speech.
- 13.1.104 In April 1996, John Smyth returned to the UK for two weeks. He went to visit Nick Stott, and his family. Nick Stott had stayed with John Smyth and his family at the house in Harare before and had taken some part in the Mission work there. He had been in the army in Bosnia and had been injured. John Smyth persuaded him (and convinced him) to return with him to Zimbabwe to convalesce and to join in at the camps. He continued with the work there and later became the leader of Zambesi Ministries. He was surprised that all the boys at the camp were required to wear Speedo style swimming trunks and, on questioning John Smyth about it, he was told that *“it is for a good athletic and sporty image of camp”*. These camps were being held in the bush outside Marondera, as the former Ruzawi School stopped hosting them, when they became concerned about John Smyth’s behaviour.
- 13.1.105 The court case against John Smyth was due to start during 1997, with support for four of the boys who had provided affidavits to the court being given by a Reverend based in South Africa. One of the four withdrew from involvement in the case, as insisted by his parents, as the whole ordeal was becoming too much for him. The hearing was

postponed at the last minute by the court authorities for no very clear reason. 14 affidavits were drawn up in total.

- 13.1.106 In the 1990s, a victim was appointed as a Church officer. Prior to his appointment, he told his diocesan bishop and two parish representatives that he had been involved in a cult, in which physical discipline had been administered. He wanted to make them aware that he had been involved with “*something inappropriate*”. He did not, however, name John Smyth or give any details of the severity of the beatings. The Bishop says that he has no memory of this happening. There should have been more professional curiosity on behalf of the then Bishop, as that could have led to the person reporting more detail and to the matter being investigated. This Bishop cannot be named in the Review, as this would identify the victim.
- 13.1.107 By this point in time, the mid-1990s, all Bishops will have been fully apprised of the debates within the House of Bishops regarding the development of a child protection policy within the Church. Even if this alert from this newly appointed Church officer was prior to the introduction of the policy in July 1995, a Bishop will have been required to be more curious and to explore any safeguarding matters brought to his attention. After July 1995, the policy requiring this level of scrutiny was in place.
- 13.1.108 During 1999, Nick Stott regularly attended Zambesi Trust meetings with Jamie Colman and Nix Smyth. In his meeting with reviewers Nick Stott told us he had thought that he became a Trustee. He advises that he later became aware, in conversation with Jamie Colman, that the papers for this were never filed with the Charity Commission. This was reinforced in a statement made by Jamie Colman in 2017. Nick Stott says that the Trust arrangements included restricted funds specifically for support to John and Anne Smyth. He says that he was told by Jamie Colman about “*an issue*” with John Smyth in the 1980s, but says that he was not told any details of this. As stated earlier, Nick Stott was advised by Paul Perkin to not join John Smyth and his Mission in Zimbabwe, but he still chose to go. A year later Nick Stott was accepted as a mission partner by Crosslinks, with John Smyth having moved by then to South Africa. With John Smyth out of the picture and Nick Stott accepted by a formal mission, St Marks then supported his application. Nick Stott has told Reviewers that he felt, at that time, that it was not his place to go investigating rumours and, in hindsight, he wishes he had done so. He had a confidence that any matters would have been investigated and dealt with by people he trusted.
- 13.1.109 Sometime during 1998, Robin Weekes (later ordained), was informed by Reverend Iain Broomfield that “*something bad*” had happened at Winchester College many years ago, but neither the perpetrator’s name, nor the nature of abuse, were mentioned. This was either when he went to speak at the Winchester College Christian Union or at a Iwerne camp – he cannot remember which. He was 24 at the time.
- 13.1.110 John Smyth’s son was leading a Church in Harare in 2001 and was increasingly distancing himself from his father, both personally and in terms of his Ministry ... “*Not least because I was a young guy with a wife and I had two kids by then, but my dad was already becoming a pain in the neck to me in terms of my Church ministry*”.
- 13.1.111 Nick Stott stayed with the Smyths for a short period. Nick Stott described how he was one of the first on the scene following Guide Nyachuru’s death, in his meeting with reviewers he described this tragic event and his role on the morning:
- “My role was to go down to what we called the flag lawn right by the swimming pool. We probably had 45 minutes to an hour before the wake-up bell rang and my job was just to make sure while the body was still in the pool no-one else came near. In that one hour I saw one person and I said ‘We are just closing this area for now, could you go somewhere else?’, and I will never forget that. And then everyone was woken up and they were all taken off to the dining hall. John kept everyone over there and explained what happened. I knew that the police were called and things like that”.*
- 13.1.112 John and Anne Smyth took a seven-month sabbatical trip away from Zimbabwe at this time. They visited Vancouver, Canada, for part of this, with John Smyth attending a course at the Regent Theological College there. College records show that he

registered and paid for two short courses at the College, but there is no record of him attending. The courses were: A Christian Understanding of Human Sexuality and Evangelism and Catholicism in Dialogue. At this time, the Smyths were required to attend the Home Office in Harare every 30 days to have their temporary residence visa stamped. This was usual practice. On return from their sabbatical, and in breach of their visa requirements, they were given 30 days to leave Zimbabwe. They are said by a close family member to have packed in a hurry and moved to Durban, South Africa.

- 13.1.113 Nick Stott subsequently took over the running of the camps, with the leadership being, in effect, handed over to him.
- 13.1.114 A letter to supporters of the Zambesi Trust was sent in April 2002, from the Trustees: Jamie Colman, Tom and Joan Penny and Dr Bruce Levy. Dr Bruce Levy is UK-based at this time, according to the letter. This letter is seeking new funding, indicating that some funders diverted their funding to Zimbabwe-based missionary work, rather than the (new) South African mission. The letter invites supporters to consider whether they wished for their contributions to be dedicated to aspects of the missions, for example, specifically to fund Nick Stott and the mission in Zimbabwe or to be directed towards John and Anne Smyth in South Africa. These donations were being allocated via restricted funds within the overall Trust funding. It is clear from this that the mission work being delivered by John Smyth in South Africa is active, under the name of Zambesi Trust and developing. There is a specific reference in the letter to supporting John Smyth by helping him to establish pensions, upon which to live, saying that his income streams from his former Bar work were insufficient to meet his needs.
- 13.1.115 It is likely that the “*mission*” being referred to in the Zambesi Trust letter is John Smyth’s work on Bible study with students at a local University in Durban. John Smyth continues to have access to young men (and possible potential victims).
- 13.1.116 In December 2002, John Smyth was appointed as the National Director of CLASA. (Appendix 16)
- 13.1.117 A report by a victim, about a senior leadership team meeting at Emmanuel Church, Wimbledon, which took place in 2002, is disturbing. He (the victim) was described, in his own words, as a “*source of potential nuclear threat to the whole Iwerne world because I knew something, and I could speak out about something that had the potential to destroy the whole organisation*”. The attempt at containing the abuses from the late 1970s and early 1980s was continuing, despite this being, by now, a very open secret indeed.
- 13.1.118 John Smyth wrote to Mark Mullins of the Lawyers Christian Fellowship in the UK in January 2003 (Appendix 17), introducing himself and saying that he had been out of the country for nearly 20 years. It is not clear why he wrote in this way. Mark Mullins was alerted to allegations about John Smyth and reacted by speaking with Reverend Brian Anderson, pastor at a Baptist Church in Cape Town. Mark Mullins notes in correspondence to Reviewers that: “*He told me that they tried to get JJS deported. The Minister for Home Affairs agreed one day and then mysteriously changed his mind the next. He strongly believes that JJS was being protected by Mugabe himself. That is borne out to some extent by the revelation in JJS’ newsletter of January that that he has been granted citizenship in Zimbabwe which is curious when one considers the plight of so many other whites in that country.*” Brian Anderson said he was prepared to denounce John Smyth at Church if CLASA did not remove him. Mark Mullins contacted CLASA and explained allegations but they did not remove him. John Smyth gave a talk on Democracy in Johannesburg on behalf of CLASA during this year.
- 13.1.119 There is no formal relationship between LCF and the Church of England and, given the fact that they are not specifically included in the ToR for this Review, we are not offering any analysis of the LCF’s role in this.
- 13.1.120 In May, the information about John Smyth was placed before the LCF National Committee – the decision was made to terminate John Smyth’s membership with the proviso that before the decision was finalised, he be given the opportunity to make representations. The South African body was kept informed of the LCF actions and

they attempted to confront John Smyth. Then John Smyth resigned as a Director of CLASA. He claimed, in a letter to the LCF, that his resignation had nothing to do with the allegations. Mark Mullins' statement to the LCF said "...he is not a fit person to be a member of the LCF in the absence of any true repentance from these activities" (Appendix 18). It can be argued that the LCF could have done more to expose John Smyth to the UK authorities. Equally, it can be argued that the LCF took decisive action and attempted to curtail John Smyth's activities in South Africa. It is out of the scope of the ToR for this Review to make a judgement on that.

- 13.1.121 John Smyth continued to try to influence the LCF, even after the termination of his membership. In August 2003, he sent a dossier entitled "*The answer to the Bulawayo document of 1993*" which, he claimed, showed that he was exonerated of blame.
- 13.1.122 On the 12<sup>th</sup> September 2003, Mark Mullins sent copies of the Coltart Report and the Ruston report to the LCF committee. There was an email exchange between the LCF committee, the Bulawayo pastors and David Fletcher between the 14<sup>th</sup> and the 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2003 regarding John Smyth's attempts to "*cover himself and maintain Christian respectability*".
- 13.1.123 John Smyth became increasingly active in South Africa throughout 2004/5, getting involved with several legal and other causes and setting up and leading the Justice Alliance South Africa (**JASA**<sup>72</sup>), JASA was formally registered in 2009 as a not for profit organisation. And in 2005, John and Anne Smyth moved to Cape Town. They began to attend a local church – Church on Main.
- 13.1.124 John Smyth appeared as an *amicus curiae* - a person permitted to assist a legal case, because John Smyth had no formal legal standing in South Africa, of the Constitutional Court of South Africa on behalf of the organisation, Doctors for Life International. This was to oppose the legislation of same-sex marriage on the basis that it would discriminate against people with deeply held religious beliefs. John Smyth gradually developed his legal reputation and was called upon to represent people fighting for causes which accord with his conservative beliefs. There is evidence here that John Smyth began to develop his legal connections and work, and was called upon to represent people fighting for causes which accord with his beliefs. John Smyth gave a talk at the University of the Free State at a conference held there on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> March 2006, on abortion. He was once again in a powerful and influential position, with increasing access to organisations and people, including potential victims.
- 13.1.125 Anthony Cordle moved to Cape Town in 2006 and met up with John and Anne Smyth every two or three months. He says that he tried to talk to John Smyth about what happened in the UK but John Smyth would not engage with it. The Zambesi Trust (Canada) ceased to operate from March 2007, due to failure to file a tax return. Their Charity status was cancelled and all privileges taken away by the Canadian Government.
- 13.1.126 There is some evidence (from family members) that John Smyth ran Bible Study Groups for young men from around 2008 onwards in South Africa. He is clearly very active and able to meet with potential victims.
- 13.1.127 A book was published by John Smyth – "*Tremendous Teens*" in 2011. The cover (Appendix 19) depicts scenes of boys at summer camps, with the book being an instructional guide on the running of Christian summer camps. It is clearly based on the Zimbabwe period, but was written long after leaving there. The book confirms the central role of Jamie Colman in financially supporting the Trust and the camps: "*I name only one individual... Jamie Colman, who for nearly 25 years has borne the burden of running the Zambesi Trust (UK) and keeping the work on the road financially (Acknowledgements ix)*". The book also references that there was a "*regular trickle of boys and girls from the UK [and] from the inter Varsity camps, Ontario, Canada*". The book describes the camps as being run along the lines of the Iwerne camps and, indeed, Scripture Union and the Iwerne Trust are acknowledged in the book as being key influencers on the work of the Zimbabwe camps. There is talk of the corporal

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<sup>72</sup>Explained on JASA's 'X' (Twitter) profile as; JASA is a coalition of corporations, individuals & churches committed to upholding & fighting for justice & the highest moral standards in South Africa

punishment at the camps but this is minimised: “*For a while we introduced a very mild form of corporal punishment on the boys’ camps – two or three whacks to the bottom with a table tennis bat (page 19)*”. The reason given for this practice being stopped was a change in attitude to corporal punishment in Zimbabwe at the time. The death of Guide Nyachuru is also referenced in the book, again minimised, and accompanied by a description as to how safety practices were introduced following the death.

### **Analysis of Africa Period**

- 13.1.128 A full examination of the abuses which occurred in Zimbabwe and South Africa was not explicitly referenced in the ToR for this Review. This period is significant to the learning from this case for the Church of England.
- 13.1.129 Had adequate action to prevent further abuse been taken at the point that Church officers first became aware of John Smyth’s abuse in 1982, or as we hypothesised previously, even earlier, this may have prevented John Smyth from perpetrating further harm in Africa. Tragically, none of the interventions attempted by Church officials up until this point was successful and, as described below, John Smyth did continue to abuse further victims in Africa.
- 13.1.130 During this Review we have become aware of the continuing role of Church of England officers in supporting John Smyth with his ministry activities in Africa throughout this Review period and up until the abuse was investigated and reported on by Channel 4 in 2017. Several contributors have also indicated that they made financial contributions themselves or are aware of others in the UK that did, and how John Smyth was given support with his fundraising by Church officials - sometimes within their parishes - to enable the family to continue to thrive in Africa. More informal support was given too by those associated with the Church by means of visits and holidays to Africa, and hosting John Smyth on his visits to fundraise in the UK. Support seems to have extended beyond Church officers to include Members of Parliament in the UK, related to the Church, who visited John Smyth in Zimbabwe.
- 13.1.131 We have undertaken an analysis of information available to us, much of this offered by contributors who we have met including those who have previously undertaken investigations relating to this matter (The Coltart Report and Andrew Graystone’s investigations). This means there are limitations on the information that we have been able to consider and analyse in the course of our Review. Much of the information reviewed has been communicated to us by others and has not been gathered first hand by Reviewers, for example from those directly involved with John Smyth and his activities in Africa, including victims and their families in Zimbabwe and South Africa. Further investigation on this period is recommended as a next step later in the report. This would ensure comprehensive analysis of the impact of Church officials actions related to the abuse perpetrated by John Smyth in Africa.
- 13.1.132 John and Anne Smyth and family moved to Harare, Zimbabwe, in August 1984. A significant person, involved with this move and connected with the missionary work developed by John Smyth, was Andy Shaw, who John Smyth met whilst at Theological College in Bristol.
- 13.1.133 African Enterprise supported the setup of Zambesi Ministry, John Smyth was assisted by Michael Cassidy. The funding for this move and the establishment of the mission came from African Enterprise fundraising links, as well as personal support from various individuals, who responded to communications from John Smyth.
- 13.1.134 Anthony Cordle spoke with a lawyer, Tim Tanser, in Zimbabwe, advising him to not engage with John Smyth, but without being specific about his concerns. This warning was not heeded. Tim Tanser went on to represent John Smyth, following the death of Guide Nyachuru in 1992.
- 13.1.135 Martin and Jill Kingston, who went on to be Trustees of the Zambesi Trust, visited the Smyth’s at their home in Harare in 1985. Jill Kingston remembers being concerned about John Smyth’s propensity for walking around almost naked and his obvious interest in young men, coupled with a lack of interest in his own daughters.

- 13.1.136 During 1985, John Smyth returned to the UK to represent Mary Whitehouse in a court case.
- 13.1.137 Throughout 1986, John and Anne Smyth travelled extensively, going to Calgary in Canada, Washington DC in the States and London, giving talks and establishing streams of funding for the mission and the setting up of the Zambesi Trust. The Trust was founded in the UK, Canada and in Zimbabwe, with separate Boards of Trustees for each.
- 13.1.138 Towards the end of 1986, three Christian MPs, travelling with Anthony Cordle, visited Zimbabwe and went on a whistlestop tour, visiting various key figures in the country, including Robert Mugabe, the Zimbabwean President.
- 13.1.139 There is no evidence that any proactive attempts were made to alert authorities in Zimbabwe by Church of England officers, including David Fletcher or other Clergy who had seen the 1982 Ruston Report and were therefore aware of the abuse from 1982. David Fletcher and others attempted to alert people later, in 1986, once John Smyth was already firmly established in Zimbabwe. By the time any attempts were made to warn those in Africa, John Smyth had already begun to abuse boys and young men. Some believe that David Fletcher closely monitored John Smyth after he left the UK. This was not the case. Indeed, it was only because of an approach from Michael Cassidy that David Fletcher took any interest. John Smyth was out of sight and out of mind, a problem solved and exported to Africa, the 1982 Ruston Report and the beatings buried by secrecy. It can be speculated that attempts to thwart John Smyth's activities in Zimbabwe would have probably failed, as the country was suffering from much corruption at the time and there was not a strong link between the Church of England and the African Anglican churches. However, these attempts should have been more strongly pursued, as they may have had an influence. The starkest fact is that the UK abuses should have been pursued further, reported to the UK police and pursued by them. David Fletcher and others were still continuing to cover-up and to draw a veil over the abuses they knew about in detail from the late 1970s until 1982. A police investigation should have commenced then, in 1982. The police investigation into John Smyth's UK offences did not start until many years later, in 2017. David Fletcher and others, deliberately and knowingly, stood in the way of that investigation.
- 13.1.140 John Smyth and Michael Cassidy fell out and parted their ways, with John Smyth splitting off from African Enterprise in June. He remained an "associate" with African Enterprise, but this split meant that he was now largely free from oversight. Family members have told us that this was a distinct and common pattern – John Smyth falling out with people and then going his own way. This sort of behaviour should have waved a red flag for those around him.
- 13.1.141 John Smyth started negotiations to run his Mission at independent schools. He assured David Cunningham that he would not be running the camps himself, but he did, indeed, run a camp at Peterhouse School in August.
- 13.1.142 The Council of Reference was changed to a "Board of Reference" for the Trust, in late 1986. The evidence is that this Board had a completely different membership from the Council, with Council members not being informed of the change. John Smyth was clearly manipulating the situation to ensure that he had complete control over the running of the Mission.
- 13.1.143 Michael Cassidy, worried that John Smyth would now be free to set up camps to include boys and young men, wrote to David Fletcher to ask for advice on how to counsel John Smyth against this. This indicates a depth of knowledge about the concerns over John Smyth. Michael Cassidy must have been informed about the UK concerns over John Smyth's activities for him to be so exercised about it.
- 13.1.144 Young men from the UK (and possibly Canada) began to visit John Smyth, staying in the house in Harare. One tells of witnessing disturbing behaviour – nakedness and "grooming".
- 13.1.145 In 1987 John Smyth visited the UK to raise funds.

- 13.1.146 People in the UK were told of the abuse perpetrated by John Smyth, by Peter Krakenberger in 1987.
- 13.1.147 There is considerable concern about John Smyth throughout 1987, with a range of people, including prominent clergymen, corresponding and attempting to curtail John Smyth's activities at the camps.
- 13.1.148 These people, and including Tim Sterry, were sent a postcard expressing alarm at John Smyth being sent to Zimbabwe, to commit further abuses. The response to this was to alert John Smyth himself to the contact! There is also discussion about whether the justifications for keeping the abuse secret should be explained to the person who sent the card.
- 13.1.149 There is evidence of a victim approaching a clergyman for help in the UK in 1988, but not being taken seriously. Many people, including Church officers and lay individuals, in both the UK and Zimbabwe are, by 1988, fully aware of the abuses in the UK in the late 1970s and early 1980s.
- 13.1.150 John Thorn's autobiography was published in 1989.
- 13.1.151 There are increasing challenges to John Smyth continuing his work with boys and young men from 1989, both within Zimbabwe and from the UK.
- 13.1.152 Several very important events happen in a relatively short period in 1989 – the Lawyers Christian Fellowship began to distance itself from John Smyth, the entire Board of the UK Zambesi Trust resigned (with Jamie Colman taking over control) and Andy Shaw ceased to work with John Smyth in the Mission.
- 13.1.153 From this time and for the next few years, there is evidence of funding from the UK continuing, including considerable capital funding of Zambezi House in Harare. Some of this funding is coming from prominent Evangelical Churches in the UK.
- 13.1.154 Reports of abuse at the camps are growing and there is a developing movement, led by David Coltart and some parents, to close down the camps.
- 13.1.155 A boy (Guide Nyachuru) is found dead in the pool at the Ruzawi camp, which led to John Smyth being charged with culpable homicide, later in 1995.
- 13.1.156 Young men from independent schools in the UK and Canada continue to stay with the Smyths and in Zambezi House, working on the camps and in the Mission. One of these, Nick Stott, went on to be important to the camps and he eventually took over from John Smyth in 2001.
- 13.1.157 A case is brought against John Smyth (both for the culpable homicide and for injuries against boys on the camps) but this is dropped.
- 13.1.158 In the UK, the Titus Trust was formed in 1997. The Iwerne Trust continued until 2015.
- 13.1.159 The Smyth family moved to Durban, South Africa, in mid-2001.
- 13.1.160 The Lawyers Christian Fellowship formally excluded John Smyth from membership in 2003.
- 13.1.161 John Smyth sets up JASA, a group campaigning on behalf of Evangelical interests and causes. John Smyth resigned from the CLASA, following representations from the LCF in the UK.
- 13.1.162 The Smyths moved to Cape Town in 2005.
- 13.1.163 The Zambesi Trust (Canada) was closed down in 2007.
- 13.1.164 There is considerable contact between John Smyth and the UK during his time in Africa, both in terms of contacts to and from prominent evangelicals and in terms of



young men being brought in to Zimbabwe to work on his Mission, selected from independent schools.

- 13.1.165 John and Anne Smyth visited the UK frequently (there is evidence of visits every year between 1985 and 2003). These were mainly fundraising visits and they stayed at various locations, including at a house owned by the Colman's in Hampshire.
- 13.1.166 John Smyth deliberately manipulated things so that he gained control and obtained freedom to pursue his aims to work with boys and young men, going completely against the agreements made in 1982/3.
- 13.1.167 There was no meaningful attempt to monitor John Smyth when he was first in Zimbabwe.
- 13.1.168 Victims approached clergymen for help in the UK but were not taken seriously.
- 13.1.169 Jonathan Fletcher had a far greater role in intervening in the Mission work in Zimbabwe than has been known earlier.
- 13.1.170 The attempts made by Clergy and Lay people (who knew of the Ruston Report) in the UK to control John Smyth were weak and demonstrated a greater emphasis on keeping the "secret" a secret, than a genuine effort at stopping John Smyth abusing boys and young men.
- 13.1.171 When the Zambesi Trust was set up, the UK Trustees could and should have been passed knowledge of the abuse that had taken place. David Fletcher and all the others who were in receipt of the Ruston Report, chose not to inform them, thereby allowing John Smyth the opportunity to have uncontrolled access to children and to develop his Mission in Zimbabwe unchecked and unmonitored.
- 13.1.172 Church officers and individuals continued to support and fund the Zambesi Trust, despite there being general knowledge amongst many people that he was under investigation for abuses at the Mission camps.
- 13.1.173 Large numbers of people knew of the UK abuses, including Clergy. There is evidence of at least two bishops being told and the strong probability that two other bishops knew up until the end of 2011.
- 13.1.174 Despite all this knowledge and despite there being active and strong correspondence between the people who knew of John Smyth's abuses, both in the UK and Zimbabwe, no one considered taking the matter to the UK police.

#### **14. TIME PERIOD: 2012 – 2016**

##### **Key Findings**

- 14.1.1 The Review ToR steers us to focus on two related but distinct questions: (1) what the Church of England did (i.e. relevant officers and institutions) know about alleged abuse perpetrated by John Smyth; and (2) what was the response of the Church of England to those allegations. For this period, in response to these questions, we have found the following:
  - (a) The abuses committed by John Smyth began to be formally known to the Church of England in this period. The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, Yvonne Quirk, was in contact with a victim at the end of July 2013, following several months of this victim being in contact with a Church officer, who was also a victim.
  - (b) Several opportunities were missed during this period to establish a formal report of the abuse that had taken place in the UK to the police. The notification to authorities in South Africa, regarding John Smyth's possible continuing abuse there, was not followed up to ensure action was taken to prevent further abuse.

- (c) From July 2013, the Church of England knew, at the highest level, about the abuse that took place in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The Archbishop of Canterbury's personal Chaplain (a Priest) and the Bishop of Ely were all made aware of the abuse, and Justin Welby became aware of the abuse alleged against John Smyth in around August 2013 in his capacity as Archbishop of Canterbury. It is most likely that other staff members there will have been informed at the same time in August 2013.
- (d) There was a distinct lack of curiosity shown by these senior figures and a tendency towards minimisation of the matter, demonstrated by the absence of any further questioning and follow up, particularly regarding the Church reassuring itself that a known abuser was not still actively abusing (albeit in a different country, but this does not diminish the moral responsibility on people).
- (e) The conclusion that must be reached is that John Smyth could and should have been reported to the police in 2013. This could (and probably would) have led to a full investigation, the uncovering of the truth of the serial nature of the abuses in the UK, involving multiple victims and the possibility of a conviction being brought against him. In effect, three and a half years was lost, a time within which John Smyth could have been brought to justice and any abuse he was committing in South Africa discovered and stopped.
- (f) This period is characterised by the fact that the UK abuses are revealed to a much wider group, including the Church of England at the highest level. The abuses in Zimbabwe are also being discovered. The suffering being experienced by several UK victims continues to have a devastating impact, with a victim attempting to take his life on Christmas Day 2013. Several other victims persist in seeking financial help to enable them to access qualified therapeutic support for the abuse.
- (g) The key responsibility for this lay with David Fletcher. It is of note that David Fletcher had shared the Ruston Report with people in Zimbabwe in the 1990s in an attempt at alerting authorities there about the danger that John Smyth posed. As this Review has shown, very many people knew of the abuses in the UK by the time of the Titus Trust being alerted by an anonymous person. It was a quite "*open secret*" amongst a whole variety of people connected with the Conservative Evangelical network, both in the UK and in Africa and by both Clergy and Lay people. The core argument that the victims were being protected by not sharing the knowledge of the 1982 Ruston Report is, by now, spurious. In fact, the "*secret*" had been "*out*" for a long time. David Fletcher was still attempting to protect the Iwerne reputation, the Conservative Evangelical world, as well as his own reputation and that of the small group who did not report or act adequately on knowledge of the abuse. His primary motivation by this point in time was not that of protecting the identities of the young men involved. This may have been his motivation, during the earlier period when the UK abuses first came to light, but, by now, things had changed and other considerations were at play. As argued earlier, he should have reported the abuses in 1982 as they were known to have been crimes and they also included some children.
- (h) A report was eventually made to the police by individuals within Titus Trust. The two victims known to most trustees and James Stileman at this time were not consulted on whether they would agree to their names being forwarded to the police, and so this was done without their identities being revealed. The police referral was, therefore, inadequate and ended due in part to there being no named abuse victim. Some have claimed that this was part of a deliberate cover-up. It was, at the least, a demonstration of a patronising attitude taken towards victims. They "*knew better*", putting the protection of the Iwerne name, and evangelicalism generally, ahead of a real commitment to helping abuse victims and dealing with a known abuser, who was still free to abuse, albeit now in Africa.
- (i) The Titus Trust took legal advice, advisors referenced only the fact that because under 18-year-olds had been abused, this constituted an offence. The 1982 Ruston Report, many years earlier, had identified that offences against adults had been committed, under the 1861 Offences Against the Person Act.

- (j) A timeline published by the Titus Trust stated that payments were agreed to be made for therapy costs for a victim, but these were made by individuals and channelled via the personal bank account of the Operations Director, James Stileman. James Stileman was new in post. James Stileman sent a redacted version of his report to the Trustees, when informing the Scripture Union, via Tim Hastie-Smith, of the abuse. The redactions were made as this was a status report, which contained other information not relevant to John Smyth. Thames Valley Police were alerted to the abuse by the Oxford DSA in November 2016; there does not appear to be any action taken on this by the force.
- (k) There is some evidence of John Smyth continuing to groom and potentially abusing young men in South Africa during this period.

### Chronology – 2012 to 2016

Date - Year/Month	Event
16 <sup>th</sup> March 2012	A victim who is also a Church officer received an “ <i>out of the blue a letter</i> ” from a fellow survivor, marked “strictly personal, private and confidential”, asking for help.
March – December 2012	Correspondence takes place between victim and victim (Church Officer)
20 <sup>th</sup> October 2012	Anne Atkins, a journalist, writes an article for <i>The Mail</i> on Sunday newspaper in wake of Operation Yewtree, mentions abuse from ‘ <i>an eminent lawyer, with considerable influence in a well-known public school</i> ’.
26 <sup>th</sup> October 2012	Victim contacts victim (Church officer) by email asking for expert psychiatrist help. Victim (Church officer) responds to confirm he may know someone who might be able to help.
8 <sup>th</sup> November 2012	An individual contacted Titus Trust’s manager stating the lawyer mentioned in the Anne Atkins’ article was John Smyth...‘ <i>if you don’t know about the case then your Trustees will tell you about it.</i> ’
9 <sup>th</sup> November 2012	The victim (Church Officer) is made aware of the possible connection between John Smyth and Justin Welby. He is also made aware of the death of a boy at a camp run by John Smyth in Zimbabwe
6 <sup>th</sup> December 2012	Titus Trust contact by the individual from 8 <sup>th</sup> November, asking if, ‘ <i>this historic situation re John Smyth been investigated/faced up to?</i> ’. Three trustees and three staff were sent this email.
<b>2013</b>	
January to October 2013	Victim continues to ask for help and victim (Church Officer) continues to respond. Victim (Church Officer) states that this interchange stirs up memories for himself.
25 <sup>th</sup> January 2013	Titus Trust responds to individual who had contacted them, confirming an investigation into allegations against John Smyth completed and at the time no criminal activity had occurred.
4 <sup>th</sup> February 2013	The Most Reverend and Right Honorable Justin Welby’s election was confirmed and legally took office as Archbishop of Canterbury.

Date - Year/Month	Event
12 <sup>th</sup> March 2013	Titus Trust Trustees meeting references the October 2012 Anne Atkins' article, " <i>the Winchester affair</i> " and an enquiry from an external party.
29 <sup>th</sup> April 2013	Victim (Church officer) replies to victim, he feels like he has done what he can without being able to talk personally. Suggests victim contacts "those who run Iwerne" and offers to meet and talk rather than continued email correspondence.
July 2013	Victim (Church officer) advised by a "Christian psychiatrist" to speak with his Diocesan Safeguarding Office for support with the disclosure and John Smyth abuse.
July 2013	Victim (Church officer) emails victim stating he has contacted the Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, Yvonne Quirk about the contacts and disclosure and asks that victim does not email him further
29 <sup>th</sup> July 2013	Victim contacts The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser asking her to call back.
30 <sup>th</sup> July 2013	The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, briefs Bishop of Ely (Stephen Conway) on disclosures of John Smyth abuse - agreement to find support for a victim, to contact Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop of Cape Town.
	The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser emails national Joint Safeguarding Adviser at the time (Elizabeth Hall)
	The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser telephones Cambridgeshire Police Officer (Detective Sergeant (DS) Lisa Pearson) regarding disclosures made about John Smyth abuse.
1 <sup>st</sup> August 2013	Letter sent from Bishop of Ely to Bishop of Table Bay, South Africa about John Smyth abuses in UK
2 <sup>nd</sup> August 2013	Bishop of Ely emails Reverend Dr Jo Bailey Wells and attaches letter sent to Garth Counsell the Bishop of Table Bay (South Africa). This advises specifically of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A serious historic safeguarding situation</li> <li>• John Smyth's links to the camps</li> <li>• Police involvement</li> <li>• Rapidity with which John Smyth leaves UK</li> </ul>
2 <sup>nd</sup> August 2013	Jo Bailey Wells responds to say that she will let the Archbishop (of Canterbury) know and notes " <i>He may just know JS personally</i> " given his involvement with the camps, she forwards the emails to Lambeth staff including documents, and states that she has sent a copy to Justin Welby.
8 <sup>th</sup> August 2013	Archbishop of Canterbury confirms he knew John Smyth in 1970s and requests contact be made with Iwerne Trust about who is running camps now.

Date - Year/Month	Event
9 <sup>th</sup> August 2013	Bishop of Ely provides update of actions taken to Lambeth/ Jo Bailey Wells, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledgement from Bishop of Cape Town having received letter from Bishop of Ely.</li> <li>• Plans in place for "<i>immediate response</i>"</li> <li>• Importance of not contacting anyone given police are involved and "<i>will need to make decisions</i>"</li> <li>• Hopes to establish planning across the dioceses and police forces</li> </ul>
9 <sup>th</sup> August 2013	Jo Bailey Wells emails Justin Welby to this effect, and states Bishop of Ely " <i>is clear we must not alert the Iwerne leadership as the police are (already) handling.</i> "
20 <sup>th</sup> August 2013	Ely Diocese Safeguarding Management Group first discussion about John Smyth case
20 <sup>th</sup> August 2013	The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, contacts the Joint Safeguarding Adviser in a national role for advice on finding support for victim
August 2013	Email exchange between victim and The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, regarding finding therapist, discussing locations. The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser also explains that the summer holiday period makes the search slower and describes that they " <i>usually</i> " offer four sessions and then review needs.
1 <sup>st</sup> September 2013	James Stileman is appointed as Operations Director of Titus Trust.
4 <sup>th</sup> September 2013	DS Lisa Pearson, Cambridgeshire Police Officer advises The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser that John Smyth case most likely needs to be referred to Hampshire Police as abuse took place in Winchester. Police Officer advises she will talk to senior colleagues before advising the Safeguarding Adviser further.
10 <sup>th</sup> September 2013	Bishop of Ely receives response from Bishop of Table Bay. Archbishop of Canterbury's Personal Chaplain, Jo Bailey Wells, advised no further action to be taken until Police had advised on next steps.
11 <sup>th</sup> September 2013	The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser speaks with victim (Church officer) discuss connection between Justin Welby and Iwerne, victim indicates that Justin Welby was a camp leader. The Safeguarding Adviser also asks victim (Church officer) if he is willing to help police.
27 <sup>th</sup> September 2013	The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, is advised that an Authorised Listener should be appointed to help the victim
9 <sup>th</sup> October 2013	Victim tells The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, that a victim also perpetrated abuse. Also advises of a further victim that had attempted to take his own life, and this is how the case came to light in the 1980s.
11 <sup>th</sup> October 2013	Diocesan Safeguarding Management Group meeting takes place - meeting minutes state that a paper re John Smyth was tabled. NST have no record of this document.
	Bishop of Ely agrees to fund three sessions of therapy for victim

Date - Year/Month	Event
	The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, emails national Joint Safeguarding Adviser providing update on actions taken. Escalates case to national church level as not a " <i>specific Ely concern</i> ". She advises that she feels she cannot do any more until National Safeguarding Adviser and Police have taken a view. Advises that Cambridgeshire Police rep on DSMG doesn't think case will be followed up.
29 <sup>th</sup> October 2013	The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, chases the national Joint Safeguarding Adviser for response to earlier email (11 <sup>th</sup> October)
31 <sup>st</sup> October 2013	The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, handwritten file note suggesting no response from South Africa, and that she will chase one more time. Suggests " <i>we have done all we can</i> ".
November 2013	John Smyth visits Horizon Young Offenders Institute in South Africa.
5 <sup>th</sup> November 2013	Phone call discussion between The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, and James Stileman of Titus Trust about funding for psychological support for a victim. James Stileman agreed to speak with the chair of the trustees
7 <sup>th</sup> November 2013	Phone call between The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, and national Joint Safeguarding Adviser, to update on case.
12 <sup>th</sup> November 2013	James Stileman from Titus Trust shown a copy of 1982 Ruston Report by Giles Rawlinson, who had been given the report by Tim Sterry on his retirement. This had been given to him in an envelope that he agreed would not be opened until there was a need to do so.
13 <sup>th</sup> November 2013	James Stileman from Titus Trust advises Ely Diocesan Safeguarding Officer that payment from concerned anonymous individuals would be funding 10 sessions of psychological support for a victim. The funding was personally provided by David Fletcher and Giles Rawlinson, via James Stileman.
7 <sup>th</sup> December 2013	Titus Trust Trustees meeting - Giles Rawlinson mentioned (under AOB) a historical matter which did not need minuting There was some knowledge of this from earlier meetings, but not about the existence of the Ruston Report
25 <sup>th</sup> December 2013	A victim attempts to take their own life.
<b>2014</b>	
17 <sup>th</sup> March 2014	James Stileman suggested invoice come direct to him as he would pay personally, offer not from Titus Trust.
19 <sup>th</sup> May 2014	Therapist contacts James Stileman by email, requests further funded sessions for victim
May 2014	Victim raises concerns with Ely Diocesan Safeguarding Officer based on his knowledge of abuse in Zimbabwe and concerns about potential abuse in South Africa.

Date - Year/Month	Event
	The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser responds to victim stating that Bishop of Ely has written to the relevant Bishop in South Africa, but no response to their request for a safeguarding lead contact. The Bishops of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser also confirms she has <i>"discussed the matter with Cambs [Cambridgeshire] Police and they confirmed that they can do nothing because his actions, though clearly an abuse of trust and position, would be unlikely to reach the threshold for a criminal investigation and because of the out of time rules"</i> .
23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2014	<p>Email response from The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser to victim, suggests she has only gained information about John Smyth's activities in South Africa from websites. She states, <i>"given the allegations in UK and then in Zimbabwe there has to be a concern about his behaviour now"</i>.</p> <p>The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser explains she no power to compel agencies in South Africa to respond to her concerns and no professional routes to take this further.</p>
10 <sup>th</sup> June 2014	Titus Trust Trustees meeting takes place. James Stileman and Giles Rawlinson reiterate an earlier report to the Board about a safeguarding matter regarding John Smyth, explaining the approach by the victim/therapist for support and private funding that was given, a brief description of the abuse, Mark Ruston's report and David Fletcher's view that this should not come to light. James Stileman was instructed to engage legal advisors, advise insurers and to keep the trustees updated on a day-to-day basis regarding John Smyth allegations.
16 <sup>th</sup> June 2014	<p>Victim emails The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, states he is disappointed with her response (on 23/05/2013) and that it seems no one from the 'original group' of clerics, school principals, Iwerne or Scripture Union continued any sort of oversight or monitoring of John Smyth.</p> <p>States that <i>"a known abuser continues a ministry of some sort and we are none the wiser as to whether it is with youth or not"</i>, <i>"there seems no way of checking up, getting a message through, or preventing further abuse"</i>.</p> <p>Also asks if she has contacted Lambeth, again mentions Justin Welby role at Iwerne and contact with John Smyth. References cases of Jimmy Savile and Rolf Harris where victims were not believed or not followed up and how he feels this is relevant to the lack of action in Cape Town.</p>
28 <sup>th</sup> June 2014	Therapist writes to victim suggesting she has spoken to Titus Trust and that <i>"the person I speak to would like to be able to offer this but has not had authorisation"</i> and that he would try to personally underwrite another three sessions, clear that this offer was not being made by Titus Trust.
30 <sup>th</sup> June 2014	Victim emails The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, chasing response to 16 <sup>th</sup> June email.
30 <sup>th</sup> June 2014	James Stileman (Titus) had a first conversation with a charity safeguarding lawyer at Barlow Robbins solicitors, explaining matters at a high level and to explore their suitability to advise the Trust.
1 <sup>st</sup> July 2014	James Stileman and Giles Rawlinson meet and the Ruston Report is shared.



Date - Year/Month	Event
1 <sup>st</sup> July 2014	James Stileman updates Titus Trustees regarding the contents of the 'envelope' containing the Ruston Report, and a copy of the article from 2012 and emails up to 2012. He outlines his approach to solicitors.
2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2014	James Stileman meets David Fletcher to discuss the Ruston Report. David Fletcher explained his perspective. Simon Doggart's role in abuse is discussed.
4 <sup>th</sup> July 2014	James Stileman meets Barlow Robbins Solicitors – no papers passed, discussion including nature of abuse.
7 <sup>th</sup> July 2014	James Stileman updates Titus Trustees regarding recent meetings and requesting appointment of legal firm as advisers.
11 <sup>th</sup> July 2014	James Stileman updates Titus Trustees regarding recent research and knowledge, agreeing to circulate a pack of information in hard copy to trustees. Also updates that lawyers suggest that James Stileman makes contact with victim to encourage him to disclose to Police.
22 <sup>nd</sup> - 24 <sup>th</sup> July	Report written by James Stileman, circulated to Titus Trustees – each receiving a numbered copy.
4 <sup>th</sup> August 2014	James Stileman updates Titus Trustees regarding receipt of his report, agreement with The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, that it would be appropriate for James Stileman and a Trustee to meet with the victim.
19 <sup>th</sup> August 2014	James Stileman updates Titus Trustees that Giles Rawlinson and David Fletcher suggest David Fletcher should attend meeting with victim.
3 <sup>rd</sup> September 2014	Victim raises concerns with Ely Diocesan Safeguarding Officer about potential for John Smyth continuing abuse in Zimbabwe and South Africa.
4 <sup>th</sup> September 2014	<p>Email correspondence from The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser to victim regarding an offer of meeting with James Stileman and David Fletcher. The victim clear he does not want to meet them. He asks the Safeguarding Adviser to ask them to follow up concerns re John Smyth activity in South Africa and Zimbabwe.</p> <p>The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser apologises to the victim as realises that the Titus Trust now know the victim's identity and name, she suggests she is sure that she has not divulged this information.</p>
5 <sup>th</sup> September 2014	The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, email to James Stileman suggests that victim does not want to meet or have any contact with Titus Trust, that the victim wanted to know if Titus Trust had knowledge of allegations in Zimbabwe and of the death of a boy there, he wanted to know what steps were being taken to prevent further abuse. Safeguarding Adviser gives detail of actions taken by the diocese including her advice from Cambridgeshire Police, and attempts to pursue matters had failed.
11 <sup>th</sup> September 2014	Diocesan Safeguarding Management Group minutes state still no response to Bishop of Ely's letters to Bishop of Cape Town.

Date - Year/Month	Event
24 <sup>th</sup> September 2014	James Stileman updates Titus Trustees regarding legal advice. This suggests trustees should act in best interests of the charity, two trustees having prior knowledge and that they should no longer take part in discussions. Suggests also a report to the Police should be made given Ruston Report suggest minors were involved, a serious incident report to Charity Commission, seek external support with managing the public interest in this matter. Also suggests informing the Scripture Union, notifying former trustees of Iwerne Trust, review of conflict of interest and updating policies. The update also mentioned that the victim declined to meet.
26 <sup>th</sup> September 2014	James Stileman phones Hampshire Police and arranged a meeting on 30 <sup>th</sup> September.
29 <sup>th</sup> September 2014	James Stileman writes to The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, responding to the email sent to them on 5 <sup>th</sup> September.
30 <sup>th</sup> September 2014	James Stileman met with Metropolitan (Met) Police Officers arranged by Hampshire Police, given that James lived in London. James gave them a verbal report of his knowledge and emailed them a copy of his summary that he had used to brief them and to remove victim names. The Met police asked for the redaction. They advised this was 'a third party report' and that it best they give a crime reference number that can be passed to the victim, who can then get in touch if he wishes.
30 <sup>th</sup> September 2014	James Stileman advises Scripture Union of current historical abuse case which Titus Trust are managing. This was a follow up discussion after giving notice to the Board on the 30 <sup>th</sup> September.
3 <sup>rd</sup> October 2014	James Stileman updates Titus Trustees regarding response to The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, Police engagement – suggesting that this has now been passed to Hampshire Constabulary CID.
3 <sup>rd</sup> October 2014	John Smyth visits Peter Krakenberger in Winchester and asks for forgiveness.
17 <sup>th</sup> October 2014	James Stileman sends John Smyth's former Winchester address to Hampshire Police.
25 <sup>th</sup> October 2014	James Stileman provides an update to Titus Trustees regarding serious incident report to the Charity Commission and discussions with Scripture Union. Scripture Union suggested a media adviser who would be 'well suited' to advise Titus.
29 <sup>th</sup> October 2014	Titus Trust serious incident report is filled with Charity Commission.
30 <sup>th</sup> October 2014	James Stileman contacted by Hampshire Police; the officer had read the article published in a newspaper in 2012. James Stileman provided Police with extract from John Thorn's book which references John Smyth's abuse.
2 <sup>nd</sup> December 2014	Victim writes to James Stileman via the Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, seeking reassurance of action to prevent further abuse in South Africa. Victim states he will write again, not wanting to be identified and requesting all communication to go via The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, who adds covering note to letter and sends 11 <sup>th</sup> December 2014.

Date - Year/Month	Event
11 <sup>th</sup> December 2014	James Stileman meets with National Director of Scripture Union and the media adviser engaged on a retainer by Titus to support with PR matters – the media advisor was provided with copies of papers including James Stileman’s report of 2014, the Ruston Report and the legal advice note.
15 <sup>th</sup> December 2014	James Stileman circulates letter from victim, with covering note from The Bishop of Ely’s Safeguarding Adviser to Titus Trustees.
17 <sup>th</sup> December 2014	Titus Trust receives a response from Charity Commission.
18 <sup>th</sup> December 2014	Email exchange between The Bishop of Ely’s Safeguarding Adviser, and victim. Confirms James Stileman is awaiting victims next correspondence before responding. Victim advises he is not sure he has the energy to fully respond further at the moment
24 <sup>th</sup> December 2014	James Stileman and a trustee correspond regarding Simon Doggart and action taken in response to allegations about his role in the abuse. James Stileman confirmed he had informed police on 30 <sup>th</sup> September regarding the abuse.
<b>2015</b>	
8 <sup>th</sup> January 2015	Media adviser engaged by Titus Trust issued his advice including press statement to make this public.
9 <sup>th</sup> January 2015	James Stileman provides an update to Titus Trustees regarding his meeting with Scripture Union Director, advice from Media Adviser, his actions to follow up on concern regarding Simon Doggart and to seek approval of plans to share documents with Scripture Union following legal advice.
13 <sup>th</sup> January 2015	<p>Reverend Tim Hastie Smith contacts Titus Trust to state Scripture Union position and request papers including a copy of ‘your dossier’, contemporaneous notes from Mark Ruston, Serious Incident Report made to Charity Commission and their response, requesting these are shared by end of the week in time for their trustee meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> January.</p> <p>James Stileman speaks with a victim to establish information about Simon Doggart – specifically if he had abused children under the age of 18. Victim was not aware if this was the case.</p>
15 <sup>th</sup> January 2015	Redacted versions of documents held by Titus are shared with Scripture Union including James Stileman’s Report, the Ruston Report, Titus Serious Incident Report to the Charity Commission and their response to this.
27 <sup>th</sup> January 2015	Legal advice given to Titus that James Stileman should contact police and explain his knowledge of Simon Doggart as an alleged abuser.
22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2015	Diocesan Safeguarding Management Group meeting - there is no mention of John Smyth case.
26 <sup>th</sup> January 2015	Titus Trustee meeting at which Giles Rawlinson and David Fletcher resign as Titus Trustees. Media Adviser engaged by Titus presents his proposals for action.

Date - Year/Month	Event
3 <sup>rd</sup> February 2015	John Smyth makes a statement on behalf of JASA to a Parliamentary Portfolio Committee stating that young people must be protected from sexual predators.
10 <sup>th</sup> February 2015	Victim writes James Stileman at Titus Trust via The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, asking for reassurance of oversight of John Smyth and his activities in Africa, asking if Titus has " <i>done everything in your power</i> " re John Smyth. Asking if appropriate authorities have been made aware of the risks he posed and advising of a death in Africa. Victim also asks about action in relation to second perpetrator and seeks further help with therapeutic support.
26 <sup>th</sup> February 2015	Email confirmation from the Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser to victim that Titus Trust letter (dated 10/02/2015) posted in last couple of days.
2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2015	James Stileman has a phone call with Hampshire Police following several attempts via email and phone in February. Explained he tried to ascertain whether any victims were under 18 years of age allegedly abused by Simon Daggart, but unable confirm this. Police advised that they had assessed the risk of John Smyth being able to perpetrate abuse in South Africa and case was to close but victims could come forward if they wished.
16 <sup>th</sup> March 2015	James Stileman is provided detailed legal advice regarding funding counselling sessions, recommending that the Trust should not pay as it did not bear the responsibility for John Smyth's actions.
29 <sup>th</sup> March 2015	James Stileman asked Hampshire Police for assistance with feeding back to victim, they advised the following text: " <i>I am advised police have taken action in respect of managing the risk the individual may currently pose</i> ".
15 <sup>th</sup> April 2015	The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, contacts victim to advise she would be on sabbatical for May 2015 and provided details of the deputy Ely Safeguarding Adviser in her absence.
16 <sup>th</sup> April 2015	James Stileman sends a letter, drafted with legal advice to victim, responding to his questions, stating he has been instructed by trustees to respond. The letter also explained police awareness of John Smyth and his activities in Africa.
20 <sup>th</sup> May 2015	Scripture Union Board meeting minutes supporting Titus Trust proposal for a joint independent Review and querying what information has been disclosed to police.
May 2015	Tim Hastie-Smith reportedly informed Scripture Union Board that he had spoken directly with Paul Butler (also Lead Bishop for Safeguarding) who was advocating for an inquiry.
5 <sup>th</sup> June 2015	James Stileman provides an update to Titus Trustees.
15 <sup>th</sup> July 2015	Scripture Union Board meeting minutes record Titus Trust being cautious about a proposal for a joint independent case review.
2015 (month unknown)	In South Africa, Anthony Cordle is approached by a parent concerned that their 18 year old son in close contact with John Smyth, they had been told by others that Anthony knew something about John Smyth's history.

Date - Year/Month	Event
<b>2016</b>	
Early 2016	Leadership from Church on Main in Cape Town, South Africa question the nature of John Smyth's bible study groups, lunches and squash games with university students (boys) – due to concerns raised about John Smyth encouraging the students to get in the shower with him, and discussing masturbation, and pornographic material with them.
Early 2016	John and Anne Smyth visit UK as their eldest daughter terminally ill.
8 <sup>th</sup> February 2016	Iwerne Trust formally ceases to exist – removed as a charity registration, 'other names' listed as The Titus Trust (working name).
July 2016	Church of England announces that Peter Hancock will take over as Lead Bishop for Safeguarding from July 2016.
May 2016	The Church of England's practice guidance on Safer Recruitment (approved in May 2016) was published, which replaced the 2015 Safer Recruitment guidance
1 <sup>st</sup> June 2016	James Stileman leaves Titus Trust employment.
31 <sup>st</sup> August 2016	Victims began to be contacted by journalists.
October – November 2016	Several victims begin regular contact with each other and Channel 4 journalists. Victims also begin to disclose their experiences of John Smyth abuse to their own partners, spouses and families.
4 <sup>th</sup> November 2016	David MacInnes writes to Oxford Diocese Safeguarding Children Advisor following a phone call. Letter marked <i>Private and very confidential</i> . He attaches the Ruston Report and describes that it came to him via a friend who "gave strict instructions of absolute confidentiality" and that he 'gathered the parents of the boys were adamant that no action should be taken at the time'.
9 <sup>th</sup> November 2016	Oxford Diocese Safeguarding Children Advisor informs police, sends copy of a report sent by David MacInnes. A DCI from Thames Valley Police responds with a covering letter, and undated and unsigned report setting out the concerns about Mr Smyth. The DCI follows up the email soon after indicating he is not sure a great deal further will happen but that it will be inputted into the national reporting system (Operation Hydrant) <sup>73</sup> .
9 <sup>th</sup> November 2016	Oxford Diocese Safeguarding Children Advisor makes note of referral by David MacInnes, describes " <i>physical and spiritual abuse with a strong sexualised element</i> " and notes his action of informing Police.
10 <sup>th</sup> November 2016	Thames Valley Police Contact Centre process the information and record an initial child protection report, noting that it forms part of "Op Hydrant", They update it with the information provided by the Diocese and the letter: the person involved is named as John Smyth, no DOB. Location only given as educational establishment in 'Oxon' and no

<sup>73</sup> Operation Hydrant (Nationwide Police operation) was coordinating multiple non-recent child sexual abuse investigations around the country. Relevant investigations were those which involve either people of public prominence and/or abuse that has taken place in an institution. In most cases the victims were reporting abuse that took place when they were children.

Date - Year/Month	Event
	victim names were provided. The same day it was reviewed by a specialist Detective Sergeant (DS) from the Local Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) who sought to contact the person who had made the original referral to the Diocese for additional information, David MacInnes.
16 <sup>th</sup> November 2016	Specialist DS from Thames Valley Police was able to speak to the original referrer, David MacInnes, and he provided a few additional details, noting that offence location was thought to be at the suspect's home in Hastings. No links to 'Oxon' were identified.  The DS ensured that an offence of "Section 18 Grievous Bodily Harm wounding with intent (Offences Against the Person Act 1861)" was recorded in light of the nature of the injuries described and advised the original reporter that, in the absence of additional information, it was likely that the report would be filed given the lack of any obvious lines of enquiry. This is in line with expected processes and crime recording requirements.
23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2016	DS based in the MASH notified the DS from Thames Valley Police on Op Hydrant, who confirmed that details of this offence has been recorded as part of Op Hydrant, which was then shared with other police forces in line with the process. This DS also agreed that, at this stage, there were no suitable lines of enquiry for Thames Valley Police to follow up.
December 2016	John Smyth removed from all activity/ministry at Church on Main in South Africa.

## Analysis

14.2 2012 was a very significant year, with the abuse in the UK reported and discussed including;

- (a) A victim of John Smyth seeking help by contacting another victim who was also a Church officer.
- (b) A journalist referring to the abuse in an article in a national newspaper article.
- (c) Contact was made to Trustees of the Titus Trust about the abuse.

14.3 Taking these in turn:

14.3.1 In March 2012, a victim of John Smyth's abuse wrote a letter seeking help from another victim who was also a Church officer and ordained. The following account of this important exchange is summarised so as not to risk jigsaw identification and is drawn from the contribution of a victim, in interviews with the reviewers. It is also based on interviews with Yvonne Quirk who was at this time an independent consultant working for Ely diocese as The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, Lisa Pearson, a DS with Cambridgeshire police at the time, papers supplied by the NST, Lambeth Palace and Ely diocese. Interviews were also held with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby and other people at Lambeth Palace.

14.3.2 The approach to the person who is a victim and a Church Officer, made by another victim, is described in their own words in a submission to the Review, detailed below:

*"In March 2012 I received out of the blue a letter from a fellow survivor, marked "strictly personal, private and confidential", asking if I could help. He was wanting counselling and thought that by virtue of my position I might be well placed to find this. He asked that I do not contact anyone about this until we'd had contact. I emailed back suggesting a meeting. I heard nothing for six months. Then he contacted me again. I*

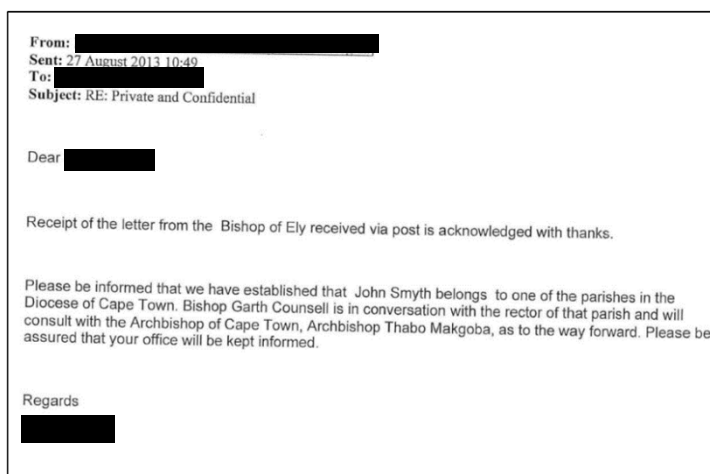
*then approached...who was a psychiatrist before he was ordained, for help and to see if he could help this victim. He listened with wisdom and sympathy, but did not feel able to give the time. Over the autumn and into 2013 I got increasingly toxic emails from this fellow survivor, which were disturbing to read because it was as if he was blaming me for what had happened to him (since I was now part of 'the system'). I sent him web links to various help lines for people who've experienced abuse."*

- 14.3.3 The victim (Church officer) contacted a friend sometime later knowing that she had been told of the abuse by her husband, and that she had been in correspondence with him. He expressed his concern for the victim who had reported the abuse. The victim (Church officer) responded quickly to the victim seeking help, but did not hear from him again for about six months. There continued a long period in which emails were exchanged between the two victims. The issue and role of victims who are also Church officers is clearly a complex area that requires an equally trauma-informed approach to other victims. This is explored in later sections of the report as well as in learning. It is worth noting here that there was no requirement under the policies in operation at the time for the victim (Church officer) to report this approach to his Bishop.
- 14.3.4 The victim (Church Officer) made a second approach to a Christian psychiatrist in June 2013. He was unable to help but suggested that contact be made with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer.
- 14.3.5 The victim (Church officer), then emailed The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, Yvonne Quirk receiving a call back from her. He told her about the abuse he had suffered and explained that he had been the first to inform Mark Ruston about the abuse and that he believed this culminated in the creation of the Ruston Report, but he did not know of the report at this time, only finding out about it when its existence was made public. He also talked about the contact from the victim. A meeting was then set up with the Safeguarding Adviser, on 26<sup>th</sup> July.
- 14.3.6 Following advice from Yvonne Quirk, the victim (Church officer), replied to an email from the victim seeking help, saying that it was "*inappropriate*" for him to continue to deal with his emails from then on. When he met with, he gave her details of his own experience of the abuse in 1981/2, as well as passing the victim's contact details. Yvonne Quirk then commented to him (detailed in his submission to the Review) that she thought that the matter had been dealt with properly "given the standards of the time" in 1982. Our judgement on this is that this assumption (even within the supposed standards of the time) was ill-judged.
- 14.3.7 Yvonne Quirk briefed the Bishop of Ely, Stephen Conway, about the abuse. She advised him that Justin Welby (who was by now installed as the Archbishop of Canterbury) knew John Smyth and had connections with the Iwerne camps. She also advised him that John Smyth was living in Cape Town. Stephen Conway had no connections with John Smyth, the Iwerne Trust or camps – demonstrated in that he mis spelled the name "*Ewan*" and called John Smyth "*John Smythe*".
- 14.3.8 Yvonne Quirk, the Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, emailed Elizabeth Hall, Joint Safeguarding Adviser for Methodist Church and the Church of England, at this time, as well as DS Lisa Pearson, of Cambridgeshire Police. The detailed of these referrals have not been seen in the papers we have received, and we have been advised that may have been a verbal one.
- 14.3.9 Stephen Conway wrote to the Bishop of Table Bay, Garth Counsell, on 1<sup>st</sup> August. The letter is appended at Appendix 20 and details the seriousness of the abuse, John Smyth's links to the Iwerne camps, the (assumed) referral to Cambridgeshire Police and there is also a reference to the rapidity with which John Smyth left the UK. Justin Welby was informed of this, with The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, noting that "*... he may just know JS personally*" in his note to Lambeth Palace. Justin Welby's personal Chaplain, Jo Bailey Wells, acknowledged the receipt of the information in a letter to the victim who originally came forward, dated the same day. Stephen Conway, in an email to Jo Bailey Wells, said "*Mark Ruston and the Ewan (sic) leadership appear to have done everything they could have done according to the standards of the early*



80s". It is not clear how this conclusion was drawn, and may have influenced the next responses by Church officials, including the Archbishop of Canterbury and his staff.

- 14.3.10 Justin Welby wrote or stated in an email from that time that he knew John Smyth in the 1970s and states that the matter is "*disclosable and must be done by either us or them*", the "them" being the Iwerne/Titus Trust. He was advised by Jo Bailey Wells that Stephen Conway considers that the Iwerne/Titus Trust must not be informed at this juncture, as the matter was being investigated by the Police. Justin Welby is told, therefore, that the matter is being dealt with, the Police have been informed and a letter has been sent to the appropriate Bishop in Cape Town. It is not clear what the reference to the matter being "disclosable" means. If it refers to the need for a disclosure to authorities (the Police) needing to be made, this was not fully followed up.
- 14.3.11 There is confirmation (by the Bishop in Cape Town) that the letter sent to Garth Counsell has been received, that the Bishop is in conversation with the, rector of the parish that John Smyth belongs, and that he will consult with the Archbishop of Cape Town. On 10<sup>th</sup> September, Stephen Conway says that he has received a brief response from Cape Town and he does not think that much action will be taken.



- 14.3.12 Jo Bailey Wells subsequently advised Stephen Conway that she would leave it to the diocese to pursue and to take no further action until the Police had provided further advice. This advice never came to fruition for the reasons that are explored below. There is no evidence in the Lambeth Palace records passed to Reviewers to indicate that Jo Bailey Wells followed this up. She has said to us that she was extremely busy at the time and that safeguarding referrals were coming into Lambeth Palace very regularly ("*one every couple of weeks*" as she described it to us). Her memory of the time is that this referral (re John Smyth) was not particularly remarkable within this context of such a volume of referrals coming in. The referral should have stood out as being remarkable – at least three victims were known of, with a further number (around five or six) having been referenced by a victim. Fundamentally, the diocese was expected to follow safeguarding procedures but there was no oversight from Lambeth Palace, even though they had been alerted. This is all the more surprising, given that Lambeth Palace had been told of, and had acknowledged, that Justin Welby may have a connection with John Smyth. It has to be appreciated that Lambeth Palace and the office of the Archbishop of Canterbury do not exercise a function of command and control of the dioceses of the Church of England. This is explored elsewhere in this report.
- 14.3.13 Records from this period, provide no further evidence that formal correspondence was entered into, by either Lambeth Palace or Ely Diocese on the matter.
- 14.3.14 The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, Yvonne Quirk, explained to reviewers that she received a large number of emails from a victim, and copies of the communications have been submitted to reviewers by Ely Diocese. One of these talked of the existence of a second abuser (not named, but Simon Doggart) and also of a victim having attempted to take his own life. The victim made verbal reference to the existence of several further victims (around five more) over the course of their contact.

- 14.3.15 Regarding contact with South African counterparts, Yvonne Quirk has explained to reviewers that she made attempts to establish contact with the Bishops safeguarding adviser in South Africa; *"I think there were 3 emails, none of them acknowledged"*, that the Diocesan Bishop told her he had attempted several times to make direct bishop-to-bishop contact and had no response either. She also explains that *"at some point I resorted to online searching to track [John Smyth's] progress from the UK to Zimbabwe and then on to South Africa, trying to identify paths to disclosure. I could not find any safeguarding adviser in Zimbabwe" and that she had "tried to make contact with the journalist who had reported on the case, or may have been the author of the book"*. Yvonne has also advised she'd tried *"unsuccessfully to find a contact in the South African Government to ensure someone knew JS's background. During this time I made so many futile attempts to contact so many people that in the end, I think I gave up even noting them, still less trying them all again and again."*
- 14.3.16 On 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2014, Yvonne Quirk wrote to the victim advising that she had *"no power to compel agencies in South Africa to respond to my concerns"*:

To: [REDACTED]  
 From: [REDACTED]  
 Subject: RE: Meeting  
 Date: Fri, 23 May 2014 11:26:10 +0100

Sorry for the delay in replying to this; I was out of the office yesterday.=  
 No, the only information I have about Smyth is gleaned from his website. G=  
 iven the allegations in UK and then in Zimbabwe there has to be a concern a=  
 bout his behaviour now. Unfortunately I have no power to compel agencies in=  
 South Africa to respond to my concerns, and no professional routes to take=  
 this any further. I know this will be difficult for you to hear, and I'm s=  
 orry not to be able to say something more positive.=20  
 Best wishes.=20  
 [REDACTED]

Yvonne explains that her email of 23 May 2014 followed a meeting with the Bishop of Ely where *"we had agreed there was nothing more we could do unless a new lead came up from others working on the case"*. Yvonne explains her perspective on that time and reflects; *"I was angry and exhausted and had indeed lost my grip. I do not offer any excuse for that decision. I have explained the background only because I want to assure the victims of JS that I did not, at any stage, see their plight as some sort of ticky-box exercise that I could casually sign off once I had ticked enough boxes. I recognise now that what I should have done was step back, take a proper break from the case and then return fresh to my part of the fight. But I did not. I fully accept the criticism levelled at me in that regard. To the victims of JS, I apologise directly and unreservedly for that. I am so very sorry. You deserved better."*

- 14.3.17 Stephen Conway advises reviewers that he *"did all within my authority as a Bishop of the Church of England. As a diocesan bishop in the Province of Canterbury, I made a detailed disclosure to an entirely independent authority, in another Province, on another continent. I had no power to pursue that authority."*
- 14.3.18 Nothing presented to Reviewers suggests that any information regarding these matters was passed on to the next appointed Bishop of Lambeth, Nigel Stock. He took up this position in late October 2013 and the position had been vacant since 2004, prior to his appointment. Bishop Bailey Wells was interviewed by the NST and in this meeting suggested that safeguarding was not a formal part of her role as Chaplain to the Archbishop and that these communications would now be handled by the Bishop of Lambeth (who now supports both the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, not just Canterbury, as was the case in 2013). Stating that safeguarding is not a formal part of a role runs counter to the important maxim that *"Safeguarding is everyone's business"*. This is a concept which was firmly in place in 2013 and formed a cornerstone of the former Government's policy of "Every Child Matters", instituted in Government guidelines since 1997 (becoming "Every Child an Achiever" in 2010, but retaining the key principle of safeguarding being everyone's business). This position was confirmed in a later interview with Reviewers.

- 14.3.19 A telephone call took place between Yvonne Quirk the Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, and DS Lisa Pearson of Cambridgeshire Police in July 2013. DS Lisa Pearson, who went on to become a DSA in Ely, described to reviewers that she considered the phone call with the Safeguarding Adviser to be solely about giving advice, and that she did not consider this to be a formal referral to the Police. Consequently, no crime report was completed. Yvonne Quirk has advised reviewers she expected that any safeguarding conversations were contemporaneously logged and kept as intelligence in case of further developments. During the call, DS Pearson suggested that this should be a case for Hampshire Police, not Cambridgeshire Police given the location of the allegations, and that she would consult with senior colleagues before giving fuller advice. Lisa Pearson advises that an intelligence report was then submitted to Hampshire Police, however no other record of this has been presented to reviewers.
- 14.3.20 Yvonne Quirk describes that in this call they "*shared my uncertainty about whether JS's actions could be defined as criminal*". Lisa Pearson has advised that Yvonne Quirk did not reference detail of the abuse, specifically the fact that there were at least two victims, or the extent of the physical abuse perpetrated. Yvonne Quirk explains this to reviewers "*...I did not tell Lisa Pearson the beatings had been severe. This is simply because I had no evidence this was the case until much later. [A victim's] initial account of having lunch with JS's family immediately afterwards "as if nothing had happened" did not suggest serious or visible injury. As I have stated above, neither victim wanted to go into details, and I did not want to jeopardise a possible police enquiry.*" Had the known and full description of the abuse been shared at this point it would have indicated the seriousness of the abuse and potential level of risk posed by John Smyth. In turn, this may have led to further Police led investigation at this point.
- 14.3.21 Yvonne Quirk has advised reviewers that she "*refute[s] the claim that [she] did not reference the full knowledge had about the abuse*" in her contacts with Police in the "early days" of the case.
- 14.3.22 Yvonne suggests that the information she had from victims at the time indicated the abuse was an adult safeguarding issue, and that the context of safeguarding work in the Church and procedures at this time for adults would have influenced her practice, describing this as follows: "*The procedures for protecting vulnerable adults at that time were relatively new and unfamiliar territory outside Health, where attention was focused on those who lacked capacity. There were relatively few safeguarding professionals who had built up substantial experience in the field of safeguarding adults from sexual abuse.*"
- 14.3.23 Yvonne Quirk later met in person with two of Lisa Pearson's more senior police colleagues at a Police station in Cambridge. The details, including the date of this meeting are not recorded in documents available to reviewers and the events rely on Yvonne Quirk's recollections. Yvonne describes this as not being an official interview but more of "*an exploratory meeting to share options on what was already signalling itself to be a complex case*". Yvonne describes how following the sharing of information they "*discussed consent and the low probability of successful extradition of John Smyth*". She describes to reviewers that "*the officers agreed with each other that the spillage of blood, even a small amount, was where any defence involving consent would fail. Finally, I was told that, regretfully, this case could not be taken any further as a police matter.*" Yvonne's recollection of this meetings and the reasons given for this are:
- "*The victims had capacity and it could be argued they consented to what happened;*
  - *The threshold for vitiating consent was an injury that resulted in blood being spilled; there was nothing to indicate serious injury at the time of the meeting;*
  - *Neither man was likely to meet the definition of Vulnerable Adult under legislation or policy;*
  - *There were issues around being 'out of time' for assault*
  - *There was little or no chance of extraditing JS from South Africa."*

Yvonne describes that she came away from the meeting believing that the case *"had been given proper consideration but there was no possibility of a criminal investigation. That is why there was no crime number"* and that she *"believed the Diocese of Ely would have to take responsibility for seeing the case through and trying to secure justice for the victims."*

- 14.3.24 The crucial issue here is that these two interactions with Police were later assumed, by more senior Church leaders, to be a 'report to police', although no crime record or crime reference number was made. This is despite feedback from the police representative on the Ely Diocesan Safeguarding Management Group (**DSMG**) stating that she did not think that the case would be followed up, at a meeting on 11th October 2013.
- 14.3.25 The Diocesan Safeguarding Management Group decided that the case needed to be referred to the church at a national level. An email dated 11<sup>th</sup> October was sent from Yvonne Quirk to Elizabeth Hall, National Joint Safeguarding Adviser for the Methodist Church and the Church of England at the time. This was now being seen as not being an Ely diocese specific case. Yvonne Quirk notes in her records that she cannot do any more until the national advisor and the police have decided on which actions to take. This was not taken up at a national church level and this, therefore was a serious error.
- 14.3.26 The Bishop of Ely, Stephen Conway agreed to fund therapy sessions for victims, describing this as *"I offered to fund counselling sessions for one survivor, which that person declined. I continued to offer support to that survivor for the rest of my time as Bishop of Ely"*. Three therapy sessions funded by Ely and referred to in the chronology for this review were offered to a different survivor who was resident in a different diocese. Stephen Conway describes that this was *"interim support while they made preparations to provide suitable ongoing support for that individual"* adding that this *"provides evidence of my sense of duty of care for survivors of abuse."*

#### **Summary of failures during this period**

- 14.3.27 There was never a formal referral to Cambridgeshire Police, although a police intelligence report was subsequently sent to Hampshire police where the offences were thought to have occurred.
- 14.3.28 Although mentioned during conversations between the diocese and Cambridgeshire Police, no referral was made to Hampshire Police. There is a distinct lack of any clarity about police action. Conversations and a meeting in person took place and written comments are made about the case being considered, but no formal decisions appear to have been taken or recorded in the information available to reviewers.
- 14.3.29 The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser took insufficient action.
- 14.3.30 There was not, at any point, by anyone involved, a full recognition of the seriousness or the extent of the abuse in the UK. This is despite knowledge of a further abuser and to the fact that another victim had attempted to take his own life. The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser knew that at least three victims were involved in the later part of 2013 that there may have been two abuse perpetrators and that there was a continuing concern regarding the potential for abuses continuing in Africa. This knowledge should have been more than enough to raise a serious level of concern that this was a very serious abuse case. Indeed, her knowledge was even greater than this, as she had been told by a victim that around a further five or six victims had suffered abuse. The adviser has suggested to reviewers that she was not immediately aware of the seriousness of the abuse, that she understood victims were adults and that the 2006 House of Bishops policy, "Promoting a Safer Church" was not a useful tool for a complex case such as this.
- 14.3.31 The letter to the Church authorities in Cape Town was not followed up in any meaningful and effective way. This is despite it still being discussed more than a year later at the DSMG.

- 14.3.32 The Archbishop of Canterbury was ill-advised about the actions taken in the Ely diocese. He was told that a referral had been made to the police. This was not correct.
- 14.3.33 A referral from Ely diocese to the Church to alert them to the potential for this being a National and not local case was not pursued. This was a serious error.
- 14.3.34 This Review does not attempt to explore the detailed reasons why the South African authorities did not follow up the letter from Stephen Conway more vigorously. The Reviewers were advised by the NST, on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at a Learning Lessons Review Group meeting, that this was outside the scope of the ToR for the Review. Subsequently the NST agreed, following legal advice, we could not extend the ToR at a Learning Lessons Review Group meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2021. A recommendation from this Review is that this does need to be fully explored within the context of a review commissioned to look at what happened in both Zimbabwe and South Africa in detail. This Review focuses on what the Church of England did and did not do.
- 14.3.35 By this point in time, 2012/13, safeguarding was firmly established as a concept, with a strong legal underpinning and Government guidance, which applied to all organisations and bodies, including the Church. We have demonstrated that this was far from the case, with serious abuse and crimes being covered up at the time. This complacency continues with comments from the Bishop of Ely and a lack of serious attention from Lambeth Palace and various police forces. This could have influenced the way that things were handled subsequently and for the abuses in the UK to not be investigated.
- 14.3.36 Stephen Conway was in a potentially powerful position to explore this further, to reinforce the referral to South Africa, to ensure that a police referral had been made and was being investigated, and to make sure that the full extent of the concerns regarding this disclosure of serious abuse was being fully pursued.
- 14.3.37 Stephen Conway's involvement was reviewed by a Church Core Group in 2021. The outcome of this is quoted below, directly from a report provided by the NST to reviewers: *Some may make a judgement of systemic failure within the Diocese of Ely through the lens of safeguarding in 2021. An opportunity was missed to halt Smyth and bring him to justice within the UK; however, Bishop Stephen was not in possession of the legacy we know of as John Smyth in 2013. +SC relied substantially on his BSA and with no known checks and balances in place, he made decisions accordingly. There was no policy in place at the time for +SC to follow, re the risk posed internationally. His response was consistent with safeguarding culture and practise at the time. The National Safeguarding Advisors did not respond and failed to help the Diocese navigate the matter further.*
- The Core Group recommended *"a proportionate response is for no further action to be taken. As a risk management measure, and to ensure confidence in current policy, an offer of a "reflection interview" with +SC for learning practises should be made."*
- 14.3.38 Based on the evidence seen by Reviewers and interviews conducted with the key people at the time, it appears to be the case that the serious abuse which was known about by both Ely diocese and Lambeth Palace from early 2013 was not properly investigated. There is no evidence of any continuing interest and activity from November 2013 onwards, apart from references in the minutes of the Diocesan Safeguarding Management Group in Ely diocese, but with no evidence of any actions being taken.
- 14.3.39 Anne Atkins wrote an article dated 20 October 2012 published in the Mail on Sunday (Appendix 21) in which she describes being told of serious abuse. This is widely interpreted by those with knowledge of the case, as being about John Smyth.
- 14.3.40 An individual contacted the Titus Trust (anonymously at the time) in November 2012 to say that the lawyer referred to in the Anne Atkins' article is John Smyth, saying that his actions had been criminal. She wrote "...if you don't know about the case then your Trustees will tell you about it". She asked whether "...this extreme form of discipleship is no longer operated?". The Trust manager replied that day, saying that "the sort of

*discipling with which you are concerned is not how we care for those who attend the holidays now". This individual said, when we met with her, that "I should have reported this suspicion of John Smyth's abuse onto a relevant authority but didn't because of a misplaced loyalty to the Iwerne regime". She thinks that her email was seen only by Giles Rawlinson and David Fletcher, with the other Trustees not being made aware of it.*

- 14.3.41 The Titus Trust sent an email to this individual which said that a "specific investigation" had been carried out by the Trustees, with assurances that the matter was properly handled at the time, with no criminal activity occurring. This screenshot is taken from a timeline prepared for the Police in 2014 by James Stileman, Operations Director of Titus Trust at the time:

25 Jan 2013	<p>The Trust Manager sent R1 an email, drafted in full by GR, including the following two paragraphs:</p> <p>'I can confirm that a specific investigation has been carried out by the Trustees since your enquiry, and they are assured that this matter was handled at the time, and that no criminal activity occurred.</p> <p>In the light of the Jimmy Savile revelations, the Trustees are also very mindful of their responsibilities in regard to the young people and young adults under their care, and therefore are also carrying out a review to ensure there are no other matters from the past which should be investigated further.'</p> <p><i>[NB. This email was discovered on 3 February 2017 (see below) when R1 forwarded it back to the Trust after the JS abuse was publicised by Channel 4. There is no evidence of a specific investigation having been carried out by the whole board of Trustees since R1's enquiry on 6 December 2012 and the wider Trustee body was not aware of R1's query regarding JS's abuse and potentially criminal activity. The only Trustees with knowledge of the correspondence were GR, DF and the then Vice-Chair and Safeguarding Trustee.</i></p> <p><i>This email was reviewed by GR in the summer of 2021. He has said that he acknowledges that saying that a 'specific investigation has been carried out by the trustees' could be misconstrued as meaning that the investigation had involved the whole Trustee body, when in fact it had only involved DF, the Vice-Chair/Safeguarding Trustee and the Trust Manager. However he notes that he reported this matter to the whole board of trustees at its next meeting on 12 Mar 2013 (see below), although the specific details were withheld, because at that point he had not read the Ruston Report, and he wanted to protect the victims.</i></p> <p><i>While no further evidence has been identified in minutes or emails that supports GR's assertion, he says that he believes that a subset of trustees and senior staff would have been asked to 'carry out a review to ensure that there are no other matters from the past which should be investigated further'.</i></p> <p><i>GR has said that he 'wishes to apologise to R1 and the other trustees at the time because the language in the two paragraphs [of the e-mail that he drafted] was less than crystal clear and unambiguous.'</i></p>
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- 14.3.42 This is a disputed matter now, as it seems from all the evidence that no such inquiry was carried out, with the whole Board of the Trust not being informed. It is most likely that only Giles Rawlinson and David Fletcher (the two remaining Trustees of the continuing Iwerne Trust) having seen or handled the communication. The Trust meeting minutes from 12<sup>th</sup> March 2013, under AOB, refer to the Anne Atkins' article and also the "Winchester affair" and an enquiry from an external party. Giles Rawlinson reported that the matter had been dealt with. There was no mention of historic abuse. The minute is non-specific.

08 November 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A supporter wrote to the Trust Manager, on 8 Nov 2012, asking about the JS affair, and whether the trustees had investigated the matter in full <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Trust Manager consulted GR, copying in DF and DA, on 6 Dec 2012.</li> <li>○ DA responded the same day saying, "I am vaguely aware of issues dating back 20+ years in connection with John Smyth and I think that these relate at least in part to involvement that he had with running/helping to run a CU [Christian Union] at Winchester College. ... I am not aware of exactly what happened, but I seem to recall (a) that the Winchester CU effectively was not allowed to continue; and (b) that links he had with camp were stopped."</li> <li>○ GR drafted a response for The Trust Manager to send on 25 Jan 13 including the following statement, "I can confirm that a specific investigation has been carried out by the Trustees since your enquiry, and they are assured that this matter was handled at the time, and that no criminal activity occurred".</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>When the broader trustees learned of this correspondence in late 2014, they were deeply concerned, as they were not aware of the correspondence or of any investigation that was alleged to have been undertaken.</p>
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- 14.3.43 James Stileman was appointed as the Operations Director for the Titus Trust on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013. He was contacted by Yvonne Quirk in early November that year regarding the abuse, who was requesting funding for a victim. He agreed to meet with Giles Rawlinson to discuss in the following week. James Stileman met with David Fletcher and, separately, with Giles Rawlinson. Giles Rawlinson then produced a document from a sealed envelope which had been handed to him by Tim Sterry on his retirement from the Scripture Union. This was the 1982 Ruston Report. Tim Sterry had handed over the envelope to Giles Rawlinson, explaining that it was about John Smyth but that it should not be opened until there was a need to do so; Giles Rawlinson



states that he had not opened it until this moment. He and James Stileman read the report.

- 14.3.44 Following the meeting, James Stileman was told that “*someone*” connected to the Titus Trust would fund the first three sessions with a therapist (to a maximum of £500). He stressed that this was not a payment from the Trust, but from some concerned individuals within the Trust who wanted to support the victim. He was instructed to tell him that the payment was coming from someone who shared “*huge concern*” for him. The Titus Trust has produced a timeline (August 2021), detailing events and actions taken which has been published<sup>74</sup>. The timeline states that Giles Rawlinson and David Fletcher made the payments personally. The payments were made by personal cheques in the name of James Stileman.
- 14.3.45 The reason given for not informing the whole of the Trustee Board members at this time is to protect the identity of the victims. The Bishop of Ely’s Safeguarding Adviser, Yvonne Quirk, had indicated she had discussed this with DS Lisa Pearson of Cambridgeshire Police and they were unlikely to pursue it.
- 14.3.46 The funding for a victim’s therapy continued into 2014, with the personal payments from two Trustees, channelled via James Stileman’s own account, remaining as first arranged.
- 14.3.47 The Bishop of Ely’s Safeguarding Adviser responded to an email from a victim stating she had no authority over the South African authorities. While this is true, it demonstrates a lack of persistence to ensure that follow up had taken place to prevent further harm by the abuser. Any report of suspected abuse or safeguarding concern should be actively pursued until safety is ensured - that would have been expected to be the case in 2013.
- 14.3.48 A Titus Trust meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> June 2014 was told that “*(the) safeguarding matter alluded to in the December meeting ought to be discussed further with the Trustees*”<sup>75</sup>. Giles Rawlinson was at this point instructed to share what had been given to him by Tim Sterry. James Stileman was instructed to engage legal advisers, to advise their insurers and to keep the Trustees updated on a day-to-day basis. The Trust informed a safeguarding lawyer at Barlow Robbins solicitors. James Stileman was shown the 1982 Ruston Report and met with David Fletcher regarding it. The lawyers, informally, as they had not been formally instructed to act on behalf of the Trust, advised that the 1970s activity was likely to be criminal as it appeared that four victims had been under 18 and still at school. James Stileman informed the Trust’s insurers; however, at this point, the abuse had not been formally reported to the Police. This is as recorded in the Titus Trust timeline but Giles Rawlinson has informed reviewers that the minutes of the meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> June 2014 do not record this instruction.
- 14.3.49 James Stileman compiled a report regarding the abuse for Titus Trust trustees, which was sent (via numbered copies) to the trustees on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2014 (Appendix 22). The Trust Board took legal advice and instructed Barlow Robbins. They gave the following legal advice:
- (a) That the current trustees have a duty of care to the Trust, they must act in good faith, protect the charity assets and act in the best interests of the charity
  - (b) They draw a significant difference between Giles Rawlinson and David Fletcher and the rest of the trustees, as Giles Rawlinson and David Fletcher had clearly known of the abuses for some time but the other trustees had only just been informed. (Giles Rawlinson, in a submission to reviewers, comments that he only became aware of the abuses in November 2013 and not “for some time” as stated)
  - (c) Giles Rawlinson and David Fletcher should not take part in any further discussions on the matters relating to John Smyth.

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<sup>74</sup> [Documents relating to the Titus Trust’s response to John Smyth’s abuse](#)

<sup>75</sup> Source: [Documents relating to the Titus Trust’s response to John Smyth’s abuse](#)



- 14.3.50 The trustees included ordained Clergy – Reverends, Richard Dryer, Adrian May and Philip Parker. Every trustee carried a responsibility to report abuses as soon as it was known that the perpetrator was active, even if abroad. For those who were Church officers, church safeguarding procedures had been in place since 2013 giving guidance on how they should respond to victims of abuse. It has been reported to reviewers, by Richard Dryer, that this responsibility was discharged by reporting to the Director of Operations (**DOO**) for the Trust. The Trustees were kept informed of progress by the DOO. They were told in writing in July 2014, that the Ely safeguarding team had been aware of the abuse since November 2013.
- 14.3.51 The abuses that are known about by the Trust since at least June 2014 were then relayed to Hampshire Police by James Stileman on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2014. James Stileman was subsequently visited at home by the Metropolitan Police. He offered them the report (the Stileman Report as it became known). He reports that the police asked to be sent the report with the victim's names redacted. The Met police recorded a crime and James Stileman was given a crime reference number. Most likely with the intention that this would be handed to the victims, presumably so that they could contact the police, giving their names and details. This was recorded as a third party allegation. James Stileman gave the crime reference number to Yvonne Quirk, but there is no record of this being given to either of the victims she was in contact with. The Met police passed the matter on to Hampshire police. The submission from the Met police does not detail this and reviewers have concluded, on the evidence available, that the intention was to provide the victims with the opportunity to report the crime, in order for the police to be able to investigate against named persons (or a person).
- 14.3.52 It has been alleged by some commentators (primarily in social media) that James Stileman deliberately withheld information from the police but he has vigorously denied this. Hampshire police sent him an apology, sometime after the abuses had come to light in February 2017, for giving the impression that he had not passed information on to them.
- 14.3.53 Victims have said to reviewers that this was a critical and important missed opportunity. If they had been clear that an investigation may have been started, triggered by them reporting the crime, they would have taken that opportunity to speak with police.
- 14.3.54 A Serious Incident Report was also sent to the Charity Commission, with their response being:



- 14.3.55 The Charity Commission was also notified again in 2017, following the approach from Channel 4 regarding their planned programme.
- 14.3.56 James Stileman was visited by the Metropolitan (Met) Police on 30<sup>th</sup> September. They were given a redacted copy of the Titus Trust report prepared by James Stileman. A Met crime report was created and recorded as third-party allegations. A crime reference number was given to James Stileman to pass on to the two victims. James Stileman contacted with the crime reference number so that this could be passed to the victim she was in touch with.
- 14.3.57 The crime report was transferred to Hampshire Police. Tim Hastie-Smith, of Scripture Union, was informed of this by James Stileman on 30<sup>th</sup> September. It is not clear what subsequent action was taken.
- 14.3.58 On 13<sup>th</sup> January 2015, Tim Hastie-Smith contacted the Titus Trust to state Scripture Union position and to request papers including a copy of 'your dossier', contemporaneous notes from Mark Ruston, the Serious Incident Report made to Charity Commission and their response. He requested these are shared by end of the week in time for their trustee meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> January. Titus Trust shared documents in line with legal advice, including 12 pages of the 72-page Stileman report, with Scripture Union.'
- 14.3.59 12 pages of the 72-page Stileman report were sent to Scripture Union.
- 14.3.60 On 14<sup>th</sup> October, Andrew Graystone (a journalist and activist) was engaged by the Titus Trust to advise on risk management for the Trust on this and relevant matters. He was engaged in his capacity as an advisor on publicity and communications.
- 14.3.61 Early in 2015, Giles Rawlinson and David Fletcher stepped down as trustees and Reverend Iain Broomfield became the Chair of the Trust. Iain Broomfield had been a senior staff member at the Iwerne Trust for around 10 years prior to this. He was

suspended from his clerical work in April 2020, pending an investigation by the Church of England, including safeguarding matters. We did not interview him because of this.

- 14.3.62 Andrew Graystone presented his report to the Titus Trust Board on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2015, containing options for their publicity response. The Trust did not agree with his recommendations and parted company with him.
- 14.3.63 James Stileman sent a letter, drafted with legal advice, to the victim, responding to his questions, stating he has been instructed by trustees to respond, including that Titus condemns John Smyth's actions in the UK and overseas; that Trustees have conducted a thorough review of events in the 1970s/1980s and believe it was dealt with robustly and compassionately, suggesting since contacted in autumn 2013 the trustees have carried out a thorough investigation, reported the matter to the police, filed a serious incident report with the Charity Commission, have told police of allegations against Simon Doggart including his work in a school, suggesting victim consider speaking to police. The letter explained also that the Iwerne Trust and Titus are separate organisations. Also suggesting that Titus could not continue to fund further counselling, previously it was done under a private arrangement, and that it was not appropriate for the Trust to pay for further counselling. The letter also explained Police awareness of John Smyth and his activities in Africa.
- 14.3.64 Hampshire Police advised that they had opened and closed the case on Simon Doggart, following a referral from the victim, who was advised to do so by . They said that they had fully assessed the current risks. The case regarding John Smyth was also discontinued, based on there not being any named and identified victims
- 14.3.65 Tim Hastie-Smith discussed John Smyth and the correspondence with the Titus Trust with Paul Butler, the President of Scripture Union and lead Safeguarding Bishop for the Church of England at that time. There is no record of this meeting. Tim Hastie-Smith knew the identity of the perpetrator and had seen the Ruston and (redacted) Stileman reports. Paul Butler says that he did speak with Tim Hastie-Smith but that he was not provided with any detailed information about the abuse and was not shown any reports at the time. Paul Butler describes his role at Scripture Union as advisory and not managerial. It would have been good safeguarding practice to have shared these documents at that time, within the safeguarding policies of the time, both within the charities sector and nationally. The decisions made were those of the Board and not Paul Butler himself. Andrew Graystone, after hearing of the abuses via his consultancy work with the Titus Trust, decided to pursue the story as a journalist and invested a great deal of time in this. He travelled to Zimbabwe and South Africa to carry out his research and spoke with a small number of the UK victims, as well as parents and victims in Zimbabwe. He contacted Channel 4 (Cathy Newman and Tom Stone principally) and worked with them on the investigation. This is documented in Andrew Graystone's 2021 book *Bleeding For Jesus* (Darton, Longman and Todd). He explains in his book that he made a judgement that this was a better course of action than simply handing over what information he had, by then, gathered, to the Police. He reasoned that he would find out very considerably more about John Smyth and his abuses in both the UK and Africa. David MacInnes sent a copy of the Ruston Report to the Safeguarding Children Advisor for Oxford Diocese on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2016. David MacInnes said, in a note to reviewers that he considered that this information should be passed on to someone in authority The Safeguarding Children Advisor for Oxford Diocese report sheet regarding the referral suggests as a summary that John Smyth is an "*alleged non-current offender, now in South Africa*" the detail of the report states:
- "Subject allegedly beat boys and young men in a Christian youth group very severely as punishment for sin. There was apparently physical and spiritual abuse with a strong sexualized element. David MacInnes had turned up an unsigned and undated typed document which had come to him in the 1980s. Subject apparently now lives in South Africa."*
- 14.3.66 This suggests good understanding of the type of abuse perpetrated by John Smyth, and the action taken to inform police is the correct course. The description of "*non-current*" offender demonstrates, however, a lack of understanding regarding the likely current risk posed at that time by John Smyth.

- 14.3.67 The Safeguarding Children Advisor for Oxford Diocese then had email correspondence with a Detective Chief Inspector from Thames Valley Police, sending him a copy of the Ruston Report. The Detective Chief Inspector confirmed that they would record the referral and make a national assessment, an email from Police to the Safeguarding Children Advisor for Oxford suggests this as "*recorded*" suggesting "*not sure a great deal will happen but it will be assessed nationally to see if concerns have been raised about this person before*". It is not clear if a crime reference number was obtained, what action was then taken by the Police, or if any prior information was found regarding John Smyth, for example, the earlier report, by James Stileman. There is no information available to Reviewers to suggest that this was followed up or escalated by Oxford Diocese in any way.
- 14.3.68 The Safeguarding Children Advisor for Oxford Diocese at this time has explained to reviewers that they felt they had followed the guidance available to them at the time, namely, "Protecting All God's Children". This guidance states tasks to be undertaken by those in the safeguarding children advisor role included "briefing the national adviser on all cases which go to public court or tribunal or which draw media attention", in this case and at this time the national adviser was not briefed of the information known until after the abuse came to light in 2017.
- 14.3.69 A total of five police forces were told of the abuse between 2013 and the end of 2016 – Cambridgeshire, via DS Lisa Pearson and two of her more senior colleagues, London Metropolitan, Surrey and Sussex, Thames Valley, and Hampshire. The ToR require us to include information regarding Hampshire Police and this was extended, subsequently, by agreement with the NST, to include all of the police forces who had dealings with the John Smyth case.
- 14.3.70 Cambridgeshire Police, via DS Lisa Pearson, were notified of the abuse by Yvonne Quirk, the Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, in 2013; this took place informally as a discussion and was followed up by two more senior officers at an in person meeting with Yvonne Quirk. This was not recorded as a crime. Surrey and Sussex Police had a brief involvement, as there was a confusion regarding where the person reporting the abuse (James Stileman), lived. This was passed to the Metropolitan Police who subsequently visited James Stileman and recorded the crime, passing on a crime reference number. They, in turn, passed the matter to Hampshire Police, based on a belief that the alleged abuse took place in the county. It is understood by Reviewers that Hampshire Police reviewed the information and did not pursue this any further. As explained above, Thames Valley Police were notified of the abuse and information passed to Oxford Diocese by David MacInnes but there is no evidence of any action being taken, aside from national checks.
- 14.3.71 A full investigation took place once Channel 4 programmes publicised the detail of alleged offences, leading to Hampshire Police set-up of Operation Cubic. The lack of follow-up by Police to the various conversations and two previous crime reports appears surprising given the profile of non-recent cases of prolific abuse such as that perpetrated by Jimmy Savile and other offenders which had come to light in 2011. An explanation offered by those in touch with Police at the time suggests they may have been overwhelmed in this period by historic allegations of abuse.

#### **Africa during this period and his contacts with the UK**

- 14.3.72 There is little concrete information on John Smyth's time in South Africa. It is highly likely that he was continuing to abuse young men and there is some evidence to this effect. There are some records of him returning to the UK, but these visits do not appear to be for fundraising. How John Smyth funded his quite opulent lifestyle, living in a large house in a quiet suburb of Cape Town, is not known. It is very likely that he continued to receive funding through Trusts from individuals and we have seen some evidence of individual one-off payments being made to him and Anne.
- 14.3.73 John and Anne Smyth were in the UK in 2013 (exact date not known). They made a surprise visit to Fiona Ashton, Mark Ashton having died recently. She reports being "*frightened*" by this visit, as she does not know how John Smyth had her address or phone number and had given just 15 minutes notice. She says that John Smyth made

a “snide remark” about Mark Ashton as he was leaving the house. This is included as it shows that John Smyth continued to be a powerful influence and also demonstrates his strong links to the UK and to people associated with the Church of England.

- 14.3.74 John Smyth was, again, in the UK in October 2014 and he met with Peter Krakenberger.
- 14.3.75 Late in 2014, John Smyth was interviewed on SABC television news in South Africa, as a representative from JASA, about the Oscar Pistorious trial. He was on camera for 11 minutes, clearly being seen as a reliable and expert witness. He is clearly in a prominent and influential position, not hidden from public view.
- 14.3.76 On 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2015, it has been said that John Smyth made a submission on behalf of JASA that young people must be protected from sexual predators to the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Justice and Correctional Facilities in South Africa. We have not seen the concrete evidence of this, but, if it is the case this is another demonstration of his prominent and powerful position in South Africa.
- 14.3.77 Sometime in 2015 (exact date unknown) a Juvenile Court Judge in South Africa, came to see Anthony Cordle, advised that he may be able to help her. She and her husband (a pastor at a small non-conformist Church in Haut Bay in the Western Cape) were very concerned that John Smyth was getting very close to their 18-year old son and she was very suspicious of him. Cordle advised her to have nothing to do with him. This comes from direct evidence presented by the Judge in a verbal submission to the Review.
- 14.3.78 The Church attended by John and Anne Smyth in Cape Town (Church on Main) questioned John Smyth’s behaviour in the Bible study groups he was running with young men. These were local university students. They had complained to the Church leaders that John Smyth would shower with them and then stay naked as he discussed masturbation and pornography with them. They felt very unsure of him and questioned his motives. This is first reported in early 2016. The Pastor at the Church (Andrew Thompson) offered this information in a verbal submission to the Review. There is no evidence that a report was made to the Police at the time.
- 14.3.79 In December 2016, after months of discussion and consideration, John and Anne Smyth were being considered for excommunication from Church on Main. The Pastor reports that he and his fellow leaders tried hard to communicate with John Smyth but they were rebutted by him. He simply denied any suggestions of impropriety.

### Comments on the Titus Trust

- 14.3.80 The ToR for this Review require us to comment on the actions taken by the Titus Trust. These are given, not as a “critique” as such, but as observations which the Trust may want to consider. The current trustees have engaged in this Review, they have also produced and published a detailed timeline of the events which unfolded between 2012 and 2016 (and beyond). The comments here are to be read in conjunction with that timeline. The Titus Trust commissioned an independent cultural review from Thirtyone:eight, which includes:

*"Why it took so long for the abuse to come to light is also related to the culture of the Trust over the years. From the trustee minutes, one of the trustees has stated that John Smyth’s victims did not want the abuse reported, although it is not clear that this was true for all survivors. It is our view that this should have been reported at the time in 1982, and that by not doing so, John Smyth was able to continue his abuse abroad. By not dealing with it properly at the time, this has had huge implications for the survivors then and now. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that up to 2014, some people within the Trust network were aware of John Smyth’s abuse, but either thought it had been dealt with, or were content to not bring it out into the open."*

- 14.3.81 This accords with our findings, and we offer several observations regarding the actions of the Titus Trust:

- (a) The response to the approach from an anonymous informant regarding historic abuse, in 2012, was inadequate in terms of further actions taken to report and ultimately to attempt to prevent John Smyth from perpetrating further harm. The article written by Anne Atkins, written in 2012, was not fully discussed by the Board and a full discussion could have only taken place if David Fletcher had shared his knowledge regarding the Ruston Report, which he had withheld from both the Iwerne Trust and then the Titus Trust for 31 years. We do not accept his reasoning for hiding this serious abuse and the crimes as being legitimate, either at the time the Report was written or at any time since.
- (b) Giles Rawlinson has described to Reviewers that he became aware of the Ruston Report after opening a sealed envelope, held in his possession, after some years of not doing so. It is interesting to note that the Trust's legal advisors took the view that both David Fletcher and Giles Rawlinson had concealed information from the Board, and they were, later, asked to stand down.<sup>76</sup> Giles Rawlinson, in a submission to reviewers, contends that Barlow Robbins were misinformed on this. He says "I believe that my actions [in 2013 and 2014] show that I was not concealing information, but I was trying to act in the best interests of the Titus trust, while being concerned for the interests of the victims".
- (c) James Stileman was very new in post when the abuses came to light. He made personal cheque payments for the therapy agreed to be paid, ultimately, by David Fletcher and Giles Rawlinson. He has told Reviewers that he was under some pressure to do so, from Yvonne Quirk.
- (d) There has been legal challenge to the trustees and also a legal opinion (written by a QC) regarding the difference in status between the Iwerne Trust and the Titus Trust, but these matters are outside of the remit of this Review, and we have no comments to make.
- (e) It is fully acknowledged that most of the observations we make here have already been considered by the Trust and we hope that they are helpful to the Trust in any future decision-making.

## 15. TIME PERIOD: 2017 – 2019

### Key Findings

- 15.1.1 The Review ToR steer us to focus on two related but distinct questions: (1) what did the Church of England (i.e. relevant officers and institutions) know about alleged abuse perpetrated by John Smyth; and (2) what was the response of the Church of England to those allegations. For this period, in response to these questions, we have found that the abuses in the UK and Zimbabwe are now clearly known to relevant officers and institutions in the Church of England throughout this period, with increasing knowledge as more people commented and more victims came forward. In summary:
- (a) An NST Core Group<sup>77</sup> was set up on 1st February 2017. The Core Group was chaired by Moira Murray who was the NST Casework Manager at the time. The group met nine times; its last meeting was on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2018. An analysis of the role, function, operation, and decision- making of these Core Groups is included later in this report.
  - (b) Channel 4 News aired a programme on 2<sup>nd</sup> February (with a follow-up news item on the 3<sup>rd</sup>), disclosing the abuses by John Smyth in both the UK and Zimbabwe
  - (c) Hampshire Police started an investigation (Operation Cubic) into John Smyth
  - (d) The Church's Safeguarding Policies in place and relevant at this time include: "Practice Guidance: Responding to Serious Safeguarding Situations Relating to Church officers" (Appendix 26), and "Practice Guidance: Risk Assessment for

<sup>76</sup> Source: [Documents relating to the Titus Trust's response to John Smyth's abuse](#) August 2021

<sup>77</sup> [practice-guidance-responding-to-assessing-and-managing-safeguarding-concerns-or-allegations-against-church-officers.pdf](#) ([churchofengland.org](http://churchofengland.org))

Individuals who may Pose Risk to Children or Adults” – these were published in 2015, and include definitions of key terms such as ‘serious safeguarding situations’ and guidance relating to the purpose and expectations regarding Core Groups.

- (e) There was limited guidance for Church officers, and Core Groups responding to complex, historical abuse allegations including those where multiple victims of the same perpetrator/s disclose abuse of national significance or where high-profile individuals or institutions are alleged to have perpetrated or failed to respond to abuse allegations.
- (f) Justin Welby issued a statement at the time the Channel 4 News programme was aired and appeared on LBC radio the day after, stating his intention was for victims’ interests to come first and confirming his knowledge of the abuse since 2013.
- (g) A victim wrote an open letter to the *Telegraph*.
- (h) The Zambesi Trust UK began to be wound up.
- (i) The Bishop of Guildford issued a statement saying that he is a victim of John Smyth.
- (j) The *Telegraph* writes about Jamie Colman’s support for John Smyth.
- (k) A victim causes a security alert at Lambeth Palace.
- (l) A helpline for victims is set up by the NST at the start of April.
- (m) Victims pursue a meeting with Justin Welby throughout this period.
- (n) A demonstration by victims, planned to take place at Canterbury Cathedral, was stopped on the advice of Police, fearing a security risk to the Archbishop of Canterbury.
- (o) In August, the Crown Prosecution Service agrees that John Smyth has a case to answer.
- (p) John Smyth dies on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2018.
- (q) A claim for personal injury is made to the Titus Trust by three victims.
- (r) Justin Welby was interviewed on Channel 4 on 12<sup>th</sup> August. He claims, amongst other things, that Iwerne is “not Anglican”. This has been taken to mean, by some victims and other commentators, that it is not associated with the Church of England.
- (s) There is discussion regarding the commissioning of a review between the various organisations involved.
- (t) This Review was commissioned as a single agency Learning Lessons Review, to start on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2019.
- (u) The NST Core Group which investigated a complaint into Justin Welby’s actions requested that this Review is tasked with examining whether, on balance, the Archbishop acted correctly following the referral in 2013. In doing so, this matter needs to be considered within the whole, wider, context of the role of the Archbishop in the John Smyth case. There has been a great deal of media interest and speculation regarding Justin Welby’s attendance at the Iwerne camps, his knowledge of John Smyth and then the handling of the disclosures in both 2013 and 2017 (and, also, the promise to meet with victims, made in February 2017). What follows later in this section is intended as an objective analysis of what took place, based on the evidence available, including two



interviews with Justin Welby, in April 2021 and July 2022, which may help to clarify what occurred and what could and should have occurred.

### Chronology - 2017 to 2019

Date - Year/Month	Event
<b>2017</b>	
January 2017	John and Anne Smyth visit the UK; staying with friends. While in Bristol, they are confronted about abuse by Cathy Newman, a journalist from Channel 4 News.
	Various people including Peter Krakenberger, Fiona Ashton and others are contacted by Channel 4 journalist about investigation in to John Smyth abuse.
13 <sup>th</sup> January 2017	Winchester College reports allegations of abuse by John Smyth to Hampshire Police, and the LADO.
23 <sup>rd</sup> January 2017	David MacInnes writes a 'personal note' to The Safeguarding Children Advisor for Oxford
26 <sup>th</sup> January 2017	Several victims are contacted by leaders at Winchester College, with a small number also contacted by Church of England Communications team, to notify of the forthcoming Channel 4 News coverage of the abuse.
End January 2017	John and Anne Smyth return to South Africa, aware of the forthcoming Channel 4 coverage.
30 <sup>th</sup> January 2017	John Smyth meets Church on Main pastor, Andrew Thompson, to discuss allegations scheduled to be broadcast by Channel 4 News the following week. John Smyth was advised that both he and Anne Smyth were no longer allowed to be leaders at the Church and were urged to return to UK and talk to Police.
1 <sup>st</sup> February 2017	1st NST Core Group Meeting takes place for John Smyth case following a notification via Winchester College that Channel 4 would shortly air their investigation regarding John Smyth on TV, included reference to the disclosure made by a victim in 2012
	Archbishop of Canterbury releases a press statement about John Smyth.
2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2017	Channel 4 News investigation into John Smyth abuse and Iwerne Trust aired on TV.
	Further enquiries by Hampshire Police, with Thames Valley Police and Met Police to research profile for John Smyth.
	Archbishop of Canterbury interviewed on LBC Radio by Nick Ferrari, in this he states he was made aware of abuse by John Smyth in 2013, and his view that victims' interests must come first. The Archbishop is also interviewed by journalists outside of the studio.
	Hampshire Police release a press statement regarding investigation known as Operation Cubic. Asking victims to come forward to contact them.

Date - Year/Month	Event
	Victims begin to contact Police, NST & DSA's following media coverage of the abuse.
2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2017	Titus Trust received report of allegations relating to a further Iwerne leader, and relative of a trustee. Titus Trust reported this to the relevant Diocese Safeguarding Advisor, who informed the Local Authority LADO.
3 <sup>rd</sup> February 2017	2 <sup>nd</sup> NST Core Group meeting takes place for John Smyth case, this meeting incorporates allegations regarding Simon Doggart and agrees actions to follow up these concerns. The group also discusses allegations of a safeguarding nature about a further Church officer.
	Hugh Palmer contacted by victims advising they suffered abuse by John Smyth.
	Hampshire Police begin taking witness Statement's from victims.
5 <sup>th</sup> February 2017	<i>Daily Telegraph</i> publish article on John Smyth and current Police investigation.
	The <i>Telegraph</i> publishes anonymous account from a victim including an attempt to take his own life.
	The <i>Guardian</i> publishes an article regarding public school abuse and references John Smyth.
	Andrew Graystone, a journalist and activist, was interviewed by BBC.
	Trustees of Zambesi Trust UK 'resolve to wind up Trust '.
6 <sup>th</sup> February 2017	James Stileman re sent his/Titus Trust contact in 2014 with Police following media coverage which inferred information was withheld.
	The <i>Telegraph</i> publishes an Open Letter to Archbishop of Canterbury from a victim, triggered by his frustration at the statements made by the Archbishop during interviews in and outside of the LBC studios.
	Bishop of Guildford, Andrew Watson, releases media statement confirming he was a victim of John Smyth abuse.  Tim Hastie Smith disclosed knowledge of an alleged victim of John Smyth that was also an abuser now working in a school, to Scripture Union safeguarding lead. Tim Hastie-Smith had called Hampshire police on 5 <sup>th</sup> February to report after viewing the Channel Four programme
8 <sup>th</sup> February 2017	3 <sup>rd</sup> NST Core Group meeting for John Smyth case further discussing allegations regarding a further perpetrator, as well as the Police investigation and actions relating to John Smyth. Agree a mapping exercise will take place.
	Thames Valley Police were made aware of potential linked offences relating to John Smyth in Met Police and Hampshire Police via Operation Hydrant. The Hampshire Police investigation was called Operation Cubic.

Date - Year/Month	Event
	A victim contacts Ely DSA asking what support is available. Discussed at Core Group, victim contact details sent to Moira Murray, NST Case Worker.
9 <sup>th</sup> February 2017	Statement issued by Church on Main, Cape Town, South Africa advising that John and Anne Smyth removed from any ministry.
10 <sup>th</sup> February 2017	The <i>Telegraph</i> publishes article detailing Jamie Colman funding and support of John Smyth via Zambesi Trust, despite being aware of abuse.
10 <sup>th</sup> February 2017	DS from Oxford MASH team and DS from Thames Valley Police link to Op Hydrant liaise with Hampshire Police to exchange relevant information relating to John Smyth.
11 <sup>th</sup> February 2017	The <i>Telegraph</i> publishes article regarding handling of John Smyth abuse allegations by Church of England.
13 <sup>th</sup> February 2017	A Police intelligence report was created following a report from the Independent Inquiry Child Sexual Abuse and the Op Hydrant helpline. The victim had initially spoken to Norfolk police but forces were asked to scope whether they had any records pertaining to either John Smyth or David Fletcher, and with a reference to the Iwerne Minister camp. No DOB or address. No Thames Valley Police offences were identified.
14 <sup>th</sup> February 2017	Victims meet or contact Moira Murray, NST Case Worker to gain support.
21 <sup>st</sup> February 2017	4 <sup>th</sup> NST Core Group Meeting for John Smyth case.
21 <sup>st</sup> February 2017	Scripture Union records describe a call being made by the Archbishop of Canterbury to Reverend Iain Broomfield in relation to the abuse.
March 2017	The new Safeguarding Policy for children, young people and adults titled "Promoting a Safer Church" was published. This document sets out the current safeguarding policy for children, young people and vulnerable adults of the Church. It has been informed by the Joint Safeguarding Statement between the Church and the Methodist Church.
	Victim contacts their local DSA to ask for support, they are signposted to the NST.
4 <sup>th</sup> March 2017	<i>New York Times</i> publish article about John Smyth including accounts from victims.
8 <sup>th</sup> March 2017	Meeting takes place between trustees and representatives of the Church of England to discuss the Trust's response.
10 <sup>th</sup> March 2017	<i>Private Eye</i> article published about John Smyth.
16 <sup>th</sup> March 2017	A victim attempts contact with Lambeth Palace, leaving a message on the voicemail of Ailsa Anderson, suggesting that he felt there were 'plenty of people out there' that would want to put a 'bomb' under Lambeth Palace.
26 <sup>th</sup> March 2017	Titus Trust records state agreement to co-fund costs of victim counselling with Church and Scripture Union.

Date - Year/Month	Event
29 <sup>th</sup> March 2017	Scripture Union make referral to Hampshire Police after reviewing all records relating to John Smyth.
28 <sup>th</sup> March 2017	5 <sup>th</sup> NST Core Group meeting for John Smyth case, discusses the voicemail left by a victim at Lambeth Palace in detail, allegations made by a victim regarding another victim who is also a Church officer and an update on the Police investigations. Also note a change in the point of contact from the NST and that the NST has " <i>pulled back from a dedicated helpline as there is uncertainty around the number of people that would be calling</i> ".
29 <sup>th</sup> March 2017	Hampshire Police Officer meets with a victim following his voicemail message, advising that Lambeth Palace had increased security and felt this was a threat. Suggested that Police were aware of abuse in 2014 but no further action taken as victims did not want to pursue.
29 <sup>th</sup> March 2017	The NST published the second Overview Report by the SCIE with regards to independent diocesan safeguarding audits (first half of 2016) along with an action plan in response.
3 <sup>rd</sup> April 2017	NST publish details of survivor helpline.
10 <sup>th</sup> April 2017	BBC report that John Smyth recruited one of his victims, Simon Doggart, as an abuser, and identify him as the Head Teacher of Caldicott Preparatory School in Buckinghamshire.
11 <sup>th</sup> April 2017	<i>Daily Telegraph</i> publish article about John Smyth and names Simon Doggart both as victim and perpetrator of abuse.
19 <sup>th</sup> April 2017	Hampshire Police continue to gain statements from victims
26 <sup>th</sup> April 2017	6 <sup>th</sup> NST Core Group meeting for John Smyth case. Discussed awareness of at least three victims of John Smyth that were children when physically abused.
May 2017	Caldicott Preparatory School announce that Simon Doggart is no longer leading the school due to ill-health.
9 <sup>th</sup> May 2017	NST carry out 'mapping exercise' agreed in Core Group in February 2017 to help them understand " <i>who needs support and where allegations are coming from</i> ".
17 <sup>th</sup> May 2017	DSAs in two different dioceses correspond regarding a victim who is also a Church officer.
23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2017	Diocese of Ely informed that Channel 4 to air further report regarding the Archbishop of Canterbury and his contact/role in Iwerne Camps.
28 <sup>th</sup> May 2017	Further statement from Church on Main issued regarding John Smyth.
7 <sup>th</sup> June 2017	7 <sup>th</sup> NST Core Group Meeting for John Smyth Case. Discussed 'mapping exercise', and victim allegations regarding another victim who is a Church officer.
16 <sup>th</sup> June 2017	Hampshire Police continue to take witness statements from victims and others.
23 <sup>rd</sup> July 2017	Simon Doggart dies as a result of cancer.

Date - Year/Month	Event
August 2017	Email conversations between victims, Lambeth Palace and NST plus others regarding requests from victims for meeting and interview with Archbishop of Canterbury.
2 <sup>nd</sup> August 2017	Victim (seeking help in 2012) requests copy of the letter sent by Bishop of Ely to Arch/Bishop/s in South Africa. Victim accidentally copied in to an internal email that followed.
3 <sup>rd</sup> August 2017	Telephone call between Hugh Palmer and victim in response an email asking for details of his involvement in 1982.
September 2017	Email conversations take place between survivors, Lambeth Palace and NST regarding request for meeting between survivors and the Archbishop of Canterbury.
	The House of Bishops introduced new guidance titled "Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies Practice Guidance". This includes the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, Safeguarding (Clergy Risk Assessment) Regulations 2016, the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisors Regulations 2016, and the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisors (Amendment) Regulations 2017. This came into force immediately on publication in October 2017.
	Hampshire Police continue to gain witness statements from victims and others.
6-7 <sup>th</sup> October 2017	Demonstration by victims outside of Canterbury Cathedral where there was a Bishops Procession - Archbishop of Canterbury cancelled attendance due to Police advice. Victims met in a room inside building with Bishop of Lambeth, Tim Thornton and The Reverend Isabelle Hamley, and other CofE staff.
	Following meeting, victim contact handed over to Canterbury DSAs. Victim mistakenly cc'd into an email between Ely DSA and Canterbury DSA.
13 <sup>th</sup> October 2017	John Smyth visits his brother Richard in Vancouver, Canada.
14 <sup>th</sup> October 2017	<i>New York Times</i> publish second article about John Smyth.
20 <sup>th</sup> October 2017	Isabelle Hamley contacts a victim following the Canterbury demonstration. Victim reports this feeling rushed and his perception that he was being 'closed down'.
November 2017	Victim sent letter meant for another victim by Isabelle Hamley, this is sent to victim's place of work and is accessible to support staff at his place of work.
1 <sup>st</sup> November 2017	David Porter, Chief Officer from Lambeth Palace, meets with victims. Victims raise concerns about responses in 2012/3. Victims request personal contact with the Archbishop of Canterbury.
8 <sup>th</sup> November 2017	Archbishop of Canterbury writes to a victim acknowledging impact of John Smyth abuse on them and their family, and apologising.

Date - Year/Month	Event
14 <sup>th</sup> November 2017	8 <sup>th</sup> NST Core Group meeting for John Smyth case. Discussed demonstration at Canterbury Cathedral, and meetings being led by Lambeth Palace that were outside the Core Group process.
2017	John Smyth continues working as a pro bono legal person for Justice Alliance of South Africa specifically for Doctors for Life and running bible study group for men.
<b>2018</b>	
March 2018	Hampshire Police confirmed to Thames Valley Police reference Op Hydrant that David MacInnes was a witness for Op Cubic.
3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2018	<i>Daily Telegraph</i> publish article about John Smyth and connection with Archbishop of Canterbury, and others including Jamie Colman and Sue Colman.
17 <sup>th</sup> March 2018	Victims meet with Lambeth Palace staff.
19 <sup>th</sup> March 2018	Victim interviewed by BBC.
30 <sup>th</sup> March 2018	Further victim writes to David Porter, highlighting the error of an earlier letter from Isabelle Hamley to him, which confused two victims' identities.
April 2018	Victims repeatedly request a meeting with Archbishop of Canterbury - Lambeth Palace state this cannot happen until he understands questions that will be raised by victims.
	Victim is contacted by the National Safeguarding Advisor, Graham Tilby, twice in this month by telephone to ask if he will continue with his social media activity. Graham Tilby has advised reviewers his reasons for calling the victim would have "been a more holistic dialogue about the victim's experience and what the victim wanted to the Church to do."
May - June 2018	Further meetings and correspondence between victims and Lambeth Palace staff.
	Church publishes House of Bishops Permission to Officiate practice which makes several changes to strengthening safer recruitment and safeguarding training requirements in respect of those who are granted PTO. An addendum to House of Bishops safer recruitment guidance is subsequently published in July 2019 which states the elements that have 'due regard'.
	Emails between victims and David Porter regarding lack of progress and requests to be involved/engaged in Core Group process.
July 2018	NST publishes Parish Safeguarding Handbook.
August 2018	Victim advised by Hampshire Police that the CPS deem John Smyth does have a case to answer and were seeking an interview with him via his legal team in South Africa.
11 <sup>th</sup> August 2018	John Smyth dies suddenly in Cape Town, South Africa.
	Archbishop of Canterbury releases a press statement in respect of John Smyth's death.

Date - Year/Month	Event
11 <sup>th</sup> August 2018	Bishop Peter Hancock, makes a public statement regarding John Smyth's death
13 <sup>th</sup> August 2018	Ely DSA offers to support to victim (who is a Church officer) in the wake of John Smyth's death.
13 <sup>th</sup> August 2018	John Smyth's death reported in <i>Private Eye</i> .
22 <sup>nd</sup> August	Victims meet CofE NST's survivor engagement worker.
23 <sup>rd</sup> August 2018	Victims meet in mediation, arranged by the Church of England.
7 <sup>th</sup> September 2018	9 <sup>th</sup> and final NST Core Group meeting for John Smyth case. Update from Police about actions that were planned prior to John Smyth's death. Also discussed recent developments regarding alleged threats to Lambeth Palace staff from a victim.
10 <sup>th</sup> September 2018	Victim referred to the Fixated Threat Assessment Centre (FTAC) by Lambeth Palace staff, alleging threats made to the Archbishop of Canterbury.
8 <sup>th</sup> October 2018	Two victims meet in final mediation, arranged by the Church of England with an independent mediator.
1 <sup>st</sup> November 2018	Apology letter sent by NST to victim regarding data breach in February 2018.
18 <sup>th</sup> December 2018	Tim Thornton emails victim reinforcing apology by Isabelle Hamley for data breach. Advising further contact regarding a report would be made.
<b>2019</b>	
February 2019	<i>Church Times</i> publishes article about Diocese of Ely contacting South Africa about John Smyth.
5 <sup>th</sup> March 2019	Victim sent copy of letter sent by Diocese of Ely to South African Bishop in 2013.
12 <sup>th</sup> April 2019	Victim interviewed by Cathy Newman on Channel 4.
26 <sup>th</sup> April 2019	Warden of Winchester College writes to Interim Director of Safeguarding at NST regarding proposed Learning Lessons Review and interface with Winchester College's own review.
13 <sup>th</sup> August 2019	Details published of the independent Learning Lessons Review that will be instigated into the Church of England's handling of allegations against John Smyth.
December 2019	Victim, who is also a Church officer, reports feeling pressurised to go public about his experience of abuse.



## Analysis

- 15.1.2 In the run-up to the showing of the Channel 4 programme on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2017, several people were approached by the Channel 4 News team, led by Cathy Newman and Tom Stone. These included several victims some of whom later appeared on the programme, Peter Krakenberger, Tim Hands (Headmaster of Winchester College at the time), Fiona Ashton and others.
- 15.1.3 John and Anne Smyth were visiting friends in Bristol over the Christmas period, Cathy Newman attempted to interview them outside the home of their friends on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2017. This interview was included in the programme broadcast a month later. On returning following the Cathy Newman interview, John and Anne Smyth told their friends about it, their response was *"Oh well, the devil must be very worried about your ministry, Anne and John, to be doing this"*. (Pastor Thompson, in Cape Town, when interviewed for the Review, also said that *"God had handed John to Satan"*).
- 15.1.4 Winchester College reported the allegations to the Hampshire Police, as well as the Hampshire LADO. Tim Hands contacted a victim, who, in turn, told his family for the first time about the abuse. The number of people contacted and alerted in this period was greater than this, but this Review is not attempting to be a full analysis of everything that happened in response to the programme airing, only that which is directly relevant to the Review's remit.
- 15.1.5 John Smyth was aware, because of his interview, that the story of his abuses in the UK was about to be told on National television.
- 15.1.6 Andrew Thompson of the Church on Main in Cape Town became aware of the impending Channel 4 programme (he was contacted by Channel 4 News just prior to the programmes being aired) and went to see John and Anne Smyth at their home on 30<sup>th</sup> January. He says that *"this was the first time that the Church elders had been made aware of the gravity of the allegations about John's ministry in the UK"*. John Smyth implored Andrew Thompson to call the UK, to vouch for him and to say that he was in good standing in the Church community. Instead, Andrew Thompson said that John and Anne Smyth could no longer continue as leaders and were effectively excommunicated them from the Church. He urged John Smyth to return to the UK and talk to the police.
- 15.1.7 The day before the airing of the programme, Hampshire Police issued a press statement, announcing a police investigation (later called Operation Cubic) and inviting victims to contact them, making direct approaches to victims that they were made aware of to participate in the investigation.
- 15.1.8 The NST established a Core Group, its first meeting took place on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2017 in response to notification by the DSA in Winchester. The DSA notified the NST that Channel 4 would shortly be airing their investigation of this case over two nights. The meeting was chaired by Moira Murray, National Safeguarding Senior Casework Manager of the NST, and attended by DSAs from Winchester, Ely, London, Southwark, Director of Communications for Safeguarding and at Lambeth Palace, Ailsa Anderson, as well as Graham Tilby who was the National Safeguarding Adviser at the time. An outline of the case was given at the meeting by way of a paper summary outlining the case and information that was known to NST at this point. It is notable that it is stated in the minutes from this meeting that the NST did not have a copy of the 1982 Ruston Report, despite this being sent to the Safeguarding Children Advisor for Oxford in November 2016, by David MacInnes, showing a disconnect in terms of the information shared regarding significant safeguarding cases between that Diocese and the NST at that time.
- 15.1.9 The minutes from the first meeting state some details that were known at the time. Of note, the Chair describes that *"the case was not referred onto the police at the time as Mark Ruston and David Fletcher had found in their investigations that the young men abused by John Smyth had consented to the beatings. The case was not referred to*

*police as corporal punishment was not illegal in public schools at the time and the young men who were abused would be embarrassed if this information was made public*". This statement was made by the Chair, who at this time had not viewed the Ruston Report (as is also stated in the minutes). While it is likely that the Chair's intention was to set the scene and to describe the events leading up to the Channel 4 investigation, the tone recorded in the minutes is reminiscent of assumptions and minimisation of the abuse mirroring the reasons given by many contributors to this Review for the lack of responses that had taken place by Church officers previously. Moira Murray has made it clear to reviewers that it was never her intention to minimise the seriousness of the abuses. She was setting out the known facts.

- 15.1.10 This first Core Group was also made aware of the disclosure by a victim in 2012 to the Ely diocese. Other victim details were shared within the Core Groups in all meetings, it is not clear whether consent was gained from the victims to share their personal data as this is not documented in the minutes from the meetings. Having said this, the Chair made it clear from the outset to the Core Group that "*all information shared in the meeting was highly confidential and not to be shared outside of the meeting to others unless they are involved with the case.*" This reminder was made at the start of all future Core Group meetings. The Chair has advised Reviewers that this was deemed an appropriate level of information sharing.
- 15.1.11 The Chair advised the Group that she would be the single point of contact for the case going forwards. It is likely that this was meant initially in terms of victim contact as well as in terms of DSA information and communication with police, but this later changed as the extent of the abuse and number of victims involved became clearer.
- 15.1.12 The document '*Practice Guidance: Responding to Serious Safeguarding Situations Relating to Church officers*' was in place at this time having been published in 2015. This had defined the role and remit of Core Groups taking place in dioceses and nationally, to ensure that:
- (a) Church of England policies and practice guidance are followed;
  - (b) there is collaboration between and support for the Diocese and the parish, or the NCI and the diocese(s);
  - (c) there is reference to any other Church community with which the alleged abuser is associated.
- 15.1.13 The tasks of the Core Group are detailed within this guidance as:
- (a) to share accurate information with the other members of the group;
  - (b) to communicate regularly with external agencies;
  - (c) to identify specific roles and responsibilities through the management of the case;
  - (d) to consider whether other Church bodies should be informed of the situation, and invited to join the Core Group;
  - (e) to ensure and regularly Review support for all parties;
  - (f) to advise responsible officers, including the bishop/archbishop, on risk management and disciplinary action, including suspension, at every stage;
  - (g) to ensure information is shared as required and to establish and maintain boundaries of confidentiality;
  - (h) to manage internal communications and actual or potential media coverage locally and nationally; and

- (i) to Review the process, when completed, against relevant policy and practice guidance, and ensure learning from the case is communicated to relevant bodies and informs future practice.

15.1.14 Guidance for the establishment and chairing of Core Groups was again set out in the document: *Practice Guidance: Responding to, assessing, and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against Church officers*<sup>78</sup>. The first iteration of this was agreed in October 2017. Nevertheless, we have been advised that the draft version would have been well known by those involved in this Core Group and are therefore relevant.

15.1.15 On the evening of the day before the Channel 4 programme, 1<sup>st</sup> February, Justin Welby read out a statement which made reference to an abuse case – this was unspecific and did not name John Smyth.

### Statement on behalf of the Archbishop of Canterbury

01/02/2017

"The Archbishop of Canterbury was a Dormitory Officer at Iwerne holiday camp in the late 1970s, where boys from public schools learnt to develop life as Christians. The role was to be a mentor to the boys, as was that of his now wife at a similar camp for girls.

John Smyth was one of the main leaders at the camp and although the Archbishop worked with him, he was not part of the inner circle of friends; no one discussed allegations of abuse by John Smyth with him. The Archbishop left England to work in Paris for an oil company in 1978, where he remained for five years. He began training for ordination in 1989.

The Archbishop knew Mr Smyth had moved overseas but, apart from the occasional card, did not maintain contact with him.

In August 2013 the Bishop of Ely wrote to the Bishop of Cape Town, informing him of concerns expressed to his Diocese Safeguarding Adviser about Mr Smyth from an alleged survivor. The British Police had been notified. The Archbishop's Chaplain at the time was forwarded this letter, and subsequently showed it to the Archbishop for information only.

The Archbishop has repeatedly said that he believes that the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults should be a principle priority in all parts of the Church, and that any failings in this area must be immediately reported to the police.

The Archbishop is on the record as saying that survivors must come first, not the Church's own interests. This applies regardless of how important, distinguished or well-known the perpetrator is."

15.1.16 The investigative programme "*An Ungodly Crime*" was aired on Channel 4 as a 30-minute documentary on 2<sup>nd</sup> February. This is significant as this is the first point at which information was publicly given about the abuse and its perpetrator. One victim has described how he watched the programme and told his wife for the first time that he was one of the victims. They contacted a senior Clergy person known to them who came round that evening.

15.1.17 Three victims, with extreme courage, appeared on the programme to give personal testimony, aired for the first time in the public domain, some of their experiences of the abuse and subsequent responses by Church officers, participants, and institutions.

15.1.18 Graham Tilby stated in a press release that "*survivors were contacted*" on hearing of the documentary. There is no evidence of any concerted effort to contact victims at this point by the Church. The Archbishop of Canterbury also issued a statement at this time.

15.1.19 Another victim had great difficulty in finding out who to speak to in the Church and eventually contacted the NST Casework Manager and Chair of the Core Group, Moira Murray, after finding a contact number via Scripture Union website. Victims were now responding to the Hampshire Police Operation Cubic statement. Moira Murray has made it clear to the reviewers that she made direct contact with the few victims she

<sup>78</sup>[practice-guidance-responding-to-assessing-and-managing-safeguarding-concerns-or-allegations-against-church-officers.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/practice-guidance-responding-to-assessing-and-managing-safeguarding-concerns-or-allegations-against-church-officers.pdf) (churchofengland.org)

knew of, met with one of them and advises that other victims were reluctant to have it known that they had been abused.

- 15.1.20 Justin Welby appeared on LBC radio, interviewed by Nick Ferrari (Appendix 23). During this interview, he said that he was aware of the abuse in 2013.
- 15.1.21 Justin Welby responded to a question by Nick Ferrari about his attendance at the Iwerne camps by saying that he stopped attending in the “late seventies”. He also maintained that he had “kept an eye” on the developments regarding John Smyth since he was first told in early 2013, but we have found no verifiable evidence of this. It may be that there is simply not a record of this.
- 15.1.22 Justin Welby was also interviewed outside the LBC studio. With reference to victims, Justin Welby said that “*their interests have to come first*”, “*these are the people we care most about*” and “*they really, really matter*”. These comments were well received by some of the victims we have spoken with and were taken as a clear indication that definite actions would be taken to ensure their welfare.
- 15.1.23 This interview prompted a victim, to write an open letter to the *Telegraph*. This was written, we were told by the victim in frustration at the comments made by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Victims feel that there was insufficient explanation or apology in what was said in response to the questions from Nick Ferrari. Victims state their continued frustration with the answers given to questions in this interview, particularly relating to promises of meeting with victims and putting their interests first.
- 15.1.24 Victims’ expectations following this interview were that Justin Welby had committed himself, and the Church to meaningful engagement with victims and to investigating the alleged abuses and to supporting them, but as time went on, victims’ frustrations and anger grew as these promises were not kept nor acted upon.



- 15.1.25 The victim (Church officer) had been contacted by Channel 4 prior to the programme being shown. An assurance was given to him by Stephen Conway that the press interest was in Justin Welby and not him.
- 15.1.26 The NST Core Group next met on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2017. It is at this meeting that the Group became fully aware of the investigations that took place in 1982 and the existence of the report written by Mark Ruston. This information was presented to the group by the DSA from Oxford Diocese who had discovered this had been passed to his predecessor by David MacInnes, and subsequently reported to Thames Valley

Police, who at that time had advised that this was a "*historical issue*". The group discussed David Fletcher's role and his knowledge of the abuse, and activity in Oxford.

- 15.1.27 The Group also discussed the now live police investigation - Operation Cubic - that was being led by Hampshire Police, and that all information should be passed to the investigation team leading this. This Group also notes information about two victims including one who had been identified as an alleged perpetrator, Simon Daggart, who was Headteacher at Caldicott Prep School at the time that this Core Group was in operation. He was also the Governor with safeguarding responsibilities at Harrow School. Follow-up is agreed at this point via the DSA in terms of contact with the relevant LADO<sup>79</sup> and for information about this to be passed to Hampshire Constabulary, which is the appropriate course of action, detailed in Church guidance that was in place at the time, *Responding to, assessing, and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against Church officers* and in statutory guidance at the time of the Core Group, where allegations are made that may indicate risks posed by adults that work with children. Further discussion alluded to a 'report' to Cambridgeshire Police in 2013, discussed in detail earlier in this report as a conversation between DS Lisa Pearson and Yvonne Quirk, The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser.
- 15.1.28 The Core Group shared their knowledge of victims, discussing both those that had featured in the Channel 4 News programme and others contacting individual Church officers confidentially. Again, there is no mention of the basis for information-sharing at the meeting or the safe parameters of information-sharing beyond the Core Group to ensure victim confidentiality remained in place, particularly where no consent to share had been gained. Discussions alluded to concerns for victim welfare, the need for direct contact with Police and the offer of a helpline. An action is taken to set this helpline up in conversation with Police and to communicate this to DSAs.
- 15.1.29 The Group noted that John Smyth was interviewed by Channel 4 while in Bristol, UK. Graham Tilby takes an action to contact the Bristol DSA to ask if he is '*active in the diocese with any Church organisations*'. The Group does not discuss any actions at this point to ensure that Church organisations in John Smyth's home nation or region are contacted, perhaps considering this to be more of a role for Police or more senior officers. It is unclear if guidance for Core Groups at this time intended for this to happen under the purpose of the Core Group to reference "*any other Church community with which the alleged abuser is associated*", as described earlier.
- 15.1.30 It is also at this meeting that safeguarding concerns about a second Church officer, who was known (by the Core Group) to have a connection to Justin Welby were first raised. This information was shared with the group following a call by a member of the public to Graham Tilby (National Safeguarding Advisor) and other Church officers including the Communications lead and the Assistant DSA from London Diocese. Graham Tilby describes the caller alleging abuse perpetrated by this second Church officer was "*very similar to John Smyth*" but that this was "*not as severe*".
- 15.1.31 Actions are agreed including for the Chair of the Group to call back the person reporting concerns and to forward notes of these conversations to the DSA for the relevant diocese and Nigel Stock from Lambeth Palace. The DSA is also tasked with researching this second alleged perpetrators parish activity, risk level posed and discussing it with a Bishop. It is not clear how this risk was to be assessed at this point, later minutes from the Core Groups explain this in detail. Practice guidance called *Risk Assessment for Individuals who may Pose Risk to Children or Adults* was available for Church officers at this time, having been published in 2015. It is not clear if this was followed. The Chair of the Core Group, Moira Murray has confirmed with reviewers that consideration was given to any risk posed by David Fletcher, but that this was not recorded in the minutes. It was considered that he was retired, in ill health and was not involved in ministry.
- 15.1.32 Core Group notes detail the emphasis for support went beyond victims involved, and extended to another alleged perpetrator of abuse, with the notes suggesting "*pastoral*

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<sup>79</sup> The Local Authority Designated Officer for Safeguarding usually in place in each Local Authority area. The LADO is responsible for managing allegations against adults who work with children, with oversight of investigations. This role was introduced under Section 11 of the Children Act 1989 (as amended 2004).

*care be considered for [the alleged perpetrator of other abuse] and David Fletcher".*  
This is in line with the expectations set out in the guidance for Core Groups at the time.

- 15.1.33 DSAs are tasked with updating their bishops with information about this Core Group meeting. Nigel Stock is tasked with updating Justin Welby on the developments. It is not clear if the updates to these senior Church officers included victim identifying information relating to victims of John Smyth or alleged victims of a further perpetrator. No detail is given at this point regarding what the arrangements being planned were for ensuring victims had support, pastoral or otherwise, during this time.
- 15.1.34 In follow up to this meeting, the Chair produced a briefing. This details actions taken and feedback from Church officers on the issues arising at the Core Group. This suggests that the only point of contact for victims should be Hampshire Police, seeming to dismiss the need for a victim helpline at this point. A victim helpline was later introduced as is detailed below. Moira Murray has said to reviewers that "*it was standard C of E policy and practice that support would be offered to all alleged perpetrators, as it was to victims/survivors, under a duty of care. Where victims were known, support was offered. We were working with the police and were guided by them. If victims came forward they were offered support.*"
- 15.1.35 This update also highlights further risk and concerns regarding allegations concerning another Church officer including concerns that he would "*make a beeline for the good looking young men*" and that he strongly identifies with the "*poor Timothy*" dynamic described by the Chair as mentoring of young men interested in priesthood, strong in evangelical circles. Further details of the allegations against this additional Church officer are shared, this is outside the remit of this Review. Actions are then taken away from the meeting by members of the Core Group including contacting the relevant LADO for this additional allegations case, and Hampshire Police, considered by Reviewers to be the appropriate operational response, within the procedures of the time, to the concerns raised.
- 15.1.36 What is not clear is how or when an assessment was made that establishes links between the further alleged abuser and John Smyth, and to determine a safe course of future management and oversight of the two separate cases, in terms of sensitively managing the information coming into the Core Group and out to statutory agencies, and maintaining a victim focus for example in ensuring the support needs of victims of both alleged perpetrators are met.
- 15.1.37 It is also unclear what the rationale was for the expansion of this Core Group to cover allegations relating to this further alleged abuser, rather than commencing a second Core Group specifically focussed on these allegations, as would have been expected in the guidance set out in *Responding to, assessing, and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against Church officers*. This states that "*in every serious safeguarding situation which relates to a Church officer, the case should be managed by a defined Core Group, convened for the specific situation*".
- 15.1.38 While the commonalities in the theological beliefs of both alleged perpetrators are obvious to the Core Group and the typologies of abuse are explored, and could be seen as similar, there is no evidence in minutes that the abusers were deemed to be linked or working together in any way. There were no allegations by victims that indicated they had been abused by both Church officers. The joining of the oversight of allegations against two separate perpetrators continues throughout most of the life of this Core Group, despite it being clearly named as the Core Group for John Smyth only in all documentation. It is not until June 2017 that a separate, diocesan-led Core Group was convened to respond to the allegations against a further perpetrator.
- 15.1.39 It is the view of Reviewers that this may have distracted some of the focus of the group on coordination of responses by Church officers to victims of either John Smyth and a further perpetrator, that each case would have warranted its own dedicated group, which would have ensured only necessary sharing of victim identifying information between those that were needed at each group. It is also the view of Reviewers that this joining of the two was not in line with the Church's practice guidance *Responding*

*to, assessing, and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against Church officers.*

- 15.1.40 Hugh Palmer was contacted, separately, by two victims at this point. He says that he did not know of the abuse until then. The Trustees of the Zambesi Trust UK resolve to “wind up” the Trust on the 5<sup>th</sup> February. It is not known whether this was as a direct consequence of the publicity or was a coincidence.
- 15.1.41 On 6<sup>th</sup> February, the Bishop of Guildford, Andrew Watson, issued a media statement saying that he had received one beating from John Smyth.
- 15.1.42 A third Core Group was held by the NST on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2017. Updates from each Diocese were received and discussions continue regarding the further allegations against a different Church officer, with new information added regarding concerns and allegations. The Group also discuss further information coming to light in relation to John Smyth and victims, further victim names and contributor information is shared within the Group, including the public disclosure and statement from Andrew Watson. The Group debate the level and type of information that should be shared with Police regarding both alleged abusers, and the Group agrees to invite Hampshire Police Officer to the next Core Group. The Group raised concern regarding the volume of information they are receiving, and the Chair offered to carry out a ‘mapping exercise’ to help them understand “*who needs support and where allegations are coming from*”. Minutes from further Core Group meetings indicate that the mapping exercise took place three months later on 9<sup>th</sup> May. Minutes indicate this is an action that was delayed due to capacity within the NST, this is confirmed by the Chair who advises that two NST staff worked on the mapping exercise whilst managing other demands on their time, describing; “*we were inundated with work and did not have the capacity to devote ringfenced time to the exercise*”. This delay resulted in poor coordination, planning of support and communication with victims.
- 15.1.43 The Group again discussed options for victim support and discussed different needs including those that would not want to speak with police. A suggestion of using Authorised Listeners was made, however this was dismissed as not all victims were known to be participating in the Church, and Authorised Listeners need to be accessed by individual Diocese, an action is taken by the Chair to explore what other support can be provided.
- 15.1.44 The letter that was sent to Cape Town in 2013 was discussed, it was agreed that the Anglican Communion<sup>80</sup> (in South Africa) should now be handed further information about the case at this stage. A DSA suggests Police will have notified counterparts in South Africa of the case, and Police leads confirm this in later meetings. The Chair takes an action to confirm who to contact to follow this up within the Church ‘communion office’, this action is carried forward for the next two meetings with no conclusion evident in the minutes. It is unclear if any follow up with South African counterparts took place because of the Core Group discussions. Given John Smyth was known to still be an active member of a Church in South Africa, this is of concern.
- 15.1.45 The Group discussed the role of other organisations including Titus Trust and Scripture Union, and agreed letters to be sent to both, recognising potential conflict of interest for Paul Butler (the lead safeguarding bishop at that time) given his role as president of Scripture Union.
- 15.1.46 On 10<sup>th</sup> February the *Telegraph* ran an article about Jamie Colman funding John Smyth via the Zambesi Trust, despite knowing of the UK abuses. The *Telegraph* also

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<sup>80</sup> Definition from <https://www.anglicancommunion.org/> - *The Anglican Communion is one of the world's largest Christian communities. It has tens of millions of members in more than 165 countries around the globe. Anglicanism is one of the traditions or expressions of Christian faith. Others include Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodox, Lutheran and Baptist. The Communion is organised into a series of provinces and extra-provincial areas. The provinces are subdivided into dioceses, and the dioceses into parishes. There are 41 provinces and, from March 2019, five extra-provincial areas. See [here](#) for a full list. Some provinces are national, others are regional. All are in communion – or a reciprocal relationship – with the See of Canterbury and recognise the Archbishop of Canterbury as the Communion's spiritual head. But there is no central authority in the Anglican Communion.*



ran an article on the following day about the abuse and the handling of this by the Church of England.



15.1.47 On 13<sup>th</sup> February 2017, Justin Welby contacted Scripture Union to:

- (i) request that they be transparent; and
- (ii) provide a formal unqualified apology in same manner as the
- (iii) apology he had given on behalf of The Church of England;
- (iv) request that they offer of help to those victims and survivors and
- (v) support them. request that they be transparent; and
- (vi) provide a formal unqualified apology in same manner as the
- (vii) apology he had given on behalf of The Church of England;
- (viii) request that they offer of help to those victims and survivors and
- (ix) support them.

15.1.48 This was outside of the core group process. Justin Welby has advised Reviewers that he was not involved in a Core Group as, to have been so, would be inappropriate and against safeguarding policy in this area, and that the Core Group must remain free from influence or the perception of influence. Justin Welby explained that he was at pains to not undermine or to derail the important work of the Core Group.

15.1.49 A letter was sent from Bishop Nigel Stock to Iain Broomfield (Appendix 24) asking for the Titus Trust to make a stronger apology. The reply from the Titus Trust (Appendix 25) made the argument that the Titus Trust was not the direct successor body with control over the Iwerne camps. The letter also argued that an apology from the Trust would not be in keeping with the expressed wishes of the victims they knew of and had spoken with. Justin Welby was not involved in a Core Group as, to have been so, would be inappropriate and against advice received on safeguarding policy in this area.

The Core Group must remain free from influence or the perception of influence. Justin Welby was at pains to not undermine or to derail the important work of the Core Group.

- 15.1.50 A fourth Core Group was held on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2017. The Chair describes that a support service had been identified that was independent of the Church, to provide counselling for victims of both John Smyth and a different perpetrator. Separately, discussions were described as taking place to establish a victim helpline. These actions are in line with Core Group guidance that was in place at the time. The guidance suggests that "*the pastoral response to alleged victims and survivors is of top priority*". It is evident that as time went on, victims did not feel they were of top priority in the response from the Church.
- 15.1.51 This Core Group was attended by a Hampshire Police Officer who gave insights into the information held by police and gained from victims. This included reference to at least two victims who were children under the age of 18 when the abuse was perpetrated and some descriptions of sexual abuse. It is clear from this point that there were child victims of the abuse. He details that Interpol have been contacted given the overseas location of John and Anne Smyth and describes some of the literature that police have reviewed as part of their investigation. The Chair confirms that any further information concerning allegations will be directly sent to Police and that Operation Cubic details will be forwarded to all Church dioceses. This level of coordination with Police by Church officers was appropriate for the complex nature of this case and is good practice where investigations run in parallel to internal Church activities to respond to allegations against Church officers.
- 15.1.52 On 16<sup>th</sup> March 2017 a victim has described to Reviewers that he attempted to contact Church officers at Lambeth Palace, and left a voicemail message for Ailsa Anderson at Lambeth Palace. He was frustrated at not hearing from them and said, in the message, that plenty of people would put '*a bomb*' under the Palace. The victim described to Reviewers that he has since reflected this was an ill-advised choice of words and had meant nothing intentional.
- 15.1.53 This victim has also suggested that that he was about to issue a second letter to the press until a Hampshire Police Officer contacted him by email to ask him to not send this. He later met with this Police Officer and was told that Lambeth Palace was concerned at the answerphone message, that they had increased security as a result of his message, but that he had sympathy for him and his experiences.
- 15.1.54 The 5<sup>th</sup> Core Group took place on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2017. Group members ongoing and new contact with victims was discussed at this meeting, including detailed discussions regarding the voicemail described above, with Police action in response to it communicated. The Group were also advised that the Police lead for Operation Cubic (investigation in relation to John Smyth) had changed.
- 15.1.55 Graham Tilby advised the Group that a caseworker in the NST, would be the first point of contact for the John Smyth case, replacing Moira Murray in that role; Moira Murray continued to chair the Core Group. It is not clear if this meant there was now a new point of contact for victims and if so, how this change in the point of contact was communicated to victims. Graham Tilby also notified the group that a helpline would be provided by an organisation he names as the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) and that the "*NST has pulled back from a dedicated helpline as there is uncertainty around the number of people that would be calling*". This indicates the volume of victim contact that the NST were expecting and potential concerns about the resources within NST being able and appropriate to respond. This kind of independent helpline is good practice in cases of this nature. It is the view of Reviewers that this should be established at the earliest point of knowledge of such complex cases where multiple victims are known or suspected. The Group hears that 15 counselling sessions would be funded per victim by agreement by the diocese in each area. It is not clear how a victim not linked to a diocese would access this support, or how many victims took up this offer.
- 15.1.56 Further details were given by the chair and a DSA regarding allegations a victim had made to them relating to another victim who is also a Church officer. The allegations

related to discrepancies in the Church officer's account relating to his experience of abuse including the sequence of this and timings specifically about introductions that the victim (who is also a Church officer) made with Simon Duggart. These allegations were discussed in detail at the Core Group meeting. Church safeguarding procedure<sup>81</sup> at the time indicates that an allegation of this kind may trigger an investigation of the Church officer; however, despite a discussion regarding "*whether a CDM<sup>82</sup> could be brought against [the Church officer]*" no further action to investigate this matter was taken. Instead, the group heard that a '*declaration*' on this matter was to be made by the relevant diocese via an Archdeacon on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2017 and that this should be awaited before deciding if a CDM against the Church officer should be brought. The declaration did not fully materialise and actions to follow up on this ceased after two further meetings of the Core Group. The lack of formal response to allegations was not in line with Church procedures in place at the time of the Core Group, for example as detailed in the "*Practice Guidance: responding to serious situations relating to Church officers*" and Safeguarding (Clergy Risk Assessment) Regulations 2016. It is possible that this was due to real or perceived conflict or anticipated complexities regarding the allegations made against a victim who was also a Church officer, due to the impact of the anticipated declaration or as a result of concerns about how this might impact on the wider criminal investigation underway. This continues to be an unresolved issue.

- 15.1.57 The Chair indicated at this meeting that a victim had recalled some further details about when he had been visited by Mark Ruston in response to the abuse coming to light in 1982. The victim alleged that another victim, who later became a Church officer, had also visited him to discuss the abuse. Again, the Core Group did not instigate any kind of investigation to respond to this allegation about a Church officer, potentially for the same reasons highlighted above.
- 15.1.58 This Core Group continued to discuss allegations and investigations relating to the second alleged perpetrator of abuse as a significant part of its agenda, again distracting the group from the original purpose which was stated at its outset to "*share information and consider the way forward with the case involving John Smyth*" indicating a role to coordinate responses to the emerging detail and victim response of John Smyth's abuse.
- 15.1.59 A survivor helpline was set up on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2017 by the NST. The Core Group heard that following productive meetings with other organisations this was to be part funded by one-third by Scripture Union, Church of England and the Titus Trust. While the timing of this helpline set up was clearly not timely and was very delayed, it does demonstrate a joined-up approach and potential for good partnership working between the relevant institutions involved in the response to the abuse at this time.
- 15.1.60 In addition to victim support, the Core Group continued to regularly discuss arrangements for and offers of pastoral support for Church officers who were subject to criticism, including David Fletcher and a second perpetrator who was at this time alleged to be of a safeguarding risk.
- 15.1.61 Victims' recollection to Reviewers of their experience of this time was that the helpline was not set up in a timely manner, that it took at least two months after the Channel 4 programmes aired to be available.
- 15.1.62 Victims have expressed their view that there was not a proactive reaching out to victims from the Church at any point during the period that followed the airing of the Channel 4 programmes and that early promises made by Justin Welby to meet with the victims were not honoured. For example:

*"...in 2017, and in terms of how the Church, and Lambeth Palace particularly, has responded, I think when you have a group of victims asking them specifically to find out what occurred, and you ignore it, apart from saying sorry and empathising, it was very tough on me mentally, and as a result I had hospital stays, and my family, or my wife particularly, has had to cope with the burden of looking after me, looking after the*

<sup>81</sup> Church of England Practice Guidance: Responding to Serious Safeguarding Situations Relating to Church Officers 2015 – Appendix 26

<sup>82</sup> Clergy Discipline Measure – [Clergy Discipline | The Church of England](#)

*children, having had hopes raised that something at last was going to be done about something that had really been a fairly private conversation between me and her over the years, very visibly in front of cameras, and that victims were going to be taken care of. It's taken me quite a long time to recover, and to deal with the mixture of anger and shame and different feelings.*

*...the Archbishop appeared on Channel 4 News and answered some questions about the Church's response to abuse, and in there he said, I think twice, that he would be happy to meet victims, and even by then I was thinking, that's great, and he has my full contact details, but no-one has been in touch to say 'would you like to have a meeting?'. I'm not sure whether he's waiting for, on my part, me to say 'yes, you've said on Channel 4 you're happy to meet us, I'd like to take you up on that', but it seems an odd thing for him to say, and again, not initiate."*

- 15.1.63 This account accords with that of other victims we have spoken with. The expectations raised by Justin Welby saying that he would be "*happy to meet with victims*" vary between victims, but the general feedback is that there was an expectation that something very distinct would be offered to them.
- 15.1.64 A sixth Core Group was held on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2017, providing updates on NST contact with victims of John Smyth, as well as updates regarding the Police investigation that were communicated to the Group by the DSA from Winchester diocese, it is not clear as it is not described in the minutes of the meeting, if this was a formal arrangement with the Police but included details of the police investigation and decisions to date. The DSA also advised the Group that Police were aware that three victims were under 18 when the abuse took place. This clearly demonstrates knowledge that children were abused by John Smyth. The DSA also described multiple sources of support that were available for victims including via Police and Winchester College. Counselling at this time was also being offered via the DSAs and the NST using the CCPAS.
- 15.1.65 This offer of multiple sources of support provides evidence that eventually there was a varied offer to victims by the institutions involved with the case. However, to traumatised victims, multiple offers from different institutions may have been confusing; to some the services were unknown. There is no evidence that these offers of support were coordinated or systematically communicated to victims by the Core Group. The main method used for communicating the offer of support seems to have been via victims themselves. This is demonstrated in contact made by the Chair with a victim, with the minutes stating she had "*asked him to pass along information to other survivors*", and with another NST employee describing her contact with a victim, made following his statement to the BBC that he had been offered no help from the Church. To rectify this, they had made contact and offered support services that the victim had then stated he would pass this information to other victims he was in touch with. This informal communication method would have worked for some victims but not others. As demonstrated during our Review, several victims were not in touch with or part of a network with other victims, they would not have heard about this support via such means of communication. In a later Core Group, the new NST lead for the counselling support describes the process as "*cumbersome and may need to be revised due to people having to tell their stories many times*". Despite this no further actions are described in the Core Group minutes to address the issue. However, there is clear learning for future responses to complex cases where there are multiple victims.
- 15.1.66 The Church's Communications Lead described information that was likely to be published in the *New York Times* about Justin Welby's friendship with Mark Ruston, that this had already been in the public domain and describing that Justin Welby had been upset by the recent BBC News programme. We have had sight of internal emails between Justin Welby, his staff and the communications team within the Church in relation to this matter that show a distinct defensiveness about this, with Justin Welby commenting that the news report was unfair in its criticism.

From: Justin Welby Sent: 11 April 2017 22:41

To: Graham Tilby

Ailsa Anderson

Cc: bishopbathwellsanglicanorg

Subject: Smyth Dear all, I have just watched a very disturbing report on the BBC.

I realise that like all abuse this is really complicated and that people have been working hard at it. However, the report was either extraordinarily inaccurate or quite worrying. I would be very grateful to know: 1. Is it true that we have made no attempt to contact survivors? If not [why not](#)? If we have why was the report so inaccurate? 2. Have they been in contact with us with requests which we could have done something about? How were they answered? We have a [well established](#), well agreed and well followed policy of survivor first. Either (as I suspect is the case) the report was highly inaccurate or we missed a trick. 3. Why was no one able to answer for the C of E? Does the BBC realise that Iwerne was not a C of E body, nor for that matter a cult, but a [non denominational](#) SU overseen camp? To call it a cult when none of the abuse happened there is certainly wrong, but also so is linking it to the C of E. I rather think we need to see if this runs with anyone else, but if the factual inaccuracies are severe that we need to make a serious complaint.

Best wishes Justin [Justin Welby](#) Archbishop of Canterbury

- 15.1.67 This internal communication was primarily focussed on the immediate response to the BBC programme and request for a statement from Lambeth Palace.
- 15.1.68 A notable email from Justin Welby to others reveals a concern about what the Church did *not* do between the abuses being reported in 2013 and the Channel 4 programmes in 2017. Justin Welby wrote: “*The tricky question would be about the 2013-17 gap, any ideas for an answer welcome.*” This demonstrates that Justin Welby was reflecting on whether actions were taken between him being made aware of the abuses in 2013 and this public exposé in 2017. This meeting again heard and discussed detailed updates from the DSA of Southwark Diocese regarding investigations and actions relating to allegations against a further perpetrator, including the commencement of a separate Core Group.
- 15.1.69 A further Core Group meeting took place on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2017. Most notably the group discuss the mapping exercise that took place on 9<sup>th</sup> May, following being suggested back in February 2017. The key points mentioned include the allegations (discussed in previous meetings) made by a victim regarding another victim who is also a Church officer.
- 15.1.70 During September 2017, correspondence took place between several victims, Lambeth Palace and the NST regarding the possibility of a meeting with Justin Welby, following his LBC radio interview where he had stated he would be speaking with victims at the earliest opportunity.
- 15.1.71 On 7<sup>th</sup> October, a demonstration was planned by victims of abuse outside Canterbury Cathedral. Victims had an expectation that Justin Welby would be there as part of a procession. The event and the attendance by Justin Welby were cancelled on advice from the Police that this could pose a security risk to Justin Welby. Tim Thornton and Isabelle Hamley also attended, with Isabelle Hamley advising that she was invited as “*a female clergy*”. They subsequently invited the victims to meet in a room in the Cathedral. Present at the meeting were around 15 people, including DSAs and others. The meeting was inconclusive, and reference was made to the difference between the Titus Trust and the Iwerne Trust by Tim Thornton.
- 15.1.72 Victims report that the tone of the meeting was that that they were “*lucky to be here*”, and that this is “*not an Anglican problem*”.
- 15.1.73 Victims have advised that the main purpose behind the demonstration was to seek a meeting between the victims and Justin Welby. No such meeting took place until April 2021, a clear four years after the programme was first aired. Justin Welby has advised reviewers that in his interactions with the victims and survivors of John Smyth, Justin



Welby consistently took and followed the advice of the expert safeguarding colleagues and the Police. Justin Welby complied with requests from the Police not to meet with victims and survivors until their investigations had been completed. In retrospect, to the extent that full disclosure would not have also impacted Police investigations, Justin Welby advises that he wishes that he had better convey the reasons why he was unable to meet personally with those victims and survivors of John Smyth who wished to meet with him and that he had followed up more closely with the victims and survivors as a group. He deeply regrets the perception created by the approach which was taken at the time and apologises without reservation.

- 15.1.74 Justin Welby did later meet with victims and survivors that wished to meet with him, on 26 November 2020 and other meetings have taken place face to face and via telephone with senior staff at Lambeth Palace.
- 15.1.75 Justin Welby also advises that he cares deeply about the victims and survivors and regrets that this was not adequately conveyed to those who, given their perception of his role in The Church of England, felt a need to understand this and to see it manifested. This could have and should have been done differently and better at the time.
- 15.1.76 Following the Canterbury demonstration, Isabelle Hamley telephoned one of the victims, apparently to offer support to him. He, however, reports that she did not pursue the conversation for very long and he found the experience frustrating and unsatisfactory. Isabelle Hamley acknowledges that, due to family circumstances, she was not able to spend more time on the call with the victim. She offered to resume the call at another time.
- 15.1.77 A victim's name was accidentally disclosed in an email from Lambeth Palace to Moira Murray in the NST on 1<sup>st</sup> November. Also in November, a meeting was held between three victims and Andrew Graystone, David Porter (Chief of Staff at Lambeth Palace) and Isabelle Hamley. In this meeting one of the victims stated that there were many missed opportunities in 2013, with the Channel 4 exposé not being the first realisation that the UK abuses had taken place. It was agreed that Archbishop Justin Welby would send a personal letter of apology to another victim, following this meeting, in recognition of the trauma he had suffered. A letter was sent in November. This victim has advised that he found this letter inadequate in its tone, and that whatever the intention was, it did not provide "closure" for him.
- 15.1.78 David Porter described how he spent several sessions meeting with one of the victims, but he has reflected to reviewers that he feels that he could and should have done more and been more trauma informed. It is not clear what David Porter's role was during this period. He had meetings with victims, but there were no particular outcomes from these meetings. Promises were made, according to victim accounts, of a meeting or meetings with Justin Welby, but none was forthcoming.
- 15.1.79 Following this meeting, Isabelle Hamley sent a letter to one of the victims, inadvertently including confidential information about a victim. This was posted to their work address, and was not marked as private and confidential, as a result the victim's PA opened the letter. Isabelle Hamley has subsequently reported to reviewers "*in terms of contents and address, I followed what I deemed to be due process by seeking advice and following the instructions of professional safeguarding staff to the letter. There was a human error, but the error, in this case, was not primarily mine. As I was then contacted by the survivor who received the letter, I was devastated that such a mistake had been made. However, I did not think it would be helpful, constructive or professional for me to blame a colleague at that point. I advised colleagues of what had happened, but wrote a letter of apology myself, and met a survivor for a meeting to apologise in person. At no point did I think it would have been appropriate to "defend" myself. My sole concern was to care for a survivor who had been distressed by a mistake.*" This issue was also subject to an investigation by the Data Officer in the Church at a later date, and it was concluded that this was a "human error".
- 15.1.80 The 8th Core Group took place on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2017. The group predominantly discussed the demonstration by victims and meetings between victims, their 'advocate'

Andrew Graystone, and officers in Lambeth Palace including David Porter, despite advice from Police advising against any meetings. The group were concerned about meetings taking place outside of the Core Group process which was felt to conflict with Church's agreed processes and Police advice. They explored the reasons behind the meetings taking place and frustrations, held by the Lambeth team and Justin Welby, with the amount of time the Police investigation was taking. A discussion also took place relating to the 'political' issues that both the John Smyth case and the allegations against a second perpetrator raised, and how this was influencing the actions being taken by Lambeth Palace staff. Members of the Core Group expressed concerns relating to the activities and communications being led by Lambeth Palace and how this could interfere with the criminal justice process and investigation. This concern is in line with the Church's guidance in place at this time in terms of working with Police where parallel investigations are taking place. It states: "*It is common for Police and Local Authority investigations to take weeks and sometimes months to come to a conclusion about whether charges will be brought*". Actions were suggested and agreed to ensure coordination and responses to resolve this, and to ensure that all information gained during the meetings between Lambeth Palace staff and victims was passed to Police to support their investigations.

- 15.1.81 The Core Group also heard detailed information about the work of the now separate Core Group in relation to allegations concerning a further perpetrator. The minutes suggest that the next Core Group "*to be held either upon receipt of the file from John Smyth survivors or after David Porter's next meeting with the John Smyth survivors' group*".
- 15.1.82 This appears to show that the meetings being held with David Porter were formally part of the response being coordinated by the Core Group, but as referenced earlier, those meetings had no formal basis and it is unclear what their purpose was. The meetings operated as a distraction to the Core Group-led activities and as stated earlier, did not produce the primary outcome expected by victims, i.e. a meeting with Justin Welby. Furthermore, the reference to the "*John Smyth survivors' group*" in Core Group minutes is misleading and potentially distracting. There was no such thing as a "survivors' group". These were a small number of victims, not representative of the whole victim group and unable to speak on behalf of that wider group.
- 15.1.83 Records suggest that the next Core Group took place on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2018, in response to John Smyth's death. It is unclear if the 'file' mentioned was ever passed to Police.
- 15.1.84 Anthony Cordle visited John and Anne Smyth in Cape Town during 2018 many times. They met on a weekly basis, with Anthony seeking spiritual help and guidance from John Smyth. He said that this was really helpful and that they "*really loved me*". John Smyth continued to have an influence over people and continued to be seen in a positive light by some. This accords with the many accounts we have received from victims (detailed earlier) of him being charismatic and convincing.
- 15.1.85 In the early part of 2018, much correspondence continued to be exchanged between several victims and Lambeth Palace regarding the need for more meaningful contacts with victims, a meeting with Justin Welby and a recognition of the need for there to be a full inquiry into what had occurred in both 2013 and 2017. One victim was also contacted by the BBC, wanting to know how much support he had been offered by the Church.
- 15.1.86 At the start of August, Hampshire Police confirmed (to a victim) that the CPS had agreed that there was a case to answer for John Smyth and that they were seeking to interview him, initially on a voluntary basis with consideration of extradition if this did not succeed. This intention was confirmed in a later Core Group meeting.
- 15.1.87 On 11<sup>th</sup> August 2018, John Smyth died of a suspected heart attack, at his home in Cape Town.
- 15.1.88 Peter Hancock, the Church of England's lead safeguarding bishop, published a statement following this news as follows: "*Reports of the death of John Smyth in South*



*Africa will be very difficult for all those who have bravely come forward to share their experiences of his harrowing treatment, and all those who suffered, knowing that the police investigation will now not be able to be completed. The violent abuse of young men linked with the Iwerne Trust between 1978-82 should never have happened and we utterly condemn this behaviour and abuse of power and trust. It is important now that all those organisations linked with this case work together to look at a lessons learnt Review, whilst continuing to offer both formal and informal support to those who have come forward as survivors."*

- 15.1.89 Cathy Newman contacted Andrew Thompson in Cape Town to ask whether he thought that John Smyth may have taken his own life. He confirmed to a Reviewer in a telephone call that this was a distinct possibility in his own mind, as John Smyth had been discussing the effects of an overdose of his heart medication with him only a week before. He also said that John Smyth's consultant had expressed real surprise at his death, saying that, following a stent operation, he was in very good health. In line with procedures in South Africa, there was no post-mortem. His funeral took place on the 20<sup>th</sup> August in Cape Town. We have been advised by contributors who were there that it was attended by few people.
- 15.1.90 On 7<sup>th</sup> September 2018, the Core Group for this case met for the final time. The Group heard an update directly from Hampshire Police regarding their investigation and course of actions as a result of John Smyth's death. Prior to his death, Police had handed their file to the CPS and had sufficient evidence to formally question John Smyth. They had contacted his legal representative who agreed that John Smyth would return to the UK voluntarily to face questions. Police intended to extradite him if he was not prepared to be questioned voluntarily, but it seemed this was not required. The investigation had since been filed following receipt of his death certificate and victims had been notified of this. The CPS were considering next steps in relation to Anne Smyth given evidence of her role in the abuse; the Police were not able to confirm how long this would take. An action was recorded for the Chair to be updated on this matter given this was the final Core Group. No further details are available regarding this communication. Moira Murray reports that *"I was in contact with Hampshire police about the possible prosecution of the wife of John Smyth and was informed that on the advice of the CPS no prosecution would be brought. This information was communicated on a need to know basis."*
- 15.1.91 The group also discussed recent developments relating to a victim who had made 'indirect threats' via email to staff at Lambeth Palace. They also described other correspondence and events involving this victim, who had experienced trauma, and the Group heard, *"been diagnosed with bi-polar and PTSD"*. A Provincial Safeguarding Advisor from the NST described how he had also stated he would attend Lambeth Palace and harm himself, indicating a safeguarding risk to the victim. The Group heard that this had been reported to Police and that a crime had been recorded. The Advisor suggested a meeting with the victim and Tim Thornton. The Group expressed concern for the victim's 'protection' as well as the safety of Lambeth staff. There is no indication that a safeguarding referral was to be made to the relevant local authority adult safeguarding team, as would be expected given the victim was suggested to have had a diagnosed mental health condition and was expressing intentions to harm himself (as well as others). It is the view of Reviewers that this would have been an appropriate course of action and in line with Church safeguarding policies at the time. The 2015 guidance, in place at this time, suggests: *"All concerns about the welfare of an adult should be referred to Local Authority Adults Services"*<sup>83</sup>. It may be that the Core Group felt reporting to the police would have automatically triggered a report to Adults Services, however this is not detailed in the meeting minutes.
- 15.1.92 As a result of these incidents, the victim was referred for police investigation and on 10<sup>th</sup> September his GP received a letter from the FTAC (part of the Metropolitan police), indicating that he had made threats against Justin Welby (referenced earlier). FTAC were alerted by Lambeth Palace. FTAC was contacted by Reviewers for further details of the alert, however a response was not received. Based on the limited information presented to Reviewers, it does seem a disproportionate response on the part of Lambeth Palace to the risk posed by someone displaying indicators of trauma.

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<sup>83</sup> Practice Guidance: Responding to Serious Safeguarding Situations Relating to Church officers, 2015 (Appendix 26)

It is not clear what the conclusion of this police or FTAC investigation was, and how the Church then responded to the victim in terms of further support or communication about this matter, particularly as this does seem in conflict to the Church's statement in guidance that: *"The pastoral response to alleged victims and survivors is of top priority, and needs to be separated as far as possible from the management processes for the situation"*<sup>64</sup>. FTAC is a joint police and NHS unit and the mental health needs should have been picked up. We do not know if this was the case as we have insufficient evidence upon which to form a judgement, but there is no criticism of FTAC given or implied. The victim described this situation to us as follows:

*"At that time I was definitely very distressed and I was mentally struggling, I was tweeting a lot because that seemed to be the only thing that was working, and I've seen tweets that I made. There was one tweet that I made where I accused Justin Welby and Ailsa Anderson of playing a part in the death of my parents, and that was completely wrong, inappropriate...and yes, I agree, that was totally inappropriate. I did take it down pretty quickly, but it could have been that.*

*I think I visited Lambeth Palace and I left quite a nice sort of stained glass statuette - I never went in, I think they said that I went into the building, but I didn't, a friend took it into the mail room and left it – and it said something like "Justin, Ailsa and Isobel, I'll see you in court, legal, public or –" something like that, there was no threat of violence in that... I go back to my original point, that I'm not violent. I think it's just something I want to get off my chest, because I think sometimes they've picked up on small things and turned it round as yet another reason for not interacting.*

*The irony is – and I'll end here – that if, as we keep saying, Justin Welby or someone representing him had properly interacted with [a victim] when he made his original complaint, with myself and others when we made our complaint after the Channel 4 programme, then none of this would have happened..... the point I'm trying to make is more about the Church using the Police and other services to deflect and blank, rather than thinking pastorally about reaching out to people."*

- 15.1.93 This Core Group also discussed NST progress in establishing an independent review of this case. Graham Tilby described attempts to engage with Winchester College, the Scripture Union and Titus Trust. He reports to the Group that none of these organisations is in a position to lead a review for varying reasons. An action is agreed for William Nye to contact the organisations to discuss further, it is the view of the Core Group at this time that the Church should not lead a review rather be a participant.
- 15.1.94 Frequent exchanges of views and opinions take place at this time over social media and detailed in blogs written by both victims and observers to this case, with allegations and counter-allegations being made between individuals and referencing organisations. Several observations are useful and constructive, much of it deemed speculation and opinion. This Review does not examine these exchanges, apart from where there is a direct relevance to the ToR, specifically what Church officers and others in the Church of England knew of the abuses, and how they responded at the time. One such entry concerns Reverend Vaughan Roberts, the Vicar at St Ebbe's Church in Oxford. It concerns an allegation made that Vaughan Roberts, whilst at a dinner at a conference in South Africa in 2017, made comments which were minimising of the abuses carried out by John Smyth. The assertion is that Vaughan Roberts knew of the abuse and characterised it as being understandable in the context of the time. Vaughan Roberts has made a statement to this Review, in which he says that his comments at the dinner have been misinterpreted and that he considers the abuses to be criminal and serious. He says that he did not know of the seriousness of the abuse until the airing of the Channel 4 programmes in early 2017. He does say that he had known "something" had happened regarding John Smyth, but that the severity was never shared with him. Another person present at this dinner has written to Reviewers corroborating Vaughan Roberts' version of events. We do not make any judgement either way about this matter and simply want to ensure that a fair account of the allegation and the response to it is conveyed.

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid

- 15.1.95 On 12<sup>th</sup> April 2019, Justin Welby was interviewed by Cathy Newman<sup>85</sup>. During this interview, Justin Welby stated that neither John Smyth nor the Iwerne Trust and related camps were “Anglican”. This claim has, since, been withdrawn Justin Welby, however the statement caused a great deal of disquiet at the time. This Review firmly establishes John Smyth as a Church officer at the time of abuse, given the definition of ‘Church officers’ described in Church safeguarding guidance at this time and in this report previously. There is evidence of links too to Iwerne Trust with the Church not only were ordained Church officers employed by the Trust, leading and delivering Iwerne Camp activity. These individuals would have also had pensions paid for by the Church of England, for their work conducted directly for the church.
- 15.1.96 The same Channel 4 interview contained several incorrect assertions by Justin Welby, that have been documented by observers. Given the requirement in the ToR for us to consider, within the Review timeframe; 2.3 (3) *Whether Church of England bodies and office holders responded appropriately to the needs of those subject to abuse by John Smyth* and 2.1 (2) *what was the response of the Church of England to those allegations*, we have considered the interview and the following inaccuracies as part of this Review:
- (a) Stephen Conway had contacted the Police and the local authority when the abuse came to light in 2013. The local authority was not approached, as far as can be determined, or recorded in Church files and the Police referral was never formally made, as explored earlier in this Review. To balance this, Justin Welby was incorrectly advised that a formal report had been made to the Police.
  - (b) A letter was sent from Justin Welby to the primate in South Africa. He has subsequently said that he had got confused and that he was talking of the letter going from Stephen Conway, not directly from him (in fact, the letter went to a Suffragan Bishop, not the Archbishop (Thabo Makgoba), although he was forwarded the letter later on).
  - (c) He claimed that Iwerne is not part of the Church of England, but this is a semantic argument. It is a separate legal entity but many clergymen and some very senior Church figures attended Iwerne, including five who went on to become Bishops and an Archbishop.
  - (d) Justin Welby stated he “*wasn’t in those (Evangelical) circles*”. He may not have been, in the strictest definition of “*being in a circle*”, but he was, and is, very closely associated with that network. When he wanted to test the water regarding the extent of knowledge of John Smyth’s abuses he made direct contact with several leading Conservative Evangelical figures, being close enough to that circle to be able to do so. This is based on the transcript of an interview between Justin Welby and Reviewers.
  - (e) Offences did not take place at Iwerne. We are not aware of abuse taking place while Iwerne camp was in operation, but the most serious of all the beatings took place on Iwerne camp premises, hired at Clayesmore School.
  - (f) At one point in the interview, Justin Welby suggests that he would have definitely been “more active” had he known of the seriousness of the offences in 2013. The evidence contained in this review suggests enough was known to have raised concerns upon being informed in 2013. He was also aware of John Smyth through various contacts, as has been detailed earlier in this report – at Iwerne in the 1970s and being warned off John Smyth in Paris in 1981. On the balance of probabilities, it is the opinion of the Reviewers that it was unlikely that Justin Welby would have had no knowledge of the concerns regarding John Smyth in the 1980s in the UK. He may not have known of the extreme seriousness of the abuse, but it is most probable that he would have had at least a level of knowledge that John Smyth was of some concern. Justin Welby that “we were in rapid touch with the survivors”. This is not correct. There was a very considerable

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<sup>85</sup> [Interview of Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, on Channel 4 News 12th April 2019](#)

delay in establishing any contacts and in setting up a helpline as described in the earlier analysis of this period.

15.1.97 Active discussion took place regarding the commissioning of a Learning Lessons Review following this period, largely led by the then lead bishop for safeguarding, Peter Hancock. A start to discussions with Winchester College was made via correspondence between the Warden of the College and the Interim Director of the NST, Sir Roger Singleton. There was an ambition, at this point, to jointly commission a single review, to embrace the Church of England, Winchester College, Scripture Union and, potentially, the Titus Trust. This was not achieved, with this single agency Review being commissioned in the summer of 2019. The formal commissioning date for this Review (as covered by the ToR) was 19<sup>th</sup> October 2019, the period being covered 1970 to 19<sup>th</sup> August 2019.

## **16. TIME PERIOD: POST 2019**

- 16.1 Several events following the end date for this review of 19<sup>th</sup> August 2019 are relevant to this Review. In particular the continued handling of the matter by the NST and Lambeth Palace and are therefore these matters are included here, following agreement with the NST and the LLR Group, where the Church's own Core Group investigation, following complaints raised by a victim, deferred to this Review for comment.
- 16.2 Towards the end of 2019 and throughout 2020, several victims continued to call for a meeting with Justin Welby. This period is, of course, very much complicated by the global Covid pandemic, making meetings logistically difficult to organise and plan. A meeting, which was eventually held, took place via a Zoom video call in April 2021 with four victims present, as well as Justin Welby, other Lambeth Palace staff and Andrew Graystone. It was a small and relatively short meeting, with limited membership, the offer to meet had not been made to a wider group of victims.
- 16.3 Three weeks after the meeting, Justin Welby issued a public apology on behalf of the Church, which received wide publicity, see Appendix 27. The statement made it clear that he considers this Review to be legitimately concerned with the broad definition of the "Church of England", as explained earlier in this report. Justin Welby subsequently wrote a letter of apology to the family of Guide Nyachuru, who aged 16 years old was found dead in a swimming pool at a camp run by John Smyth, in 1992.
- 16.4 A victim brought a complaint against Justin Welby to the NST, in April 2021. This alleged that Justin Welby had not taken sufficient action to ensure that abuses were not still taking place in South Africa, after the referral to the Ely diocese was made in July 2013. The complaint referenced the fact that Justin Welby had said (in a radio interview) that he had written, personally, to the Primate of Cape Town. Furthermore, that the Archbishop had many opportunities to talk about this matter with Thabo Makoba, Archbishop of Cape Town, citing the several occasions that the Archbishop met with him in the months following the Ely referral. A Core Group was established to consider this complaint, with a member of the NST staff leading the research for this, including a search of the Ely diocese records and interviews with the relevant people involved with the referral in 2013.
- 16.5 The Core Group concluded, after several meetings, that Justin Welby had acted within the policies in place within the Church of England at the time, that he had properly left the management of the matter to the Diocesan Bishop and that there was, therefore, no case to answer. In reaching this conclusion the Core Group did say, however, that there may be a case which could be made on other grounds, such as personal or moral responsibility on behalf of Justin Welby to have kept a close eye on this and to have gone beyond simply leaving the matter to the Diocesan Bishop. The Core Group concluded that this would be a matter for the "Makin Review", referring to this report. We are, therefore, required to comment on the decision.
- 16.6 In doing so, this matter needs to be considered within the whole, wider, context of the role of Justin Welby in the John Smyth case. There has been a great deal of media interest and speculation regarding Justin Welby's attendance at the Iwerne camps, his knowledge of John Smyth, the handling of the disclosures in both 2013 and 2017 and, also, the promise to meet with victims, made in February 2017. What follows is intended as an objective analysis of what took place, based on the evidence available, including two interviews with Justin Welby, in April 2021

and July 2022, which may help to clarify what occurred and what could and should have occurred.

- 16.7 These matters have been described earlier on in this report and, to avoid repetition, this analysis will summarise information that earlier material.
- 16.8 John Smyth was known to Justin Welby by virtue of Justin Welby's attendance at Iwerne camps. There is no evidence that this went beyond a passing relationship at that time. Justin Welby has said that he was "impressed" by John Smyth, in terms of his ability and his charisma, as were very many people at the time. He did on one occasion carry out an errand for John Smyth (delivering a boat key to his house) but there is nothing to suggest that the relationship went beyond this level. Christmas cards were exchanged between Justin Welby and John Smyth for some years, following Justin Welby's move to Paris, but this "exchange" has been characterised by him as being within the norms of the time and not indicating a particular friendship. As is described earlier, Justin Welby was overheard by a contributor to this Review, having a "grave" conversation with Mark Ruston, about John Smyth, whilst lodging with him in 1978. Justin Welby does not recall this conversation and explains he was not aware of the actions of John Smyth at this time.
- 16.9 Justin Welby contributed to John Smyth's 'missions' in Zimbabwe through donations to the Zambesi Trust, describing this as within the context of making many other, small, personal payments to charities and Missions. As described earlier in the Review, Justin Welby was alerted to a concern regarding John Smyth, by the Canon, Peter Sertin, at a Church he was attending in Paris in 1981. Our conclusion on this is that he was not told anything in detail by Peter Sertin. He could have been more curious about it, but it is the case that he was, at that time, a lay person, however he then carried this knowledge with him into later periods. Peter Sertin, as an ordained Church officer, now deceased, should have done more about the disclosure that was made to him.
- 16.10 There is no evidence that Justin Welby maintained any significant contact with John Smyth throughout the 1980s, 1990s and the 2020s. He did know of John Smyth and, on balance, did have reason to have some concern about him, but that is not the same as suspecting that John Smyth had committed severe abuses. Based on this evidence, it is not possible to establish whether Justin Welby knew of the severity of the abuses in the UK prior to 2013.
- 16.11 A key aspect of what happened in 2013 is whether Justin Welby did enough to ensure that John Smyth's abuses were investigated, and that sufficient action was taken to assure the Church that he no longer posed a threat. There are several parts to this. A question must be asked as to why he was alerted to the referral at all. It was considered necessary to let Justin Welby know that a referral had been made about John Smyth because (a) he had attended the Iwerne camps, and (b) he knew of John Smyth. The conclusion of the Core Group investigation was that Justin Welby did not need to know at all about the referral, as this was (then) a fully delegated matter for Stephen Conway. It can be argued that it simply complicated the case by telling him about it. It was, in effect, a "tip off", with no real justifiable reason behind it. But he was told and, therefore, he could not "unknow" what he now knew.
- 16.12 He was advised that a Police referral had been made. He was also advised that the local authority had been informed. Neither of these proved to be the case, but it is reasonable to conclude that Justin Welby had been assured that these steps had been taken. He was also told (via his personal Chaplain, Jo Bailey Wells) that the South African Church had been alerted by Stephen Conway. Justin Welby later said that he had personally written to the Primate in Cape Town, but he had not done so, and he, later again, said that he had got confused and had mis-remembered what had actually happened at the time.
- 16.13 Having been told of the referral and realising the seriousness of it, especially in terms of the potential public perception being that he may have had an association with John Smyth, it would reasonably have been expected for him to take a more personal interest and to have followed this matter up, certainly to the extent of reassuring himself that the letter to Cape Town had been properly replied to and that actions were, indeed, being taken to ensure that John Smyth could not be continuing to abuse there. Furthermore, he could and should have reinforced the message to the Church in Cape Town via his friendship with Thabo Makoba.

- 16.14 Our opinion, therefore, is that Justin Welby held a personal and moral responsibility to pursue this further, whatever the policies at play at the time required. He was advised to not pursue this further whilst a police investigation was underway (which it wasn't) but he should have made further attempts to reassure himself that the matter was being pursued, particularly with regard to the approach to South Africa. As is referenced elsewhere in this review, a Core Group concluded that this review should comment on any moral or personal responsibility carried by Justin Welby and that it why this conclusion is being made.
- 16.15 When the Channel 4 programmes were aired in February 2017, the question needs to be asked as to whether the response from Lambeth Palace, and in particular Justin Welby, was sufficient. Statements were issued by Lambeth Palace very swiftly after the disclosure of the abuse and the investigation by Hampshire Police was quickly in place. A promise to meet with the victims of the abuse was made by Justin Welby at the very start of this process of investigation, but this did not translate into an actual meeting until four years later. It is fully appreciated that Justin Welby cannot, reasonably nor logistically, meet with all the victims of abuse connected with the Church, but this abuse was on a scale unprecedented (especially when taking the UK and African abuses together) in the Church, it concerned someone who had been personally linked, by the press, to Justin Welby and he had made a promise to meet with the victims. The eventual meeting was a small affair, not offered to the wider, known, victim group. There was a subsequent personal apology given by Justin Welby and that is applauded, but it came too late to have impact and to offer any closure or relief to victims.
- 16.16 During the Zoom meeting with a small number of victims, Justin Welby made a commitment to ensuring that all the Clergy identified as possibly not acting on information they had, would be investigated by the NST. One of the victims held up a list of names, which Justin Welby confirmed would act as the basis for the investigations. This is not what then happened, as the only investigations carried out by the NST were those in response to our referrals in line with the requirements in the ToR. The primary point here is that the victims present at that virtual meeting now feel that they have been made a promise by Justin Welby which has not been kept. To balance this, it has to be noted that Justin Welby may have believed that the list presented in the meeting contained the same names as those being referred to by this Review. This assumption may have been inadvertently confirmed by reassurances being made by the NST that everyone being referred was being investigated by them. As has been referenced earlier, the investigations being undertaken were in order to establish whether an ordained person was presenting a current safeguarding risk. The investigations were not designed to establish whether those Clergy could and should have acted differently at earlier points in time. This is explored and examined later in Learning Themes.
- 16.17 Several victims have told us that they feel a sense of personal betrayal by Justin Welby. They say that he was closely connected with them through the Iwerne and other networks and that he knows some of them personally. He represents more than a remote figure to them.

## **PART 3: CONCLUSIONS**

*“I began to get the feeling that I will always need beating, because I will never be rid of this stuff”.*

A victim of John Smyth, 2022.



## CONCLUSIONS

- 16.18 The ToR state that the Review will allow those individuals who have indicated that they have sustained harm at the hands of John Smyth and given an account to the Church of England, to describe their experiences.
- 16.19 Also, that the Review will consider the actions of Church of England participants and will identify both good practice and failings in the Church's handling of the allegations relating to John Smyth, including their safeguarding practice, in order that they can take steps to enhance and improve their response to allegations of abuse and, thereby, ensure the Church provides a safer environment for all.
- 16.20 Specifically, the ToR requires the following to be established. Our conclusions are based on these requirements:
- (1) what did the Church of England (i.e. relevant officers and institutions) know about alleged abuse perpetrated by John Smyth, and (2) what was the response of the Church of England to those allegations.*
- 2.2 In connection with the first question, the Review will consider:*
- (1) What information was available to Church of England bodies or office holders relating to John Smyth's alleged abuse of children and individuals; and*
- (2) Who had this information and when and what did they do with it.*
- 2.3 In connection with the second question, the Review will consider:*
- (1) Whether, when the abuse was reported, relevant Church of England bodies and office holders responded in a timely and appropriate manner in line with child protection/or safeguarding best practice in force at the time, as well as relevant legislative requirements;*
- (2) Whether such abuse, and any further abuse, could have been prevented;*
- (3) Whether Church of England bodies and office holders responded appropriately to the needs of those subject to abuse by John Smyth; and*
- (4) Taking account of the Gibb Review, what additional lessons can be learnt which are relevant and which might improve safeguarding practice in the Church of England.*
- 16.21 John Smyth is, arguably, the most prolific serial abuser to be associated with the Church of England. These abuses spanned a long period of time (from the mid 1970s until close to the time of his death in August 2018), in three different countries and involving at least 115 and possibly as many as 130 boys and young men. The earliest evidence of John Smyth making an abusive approach was in 1971, involving a 14 year old boy.
- 16.22 The abuses in the UK (against somewhere between 26 and 30 boys and young men, plus others who were "groomed" and psychologically abused) were fully revealed to a small number of men in early 1982 (by the production of the 1982 Ruston Report) and actions should have been taken, at that moment, to report the abuses to the Police and other statutory authorities. A decision was actively made by this small group to cover the abuses up. The reasons given for this cover-up have been analysed in this Review and the conclusion reached is that they were not legitimate. John Smyth could and should have been reported for his abuses then and this would have led to a different set of outcomes, even if he was not prosecuted at that time. Everything else that unfolded thereafter was as a direct result of this decision to hide the abuse. There is also some evidence that his abusive behaviour was known to a few people prior to early 1982. It is certainly and irrefutably the case that people were sufficiently suspicious of his behaviour to take actions to contain and curtail his contacts with boys and young men at this early point in time. Greater professional curiosity and a greater attempt at challenging John Smyth, prior to 1982, could have led to his abuses being uncovered at an earlier point in time. Some of these people were Church officers and include Chaplains at Winchester College and ordained Clergy engaged with the Iwerne camps.
- 16.23 Between the abuses being revealed to this small group in early 1982 and John Smyth's departure to Zimbabwe in July 1984, some informal attempts were made to warn people of the

safeguarding danger that he posed to boys and young men. The leaders of a Church he tried to join in Southampton and the leaders of a theological College (Trinity College, Bristol) he studied at were warned about him. A summary of the Ruston Report was shown to them, detailing the nature and extent of the abuse that he perpetrated, this did not lead to any further action or reporting that prevented further abuse.

- 16.24 Church officers knew of the abuses in this period and should, even by standards of that time, have reported this to the police. These Church officers were aware that the abuse was in breach of the law at that time. Active decisions were made by individuals and by the group of people who were shown the Ruston Report not to report the matter to the police nor to any other authorities and, on the evidence, we have seen, few, if any, formal attempts were made to alert people in senior positions in the Church. A victim of the abuse has reported to this Review that a Bishop was told of the abuse by one of the people sighted on the Ruston Report, but there is insufficient corroborating evidence to confirm this. On the balance of probabilities, it is very likely that this was, indeed, the case. The Bishop referred to is now deceased. This can be summarised as a 'cover-up' likely to be explained in terms of concerns for the reputation of those individuals as well as the Iwerne Trust and its related activity, in the guise of concerns about the welfare of the victims, their futures and their families. Only a handful of parents were consulted at any stage of the decision making by this group of Church Officers. Information about the abuse was discussed by many individuals, Church Officers, senior and junior, included over the course of future years and decades.
- 16.25 In this period, John Smyth tried for ordination in the Church of England. Church records are incomplete and the details of this ordination attempt, or attempts, cannot be confirmed. It looks very likely, based on the evidence that we have received (including first-hand accounts from family members) that he made attempts at ordination in several places and got as far as the ACCM selection committee<sup>86</sup> on one occasion at least; victims tell of John Smyth's adverse and angry reaction to be being turned down. The reasons for this refusal are not recorded, but it is reasonable to assume that either something was known of John Smyth's abuse or he was considered to be unsuitable on account of something else. A diocesan Bishop will have been involved in these processes; it is likely that this was a further opportunity missed in the 1980s to prevent John Smyth from abusing many more victims in future.
- 16.26 On the evidence available, it is not possible to say whether John Smyth was actively encouraged to leave the UK and to move to Zimbabwe in 1984. There is robust evidence that confirms he was advised he should consider moving away (either to another part of the UK or to another country) but it is not clear whether there was an organised attempt to relocate him. He was enabled to move to Zimbabwe, with financial support from a wide range of sources, and this continued beyond the 1980s with financial contributions from Church officers and others.
- 16.27 No evidence suggests that any consideration of risk was given, at any point in this, regarding the danger John Smyth posed to his own family, including his own young children and his wife. Very sadly, it is now known that he seriously physically and psychologically abused his son from the age of seven.
- 16.28 Some attempts were made to warn people of the dangers posed by John Smyth before his departure to Zimbabwe and whilst he was living there. These attempts were informal, weak and ineffective, and seriously undermined by the fact that they were made within the context of an overall cover-up of the abuses in the UK. Despite warnings, he went on to establish a Mission and to set up camps for boys. He then abused boys in his care. Several attempts were made to stop him, including the dramatic decision of the entire UK Board of the Zambesi Trust to stand down in 1989, based on their concerns about John Smyth's use of physical punishment and nudity. Funding and support for him and his camps continued, both from the UK and from the Zambesi Trust in Canada.
- 16.29 We conclude that (in line with the requirements of the ToR, Sections 1, 2 (subsections 1 and 2) and 2.3 (sub sections 1 to 4), in the period leading up to John Smyth departing to Zimbabwe – the period between the late 1970s and July 1984 - that Church officers knew of the abuse. Further abuse could and should have been prevented, there was a legal and moral imperative at that time that would have been present for those Church officers who knew of the abuse to report

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<sup>86</sup> The ACCM was formed in 1966 'to promote the most effective ministry, both of men and women, in the service of the Church and to make appropriate recommendations for this purpose to the Bishops and to the Church Assembly'. In 1991 the work of this council was continued by Advisory Board of Ministry (ABM).

the matter to the relevant authorities. This is despite the lack of a safeguarding policy within the Church at the time. Victims of the abuse were not supported sufficiently, and their views were not directly sought on action to be taken including whether the abuses should have been reported to the police and other authorities.

- 16.30 Church officers continued to make informal and unsuccessful attempts to alert individuals in Zimbabwe to the danger that John Smyth posed. At the heart of this one person, primarily, was most responsible for not taking sufficient action to ensure that John Smyth could go on to continue to abuse boys and young men. This is David Fletcher. He was instrumental in the cover-up of the Ruston Report in early 1982 and then continued to make unsuccessful and weak attempts at alerting people in Zimbabwe. This Review gives evidence of the fact that a growing number of people knew of John Smyth's abuses in the UK, some of them being told directly by David Fletcher, both before John Smyth's departure for Zimbabwe and also after he had left and was in the process of establishing a Mission, which led on to the creation of camps where he continued his abusive behaviours. Other Church officers were aware of this and made some attempts at curtailng John Smyth's activities.
- 16.31 John Smyth visited the UK on a regular basis and maintained contact with his supporters who were Church officers, and other individuals throughout his time in Zimbabwe, while abuse of children was taking place. On these visits, he met with funders and approached potential funders and fundraisers. The Review includes many examples of funding being provided for John Smyth's Missionary work, both via the Zambesi Trusts in the UK, Canada and Zimbabwe and from individual supporters as well as members of Church of England congregations.
- 16.32 John Smyth's abuses at the camps in Zimbabwe were revealed and attempts were made to prevent him from continuing. He was challenged by people in Zimbabwe and contacts were made with people, including Church officers in the UK, by those trying to stop him. The tragic and suspicious death of a 16-year-old boy, Guide Nyachuru, at one of the camps led to an attempt at convicting John Smyth for culpable homicide. Senator David Coltart thoroughly investigated John Smyth's abuses, with a total of 14 affidavits from those John Smyth abused being drawn up for presentation to the court, in a separate prosecution. People in the UK, including Church officers, were very aware of these attempts at bringing John Smyth to justice in Zimbabwe. At any point in this period, any one of those people could and should have taken the initiative to report John Smyth to the police for his abuses in the UK. His UK abuses were well known to many people in Zimbabwe by 1995 and the number of people being aware steadily grew until he left Zimbabwe to move to Durban in South Africa in 2001.
- 16.33 We conclude that (in line with the requirements of the ToR, Sections 1, 2, subsections 1 and 2 and 2.3 (sub sections 1 to 4), in the period between John Smyth moving to Zimbabwe and subsequently moving to South Africa - July 1984 until September 2001, Church officers in the UK and in Zimbabwe knew of the abuses committed both in the UK and in Zimbabwe, and failed to act comprehensively enough to the abuse to prevent further harm to children. The numbers of people (including Church officers) having an awareness of these abuses and taking insufficient action to prevent further abuse occurring, grew. The UK abuses could and should have been reported to the Police in the UK in this period, especially given the fact that the Church of England began to adopt safeguarding policies from 1995 onwards and the general awareness of safeguarding in the UK was greatly increased, with relevant guidance and legislation being introduced throughout this period. Senior people within the Church of England were alerted to the abuses in both the UK and in Zimbabwe, including diocesan Bishops and insufficient action was taken in response to those alerts. Church officers knew enough (in the UK and in Zimbabwe) for them to take actions to report these abuses, either within the requirements of the policy in place at the time or within the moral and legal responsibilities they carried. Some of these were senior Clergy at the time with others going on to take senior Clerical positions within the Church. These include a former Archbishop of Canterbury, Diocesan Bishops and Canons and Reverends.
- 16.34 After 2001, John Smyth lived in South Africa, firstly in Durban and then, from early 2005, Cape Town until he died in August 2018. The Review findings are that, between 2001 and 2012, although many people knew of his abuses in both the UK and Zimbabwe and some evidence of disquiet about his potential abusive behaviours post-2001, John Smyth was effectively "under the radar". He was not subject, during this period, to challenge, even though he continued to receive support, including financial support, from Church officers, other Lay people and Church institutions in the UK and the Zambesi Trust in Canada and the UK.

- 16.35 Awareness of John Smyth's abuse changed in 2012. There was an oblique reference made by a journalist, a direct approach made to the Titus Trust about him by someone closely associated with the Iwerne camps and a victim sought help from a fellow victim who was also a Church officer in that year. There were opportunities missed, by Church officers and others, in 2012 and 2013, to explore these concerns and to ensure it was reported to the Police. The Titus Trust governing body was actively misled by two Trustees, one of whom being a prominent Church officer. Church officers in the diocese of Ely took insufficient action when alerted to these concerns and opportunities were missed to formally report to the Police and to follow up on a letter sent by Stephen Conway to Thabo Makoba in South Africa. Justin Welby was personally alerted by the Diocesan Bishop of Ely to these concerns and the Review explores which further actions he could and should have taken in response, particularly in his role as the senior leader of the Church. A core group reviewed the actions of Justin Welby were investigated by a Church Core Group, concluding that these were consistent with the policies in place at the time. The Core Group however, also concluded that he may be under a greater obligation to have done more, and this Independent Review was tasked to explore the matter. Hence our analysis and conclusion. The steps required to prevent further abuse and harm in South Africa were not taken and therefore an opportunity was missed again for this abuse to be reported to the Police by a Church officer.
- 16.36 We conclude that (in line with the requirements of the ToR, Sections 1, 2, subsections 1 and 2 and 2.3 (sub sections 1 to 4), John Smyth could and should have been formally reported to the police in the UK and to authorities in South Africa (Church authorities and potentially the police) by Church officers, including a diocesan Bishop and Justin Welby in 2013. Had that been done, on the balance of probabilities, John Smyth could have brought to justice at a much earlier point than the subsequent Operation Cubic investigation by Hampshire Police in February 2017. Opportunities to establish whether he continued to pose an abusive threat in South Africa were missed because of these inactions by senior Church officers.
- 16.37 Following these opportunities missed by Church officers to fully investigate, follow up and, indeed, report John Smyth to relevant authorities, a period of some three years elapsed in which John Smyth could and should have been investigated, with attempts made to establish whether he still posed a safeguarding threat in South Africa. Although the Church (by definition, Justin Welby was aware) knew that at least three people were victims of John Smyth, no actions were taken to help them in a therapeutic way, nor to find out if the numbers of people abused was greater. When the abuses were exposed by the Channel 4 programmes in February 2017, the response to calls for help and support from victims was very slow. The Core Group, which was tasked with coordinating this response, was poorly organised and unprofessional in its working methods. Breaches of confidentiality and a confusion of purpose have been explored and evidenced in this Review. Promises by Justin Welby to meet with victims were not followed through in any meaningfully helpful period of time.
- 16.38 We conclude that (in line with the requirements of the ToR, Sections 1, 2, subsections 1 and 2 and 2.3 (sub sections 1 to 4) - in the period mid-2013 to the end of 2016 - Church officers did not follow through on Police reports or in seeking to establish whether John Smyth still posed a safeguarding threat, did not support the victims known of by then and did not make an attempt to find out if more victims were involved. From the middle of 2013, it must be concluded that the Church of England (by any reasonable definition) knew of the UK and African abuses and did not do enough, by any reasonable measure, to investigate properly nor offer support for those who had been abused, both in the UK and in Africa. The reaction of the Church to the Channel 4 exposé in February 2017 was poor in terms of speed, professionalism, intensity, and curiosity. The response was not trauma informed and the needs of the victims were not at the forefront of the thinking and planning.

## **PART 4: LEARNING THEMES & RECOMMENDATIONS**

*“You look back and think was it my intention? but I can’t tell now whether I intended to go through with it, although I do know that I saw no future. I was down the path where there was no future”.*

A victim of John Smyth, 2022.

## LEARNING THEMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 16.38.1 The ToR for the Review require us to: *“identify both good practice and failings in the Church’s handling of the allegations relating to John Smyth... in order that they can take steps to enhance and improve their response to allegations of abuse and, thereby, ensure the Church provides a safer environment for all”*<sup>87</sup>.
- 16.38.2 In this section, the key findings from this Review are further explored and grouped into learning themes that can be used to influence change and *“ensure the church provides a safer environment for all”*.
- 16.38.3 Each theme informs our recommendations for the Church to consider and take action to implement. It is intended that the learning and recommendations extend to include *“para-Church”* bodies and institutions, which are not in the direct ‘control’ of the Archbishops Council, but have a significant influence in the Church and include Church officers as defined by the ToR in their leadership and staffing.

## 17. ABUSE OF POWER

### Abuse of Position of trust and power:

- 17.1.1 John Smyth held and abused several powerful positions in his professional life most notably as a leading and influential lawyer and QC which he exploited to groom his victims. His leadership roles and positions of trust in religious organisations were also abused, including while he was a Lay Reader in Christchurch, Winchester, a Church of England parish. He was able to exploit his victims using positions of power and trust in other religious organisations including through his chairing of Scripture Union, as a trustee of the Iwerne Trust and a leader in the Iwerne Camps that his victims attended. Through these roles, he was able to gain access to, and groom children and young men, perpetrating physical and sexual abuse as is described in earlier sections of this report. This occurred throughout the period of Review in the UK, going as far back as the mid 1970s, later in Zimbabwe and in South Africa, likely up until his death in August 2018. His pattern of targeting those that he perceived as having deep and unmet needs and particular vulnerabilities was also similar in each of these situations.
- 17.1.2 John Smyth’s power and influence stretched beyond his religious and professional life to his personal life and it enabled the abuse to go unnoticed with any suspicions about him being ignored. Many contributors to the Review describe how his *“charisma”*, his QC status and his intellect reinforced his power, and it is likely that these factors also played a part in the lack of effective response to disclosures in 1982.
- 17.1.3 Dr Hanson, in her analysis for this Review, describes *“his quest for dominance and control”* and that *“both gratification in his victims’ pain and his quest for power over them are evident”*<sup>88</sup>. His quest to exert his power, and his resulting controlling behaviour, are evident in terms of his approach to all of those he associated with, victims detail this in their accounts to Reviewers, his communications with them and those who were aware of the abuse in the 1980s, including with Church officers, also explicitly demonstrate this. This power ‘quest’ is also evident in his personal life, as was described in the testimonies of his close family members.
- 17.1.4 The Sexual Offences Act 2003 was amended in 2022 to include a new section which expands *“Position of Trust”* offences to include anyone who is coaching, teaching, training, supervising or instructing in a sport or a religion. This was one of the recommendations from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, IICSA, in 2019, in its Anglican Church investigation. This legislative change should be reflected in Church safeguarding policy and the resulting practice of Church officers.

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<sup>87</sup> Point 1.2 of ToR: Learning Lessons Case Review

<sup>88</sup> Hanson. E, 2022, John Smyth Psychological Analysis – Appendix 4

- 17.1.5 It could be argued that the public school system that John Smyth operated within and exploited in the 1980s, may have inculcated people with a sense of entitlement and privilege, reinforcing his powerful position to victims and others that were responsible for them. It was also within the context of closed societies that his abuse existed – Iwerne as an example, as well as the closed and personal groups that John Smyth established, enabling him to exploit that power.
- 17.1.6 The abuse was regularly minimised, for example, being explained as ‘*over chastisement*’ or between ‘*consenting adults*’ even when children were known to have been involved, and therefore it was not fully recognised nor accepted by important and influential people that could have acted to prevent further harm. This can be seen in the correspondence considered in this Review from the period that the abuse was first reported and in all the later periods. Language and actions that followed the 1982 exposé and Ruston Report indicate that victims were at least held partly responsible for the abuse, at times this is victim-blaming in tone. It is telling that Mark Ruston preached in 1987 suggesting this abuse was an “*experiment*” carried out by some Cambridge students. This sermon, whatever the intention, holds victims to account for the abuse and erases John Smyth’s role as perpetrator, despite his detailed knowledge of the physical harm and extent of the abuse and the effects on victims.
- 17.1.7 John Smyth’s abuse of position and power took place at a very different time to our contemporary period, and within systems that may have enabled him – for example, the boarding school culture and practices that separate children from families from a young age, leaving them vulnerable and, particularly in adolescence, in need of esteem, love and belonging<sup>89</sup> particularly to abusers posing as ‘father figures’<sup>90</sup>. The Iwerne approach and religious camps, with their highly status-oriented approach was a system that also reinforced this. This is well described by Dr Hanson, in terms of their strategy of engaging with boys that had potential to be of future ‘high rank’ in society; “*educated at elite private schools, athletic, attractive and so forth*”<sup>91</sup>, because such individuals were seen as having more potential to influence society. In this process, boys were arguably seen as objects, instruments to achieve higher ends – as a narcissist such as John Smyth would have approached others.
- 17.1.8 These systems and cultures will have ‘adultified’<sup>92</sup> victims when they were still legally children, the Review evidences that victims were as young as 13 when grooming and psychological abuse began and several victims report being under 18 when physical abuse first occurred. In safeguarding terms, we know now because of high-profile cases such as Child Q in Hackney<sup>93</sup>, that the adultification of children reduces perceptions of their vulnerability, childhood innocence and diminished their rights as a child<sup>94</sup>. This can occur because of the language used to describe children, for example in this case, referring to and regarding boys as young as 13 as ‘men’, and in affording them an ‘adult’ level of responsibility for themselves and other children. This can influence how children are perceived and concerns for their welfare responded to and impacts on action to safeguard them, as was evident in this case. This adultification of the victims that were children carried through in the narrative of the abuse passed to others in the decades that followed the abuse.
- 17.1.9 This misuse of power and the minimisation of the effects of abuse is also seen in more recent cases that have been reviewed by the Church and other institutions. While speaking with many people during the Review, it has been apparent that many of them do not have a good understanding of the process of grooming and the power imbalance between the abuser and the abused. The effects of abuses of power, and how some systems enable this need to be fully explored by the Church and other

<sup>89</sup> Hanson. E, 2022, John Smyth Psychological Analysis – Appendix 4

<sup>90</sup> Ibid

<sup>91</sup> Ibid

<sup>92</sup> The concept of adultification is defined by Davis and Marsh (2020) as an issue of racial bias and a manifestation of racism. Aspects of their definition apply to this case; “*when notions of innocence and vulnerability are not afforded to certain children. This is determined by people and institutions who hold power over them.... There are various definitions of adultification, all relate to a child’s personal characteristics, socio-economic influences and/or lived experiences. Regardless of the context in which adultification take place, the impact results in children’s rights being either diminished or not upheld.*”

<sup>93</sup> Gamble. J, McCallum. R, 2022, “Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review – Child Q”, CHSCP.

<sup>94</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child>



institutions and learning from this factored into future safeguarding activities, including quality assurance and training.

- 17.1.10 There are examples throughout the Review of pastoral support being offered and given to the victims of abuse, indeed this was the guise that John Smyth used to initially groom his victims. We have adopted the phrase “pastoral support” to reflect the wording used in other reviews, but some victims have suggested that this could be better described as “Spiritual Direction”. Victims and contributors to the Review described how they were provided with ‘pastoral support’ once the abuse was disclosed and after it was detailed in the Ruston Report, with this contact remaining for some time after. Whilst some feel this was genuinely meant to provide support for a victim, there is a view that it was utilised as a means of controlling the narrative and spread of information about the abuse, and to enable those ‘in the know’ of the abuse to maintain oversight of victims and their networks. A similar, more recent review concerning an alleged perpetrator of abuse and Emmanuel Church Wimbledon (ECW) identified similar issues. The report from that review states; “*Some participants felt that there was too much contact from ECW, feeling that this could just be pastoral care but also querying whether this was a desire to collect information, manage disclosures and control the story or narrative*”. This indicates that this is a very present learning point regarding the ‘blurred boundaries’<sup>95</sup> that exist around providing pastoral care in the Church environment and how there is a risk that this can be exploited by those in positions of trust and power. It is therefore crucial that that this is further explored, policies reviewed and action taken to clarify the remit of pastoral carers and those providing this kind of support, in the light of the learning identified.

#### Deference:

- 17.1.11 People in powerful, religious positions are deferred to by others, this was described in the Independent Inquiry Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA)<sup>96</sup> as; “*leaders in all faiths have significant power. Children are often taught to show deference and respect to religious figures...Both parents and children defer to religious leaders and may be disempowered from asking questions of or criticising them*”. This echoes the findings in relation to victims feeling able to disclose abuse perpetrated by John Smyth, who was seen by many to be a ‘leader’ in his faith at the time. The deference shown in this report clearly presented a barrier to abuse being disclosed by victims and family members, but also in terms of how knowledge of the abuse was responded to. For example, the perpetrator, John Smyth, was deferred to by the Church officers who had read the 1982 Ruston Report asking him to advise on their responses. This gave him continued power and unsafe influence over how the disclosures of abuse were being handled and actions that were being taken. This was wholly inappropriate and effectively handed him further control of the situation, leading to threats of repercussions if the abuse became wider knowledge. It enabled him to continue to manipulate victims, and Iwerne leaders, as the abuse was uncovered. As an example, he arranged and co-drafted letters of support from victims, and his wife, that were sent to senior Church Officers involved asking they be allowed to have continued contact with him. He was involved in negotiations about the response, for example, the length of time he would be barred from having contact with victims. This same pattern of deference to John Smyth was also apparent in responses to the abuse in Zimbabwe in the mid-1990s and later in 2016, in conversation with his local Pastor, when abusive behaviours came to light in South Africa. John Smyth was, effectively, enabled to control responses to his abuse in the UK and Africa.
- 17.1.12 Documents considered by the Reviewers highlight that there was a belief that “*God will come up with a plan*”, in terms of how to manage John Smyth, for example. Whilst these comments can be seen as merely turns of phrase, it is evident that critical decisions were made within the context of deference to this theological belief, rather than to consider the actions of the abuser and responses to this, within the law or policy and guidance in place at the time. John Smyth deferred to this and attempted to justify his abusive activity by reference to God and the scriptures in an aberrated way, shown in communications he sent to Iwerne leaders in the 1982 period, as the abuse

<sup>95</sup> Cheri Rowe, 2021 “A new way to care? Changing models of pastoral care”, Thirtyone:eight.

<sup>96</sup> IICSA, 2021 “Child protection in religious organisations and settings investigation report”

was uncovered. This potentially distracted them from taking action to prevent further harm. The learning from this is that safeguarding should take prime place in the ordering of decision-making and actions prevent abuse. Legislation, Government guidance and safeguarding policies within the Church of England take precedence over individual beliefs and Church and Canon law.

- 17.1.13 The key argument given by the small group who covered up the abuse, following the Ruston Report, is that they were protecting the identities, the reputations and the futures of the young men involved, that this was in line with the wishes of parents. This report demonstrates that very few parents were consulted and, of those very few, one thought that the matter should be reported to the authorities. At no point were the victims consulted. The decisions were reached behind closed doors, by a small group and without reference to the victims. A further possible reason for this non-disclosure, based on the wording contained in correspondence from that time and contributor accounts to the Review, is the protection of reputations – individual and organisational, for example the Iwerne “brand” and related constituencies of faith.

#### **Recommendations:**

1. Ensure a clear mandate for all Church officers, institutions and participants *that safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility, until children and vulnerable adults are safe from harm* and that this is referenced in job and role descriptions for all Church officers, participants and those employed in its institutions.
2. That the learning and recommendations from this review are disseminated across Church constituencies, institutions, and provinces.
3. That the following learning is included in Safeguarding training, policy/procedure and guidance:
  - a. signs of abuse of power by those in positions of trust
  - b. amendment to the Sexual Offences Act 2003 in 2022 to expand “Position of Trust” offences to include anyone who is coaching, teaching, training, supervising, or instructing in [a sport or] a religion
  - c. how ‘status related’ systems, cultures and practices can enable perpetrators to abuse their power
  - d. the negative impact of victim blaming language and behaviour in terms of safeguarding all at risk of harm, and
  - e. the impact of adultifying children, and use of adultifying language, erasing childhood vulnerability and their rights as a child.
  - f. safeguarding statutory guidance, and associated legislation takes prime place in the ordering of decision-making and actions to stop and prevent abuse.
  - g. risks specific to religious organisations in terms of exploitation of theology, grooming and sexual abuse, including dangers of social media.
4. Review the non-mandatory status of safeguarding guidance for Church officers with a view to making this mandatory for all Church officers, institutions and participants.
5. Review relevant guidance to clarify the remit of pastoral carers and those providing ‘spiritual direction’ in the light of the learning identified in this case, to enable Church officers to be alert to the risks and indicators of grooming.
6. Ensure oversight of an independent body, free from direct influence from Church leaders, to provide external oversight of safeguarding practice, and provide quality assurance within the Church. This body should include monitoring of the implementation of the recommendations given in this Review, and ensuring learning from other inquiries and reviews of similar prolific offenders are considered alongside this (including IICSA, Peter Ball, Past Cases Review, ‘Giving Victims a Voice’ NSPCC/MPS review).

## The abuse was ‘hidden in plain sight’

- 17.1.14 The abuse perpetrated by John Smyth’s was known to many people from 1982, becoming publicly known with the airing of the Channel 4 investigation in February 2017. There is some evidence presented in this report that the abuse may have been known about even earlier than 1982.
- 17.1.15 As is apparent from the research undertaken for this Review, many individuals and several organisations were aware of the abuse in the intervening period of almost 40 years. As time passed and as John Smyth moved to Zimbabwe, further abusing boys in that country, the numbers of people who knew, either of the real nature of the abuse or knew that he had carried out abuse, steadily grew but this failed to prevent further abuse. Those that knew were often people in positions of power, including senior Church officers, Clergy and prominent Lay figures associated with the Church and Conservative Evangelical constituency.
- 17.1.16 Attempts to manage John Smyth were ‘informal’ by means of written ‘agreements’ with him on at least two occasions. This Review demonstrates how wholly ineffective these were – there is clear evidence of his ignoring all agreements, including those made in writing, to not have further contact with boys or young men or to maintain contact with victims in 1982. John Smyth persisted in his contact with children in an uncontrolled way and there was further abuse in Africa. He continued contact with victims, and other young men in the UK beyond signing the ‘agreement’, corresponding by letter, telephone and meeting with several victims in person. He was requested in the same agreements to seek psychological advice, indicating knowledge even in 1982, that his behaviour was harmful and an intervention was required. There was no effective action taken to prevent his abusive behaviour at any point.
- 17.1.17 It is evident that safeguarding was not ‘*everybody’s business*’ in the Church system at any point in this Review period. While at the time of the 1982 Ruston Report this can be explained by a lack of awareness of ‘safeguarding’ as a term and agenda, the report author, Mark Ruston identified in the report that these were ‘*technically all criminal offences’ under Offences Against the Person Act of 1861, Section 47*’. In addition, the need and moral duty to protect children and young people from harm and abuse was known in wider society and should therefore have influenced and guided the Church officers that were involved in this case to act and report the abuse. The Review has highlighted a pattern of believing that *someone* else had taken responsibility for *doing something* about John Smyth as an abuser in the UK and then again in Africa. There is a need for the Church to fully embrace and implement and monitor the application of the mantra that “*Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility/ business*”. This is a recognised term in safeguarding services, nowadays, with services that work with children and vulnerable adults and wider society. National Safeguarding Guidance (specifically Working Together To Safeguard Children 2023 and its earlier iterations), the Children Act 1989 (as amended in 2004) introduced this as a way of promoting and ensuring all those in contact with the public, including vulnerable members of our society including children, take an active role in their protection from harm, *until they are safe*. There is no evidence that this approach was applied in the Church’s safeguarding practice while responding to this case, even at the later periods covered by the Review.
- 17.1.18 Later, through the decades, and from the mid-1990s onwards, Church officers were better equipped to respond to their knowledge of John Smyth and the abuse he perpetrated in the UK and Zimbabwe. Nevertheless, many contributors to this Review, Church officers, Church participants and otherwise, carried knowledge of the abuse with them, through decades, without fully acting on it and this is seen as an area of further learning for the Church, its officers, and institutions.
- 17.1.19 Contemporaneous correspondence from the 1980s and into the 1990s includes many references to the abuse and response to it being kept a “*secret*”, restricted to a small number of individuals associated predominately with Iwerne. David Fletcher, for example, when questioned or approached by people about the abuse over the decades that this Review describes, is said to have told people it had been dealt with, according to parents and victims wishes, and that it was to be kept a secret. This

learning is in parallel to that identified in the Independent Peter Ball Review<sup>97</sup> which found “*individual Church members appear to have favoured secrecy over transparency*”, and this therefore warrants further focus for Church leaders in follow up to this Review. All the evidence suggests that this was a secret that was very badly kept over the decades. Several contributors to the Review describe the abuse as common knowledge in some circles, including Iwerne. This makes the lack of statutory reporting, sustained or successful action over the decades that followed, and that that could have prevented further abuse, even more shocking. It is evident from contributions that we have received that some, including Church officers, for a variety of reasons, chose not to follow up on reports to them or information they were made aware of, and others that enquired further believed that sufficient action had been taken, with the wishes of victims and their families upheld.

- 17.1.20 There are examples throughout the Review of confirmation bias<sup>98</sup> by Church Officers and institutions; this could offer a potential explanation for some individuals and organisations lack of response. The recipients of the Ruston Report in early 1982, and those that were made aware of the abuse in the many years that followed, believed the justification of the abuse that was given as ‘*over chastisement*’ between ‘*consenting adults*’ and the narrative that parents and the victims did not want this reported to any authorities. They contained this knowledge within this narrow set of beliefs, leading to multiple missed opportunities to report this serious abuse to the relevant authorities, most notably the Police. A similar pattern unfolded in Zimbabwe where individuals and organisations refused to accept that John Smyth posed an active safeguarding threat to boys in his camps, and he was able to continue.
- 17.1.21 While confirmation biases are a necessary human resource that helps us to feel safe, manage anxiety, provide structure and to predict our environment, it also leads to failings in safeguarding. It means we have oversimplified and fixed ideas about a situation, this bias blunts curiosity, impacts critical thinking and therefore impacts judgement and action. This is a potential explanation for the lack of action to address the abuse that is explored in this Review.
- 17.1.22 An example that demonstrates the need to avoid confirmation bias in current safeguarding activity to ensure children and vulnerable adults are safeguarded, is as follows. The key argument given by the small group who received the Ruston Report, which then influenced other responses, is that they were protecting the identities, the reputations and the futures of the young men involved, that this was in line with the wishes of parents. This report demonstrates that very few parents were consulted and these were those parents involved in the governance of Winchester College, or in prominent social positions, of those very few, one thought that the matter should be reported to the authorities. At no point were the young men themselves consulted. The decisions were reached behind closed doors by a small group and without real engagement with the victims, and most of their parents. The view of one parent that this should be reported, was ignored. A further possible reason for this non-disclosure, based on contributor accounts and the wording contained in correspondence from that time, is that this enabled the protection of reputations – individual and organisational, for example the Iwerne leaders and their camp “brand” and that of their related constituencies of faith. Confirmation biases can be avoided in safeguarding systems by ensuring all practice and processes remain focussed on the child or vulnerable adult who has been harmed – taking a victim-centred approach to safeguarding. In addition, this can be avoided by providing opportunities to reflect on responses in safe and confidential spaces, such as supervision.
- 17.2 There are similarities between this learning and that identified in reports including that of the joint report by NSPCC and The Metropolitan Police Service relating to sexual allegations made against Jimmy Savile<sup>99</sup>, which found that Jimmy Savile was ‘*hiding in plain sight*’, able to exploit his “*celebrity status and activities to gain uncontrolled access to vulnerable people across six decades*”. This finding is starkly echoed in the findings of this Review into the abuse by John

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<sup>97</sup> Dame Moira Gibb DBE, 2017: “The Independent Peter Ball Review”.

<sup>98</sup> Confirmation bias, as defined in the Oxford Dictionary is ‘the tendency to interpret new evidence as confirmation of one’s existing beliefs or theories.’

<sup>99</sup> Gray D. and Watt P. “Giving Victims a Voice: Joint report into sexual allegations made against Jimmy Savile”.

Smyth, particularly in the descriptions of the impact of his status, and his activities, along with the 'uncontrolled access' he also had to vulnerable victims including children.

- 17.3 People who knew of the abuse chose not to act, and their inaction allowed him to continue to groom and to abuse in Zimbabwe and South Africa. He was allowed to "hide in plain sight", to appear as he did initially in the UK as a successful, charming, influential, and well-connected man, immune to criticism. Several cultural and organisational factors including beliefs, narratives and practices that are common within the Conservative Evangelical community and also present in the wider Church and/or British society may have unknowingly enabled the abuse to remain hidden. John Smyth's own portrayal as homophobic enabled was motivation for sexual gratification of the nature seen in this case to remain hidden. Other hierarchical social structures, in which status is always important and needing to be proved (contributing to circles within circles) are identified as contributing to this and detailed in Dr Hanson's research for this Review.
- 17.4 When the entire Board of the UK Zambesi Trust resigned in 1989, following the publication of John Thorn's autobiography<sup>100</sup>, others chose to continue to support him, both financially and practically, and he was able to continue to have further uncontrolled access to children resulting in further abuse and the death of a child. At any point in this, any one of those people could have made the decision to report him to the UK Police for the crimes he had committed, to request that they acted with counterparts overseas and attempted to address the perpetrator. No protocols existed at this time to enable this, and this is important learning to take forward.

**Recommendations:**

7. Review safeguarding training, safeguarding procedures and supervision guidelines to include avoidance of confirmation bias in safeguarding practice using the learning from this Review, reinforcing the need for a victim-centred focus in safeguarding practice.
8. Establish international reciprocal safeguarding procedures with other Anglican communion institutions/leaders, including protocols for informing overseas Anglican leaders and statutory authorities, where there are allegations against a person in position of trust and they relocate abroad.

## **18. LEADERSHIP OF, AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SAFEGUARDING**

- 18.1 There was a failure, by senior Church leaders, to ensure John Smyth was not able to further abuse victims. The Bishop of Ely at the time took some initial action by writing to counterparts in South Africa, however the lack of response was not followed up. It was not escalated to appropriate authorities, or every possible action taken to halt John Smyth in his 'pastoral' or other work with young people. The reasons for this have been explored earlier in the report and the lack of procedures for safeguarding across the Anglican communion could be a factor. The matter was directly referred to Lambeth Palace via the Chaplain to Justin Welby, outside of the policies which were then in place within the Church, because of his likely knowledge of, and previous connections (through Iwerne) with the perpetrator and because a letter had been sent to a South African church leader.
- 18.2 Following advice passed on initially from The Bishop of Ely's Safeguarding Adviser, these leaders believed that a crime had been reported to the Police, however this was not the case. The Safeguarding Adviser spoke by phone with a local Police colleague who was the diocese point of contact, and then subsequently met with two more senior officers, however this was not logged as a crime, with no crime reference number recorded and there was little follow-up or action as a result. This is perhaps another example of 'confirmation bias' learning. It highlights the need for the Church to ensure systematic checks and balances in the safeguarding system for cases where prolific perpetrators are still active and potentially causing harm - for example, when a case is escalated to leaders, ensuring thorough case recording has taken place, requesting and checking detail (for example, to ensure a crime reference number and/or Police referral has taken place). Had a formal report been made, this could have influenced next steps and potential Police action with overseas colleagues.

<sup>100</sup> Thorn. J, 1989 "The Road to Winchester"

- 18.3 If more incisive and comprehensive action, for example, to report to Police or to follow up on unresolved notifications and reports, had been taken at key times by leaders and Church officers, John Smyth's UK abuses could have been revealed and the Police investigation into John Smyth could have commenced earlier. Instead, this happened four years later, following detailed investigation by Channel 4. The level of subsequent formal action or Police investigation that may have taken place as a result is of course, unknown. As is well documented and an ongoing trauma for victims, John Smyth was never held to account, charged, or found guilty of any offence while he was alive.
- 18.4 Further learning is evident in the failure by Church officers and leaders in response to the heightened public awareness of the abuse and its severity in February 2017 when reported by Channel 4. A Church Core Group was established, and some remedial actions were taken, predominantly focussed on internal Church action to manage the situation, as is explored in later learning points. Several very critical actions did not take place that would have more appropriately responded and provided a trauma-informed, victim-centred approach. An effective and comprehensive support arrangement for the victims of the abuse was not put in place until months after the programme was aired and a promise, made by Justin Welby, to meet with victims was not met for another four years. These failures to act have been described by the victims as being re-traumatising. 'Victims first' is a learning theme throughout the period of Review.

### Organisational accountability

- 18.4.1 Safeguarding best practice is achieved by there being a 'golden thread' of safeguarding throughout the organisation with '*safeguarding [made] everybody's business*' from the bottom to the top of an organisation. A robust and systematic quality assurance process, that includes independent scrutiny, audits and learning reviews, would also be in place, to provide challenge and support to those responsible for safeguarding practice. A culture of transparency complementing a cycle of continuous learning to inform improvements to reduce gaps and improve practice are integral to these systems, as demonstrated in national statutory guidance<sup>101</sup> that is applicable to other institutions and organisations. During the period of Review, it is evident that the Church had very little of this best practice or a suitable structure in place.
- 18.4.2 The Church is not a centralised institution and this negatively affects the application of such safeguarding structures that exist in other organisations and means that no clear organisational accountability is currently in place. The Review identifies the ways that a prolific perpetrator can exploit gaps in safeguarding systems. Even in the later period of the Review, there was a high risk and potential for the system to be exploited with significant systematic issues requiring improvement. This theme is one that has been identified in several Church-wide reviews<sup>102</sup>, Reviewers understand improvement plans are in place to address these, nevertheless it is crucial that this need is reinforced because of the learning in this case.
- 18.4.3 It could be argued that the Church, as it is currently constituted, will not be able to fully guarantee that robust safeguarding policies can be in place. This can only be assured by radically changing the structures and connectivity within the Church, by creating a corporate organisational structure, with an accountability thread from the Archbishop of Canterbury directly through to the dioceses and church bodies.
- 18.4.4 Reviewers are aware that resourcing for national safeguarding work has improved since 2013 and there are plans in place to improve systems.

### Theological differences within the Church:

- 18.4.5 As explained earlier, the Church of England is a vast and complex body, with a very broad range of theological beliefs. Abusers, such as John Smyth, can exploit any divisions and differences that exist to their advantage. This is evidenced, for example, in John Smyth dissociating himself from Iwerne and its version of Conservative Evangelical beliefs, moving onto a more charismatic position, as he drew closer, for

<sup>101</sup> Particularly demonstrated in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, and the Care Act 2014 guidance.

<sup>102</sup> <https://www.iicsa.org.uk/reports-recommendations/publications/investigation/anglican-church.html> and <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/past-cases-review-2-national-report.pdf>

example, to the Stewards Trust and away from the Iwerne network. He had been barred, in effect, from operating within one and therefore changed his allegiances to further enable him to continue working with young men.

**“Never not Clergy”:**

- 18.4.6 This Review has highlighted several instances where ordained Clergy had not fully carried the responsibility their position requires of them, particularly in relation to safeguarding and preventing harm to vulnerable people, when operating in other organisations - for example when a trustee for an organisation (religious or otherwise) and where they are carrying out chaplaincy roles in schools, universities, and other settings. There are examples of ordained Clergy supporting John Smyth's activities in Africa in financial and other ways, where they have argued that their responsibility in that role was not linked to their position as clergy. Even though in these 'other' roles, Clergy may not always be directly employed by the Church or a diocese, their 'Permission to Officiate' (PtO) or licence is awarded and monitored by their local Diocese, they are responsible to the bishop of the licensing diocese particularly where any disciplinary measures or grounds which may imperil their licence. Being an ordained member of the Clergy is a clear position of trust and it is the Reviewer's understanding that Church policies and guidance applies to all those that hold PtO. This also applies to General Synod and other Synod members. During the full period covered by this Review, there may have been a Code of Conduct in place for Church officers, including those ordained and employed by other organisations, however this is not known. The same for Synod Members. A Code of Conduct (Appendix 28) does exist currently; however not all Synod members are covered by this leading to unclarity about responsibilities for safeguarding.
- 18.4.7 Many ordained persons, some very senior within the Church, became aware of the abuse at varying times from at least 1982 onwards. This knowledge was gained sometimes several years after the abuse took place but was carried throughout the years and decades that follow, with no successful action to address it. The abuse was eventually formally reported to police on two occasions - in 2014 (by an employee of the Titus Trust) and in 2016 (by the Safeguarding Children Advisor for Oxford Diocese). Neither report resulted in a full investigation or action that could have halted any abusive behaviour by John Smyth. It was not until the Channel 4 investigation that a full investigation was undertaken by Police in 2017.
- 18.4.8 IICSA recommendations call for nationwide and statutory, mandatory reporting of sexual abuse, detailing considerations for the Government in this. Reviewers are aligned with the view of IICSA, in response to this Review. The Church would benefit from applying this learning and the IICSA recommendation for mandatory reporting within its own future safeguarding policy and procedure, in response to the learning identified in this case.
- 18.4.9 Investigations delivered so far by the Church's NST relating to Church officers conduct triggered by this Review (in line with the requirement within the ToR – at Para 3.1.6) have been broadly based on establishing whether that person does or does not present a current safeguarding risk, rather than assessing if they should have acted differently to respond to their knowledge of the abuse. This is particularly complicated where Church officers are also victims of abuse themselves, and is complicated too where they hold very senior positions within the Church. The Church will need to establish whether the findings of failures to report knowledge of abuse, as demonstrated throughout this report, constitute a disciplinary matter or not and to learn from this in revising current guidance on investigating clergy through the Clergy Discipline Measure (CDM).
- 18.4.10 There has been a sustained attempt by some ordained persons on social media to strongly encourage victims of John Smyth who are also ordained to report their abuse to Church authorities (or, indeed, to other authorities, for example, the Police). Some of these social media comments have been very strongly worded and some have made a direct association between an abused and ordained person not reporting their abuse at the hands of John Smyth and the death of Guide Nyachuru in Zimbabwe. Whilst the internet provides a proper platform for the expression of views and opinions, it should not be used by people who hold positions of power and with particular responsibilities



(ordained persons being a prime example of these) to attempt to force people into making their own abuses public. It can conceivably be argued that these ordained and abused people had information which could have been reported and which could have helped with the stopping of further abuses. However, it can also be argued that these people are victims first, are traumatised in their own right and that different norms should be applied to them. This is a complex area and this Review cannot make a judgement either way, as that would be outside the ToR for the Review. It is incumbent on the Church to come to a decision as to how this is viewed and as to whether ordained persons (and, indeed, other Church officers) should be protected as victims first, or should be required to reveal their abuses in the pursuit of identifying abusers. Guidance is required on this for clarity. The position agreed and adopted by the NST in relation to this Review is that ordained people abused by John Smyth should not be identified in the Review nor required to report their abuses. That decision is specific to this Review and needs to be reviewed by the General Synod, in terms of both any future Learning Lessons Reviews and, more generally, in terms of all Church officers who have suffered abuse.

- 18.4.11 The use of social media by ordained persons and other Church officers should be considered by the Church, with the possibility of introducing a new Code of Conduct to cover this being debated and agreed.
- 18.4.12 The current disciplinary measures, CDMs, do not allow for such an investigation to be undertaken. The CDM is currently under review with a Clergy Conduct Measure being debated in the General Synod. It is not a matter for this Review to determine whether an individual should be investigated in this historical way, however this Review provides learning for the church in terms of ensuring accountability for knowledge of abuse and failing to act to safeguard those vulnerable to harm, because of this. This is a matter for the Church to decide on, with the possibility of a person being reprimanded (disciplined) for a failure to act at a previous point in time.

#### **Recommendations:**

9. Safeguarding developments currently underway should take full account of the learning from this Review, with a particular focus on the need for a clear “golden thread” of safeguarding, and line of sight from leaders within the Church (at Diocesan and Provincial levels) to those dealing directly with abuse investigations.
10. The principle of ‘never not clergy’ should be made clear in relevant Codes Of Conduct and to all those ordained, in relation to their duties to safeguard children and vulnerable adults and as representatives of the Church in all of their activities.
11. Ensure Clergy Discipline Measures (CDM) procedures include provision for the consideration of historic, as well as current, conduct issues. Include consideration of use of social media in any revised CDM.
12. Develop and agree guidance to detail how Church officers, participants and ordained persons, who are also victims of abuse, should be investigated, where a safeguarding allegation related to their abuse is raised.

## **19. FUNDING**

- 19.1 John Smyth (and his wife, Anne Smyth) were supported financially whilst in Zimbabwe and South Africa, via the Zambesi Trust (in the UK, Zimbabwe, and Canada) and by donations from individuals, including Church officers, some very senior, sometimes facilitated via Church parishes. He visited the UK to raise funds and hold fundraising talks and events, while he was running camps and abuse of children took place in Zimbabwe. Donation amounts varied and there is limited information regarding the frequency of donations. These funds provided his salary

and contributed to his work in Africa, where he had uncontrolled access to children, the death of a child took place and abuse of children is known to have occurred. Some people ceased their funding when they were made aware of the allegations of abuse in the UK and in Africa, for example, following for example the publication of John Thorn's book in 1989. Equally, some others continued to fund, even after knowing the detail of allegations of his abusive past from Iwerne leaders including David Fletcher and his brother, Jonathan Fletcher. There is learning to be taken from this in that Church officers, in particular where they also hold the role of trustee, and have involvement in other organisations must take overall responsibility for ensuring due diligence checks take place before donations are made to individuals and organisations, including those abroad. And that in this due diligence, activities, and safeguards to protect children and vulnerable adults are properly examined and assurance is sought that these are in place. This learning also applies regardless of the value of the donation and equally to parishes and churches that are facilitating funding and donations through talks and visits.

### Recommendation

13. Provide clear guidance relating to “giving” of financial and other donations by Church officers, institutions and participants, particularly where this relates to overseas missionary work and other related, unregulated activity outside the UK. This should take full account of the need for due diligence to be carried out, however small the funding amount.

## 20. COVER-UP

- 20.1 There is clear evidence that the abuse perpetrated by John Smyth in the UK were “covered up”, minimised and held as ‘secret’ from at least 1982 (and possibly earlier), and that this cover-up applied until later in the review period. The detailed chronological narrative and analysis of events details how this conclusion has been reached.
- 20.2 The definition of a wider “cover-up” within the Church is harder to clearly set out and identify, nonetheless, this Review provides critical learning for the Church. A cover-up can be construed as being the retention of information from the Church, either in terms of the sheer numbers of people knowing or in terms of the seniority of those “in the know” (or both). “Seniority” can be interpreted in two different ways – in the sense of being in a senior Church officer position or in terms of impact and prominence for a non-ordained person. A senior figure within the Church would be a Bishop (Diocesan or Suffragan) and, within the Lay community, a person prominent within a church or a parish and having a wide influence via publications, talks and so on. Justin Welby defined his interpretation of cover-up, linked to seniority of role within the Church, in meeting with Reviewers as: *“if they were in a senior position, then you can talk about Church of England cover-up because something like that should have been reported, and by 2013 everybody knew that you should report something like that”*.
- 20.3 Justin Welby also described to Reviewers how this might apply to leaders outside of ordained roles, but associated with the Church *“If [and individual] was associated with the camps, an evangelical leader, he wasn’t a bishop, he wasn’t an archdeacon, he wasn’t made anything because he eschewed all of that, but he was senior in the evangelical world. Now if he was aware and didn’t speak out, I would hold that as a senior cover-up even though he didn’t hold office in the Church of England because of his influence in the Church”*.
- 20.4 Preventing and dealing with the issues created by abuse must always come before any consideration of reputational damage, to individuals, organisations, to the Church, to a set of beliefs. There is a thread throughout of people thinking first of the reputational damage to themselves and to the bodies they represent. The starkest example is, of course, when a small group of people buried the 1982 Ruston Report. An example is when the activities of John Smyth at the camps in Zimbabwe were being discovered in the mid-1990s.
- 20.5 There is learning from this for the Church, in terms of how to ensure people feel safe to ‘whistle blow’ where they feel a cover-up is happening, and then as to how to respond if this is suspected in the Church. The Church should ensure the risks posed by those seeking to ‘cover-up’ are investigated. This should be detailed and reflected in Church policy relating to whistleblowing at

local diocese and national level. This should be reviewed within the Church and in more 'remote' Christian roles and bodies.

**Recommendations:**

14. Independently review Church of England systems and constituencies to identify areas of concern that may undermine a 'safeguarding first' approach, highlighting potential conflicts linked to beliefs, reputational damage that may prevent 'whistleblowing' reflecting on the learning from this case.

15. Seek independent safeguarding assurance that the current whistleblowing procedures are robust and that individuals, whether ordained, lay or volunteers feel able to report concerns of a safeguarding nature, as well as institutional and individual 'cover-up' of abusive situations. This to include a review of all relevant policies and procedures, ensuring that they explicitly protect people from the risk of personal criticism when reporting allegations or suspected abuse.

## 21. RADICALISATION AND THE EXPLOITATION OF THEOLOGIES

21.1 John Smyth was able to radicalise his victims, by using his misinterpretation and misuse of the Scriptures. He taught, preached, and exploited children and young people by applying a false theology, based on selected Scriptures, taken out of context. He mis-used the writings and views of various conservative theologians, primarily from the United States, including AW Tozer, Billy Graham, SD Gordon and Jim Packer. He contended that the way to Christ was through suffering, and he offered a "programme" which included ensuring that suffering was a route to the atonement of sins. This false thinking and perverted approach was known to the people around him and could have been challenged for what it was. Similar approaches were taken by him in Zimbabwe. He has been viewed by some commentators as being a "good Christian" who went too far. This Review's conclusion is that he was a skilled and determined narcissist, who derived pleasure from the sufferings of others, as we have detailed in the narrative and has been analysed by Dr Elly Hanson in her report. It is the responsibility of leaders in the Church, and wider bodies and organisations, to be able to identify such false and dangerous theologies and to make sure that they are not allowed to develop.

21.2 There is evidence throughout of *groupthink*<sup>103</sup>, where people are receiving all their influences within a closed group and becoming blind to external influence and thinking, and to other perspectives. John Smyth fostered such thinking himself, deliberately creating small, closed, groups, within which boys and young men felt *special* and party to a secret. There is a need for the Church to be sure that such introspective groupings cannot be created, with training and policies and procedures geared to spotting and preventing their development.

**Recommendation:**

16. That the Church takes account of the learning from this Review to avoid 'groupthink'\* in terms of safeguarding decisions, and assures itself that there is sufficient external and independent influence on decision-makers and leaders in their everyday approaches to safeguarding matters.

## 22. SAFEGUARDING SYSTEMS AND PRACTICE

### Recognising and responding to risks and signs of abuse

22.1.1 Over almost 40 years, this Review evidences the many Church officers and institutions that had knowledge to some extent, of the abuse. This includes clergy, individuals that

<sup>103</sup> the practice of thinking or making decisions as a group, resulting typically in unchallenged, poor-quality decision-making

became Clergy during the period of Review, lay people, members of General Synod, and spouses, or friends of Church officers. A criminal investigation into this abuse did not take place until 2017, when the abuse was made public knowledge by Channel 4. Police were notified of the abuse in conversation with a Church officer in 2013 but no crime was recorded. In 2014 and 2016, crimes were recorded, however no investigation followed and concerns about this were not escalated by Church officers. The Church did not carry out a risk assessment of John Smyth, nor instigate any internal investigation or thorough analysis of the case and the knowledge and role of Church officers, until this Review commenced. This is despite convening a 'Core Group' in 2017, including a 'mapping exercise' in response to the Channel 4 programmes, that went on to identify several Church officers aware of the abuse and John Smyth as an abuser.

- 22.1.2 The needs of John Smyth's own family were overlooked throughout this entire period of Review, by all of those involved in responding to his abuse of others, Church officers, leaders, participants, and organisations. There is nothing to suggest any consideration was given as to whether he presented a danger to his own family, particularly his wife and his children, and later his grandchildren.
- 22.1.3 Warnings about John Smyth and the abuse were issued to people operating in Zimbabwe at the point at which the family moved there. However, no evidence exists to demonstrate any attempts at this time to ensure the safety of the children in the family. Physical and psychological abuse did take place with his son directly harmed. It is also evident that at the least he was emotionally neglectful of his daughters; further abuse, particularly in terms of psychological abuse and coercive control cannot be discounted in terms of all those within the household and family. The identification of risk of harm to family members is a crucial aspect that must be learned by the Church, to prevent further similar situations as this in the future, specifically in their responses to allegations of harm by Church officers. Where alleged perpetrators abuse their position of trust and demonstrate abuse of power, coercive controlling behaviour and are deemed a risk to others, the risk posed by them to their own family members and others must be considered and referral made to statutory services where concerns are identified.
- 22.1.4 Several individuals who were aware of the abuse perpetrated by John Smyth, were ordained during the period of Review. It is evident that there is no requirement for ordinands to declare knowledge of perpetrators of abuse that they are aware of, inside or outside of the Church at any point in the ordination process. This is also the case in the recruitment of other Church officers. It is not clear from current procedures or guidance if there is a requirement for recruitment panels to include an individual who is safer recruitment trained and this should also be considered by the Church in revisions to policy and procedure relating to safer recruitment.
- 22.1.5 All individuals in roles, including Church officers and ordinands, that are working or will work with children or adults at risk of abuse or neglect, are required to complete a declaration<sup>104</sup> that asks if there is any reason why they should not be working with children and adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect. The declaration does not include a requirement to disclose knowledge of abuse to others by others, or to disclose knowledge or awareness of individuals that pose a risk to children or adults. For those that had knowledge of the abuse by John Smyth, had this form included such requirements, it may have provided an opportunity for them to disclose the abuse, enabling it to come to light much sooner. The Church should learn from this and consider adding a declaration related to prior knowledge of abuse to others, by others (individuals or institutions) to this declaration form, and to its Safer Recruitment Practice Guidance<sup>105</sup>. It is also recommended that the Church request that this revised declaration is resubmitted by those that have completed it, within what is deemed by the Church as a reasonable timeframe, to ensure any other similar cases come to light, risk assessed and responded to.
- 22.1.6 John Smyth applied for ordination on at least one occasion in 1981, but his application was refused at the panel responsible for recruitment of ordinands at that time. Despite

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<sup>104</sup> Church Of England Declaration Form Appendix 29)

<sup>105</sup> The Church of England Practice Guidance: Safer Recruitment, 2016

attempts, it was clear that detailed records do not exist to explain this rejection, however it is likely, based on contributor accounts to the Review, that concerns about his behaviour and application of theological beliefs may have caused this. Had these concerns been shared, in 1981, knowledge may have been passed to those in organisations that he operated and uncontrolled access to children and others at risk may have been prevented. The Church should learn from this and ensure that robust records are kept, and that these are regularly reviewed, where refusals such as this, relate to behaviour or where safeguarding is an issue to ensure information about concerns is passed to relevant statutory safeguarding services as appropriate.

- 22.1.7 Based on the evidence of this Review, the recent findings of both IICSA (referenced earlier) and the Past Cases Reviews, there is a need for a greater emphasis to be put on appreciation and understanding of the types of abuse which can occur, including the identification of grooming and sexual abuse. This should also explore how theological arguments can be perverted, and misused and how people in vulnerable positions can be groomed by determined and clever abusers. This includes the very important need for training and development in the dangers presented by social media.
- 22.1.8 Very little evidence was found of a trauma-informed approach to victims in this case across the entire timeframe subject to Review. The Church should reflect on and learn from trauma-informed approaches that have developed in recent years across statutory safeguarding services and apply learning to its policy and practices.
- 22.1.9 Resources for safeguarding, primarily through changes to and growth in the NST and the move towards Diocesan Safeguarding roles, have radically increased in the more recent period that is covered by this Review. Since 2013, there is evidence of improved investment in the safeguarding system within the Church and increase in recognition of what is needed. In 2015, more robust Church policy and procedures for safeguarding were developed and published, and again, this was further enhanced in 2017.
- 22.1.10 In the latest published Church safeguarding guidance<sup>106</sup> it is detailed that: “Under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, all authorised clergy, bishops, archdeacons, licensed readers and lay workers, churchwardens and PCCs must have ‘due regard’ to safeguarding guidance issued by the House of Bishops. A duty to have ‘due regard’ to guidance means that the person under the duty is not free to disregard it but is required to follow it unless there are cogent reasons for not doing so (‘Cogent’ for this purpose means clear, logical and convincing). Failure by Clergy to comply with the duty imposed by the 2016 Measure may result in disciplinary action”. This explains the current, non-mandatory application of the guidance. This should be reviewed in the light of the learning of this case.
- 22.1.11 It is evident to Reviewers that the numbers of staff specifically dedicated to safeguarding case management remain low, in relation to the demand for their time, and do not compare with equivalent non-religious organisation, for example within statutory safeguarding services such as local authority or health systems. As has been referenced earlier in this report, the lack of a clear “golden thread”, and adoption of the approach that ‘safeguarding is everybody’s business’ throughout the Church mean that safeguarding practice is not yet on a solid enough footing throughout the Church, and require further national investment to enable this to happen. For example, as this case demonstrates, even in the more recent period covered by the Review, there is an emphasis on managing a case of abuse once it has occurred, rather than taking system-wide preventative steps that close gaps and reinforce duties and responsibilities of Church officers. The safeguarding approach within the Church is, therefore, reactive, rather than proactive. There is a need for investment in training, development and awareness raising, including in the areas identified by the themes emerging from the Review.
- 22.1.12 There are lessons to be learned from national statutory guidance<sup>107</sup> for both children’s and adult services that the Church should review and apply to its own safeguarding policy, guidance, and practice. This is specifically relevant in the Core Group process

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<sup>106</sup> The Church of England Practice Guidance: Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers, 2017

<sup>107</sup> Particularly Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, and the Care Act 2014 guidance.

that exists within the church. As it is currently configured, and is defined in Church guidance, Core Groups are established with the purpose “to oversee and manage the response to a safeguarding concern or allegation....ensuring that the rights of the victim/survivor and the respondent to a fair and thorough investigation can be preserved”. While victims are mentioned here, there is no differentiation for Core Group responses based on their age - where victim/s are under 18, as detailed in the Children Act 1989, or if adults deemed as ‘vulnerable’ as detailed in the Care Act 2014. In the analysis of the Core Group for this case, it is evident that there was a strong focus on managing the situation, concern for Church officers of all levels and the reputational risk to the Church, all valid focusses. However, there was limited focus on engagement with and support for victims, for example in taking months to achieve a system of support for those that were harmed. The guidance relating to Core Groups has a focus on the needs and communication with the ‘respondent’<sup>108</sup> – again valid and right. However, it is the view of Reviewers that this guidance should ensure an equal victim focus, particularly in the light of the learning from this case. There was, and it is understood still is, no route for victim representation or involvement in Core Groups and this needs to be addressed. In addition, the Groups do not have a sufficient level of external oversight and quality assurance, and this should be addressed reflecting on this case.

- 22.1.13 Responses to high profile, complex and prolific abusers need to be examined nationally within the Church, and while guidance exists to this effect on how this national approach should be coordinated, this was not fully applied in the 2017 responses that were put in place. Guidance relating to Core Group has a clear focus on cases managed at diocesan level, and some reference to define those that should take place nationally, led by the NST as in this case, however there is a lack of detailed guidance for Church officers and Core Groups responding to complex, historical abuse allegations such as this case demonstrates, and particularly including those where multiple victims of the same perpetrator/s disclose abuse. The guidance details: “If the respondent is a senior member of the Clergy or an individual with a high national profile, the case will be managed by a NST Core Group in conjunction with the diocese”. This indicates cases that are of national significance relate only to these two types of respondents. It is suggested that learning from this case influences a review of this guidance to include cases where multiple victims allege abuse by the same perpetrator, where high-profile individuals or institutions are alleged to have perpetrated or failed to respond to abuse allegations and where overseas concerns are raised linked to the case to ensure that liaison with overseas communion leaders are actioned and monitored. Reviewers also suggest that more detail is added to the Core Group guidance, specifically where a nationally led group is convened, stating the need to ensure that the Group develops:
- (a) ToR for the Core Group, clearly stating the scope of the group, and how a victim (as well as respondent) focus will be ensured
  - (b) A trauma-informed approach with risks posed by respondents to victims and family members proactively considered, assessed, and documented
  - (c) An approach that enables victim participation (via advocacy or directly) with the Group
  - (d) Qualified, trauma-informed and independent (from the case) support including helplines where multiple victims are likely or known, that are well communicated, and a single contact point for victims
  - (e) Single point of liaison from the Church to Police and vice versa
  - (f) Due diligence checks in terms of conflict of interest for all Core Group members

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<sup>108</sup> The term ‘respondent’ is used in Church safeguarding guidance to describe the person about whom a safeguarding concern or allegation has been made.

- (g) Clarity about contact and collaboration with other Church organisations and those overseas.

22.1.14 This Review was commissioned because of lobbying both by victims and the then Bishop responsible for Safeguarding. As explained in the analysis of this time in the report, the Review was instigated without fully scoping the case, knowledge and involvement of Church officers. A mapping exercise promised as part of the Core Group in 2017 was eventually delivered, however this did not fully explore the complexity of the case including the volume of evidence, likely network of individuals, Church officers and otherwise, and organisations that would need to participate. This and other related factors explained earlier, resulted in the timescale for the completion of the Review needing to be extended significantly, adding to the trauma already experienced by victims and others impacted by the abuse. In addition, this Review would have been greatly assisted if a reference group had been established from the outset, which would have included a formal link with victim representatives and legal advice at least. The lead Reviewer made a recommendation for a reference group to be created on commencement of the review, but this was not accepted by the then Director of Safeguarding.



## Recommendations

17. Ensure Church safeguarding guidance includes a requirement to assess the risk posed by alleged perpetrators to their own family including children in their care, partners/ex partners and other family members, and that referrals are made to statutory services immediately where any risk is identified.
18. Include a new declaration to the “Confidential Clergy Declaration Form” to facilitate disclosure of an individual’s ‘prior knowledge’ of allegations of abuse, perpetrated by individuals or within institutions. This should also be included in the Church’s Safer Recruitment Practice Guidance.
19. That the revised clergy declaration is resubmitted by those that have completed it (within a reasonable timeframe to be determined by the Church) to ensure that similar safeguarding issues come to light, are risk assessed and responded to.
20. Develop a joint working protocol with key statutory safeguarding organisations and safeguarding partnerships to include an ‘Escalation Policy’ for Church officers to follow when they are dissatisfied with the response or where there is no update from; Police, LADO and other statutory services to a report of allegations.
21. Ensure that records are kept relating to refusals for ordination where safeguarding of children or adults is a concern, and that these are regularly reviewed to ensure relevant information is passed to relevant statutory safeguarding services.
22. Learn from trauma informed approaches that have developed in recent years across statutory safeguarding services and apply the learning to Church safeguarding practice through training, policy development and engagement with victims.
23. Consider applying ‘mandatory’ reporting within future Church safeguarding policy and procedure, ahead of this being introduced as a national requirement, reflecting on learning from this review, Past Cases Review and IICSA.
24. Expand Core Group guidance, specifically where a nationally led group is convened, stating the need to ensure that the Group develops:
  - a) ToR for the Core Group, clearly stating the scope of the group, and how a victim (as well as respondent) focus will be ensured
  - b) A trauma-informed approach with risks posed by respondents to victims and family members proactively considered, assessed, and documented
  - c) An approach that enables victim participation (via advocacy or directly) with the Group
  - d) Qualified, trauma-informed and independent (from the case) support including helplines where multiple victims are likely or known, that are well communicated, and a single contact point for victims
  - e) Single point of liaison from the Church to Police and vice versa
  - f) Due diligence checks in terms of conflict of interest for all Core Group members
  - g) Clarity about contact and collaboration with other Church organisations and those overseas.
25. Ensure that future learning lessons reviews relating to national, high-profile cases involving serial abusers, overseas contact, with multiple victims are led by a multidisciplinary reference group, with independent safeguarding advice, legal advice and victim voices represented.

## 23. THE ABUSE IN ZIMBABWE AND SOUTH AFRICA

- 23.1 Abuse at camps run by John Smyth in Zimbabwe, including the suspicious and unexplained tragic death of a child, Guide Nyachuru at one of the camps, has been described and explored by others over the time period covered by the Review. For example, in the details covered by the Coltart Report, Andrew Graystone’s book (*Bleeding for Jesus*). The abuse is also referenced in this Review where possible within the ToR. These reviews and observations do not, however, amount to a full review of the abuses in Zimbabwe, highlighting the learning related to that time. Questions also remain unanswered about any abuses which may have been perpetrated by John Smyth while he was living in Durban and Cape Town, between 2001 and 2018.

- 23.2 It was recommended, at the start of the Review process in October 2019, that abuses in Africa should be covered within this Review, with an addendum to the ToR. This was not agreed by the then Director of Safeguarding in the NST despite the Lead Bishop for Safeguarding, Peter Hancock, also requesting that a review into the African abuses to be carried out. Further consideration was given into what may have occurred in South Africa in 2020 and a question on this was raised at General Synod. It was decided that this Review would be concluded and then a reconsideration of any need for a review into the African abuses held upon receipt of the Review. 'Justin Welby made a public statement in May 2021, following a private meeting with a small number of UK victims, that included an apology on behalf of the Church of England and reference to the need for a better understanding of the abuses in Africa. He also made an apology to the family of the boy who died and subsequently wrote to the family.
- 23.3 In February 2022, the then Lead Bishop for Safeguarding, Jonathan Gibbs, in answer to a question in General Synod, that a review of the abuses in Africa will be considered after the publication of this Review. He did not specify whether this will be based upon separate reviews of the Zimbabwe period (1985 until mid-2001) and the South African period (mid-2001 until John Smyth's death in August 2018) or by a single review covering both periods. It is our view that separate reviews should be undertaken, as the learning from the abuse and circumstances of any abusive behaviours are quite different in Zimbabwe and South Africa. A further statement was made by Joanne Grenfell (Lead Safeguarding Bishop) on this matter to General Synod in July 2023. In her reply, she said: *"When a review is commissioned, it needs to be clear about its own terms of reference: what is in scope and what is out of scope. It can only bring into scope matters over which it has a reasonable degree of responsibility and ongoing control."*

**Recommendations:**

26. Consider the commissioning of a full independent review (directly or through another UK or overseas body) into learning from the abuses perpetrated by John Smyth in Zimbabwe between 1985 and 2001.
27. Consider the commissioning of a full independent review (directly or through another UK or overseas body) into learning from the potential abuses perpetrated by John Smyth in South Africa between 2001 and his death in 2018.

**24. EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE**

- 24.1 Institutions such as the Church of England can learn as much from good practice as it can from practice requiring improvement. During this Review, examples of positive practice have been demonstrated, including the following:
- 24.1.1 The Zambesi Trust Trustees resigned en masse in 1989, feeling unable to continue to support John Smyth and his family in the running of his Mission and the camps in Zimbabwe.
- 24.1.2 The Lead Bishop for Safeguarding, Peter Hancock, recognised the need for a thorough examination of the abuses carried out by John Smyth and called for an independent review. He met with victims and has been praised by them for his relentless focus on their needs and his commitment to a trauma informed approach to safeguarding in the Church.
- 24.1.3 The Core Group in 2017 eventually coordinated a multi-organisation approach to the helpline which was set up for victims and this was an example of good practice. The helpline was delayed in coming into force and being available to victims to access, but the eventual coordinated planning for it was an example of good practice.
- 24.1.4 Good practice was shown by the Core Group in coordinating the responses from the Church with the parallel Hampshire Police Operation Cubic investigation in 2018.

## All Recommendations:

1. Ensure a clear mandate for all Church officers, institutions and participants *that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, until children and vulnerable adults are safe from harm* and that this is referenced in job and role descriptions for all Church officers, participants and those employed in its institutions.
2. That the learning and recommendations from this review are disseminated across Church constituencies, institutions, and provinces.
3. That the following learning is included in Safeguarding training, policy/procedure and guidance:
  - signs of abuse of power by those in positions of trust
  - amendment to the Sexual Offences Act 2003 in 2022 to expand "Position of Trust" offences to include anyone who is coaching, teaching, training, supervising, or instructing in [a sport or] a religion
  - how 'status related' systems, cultures and practices can enable perpetrators to abuse their power
  - the negative impact of victim blaming language and behaviour in terms of safeguarding all at risk of harm, and
  - the impact of adultifying children, and use of adultifying language, erasing childhood vulnerability and their rights as a child.
  - safeguarding statutory guidance, and associated legislation takes prime place in the ordering of decision-making and actions to stop and prevent abuse.
  - risks specific to religious organisations in terms of exploitation of theology, grooming and sexual abuse, including dangers of social media.
4. Review the non-mandatory status of safeguarding guidance for Church officers with a view to making this mandatory for all Church officers, institutions and participants.
5. Review relevant guidance to clarify the remit of pastoral carers and those providing 'spiritual direction' responsibility for others in the light of the learning identified in this case, to enable Church officers to be alert to the risks and indicators of grooming and for those having 'uncontrolled access' to children and vulnerable adults.
6. Ensure oversight of an independent body, free from direct influence from Church leaders, to provide external oversight of safeguarding practice, and provide quality assurance within the Church. This body should include monitoring of the implementation of the recommendations given in this Review, and ensuring learning from other inquiries and reviews of similar prolific offenders are considered alongside this (including IICSA, Peter Ball, Past Cases Review, BBC/ Dame Janet Smith Review).
7. Review safeguarding training, safeguarding procedures and supervision guidelines to include avoidance of confirmation bias in safeguarding practice using the learning from this Review, reinforcing the need for a victim-centred focus in safeguarding practice.
8. Establish international reciprocal safeguarding procedures with other Anglican communion institutions/leaders, including protocols for informing overseas Anglican leaders and statutory authorities, where there are allegations against a person in position of trust and they relocate abroad.
9. Safeguarding developments currently underway should take full account of the learning from this Review, with a particular focus on the need for a clear "golden thread" of safeguarding, and line of sight from leaders within the Church (at Diocesan and Provincial levels) to those dealing directly with abuse investigations.

10. The principle of 'never not clergy' should be made clear in relevant Codes Of Conduct and to all those ordained, in relation to their duties to safeguard children and vulnerable adults and as representatives of the Church in all of their activities.
11. Ensure Clergy Discipline Measures (CDM) procedures include provision for the consideration of historic, as well as current, conduct issues. Include consideration of use of social media in any revised CDM.
12. Develop and agree guidance to detail how Church officers, participants and ordained persons, who are also victims of abuse, should be investigated, where a safeguarding allegation related to their abuse is raised.
13. Provide clear guidance relating to "giving" of financial and other donations by Church officers, institutions and participants, particularly where this relates to overseas missionary work and other related, unregulated activity outside the UK. This should take full account of the need for due diligence to be carried out, however small the funding amount.
14. Independently review Church of England systems and constituencies to identify areas of concern that may undermine a 'safeguarding first' approach, highlighting potential conflicts linked to beliefs, reputational damage that may prevent 'whistleblowing' reflecting on the learning from this case.
15. Seek independent safeguarding assurance that the current whistleblowing procedures are robust and that individuals, whether ordained, lay or volunteers feel able to report concerns of a safeguarding nature, as well as institutional and individual 'cover-up' of abusive situations. This to include a review of all relevant policies and procedures, ensuring that they explicitly protect people from the risk of personal criticism when reporting allegations or suspected abuse.
16. That the Church takes account of the learning from this Review to avoid 'groupthink' in terms of safeguarding decisions, and assures itself that there is sufficient external and independent influence on decision-makers and leaders in their everyday approaches to safeguarding matters.
17. Ensure Church safeguarding guidance includes a requirement to assess the risk posed by alleged perpetrators to their own family including children in their care, partners/ex partners and other family members, and that referrals are made to statutory services immediately where any risk is identified.
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