



MACSAS – Minister & Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors
PO Box 622, Brentford, Middx TW8 1AU
Website: www.macsas.org.uk Email: macsas1@hotmail.com

MACSAS PRESS RELEASE

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CHURCH OF ENGLAND RESPONSE TO VICTIMS

MACSAS welcomes the publication of **‘Responding Well to those who have been sexually abused’** – Policy and guidance launched by the Church of England on Monday 11th July 2011.

‘Responding Well’ is the first policy from any mainstream church in England and Wales to consider what a pastoral response to victims of sexual abuse should look like, what it should involve and what victims should be able to expect as a minimum response when they approach their church communities seeking help and support.

What ‘Responding Well’ is not is a procedure for responding to victims of sexual abuse perpetrated by those in positions of authority within the Church of England. This has been acknowledged by the National Safeguarding Advisor to the Church of England, Elizabeth Hall, and at the launch on Monday MACSAS was encouraged to hear that procedures would be produced to respond specifically to victims of abuse perpetrated within the Church.

‘Responding Well’ is the beginning of the development of a pastoral ministry within the Church of England, towards the 1 in 6 people within our society who are victims of child sexual abuse and the untold number of women and men who have been the victims of sexual violence. As the Policy makes clear there are people within every church congregation who have been sexually abused and it is time that their experiences are acknowledged and their needs are ministered to rather than being silenced and denied.

All inquiries can be made to **Anne Lawrence, Co-Chair of MACSAS** on **07939574368** or through the MACSAS email macsas1@hotmail.com