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### **The Methodist Church Safeguarding Past Cases Review: an open letter to the Methodist people.**

As part of the commitment of the Methodist Church to creating safer spaces the Conference agreed to undertake a Past Cases Review across the Connexion. The remit of the Review is to look at any safeguarding cases connected to the Methodist Church over the last 60 years, involving children and/or vulnerable adults.

The Review has two main aims. First, to take any action that may still be necessary to ensure that children or vulnerable adults are protected in particular situations that are brought to the attention of the review team, and second, to ensure that learning from past cases is embedded in good practice across the Church in the future.

All ministers have been required to participate in the Review and with only a very few exceptions they have already responded with great thought and care.

The perspective of lay people within the Church is crucial however. Lay people often carry information in churches that may not be passed on to ministers, particularly in the past when the importance of recording information was not as well understood as it is now. It is vitally important that anyone who has experienced abuse within the Church context has the opportunity to tell their story to the Review.

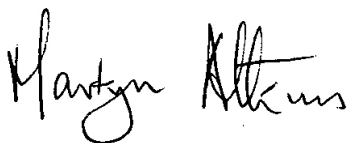
The purpose of this letter is to remind any person within the Methodist Church of the opportunity to contribute to the Review.

Details of how to participate in the Review and the form to be completed are on the Methodist Church website [www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk). If you are not able to use the internet, response forms are available from the Connexional Safeguarding team by ringing 0207 467 5125 and speaking to the Past Cases Review Administrator.

It can be very difficult to relive painful experiences and there is therefore support available to anyone who wants it. Ministers will be more than willing to support members of their congregation in completing response forms for those who feel comfortable doing it this way. Others may not want to discuss it with someone they know or they may need more specialist help. Every Methodist District has a Safeguarding Officer and their names and contact details can be found on the Safeguarding page of the Methodist Church website. If they cannot help directly they can point people to where they might get the support they need. A list of organisations that offer specialist counselling or help with specific forms of abuse is also found on the Safeguarding page of the Methodist Church website.

In order to ensure that the learning can be analysed and properly presented to the Conference in June 2015, we need all responses to the Review to be received by 24th December 2014.

Yours sincerely,



**Martyn Atkins**  
General Secretary of the Methodist Church and Secretary of the Conference

