

Yesterday, I gave my farewell speech in the House of Lords, as part of a debate on housing and homelessness.

I would like to apologise wholeheartedly for the hurt that my speech has caused.

I understand that my words – the things that I said, and those I omitted to say – have caused further distress for those who were traumatised, and continue to be harmed, by John Smyth’s heinous abuse, and by the far reaching effects of other perpetrators of abuse.

I did not intend to overlook the experience of survivors, or to make light of the situation – and I am very sorry for having done so.

It remains the case that I take both personal and institutional responsibility for the long and retraumatising period after 2013, and the harm that this has caused survivors.

I continue to feel a profound sense of shame at the Church of England’s historic safeguarding failures.

Finding support

If you or anyone you are in contact with are affected by any of the issues related to this statement and want to talk to someone independently please call the Safe Spaces helpline on 0300 303 1056 or visit safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk.

Alternatively, you may wish to contact the [diocesan safeguarding team in your area](#) or the National Safeguarding Team at safeguarding@churchofengland.org.

There are also [other support services](#) available

Contact Safe Spaces

1 min read

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