

Final Report

Jesus Fellowship Redress Scheme

Published 10 September 2024



Trigger Warning Please be advised that this report may contain information which members and previous members of the Jesus Fellowship Church may find distressing.

This report contains information relating to physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.

A guide to finding support is contained at Appendix A (page 37)

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Definitions and Acronyms

Phrase	Meaning
Abuse	Abusive behaviour as defined in the categories Emotional, Physical or Sexual Abuse.
'CAE'	Acronym for the Community Adverse Experience Scheme
Capital Contribution	Contribution of capital made in cash to the Jesus Fellowship Community Trust and received by the Trustees
Child	A person under the age of 18
Church	Jesus Fellowship Church ('JFC')
Community	A group of people living in properties owned or leased by the Jesus Fellowship with effect from 14 June 1974 to 26 May 2019.
Eligible Applicant	A person who fulfils the eligibility criteria set out in the Redress Schemes terms. Please see Appendix D.
Emotional Abuse	Abusive conduct resulting in a recognised Psychiatric Injury.
'IRP'	Acronym for the Individual Redress Payment Scheme
'JFC'	Acronym for Jesus Fellowship Church
'JFCT'	Acronym for Jesus Fellowship Community Trust
'OCS'	Acronym for the Other Claims Scheme
Physical Abuse	Any act which caused physical injury to a Child or adult.
Psychiatric Injury	A psychiatric condition that is medically recognised and defined in the ICD 11 (International Classification of Diseases) or the DSM V (Diagnostic Statistic Manual of Diseases).
Sexual Abuse	Any act that involves forcing or enticing a Child to take part in sexual activity for the sexual gratification of another person. Non-consensual sexual activity between adults.
the Trust	Jesus Fellowship Community Trust ('JFCT')
Trustees	The Trustees of the Jesus Fellowship Community Trust

Trustees' Foreword

This report has been compiled first and foremost for the victims and survivors of abuse in the Jesus Fellowship. It is the means of ensuring that the findings concerning the 890 applications submitted by 601 individuals to the Jesus Fellowship Redress Scheme are made known.

Harm and abuse in the Jesus Fellowship were not limited to a handful of leaders, a particular period of time, or geographical locations. It was widespread and systemic.

The redress scheme found significant failures in the handling of abuse allegations and of alleged perpetrators in community, including Jesus Fellowship leaders' lack of care and support for victims and survivors.

Children in the Jesus Fellowship community suffered particular harm: four in every ten are estimated to have had adverse experiences in community, and one in six sexually abused.

Whilst there will be many who selflessly joined the church and served one another for the good of the wider public, the ability of those in the community to make decisions in respect of their own lives was compromised, with choice and agency removed within a hierarchical structure which was insufficiently accountable to members and others.

The redress scheme has been effective in ensuring the voices of victims and survivors are heard however, due to the period of time that has passed since the beginning of the Jesus Fellowship, we also recognise the true scale of offending and the number of children and adults adversely affected is likely to be greater than the findings of the redress scheme alone.

We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all those who have participated in the redress scheme for their courage and for playing such a crucial part in ensuring the Jesus Fellowship confronts its failures.

On behalf of the Jesus Fellowship Community Trust, we wish to express how sorry we are that individuals experienced abuse and harm during their time in the Jesus Fellowship, and for the severely detrimental impact this has had on their lives.

The Trustees overseeing the redress process have been deeply affected by the sheer scale of abuse in the Jesus Fellowship, and would also like to thank the teams, solicitors, survivors' association, and others involved in the delivery of the scheme on behalf of victims and survivors.

We fully acknowledge that no amount of compensation can change the past, but we hope that the conclusion of this redress scheme provides an opportunity to look to the future and the promise of better things to come for all those affected.

Trustees

Jesus Fellowship Community Trust

Section 1

Introduction to the Jesus Fellowship Redress Scheme

1

Section 1.1

Closure Context

Since December 2020, The Jesus Fellowship Community Trust has existed solely as a residuary body with one purpose – winding up the administrative affairs of the Jesus Fellowship Church. New trustees were brought in specifically to oversee this work, which includes implementing the Jesus Fellowship Redress Scheme, supporting survivors and former members, and ultimately closing the Trust.



Some of the commonly stated aims of the Jesus Fellowship Church can be found in Appendix C (page 45).

The Jesus Fellowship Church was founded in 1969 by Noel Stanton (1926-2009). He had been a lay pastor at Bugbrooke Baptist Chapel (part of the Baptist Union) in Northampton since 1957 and had appealed to a younger generation of worshippers through charismatic preaching.

In 1974, a residential Christian Community was founded for the Church's growing membership. Community life was shared; individual earnings and assets were pooled in 'Common Purses' (a central fund for each household), with any surplus donated to the Church and Community.

Households, usually comprising numerous family units, single people and individuals invited into Community through the various Church evangelical outreach programmes, worked, ate, worshipped and shared dormitories together. Earlier in the life of the Community, members committed to live by strict precepts or common rules of behaviour. These included not partaking in secular television, music, books, leisure, sports, hobbies or entertainment activities, to live simply and modestly,

and avoid cosmetics and jewellery. Members were to give all their time, income and involvement to the work of the Church and Community life.

For many, this was described as a freely chosen radical expression of their faith. In later years, whilst some of these precepts or rules no longer applied, the overall culture and behaviour of the Church and Community life continued to follow similar objectives.

During its time, the Jesus Fellowship Church was also known as the Jesus Army (JA), the Modern Jesus Army (MJA) and the Jesus people.

Following a request from insurers in 2013, the Jesus Fellowship Church invited people to make disclosures about their experiences of the organisation. Many came forward with harrowing accounts of non-recent bullying, and financial, emotional, physical and sexual abuse.

Section 1.1

In 2015, the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (now Thirtyone:eight) was commissioned by the Jesus Fellowship Church to undertake an independent review of safeguarding. As a result of the disclosures that emerged during that process, several senior leaders including Trustees, Directors and senior pastors or Church elders, were suspended from duty and a National Leadership Team was established. In July 2017, several other senior leaders of the Church stood down.

Following the disclosure process, the National Leadership Team decided it did not have the capacity or the desire to continue the Jesus Fellowship Church. Considering the scope of the problems it was facing, it did not believe anyone else could, or should, try to lead the Church.

The National Leadership Team therefore recommended to the **Jesus Fellowship Church members** that the Church be dissolved, and on Sunday 26th May 2019, the members duly voted to revoke its constitution.

The Jesus Fellowship Community Trust was the part of the Jesus Fellowship Church jointly responsible for the residential community and ownership of the 'House of Goodness' business group.

The Trust has its own members, individuals drawn from the Jesus Fellowship Church who fully participated in residential, Community life. In December 2020, **Jesus Fellowship Community Trust members** voted to close the Trust.

.....
The Redress Scheme has been delivered as part of the closure of the Jesus Fellowship Community Trust.
.....

Section 1.2

Background to the Jesus Fellowship Redress Scheme

Known Allegations Before the Redress Scheme Launch

Before the Redress Scheme launched, the Trustees were aware of 291 allegations of harm and abuse. At that time, these allegations were made against 125 individuals, at various levels of leadership and membership of the Jesus Fellowship Church.

In addition to the known allegations of harm and abuse, the Trustees were also aware of at least a further 265 individuals who had registered their interest in Redress but had not yet made a disclosure.

Independent Investigation

A total of 82 allegations, including the failure to report abuse, interference with witnesses and mishandling of disclosures, were independently investigated by Vicki Lawson Brown, a Senior Practitioner with CMP Resolutions.

A summary of the investigation findings was circulated to all participants in the investigation and the full report was passed on to the Police.

Whilst the Trustees took the view that the public release of the findings was intended by the National Leadership Team from the outset, they could not do so as:

- the report contained references to identifiable persons, which would expose the Trust to possible claims if it was published;
- a number of those identifiable from the report were not willing to consent to its publication in any event; and
- there are no clear public interest grounds that would enable Trustees to lawfully publish the summary without the consent of all those identifiable from it.

The Trustees accepted the essential findings of the investigation, which they believed was carried out in a thorough and professional way.

A statement from Trustees was published on 6 April 2021 here: <https://jesus.org.uk/updates/>

Systemic Failings

As the Independent Investigation report by CMP Resolutions could not be published, the Trustees strongly believed it was important that an account of the Church's past was made public ahead of the Redress Scheme.

To that end, in November 2021, the Trustees published a closure statement which included details of systemic failings within the Jesus Fellowship Church which had a profoundly negative impact on people's lives, in some cases exposing members to harm or abuse.

Details of these systemic failings can be found in Appendix B (page 38), and cover the following areas:

- Leadership structure and culture
- Teaching on forgiveness
- Loyalty and commitment
- Attitudes to women
- Wellbeing of children
- Supervised relationships and celibacy
- Suspicion of education

This was not an exhaustive list and emphasis was placed on matters the Trustees viewed as particularly significant in relation to the Trust's closure and consideration of the Jesus Fellowship Redress Scheme.

Section 1.3

Outline Scope of the Redress Scheme

The Jesus Fellowship Redress Scheme was specifically designed to give survivors and applicants an effective means for swift and compassionate settlement, without having to go through the courts.

The design of the Jesus Fellowship Redress Scheme considered the details of known allegations, the findings of the independent investigation by CMP Resolutions, and the systemic failings identified. In addition, the Trustees were guided by consultation with survivors, legal advisers from Clyde & Co (formerly BLM), and insurers. Recommendations from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) and other redress schemes were also considered.

It ensured the compensation available went directly to survivors and applicants, rather than being eroded by legal fees. It also meant that no survivor or applicant claiming through the Redress Scheme, would have to re-state and re-live their experience in court.

The Jesus Fellowship Redress Scheme was delivered in conjunction with the Trust's legal advisers, Clyde & Co, which independently reviewed all Individual Redress Payment claims against the terms of the Scheme.

Section 1.3

The types of redress available were:



The Redress Scheme terms can be found in Appendix D (page 47)

- 1 A written apology acknowledging what has happened to individuals, providing acceptance of responsibility and an assurance that lessons of the past have been learnt and shared with relevant authorities;
- 2 For sexual, physical or emotional abuse, an award of compensation for the harm individuals have suffered, aligned with common law compensation awards;
- 3 For sexual, physical or emotional abuse, an invitation to meet with a Professional Trustee of the Jesus Fellowship Community Trust closing team;
- 4 A dedicated Support Fund for individual grants towards counselling, training or other support, where the criteria for a Community Adverse Experience was met;
- 5 The return of Capital to previous members of the Jesus Fellowship Community Trust;
- 6 The Jesus Fellowship Community Trust also sought to address claims relating to individual employment matters. Due to their nature, these matters were investigated on a case-by case basis.
- 7 Compensation payments to those who have suffered Community Adverse Experiences.

The Jesus Fellowship Redress Scheme was split into three parts: Individual Redress Payment Scheme, Community Adverse Experience Scheme and Other Claims Scheme.

The Jesus Fellowship Redress Scheme was open to applications from 26th September 2022 to 5pm 31st December 2023.

Section 2

Findings of the Jesus Fellowship Redress Scheme

2

Section 2.1

Key Information

96% of individuals who applied to the Redress Scheme received an award of financial or non-financial redress.



The Redress Scheme was advertised both nationally and locally, focused on where the Jesus Fellowship operated (Appendix F).

The Church was found vicariously liable for
264 alleged perpetrators
relating to abuse spanning all periods of its history.

61% of alleged perpetrators were leaders
in the Church and Community.

890 applications from 601 individuals
were received by the Jesus Fellowship Redress Scheme.

£7,761,190
has been paid directly to applicants

333 Individual Redress Payment Scheme applications.

513 Community Adverse Experience Scheme applications.

44 Other Claims Scheme applications.

Section 2.2

Sexual, Physical and Emotional Abuse (IRP Scheme)

333 Individual Redress Payment Scheme applications were received from **319 applicants.**



The full terms and eligibility criteria of the Individual Redress Payment Scheme can be found in Appendix D (page 47).

The Individual Redress Payment Scheme (IRP) was set up to make fair redress available to those who suffered abuse within the residential Community either as a member of the Church, or a child / dependent of a member.

The IRP Scheme was delivered in conjunction with solicitors Clyde and Co, which assessed each application and advised Trustees and Insurers on appropriate awards of compensation.

The following number of applications included claims of sexual, physical, and/or emotional abuse, as a child or adult:

Child	Related Applications	% of All IRP Applicants (319)
Emotional Abuse	140	44%
Sexual Abuse	119	37%
Physical Abuse	113	35%

Adult	Related Applications	% of All IRP Applicants (319)
Emotional Abuse	124	39%
Sexual Abuse	45	14%
Physical Abuse	34	11%

Section 2.2

75% of Individual Redress Payment Scheme applicants received an IRP Redress Scheme Award offer.

£2,622,500 of compensation for sexual, physical, or emotional abuse has been paid.

For those applicants who met the criteria for the Individual Redress Payment Scheme, the following outcomes were awarded:

Type of Redress	Awards	Total
An award of compensation for the harm or injury suffered, aligned with Common Law Compensation Awards.	217 applicants*	£2,622,500
Recipients		
A written apology including acceptance of responsibility by the Jesus Fellowship.	49 applicants	
Meeting Invitations		
An invitation to meet with a Professional Trustee to share your story.	23 applicants	

*Please note that at the time of this report being published, there are 21 Individual Redress Payment Scheme applications remaining in progress following an award of compensation being offered.

In addition, 88% of Individual Redress Payment Scheme applicants also received Community Adverse Experience compensation payments totalling £2,476,000.00.

Section 2.2

264 alleged perpetrators whom the Church was found vicariously liable for, were identified by applicants



A list of criminal convictions for perpetrators of abuse in the Jesus Fellowship, dating back to the 1990s, can be found in Appendix G.

Applications to the Redress Scheme contained **539** alleged perpetrators of abuse. Of these, the Church was found to be vicariously liable in relation to **264** individuals including Jesus Fellowship Church leaders at all levels, community residents, and guests invited to stay in Community houses.

Claims were geographically widespread across the Community and the UK.

Multiple claims were made in relation to 105 alleged perpetrators (40%), where IRP Redress Scheme awards have been offered to applicants. The Church repeatedly failed to report abuse to authorities and actively discouraged victims from involving others.

All applicants to the Individual Redress Payment Scheme have been sent a letter by Northamptonshire Police, offering them additional support and a conversation about criminal justice options available, should they wish to pursue them.

All alleged perpetrators of abuse have been referred to the police.

Please note that if a person is identified within the Redress Scheme as posing any risk to others (including any person a claimant mentions during their application as being responsible for abuse), the police may need to take appropriate action to ensure others are safe.

If you would like to contact the Police, please call 111 and ask for 'Northamptonshire Police – Operation Lifeboat'.

Section 2.2

162 leaders of the Jesus Fellowship Church were alleged perpetrators of abuse.



Noel Stanton (Founder)

The Redress Scheme compensated applicants for 31 incidents of child and adult abuse by Noel Stanton, founder and main leader of the Jesus Fellowship. Specific allegations relating to Noel Stanton are detailed in Appendix H.

The Redress Scheme offered compensation in relation to **264** alleged perpetrators of abuse; **162** of these (61%) were leaders in the Jesus Fellowship Church.

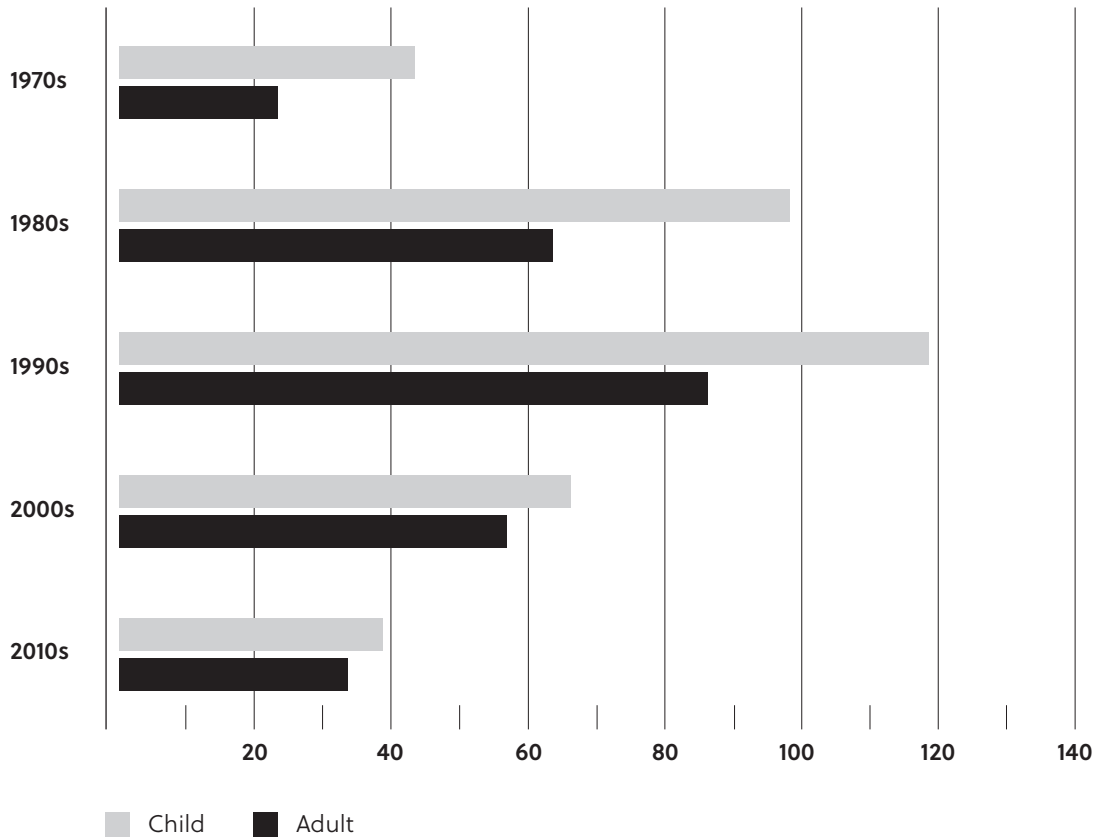
The role of leaders, and what number of those roles were involved in which types of abuse, was as follows:

Role	Number of perpetrators	Number of Abuse Allegations		
		Emotional	Sexual	Physical
Senior Church Leaders				
Covering Authority				
Apostolic Group	106	285	67	132
Elder				
Senior Leader				
Household / Non-Senior Leaders				
Household Leaders	44	27	39	22
Timothy Leaders				
Other Leaders				
	12	8	1	19

Section 2.2

Periods of Abuse

Incidents of sexual, physical, and emotional abuse were prevalent in the Jesus Fellowship throughout its existence, spanning several decades.



Section 2.2

Closed Applications

95 Individual Redress Payment Scheme applications closed (29%) without an offer of compensation, for the following reasons:

Reason	Applications	% of IRP Applications
Not Meeting Eligibility Criteria*	78	23%
Withdrawn by Applicant	3	1%
Duplicate Application	3	1%
Re-applied with a solicitor	11	3%

* For those who did not meet the eligibility criteria but otherwise lived in the residential Community of the Jesus Fellowship (26 applicants), an offer of Community Adverse Experience compensation of between £6,000 and £10,000 was made instead.

Community Adverse Experience compensation was also offered to 55 successful IRP applicants who did not apply to the Community Adverse Experience Scheme.



A list of solicitors who have supported applicants can be found in Appendix E (page 48).

Applicant Solicitors

£597,000 has been paid to applicants' solicitors, ensuring that everyone had the support they needed in making their claim.

No applicant was required to pay a solicitor for their application or pay any percentage of offers awarded.

Although the Redress Scheme encouraged applicants to use a solicitor, some nevertheless chose not to do so.

Application Processing Time

The average time taken to process an Individual Redress Payment Scheme application from receipt of submission to payment, was 180 working days (six months).

There were several reasons for individual application delays. They included:

- Medical records requiring review by solicitors (15% of all IRP applications).
- A delay in response to offers being made to the applicant due to the need for consultation between Insurer and Trustees.
- Being unable to verify eligibility upon first attempt (for example, requiring references to be obtained).
- A delay in supplying the Trust with payment details.

The Trustees would like to thank all Individual Redress Payment Scheme applicants for their patience whilst claims were reviewed.

Section 2.3

Community Adverse Experiences (CAE Scheme)

513 Community Adverse Experience Scheme applications were received from 483 applicants.



An overview of systemic failings in the Jesus Fellowship can be found in Appendix B (page 38).

The full terms and eligibility criteria of the Community Adverse Experience Scheme can be found in Appendix D (page 47).

The Jesus Fellowship Community Adverse Experience Scheme (CAE) was set up to make fair Redress available to those who suffered harm through Community Adverse Experiences within the residential Community of the Jesus Fellowship Church.

Whilst the eligibility of applicants was verified (e.g. living in community as a child or adult), the specific instances of adverse experiences were not investigated as these were identified systemic failings within the residential Community.

In the absence of such an investigation, claimants did not require a solicitor to apply on their behalf. The scheme was administered by the Trustees of the Jesus Fellowship Community Trust and the Trust closing team.

Section 2.3

96% of Community Adverse Experience Scheme applicants received a Redress Scheme award.

£4,446,655 of CAE Compensation, Support Grants, and Capital Refunds has been paid to CAE applicants.

For those who met the criteria for the Community Adverse Experience Scheme (96% of applicants), the following payments were made, or actions taken:

Type of Redress	Recipients	Total
An award of compensation for the harm suffered in community living because of adverse experiences.	465 applicants	£4,100,000
	Recipients	Total
£500 Support Grant towards counselling, training, or other support needs.	454 applicants	£227,000
	Recipients	Total
Return of outstanding Capital Contributions for previous Trust members.	30 applicants	£119,655
	Recipients	
A written apology including acceptance of responsibility by the Jesus Fellowship.	172 applicants	

Section 2.3

Community Adverse Experiences Identified (Children)

Applicants to the Community Adverse Experience Scheme were asked to confirm which type of identified harm they suffered, if they lived as a child in Community.

An estimated

4 in 10 children

suffered harm in Community and made a CAE application.

Children in Community	Number of Applicants	% of Child Applications (286)
Witnessing abuse of others (sexual, physical or emotional).	220	77%
Removal as a Child from parenting or the domestic family unit.	108	38%
Lack of safeguarding, opportunity to access medical care, protection from harm that had been reported to an adult.	173	60%
Unhealthy religious practice in childhood; exorcisms and/or extreme schedule of worship which caused harm.	236	83%
Being denied educational engagement or educational activities owing to the influence or direction of the Jesus Fellowship Leadership.	233	81%
Being denied social interaction (outside of Community and preventing male/female friendships in and outside Community) owing to the influence of Jesus Fellowship Leadership.	250	87%
Child labour in circumstances where there was alleged neglect or harm was caused.	104	36%
Having toys, games, childhood comforts removed.	225	79%

Section 2.3

Community Adverse Experiences Identified (Adults)

Applicants to the Community Adverse Experience Scheme were asked to confirm which type of identified harm they suffered, if they lived as an adult in Community.

An estimated

1 in 10 adults

suffered harm in Community and made a CAE application.

Adults in Community	Number of Applicants	% of Adult Applications (323)
Being forced to leave a positive relationship or remain in an abusive relationship.	108	33%
Prevention of access to the outside world (doctors, police, social services).	116	36%
Failure of individuals in position of leadership to act positively to reports of abuse or harm.	204	63%
Failure to return capital contributions when leaving membership.	78	24%
Women in Community	Number of Applicants	% of Adult Women Applications (184)
Harmful treatment of women as subordinates and/or women suffering detriment and harm through being placed in positions of servitude.	179	97%

Section 2.3

224 individuals shared their voice as a survivor of Community Adverse Experiences.



Many of the adverse experiences described mirror the systemic failures identified by Trustees (please see Appendix B, page 38).

Individuals had the option to share 'Your Voice' within their application, and/or to add extra documents to describe their adverse experiences in Community. These were read by Trustees of the Jesus Fellowship Community Trust.

Some of the adverse experiences previously identified for children were echoed by adults – such as feeling controlled in how to behave, and a lack of educational/employment opportunities.

Applicants also mentioned various pressures – to remain celibate where not desired; not to leave the community (and having no means of doing so); to keep up with an onerous schedule of work and meetings, which led to lack of family time, and that the corporate ('the cause') was more important than the individual. Single parent families were particularly vulnerable.

Applicants mentioned feelings of being controlled in details of their lives and being victims of a harsh and unsympathetic attitude towards physical and mental illness and disability.

Homophobic attitudes and intolerance of others were also shared.

Applicants, particularly those who were children in community, also said they had been taught an unhealthy view of God and judgement, which in some cases has led to lasting psychological damage.

The Trustees would like to thank all those who shared their voice for their courage in bringing these harmful experiences to light.

Section 2.3

Closed Applications

48 Community Adverse Experience Scheme applications were closed (**9%**) without an offer of redress, for the following reasons:

Reason	Applications	% of CAE Applications
Not Meeting Eligibility Criteria	22	4%
Not Passing Fraud Checks	10	2%
Duplicate Application	14	3%
Withdrawn by Applicant	2	>1%

Application Processing Time

The average time taken to process a Community Adverse Experience Scheme application from receipt of submission to payment was 81 working days (2.7 months).

Several reasons for individual application delays included:

- Certified ID not being provided with the application.
- Being unable to verify eligibility upon first attempt (for example, requiring references to be obtained).
- A delay in supplying the Trust with payment details.

The Trustees would like to thank all Community Adverse Experience Scheme applicants for their patience whilst applications were reviewed.

Section 2.4

Other Claims (OCS Scheme)

44 Other Claims Scheme applications were received from 39 applicants.

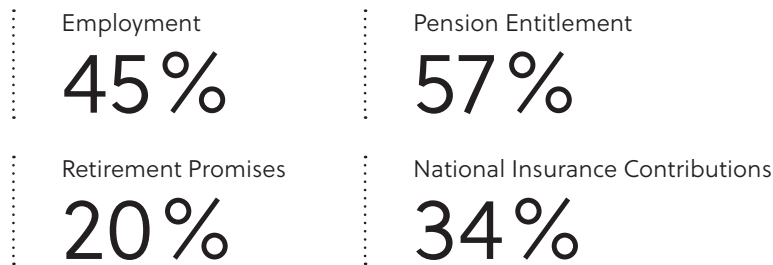


The full terms and eligibility criteria of the Other Claims Scheme can be found in Appendix D (page 47).

The Jesus Fellowship Other Claims Scheme (OCS) was set up to make fair Redress available to those who those who sought to address potential claims relating to individual employment matters and/or specific individual representations by the Jesus Fellowship Community Trust.

The following number of applications included claims of employment, pension entitlement, retirement promises, and National Insurance contributions:

The Other Claims Scheme was delivered in conjunction with the solicitors Clyde and Co, which assessed each application and advised on appropriate awards of compensation.



Section 2.4

£54,035 has been paid in compensation to Other Claims Scheme applicants.

Due to the specific nature of these types of claims, appropriate outcomes were considered, with the support of the solicitors Clyde and Co, on a case-by-case basis.

Most Other Claims Scheme applications closed (**97%**) without an offer of redress. This was for the following reasons:

Reason	Applications	% of OCS Applications
Not Meeting Eligibility Criteria	37	84%
Not Passing Fraud Checks	1	2%
Duplicate Application	4	9%
Withdrawn by Applicant	1	2%

The Trustees found that whilst many applicants may have had moral claims, overall, they did not amount to legal claims that could be compensated.

Because of this, applicants were advised to make a Community Adverse Experience application instead – **72%** of OCS applicants did so.

Section 3

Financial Summary

3

Section 3

Financial Summary

Redress Scheme Awards to Applicants	Amount
Individual Redress Payment Scheme Compensation	£2,622,500
Community Adverse Experiences Compensation	£4,738,000*
Other Claims Compensation	£54,035
Support Grants for counselling, training, or other support.	£227,000
Capital Refunds for previous Trust members.	£119,655
A: Sub Total (Awards to Applicants)	£7,761,190
B: Applicant Solicitor fees	£597,000
Total (A + B)	£8,358,190

* £4,100,000 to CAE applicants plus £638,000 to 81 IRP Applicants who did not make a CAE Application.

In addition, the Jesus Fellowship Community Trust has previously paid **£434,581** of direct counselling costs for victims whilst the Redress Scheme was being designed and launched.

This financial summary does not include legal costs for the Jesus Fellowship Community Trust, as this information is privileged for members only.

Section 4

Recommendations

4

Section 4

Recommendations

The Trustees and closing team of the Jesus Fellowship Community Trust would like to share the following recommendations, to inform other redress schemes or processes which aim to support and appropriately compensate victims of non-recent abuse.

Trauma-Informed Approach

Applicants or claimants require professional and independent support from those trained in a trauma-informed approach. This includes being empowered to make use of an independent solicitor without cost, receive counselling or other therapy to support their wellbeing, and be provided with clear communication alongside various channels of support to suit their preferences (for example, written or verbal support channels).

The wording of communication, including offers of compensation, awards, or apologies, must be carefully drafted to reduce the risk of applicants or claimants being re-traumatised by their experience of the process. We note that trying to achieve this can be particularly challenging when detail of a claim or application must be investigated, or an outcome explained.

Secondary trauma can and will deeply affect the teams, staff, and survivor group/s involved in delivering redress schemes or similar processes. Professional support including access to training and counselling, considering appropriate levels of interaction with distressing content, and clear operational boundaries are important to mitigate this impact. Survivor group/s may require the support of an independent advocate, to minimise the impact of having to re-share experiences and feedback of those they support.

Section 4

Reporting of Abuse

Whilst some disclosures of abuse were new, most of the abuse in the Jesus Fellowship Church was known about and internally disclosed when the incidents happened and was not only due to more recent disclosure exercises or the delivery of the Redress Scheme.

It was the persistent belief of the Jesus Fellowship Church that the application of its own leadership processes and principles (including its teaching on forgiveness, grace, and discipline) in response to allegations of abuse meant that incidents were not also reportable to authorities. In addition, many leaders, either intentionally or otherwise, were culturally viewed as being above reproach.

Many of those who did disclose abuse were unsure whether their disclosure would be treated appropriately, especially owing to the highly relational and informal community style of the Church. The Jesus Fellowship Church was not a registered charity or company, instead operating under deed.

Leaders of independent churches, who are non-denominational or only informally affiliated with others, such as the Jesus Fellowship Church, also have limited accountability to others. Like the Jesus Fellowship Church, these groups are also often highly relational and inter-familial.

There should be a statutory duty, which extends to the leaders of religious communities or groups of all kinds (however formalised as a registered entity their structure is or not), to report abuse with legal immunity for those reporting on reasonable grounds and imposing criminal sanctions for failure to report.

This will help ensure a safe space is always available for disclosures of abuse to be investigated properly and independently, and that leaders of churches, of all kinds, are always accountable to others and are not above reproach.

Section 4

Importance of Privacy

We believe that the Redress Scheme was effective in creating a trusted space for victims and survivors to disclose the detail of their abuse in a safe way. Privacy of their disclosure was paramount to this trust, including the scheme being clear on who may see the details of an application. The terms of the scheme included the provision that alleged perpetrators of abuse would not be contacted without the prior consent of the applicant. We believe this is an important factor for other Redress Schemes and similar processes to consider.

In relation to the right of recovery of compensation from alleged perpetrators, the trustees of JFCT have determined it was in the interest of the trust not to pursue this right – as the Redress Scheme has already produced significant economic benefit to the closure of the trust (compared to ongoing litigation) and recovery actions would ultimately involve the disclosure of application details to alleged perpetrators (for example, to those who may be family of the victim or survivor).

It is important to note that insurers retain the right for recovery actions against alleged perpetrators, including the disclosure of application details, as they did not formally agree to be bound by its terms.

In relation to this, we recommend the Association of British Insurers Code of Practice – Responding to Civil Claims of Child Sexual Abuse is updated to ensure insurers obtain consent from applicants for the disclosure of claim or application details to an alleged perpetrator in the context of recoveries, where the claim has been submitted as part of a redress scheme or similar claims handling framework – as the insurer will benefit economically from their design and participation regardless. This will ensure the integrity of such schemes as safe spaces to where abuse can be disclosed compared to a civil claim process alone, with privacy and consent of victims and survivors being the key enabling factor.

Section 5
Next Steps

5

Section 5

Next Steps

Redress Scheme

Please note at the time of this report being published, 21 Individual Redress Payment Scheme applications remain in progress. These will continue to be processed as per the Redress Scheme terms by Trustees and Insurers.

Closure of the Jesus Fellowship Community Trust

All businesses, including the House of Goodness group, and property of the Trust have been divested (sold) or closed.

Update Published on www.jesus.org.uk - 8 July 2024

As the end of the Redress Scheme approaches, the trustees wish to consider further and final distributions of the assets of the Jesus Fellowship Community Trust (“the Trust”) in accordance with the current version of the Trust deed – Phase 3 (Historic Requests) and Phase 4 (Apportionment).

However, during the delivery of the Redress Scheme and in reviewing registrations of interest in Phases 3 and 4, the trustees have become aware of further complaints and grievances in relation to people’s time in community.

These have alluded to possible claims falling outside the scope of the Redress Scheme, e.g. whether people who are not currently considered to be Listed Beneficiaries of JFCT should be so considered, or have some other entitlement to benefit from the winding up of the Trust (other than those who may benefit from their registered interest in Phase 3 or Phase 4).

Whilst the trustees can complete the Redress Scheme, they are unable to proceed further with distribution of surplus Trust funds within Phases 3 and 4 until this uncertainty regarding potential further civil claims under Phase 2 is resolved.

The trustees have taken legal advice (privilege in which is not waived) on the best way to remove this uncertainty. As a result, they intend to make an application to court, to request the assistance of a judge to order that any further civil claims to the Trust assets, beyond the Redress Scheme, are made known, and for the trustees to then proceed without uncertainty with distributions in Phases 3 and 4.

This process will take time. The trustees expect no votes or further distributions of Trust assets (other than in relation to the Redress Scheme) to be made until the court process concludes in 2025.

All Listed Beneficiaries and those who have registered their interest in Phases 3 and 4 will receive a monthly progress report.

The trustees acknowledge that the extended closure timescale will be frustrating to many and wish to thank all those involved for their continued patience as we work to complete the Redress Scheme, before turning our attention to final distributions from the Trust, in the last stages of this complex closure process.

Further updates will continue to be published on the Jesus Fellowship Community Trust website – www.jesus.org.uk

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Other Jesus Fellowship Church Entities

At the time of this report being published, the Trustees understand:

Jesus Fellowship Church (JFC)

A new Charitable Incorporated Organisation, the 'Baptist Heritage Assets (Bugbrooke)', was registered on 28 November 2023, and has been given the charity number 1205932. This new charity will act as the Trustee of, and manage, the Bugbrooke Baptist Chapel and Manse. It also has the power to acquire and run the Cornhill Burial Ground. Independent congregations continue to exist in various locations, no longer governed by the Jesus Fellowship Church.

New Wave Housing

Community properties previously managed by New Wave Housing (formerly the Jesus Fellowship Housing Association) have been transferred to Green Pastures CBS Ltd. New Wave Housing is in the process of being closed by its Trustees.

Joining Communities Together

Services and projects for the homeless continue to be managed by Joining Communities Together (formerly the Jesus Centres Trust, and Jesus Army Charitable Trust), a charity with the registration number 09759891. These services are no longer known as Jesus Centres, although may still be operating from the same location/s, and are no longer associated with the Jesus Fellowship Church.

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Appendices

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Appendix A - Support for Victims

The following organisations have been briefed on the context of the Jesus Fellowship and are available to provide ongoing support for victims of abuse.

Victim Support	www.victimsupport.org.uk/	0808 168 9111	Victim Support provides the support you need to move forward if you've been affected by crime. Its services are free, confidential and available to anyone in England and Wales, regardless of whether the crime has been reported or how long ago it happened.
NAPAC	www.napac.org.uk/	08088 010 331	The National Association for People Abused in Childhood offers support to adult survivors of all types of childhood abuse, including physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect.
One in Four	oneinfour.org.uk/	02086 972 112	One in Four specialises in supporting survivors of sexual violence and abuse, and particularly survivors of child sexual abuse and trauma.
BACP	www.bacp.co.uk/	01455 883 300	The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy provides a directory of therapists you can narrow down by location.
Male Survivors Partnership	www.bacp.co.uk/	0808 800 5005	The Male Survivors Partnership is a consortium of Male Survivors organisations across the UK that have joined together with the aim of creating better support for male survivors of sexual abuse, rape, and sexual exploitation.

If you would like to contact the Police about abuse in the Jesus Fellowship, please call 111 and ask for 'Northamptonshire Police – Operation Lifeboat'.

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Appendix B – Systemic Failings

Important

The outline of systemic failings below was published by Trustees of the Jesus Fellowship Community Trust as part of their Closure Statement in November 2021 and before the launch of the Redress Scheme.

This is not an exhaustive list and emphasis has been placed on matters the Trustees view as particularly significant in relation to the Trust's closure and consideration of the Jesus Fellowship Redress Scheme.

The full Closure Statement can be found here:
<https://jesus.org.uk/about-jfct/jesus-fellowship-closure/>

As this was published before the launch of the Redress Scheme, please read in conjunction with 'Your Voice' on page 23 of this report.

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Leadership Structure and Culture

The JFC had a hierarchical leadership structure. Significant decision-making was restricted to the founder, Noel Stanton, and the most senior leaders.

New members of the most senior leadership could only be appointed by the senior leaders themselves, and whilst candidates' suitability could be challenged by members, this was actively discouraged and opposed.

Allegations against the church demonstrate that those who challenged Noel Stanton were relegated, and members who disagreed with him or other leaders at various levels, were heavily criticised.

There is a particular emphasis among the allegations indicating the abuse of power by Noel Stanton, who adopted a domineering style that prevented him being held accountable by fellow senior leaders. For example, on numerous occasions it is alleged Noel Stanton took decisions on behalf of the JFC, against the wishes and advice of his most senior colleagues.

People who disagreed with Noel Stanton were characterised as rebellious and told they would be 'subject to the judgment of God'. It is alleged leaders of other JFC households and congregations also adopted this style of threatening teaching, which for many led to a climate of fear. These wider leaders were often never held to account or disciplined.

Whilst members sought in principle to share their belongings and finances in community life, decisions such as where people should live and what they might buy were routinely made or controlled by centralised leadership.

In practice, many members found that decisions made or access to funds were dependent on factors such as position in the hierarchy, personal relationships and gender. As a result, adults living in community houses became institutionalised. Their ability to make decisions in respect of their own lives was compromised, with choice and agency removed.

The Trustees believe that within this hierarchical structure, Noel Stanton and other JFC leaders were insufficiently accountable to the members of the Jesus Fellowship and the Trust.

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Teaching on Forgiveness

JFC teaching and practice at one time included an incorrect emphasis in relation to 'forgiveness' and 'grace'. Forgiveness was taken to mean, in certain instances, that abusive people should remain in, or be returned to, leadership and positions of influence. This left the abusers in proximity to vulnerable people.

Due partly to the lack of accountability in the leadership structure and this misleading teaching of 'forgiveness' and 'grace', the Trustees believe there was a fundamental failure to keep members and children sufficiently safe from harm and abuse over the life of the Church.

Despite the more recent openness and co-operation with the Police and other authorities, including positive steps taken by JFC leaders to address safeguarding within JFC and changes to JFC doctrine, the Trustees fully recognise there were significant failures in the handling of abuse allegations and perpetrators by JFC leaders in the past.

Loyalty and Commitment

The teaching of the JFC emphasised commitment to the organisation, its aims and objectives. Over a significant period of time this was at the expense of valuing external family relationships and the work of other Christians and churches. Onerous expectations were placed upon members, exceeding every other consideration. The JFC had a culture of constant busyness and activity, with the work of the church becoming dominant in a way that eroded family life, health and faith. For many, this was exhausting and holidays were banned or discouraged during the life of JFC.

All things were regarded as subservient to the 'cause' of the church. It is alleged that deviation from the commitment to the JFC called for rebuke, character assassination or ostracisation of many members.

For many, controlling behaviour overshadowed people's lives in the Trust. For example, there is no doubt individuals were afraid to leave New Creation Farm because they were told, explicitly or implicitly, that they would be 'damned by God' if they did so.

There was a distrust of other organisations and outside influences, and this was often explicitly taught in meetings. Until recently, external advice or support was not sought, and where this was given, it was not sufficiently heeded.

This was accompanied by a lack of transparency with external bodies and insufficient accountability to other Christian groups or networks.

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A similar point has also been made by the Evangelical Alliance when it wrote to the JFCT in 2018, leading to the resignation of the JFC from the Alliance:

“We have note of the actions taken over the years to address the past and to support those who have been victims of abuse and recognise the enormous pressure this puts you under. It seems that, in spite of efforts and your direction of travel, the past abuse and mode of leadership continues to impact both members and former members so deeply that a more radical approach is required if a healthy future is to be realised...”

“We would suggest that the Jesus Fellowship needs to come under the oversight of a stream or established denomination which will give wise, ongoing oversight and accountability in the years to come. In effect, this represents a radical reshaping of the Jesus Fellowship and a recognition that without external, ongoing oversight, your past risks blighting your future...”

Until recently, other churches and Christians were unjustifiably criticised, and members were dissuaded from attending other churches. Senior JFC leaders would often speak against previous members, and lead current members in praying against – and cursing – those who had left.

The Trustees believe that there was a misplaced vigilance for disloyalty to the ‘cause’, stifling individual freedom of choice and self-expression.

Attitudes to Women

Women were not treated equally in the JFC. They were not listened to, and their views were not accorded as much significance as those of men. The intensity of this sexist culture in the JFC varied depending on locality, but it certainly pervaded the church until its closure.

There was an expectation that women would give up their aspirations and careers to serve the church and men, taking domestic roles in community houses, for example, or behind-the-scenes administrative duties. Women living in community were not expected to return to employment after having children. In some cases this constituted a suppression of their aspirations.

Women were denied a voice, and the opportunity to have a say in the direction of the JFC for much of its history. The church’s structure was distorted by a lack of adequate female representation.

Whilst some women aligned with this practice and associated teaching and beliefs, many left the JFC because their aspirations were unsupported, or they were treated negatively or abusively.

Women were often blamed for the misdeeds of men, in particular where allegations of abuse were disclosed. Women, including victims of abuse by men were, for example, often characterised as ‘jezebels’, meaning to tempt and distract men.

The Trustees believe this systemic attitude to women was – and is – wrong, and that the alleged practices concerning women within the JFC produced a sexist and victim- blaming attitude.

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Wellbeing of Children

For many people, being a child in the JFC community was at worst abusive, and at best lacking in full opportunities.

At times, the outreach efforts of the JFC towards the poor and the marginalised created situations where very troubled or distressed individuals, such as addicts, were wholly inappropriately mixed with children and other vulnerable individuals.

Child safety and well-being was placed behind that of the person being helped. This culture gave rise to children being exposed to abusive, frightening and/or destabilising influences from adults who presented a very serious risk to them. The allegations show this was often against the wishes of parents, but at other times parents encouraged this culture and the importance of the outreach work.

The Trustees believe the emphasis of outreach work over the safety and wellbeing of children was unacceptable.

Children were inappropriately and harshly discipline by adults, including those who were not their parents. At times in JFC's history, this included corporal punishment ('rodding').

The Trustees recognise that this teaching and practice was wrong, with some victims living with lasting distress as a result. Such treatment is unlawful today.

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The allegations confirm that the views of children were not taken sufficiently into consideration when decisions were made that affected their lives. Many people who had an adverse experience of the church were the children of parents who joined the JFC. These children feel they were forced on a journey they neither chose nor desired.

Many children were removed from their parents' household or influence in their teenage years and put under the responsibility of 'shepherds' or 'caring brothers/sisters', at times against the wishes of parents.

In many cases, children in community lacked opportunities, choice, recreational activities and the chance to develop themselves. Parents often followed the teaching and culture of the church to deny toys and the celebration of events such as Christmas.

Under JFC community rules at times, partaking in sports, school trips and participating in school plays or other extra-curricular activities were forbidden. Instead, children were made to partake in onerous schedules of worship or serving community needs.

When children told their parents and the church that they were being bullied at school, they were encouraged to view this as welcome persecution. Their experience of bullying was not properly addressed, to their lasting detriment.

The Trustees believe that the well-being of children was not paramount in the practice of community living, leading to increased risk of abuse by members or visitors and lasting harm for those individuals affected.

Supervised Relationships and Celibacy

JFC teaching emphasised that church members should avoid flirting and over-familiarity. Relationships were to be conducted through a supervised 'relating process'.

There are examples where relationships or friendships were deliberately blocked or discouraged when they might otherwise have flourished. Equally, some relationships were engineered, encouraged, or even insisted upon.

Strong emphasis was placed on celibacy. This led in some cases to people making a celibacy vow without adequate counselling, preparation or maturity. Although the JFC's emphasis on celibacy created space for single people in the church, it also fostered the prevailing view marriage was second-rate.

The Trustees believe third parties interfered inappropriately with decisions that were matters of personal choice of individuals who may have wished to enter into a relationship or friendship with another person.

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Suspicion of Education

Further education and training were treated with suspicion. Young people were dissuaded from attending University and other places of study.

There was great reluctance to train Church members, even in JFC businesses. Until comparatively recently, little emphasis was placed on developing people through training, education and self-improvement. These were often portrayed as the activities of self-centred, wrongly ambitious and independent people.

The Trustees believe this negative and misplaced attitude hindered people's growth and personal development. There was little acknowledgment of the fact training and development are important and necessary aspects of the modern workplace, and indeed of church life.

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Appendix C - Aims of the Jesus Fellowship Church

Important

The below outline of aims of the Jesus Fellowship was published by Trustees of the Jesus Fellowship Community Trust as part of their Closure Statement in November 2021 and before the launch of the Redress Scheme.

The full Closure Statement can be found here:
<https://jesus.org.uk/about-jfct/jesus-fellowship-closure/>

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Aims of the Jesus Fellowship

Some of the common aims of the Jesus Fellowship Church, over time, were stated as:

- Bringing the Christian gospel to the searchers in today's spiritual culture, to those trapped in social evils, and to victims of poverty and injustice.
- To go anywhere to help men and women in need through addiction, degradation or other unfortunate circumstances.
- To offer the saving life of Jesus to any person and help them in their need.
- To offer friendship, without discrimination and prejudice, and identify with all people groups, meeting them in UK cities and towns, and showing the love and life of Jesus.
- Respecting all religious faiths and support for all lawful authority, working with police, probation and social services.
- Adopting charismatic worship and showing a living, rather than religious, Christianity.
- For members to enter into a covenant of loyalty to the cause, being available for any service, as they love the lost and build the church of Jesus Christ.
- To unite believers in holy, loving and just church communities, which show the end of social and racial divisions and demonstrate a new sharing lifestyle as the brotherhood of Jesus, shining as 'light to the world'.

Earlier in the life of JFC communities, members committed to live by strict precepts or common rules of behaviour. These included not partaking in secular television, music, books, leisure or entertainment activities, sports or hobbies, to live simply and modestly, and avoid cosmetics and jewellery.

Members were to give all of their time, income and involvement to the work of the church and community life; for many, this was a freely chosen, radical expression of their faith.

In later years, whilst some of these precepts or rules no longer applied, the overall culture and behaviour of the church and community life continued to follow similar objectives.

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Appendix D - Redress Scheme Terms

Scheme Guide	Link
Individual Redress Payment Scheme	https://jesus.org.uk/helpfuldocument/individual-redress-payment-scheme-document/
Community Adverse Experience Scheme	https://jesus.org.uk/helpfuldocument/community-adverse-experience-scheme-guide/
Other Claims Scheme	https://jesus.org.uk/helpfuldocument/other-claims-scheme-guide/

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Appendix E - Applicant Solicitors

The following solicitors have supported applicants with Individual Redress Payment applications:

Name of Firm	No. Applications
Lime Solicitors	117
Hugh James	115
Emmott Snell Solicitors	13
Robson Shaw Solicitors	7
Biscoes Solicitors	6
Jordans Solicitors	6
Middleton Law Ltd	5
Switalskis Solicitors	3
Taylor Emmet Solicitors	3
Irwin Mitchell LLP	2

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Appendix F - Advertising of the Redress Scheme

Online

Name	Advert	Site	Date
Northampton Chronicle & Echo	Video	https://www.northamptonchron.co.uk/	15/6/2023
Milton Keynes Citizen	Video	https://www.miltonkeynes.co.uk/	16/6/2023
Northampton Chronicle & Echo	Half Page	https://www.northamptonchron.co.uk/	15/6/2023
Milton Keynes Citizen	Half Page	https://www.miltonkeynes.co.uk/	16/6/2023
BirminghamLive	Half Page	https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/	5/6/2023
CoventryLive	Half Page	https://www.coventrytelegraph.net/	5/6/2023
LeicestershireLive	Half Page	https://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/	5/6/2023
Loughborough Echo	Half Page	https://www.loughboroughecho.net/in-your-area/	7/6/2023
KentLive	Half Page	https://www.kentlive.news/	9/6/2023
Wales Online	Half Page	https://www.walesonline.co.uk/all-about/swansea	5/6/2023
The Church Times	Half Page	https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/	16/6/2023

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Print

Name	Advert	Date
Northampton Chronicle & Echo	Half Page	15/6/2023
Milton Keynes Citizen	Half Page	16/6/2023
Birmingham Mail	Half Page	5/6/2023
Coventry Telegraph	Half Page	5/6/2023
Leicester Mercury	Half Page	5/6/2023
Loughborough Echo	Half Page	7/6/2023
Kent and Sussex Courier	Half Page	9/6/2023
South Wales Evening Post	Half Page	5/6/2023
The Church Times	Half Page	16/6/2023

Radio

Name	Advert	Date
Premier Christian Radio (London & National)	6x 30 second slots per day for 30 days	15/6/2023

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Appendix G – Criminal Convictions

Reference	Description	Sentence	Year
Person 1	1 count of buggery; 7 counts of indecent assault of a child under the age of 16.	3 years imprisonment	2018
Person 2	4 counts of sexual assault.	4 years imprisonment	2019
Person 3	1 count of gross indecency; 2 counts of indecent assault of a child under the age of 16.	5 years imprisonment	2016
Person 4	2 counts of indecent assault of a child under the age of 16.	3 months imprisonment	1997
Person 5	Breach of sexual offences prevention order.	2 years imprisonment	2009
Person 6	4 counts of indecent assault of a child under the age of 11.	5 years imprisonment	2010
Person 7	3 counts of indecent assault of a child under the age of 14.	18 months imprisonment, suspended for 2 years	2017
Person 8	1 count of indecent assault.	24 months imprisonment, suspended for 2 years	2018
Person 9	3 counts of indecent assault; 2 counts of gross indecency with a child under the age of 14.	3 years imprisonment	2017
Person 10	1 count of indecent assault with a child under the age of 14.	24 months imprisonment, suspended for 18 months	2017
Person 11	1 count of inciting a child into sexual activity.	6 years imprisonment	2016

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Appendix H – Noel Stanton

Individuals	Allegation Type	Period of Harm
1	Sexual Abuse (Male Child)	1970s
2	Emotional Abuse	
3	Emotional Abuse	
4	Emotional Abuse	
5	Emotional Abuse	
6	Emotional Abuse	
7	Sexual Abuse (Male Child)	
8	Sexual Abuse (Male Child)	1980s
9	Emotional Abuse	
10	Emotional Abuse	
11	Emotional Abuse	
12	Emotional Abuse	
13	Emotional Abuse	
14	Sexual Abuse (Adult)	
15	Emotional Abuse	1990s
16	Emotional Abuse	
17	Emotional Abuse	
18	Emotional Abuse	
19	Emotional Abuse	

Individuals	Allegation Type	Period of Harm
20	Emotional Abuse	2000s
21	Physical Abuse	Various Periods
22	Emotional Abuse	
23	Emotional Abuse	
24	Emotional Abuse	
25	Emotional Abuse	
26	Emotional Abuse	
27	Emotional Abuse	
28	Emotional Abuse	
29	Emotional Abuse	
30	Emotional Abuse	
31	Emotional Abuse	
32	Emotional Abuse	
33	Emotional Abuse	



Final Report

Jesus Fellowship Redress Scheme