

An apology to those impacted by historical adoption practices

The Church of England has today issued [an apology to those impacted by historical adoption practices](#), together with a report on its research into the practice.

Bishop Michael has issued the following apology on behalf of the Diocese of Bath and Wells.

I would like to extend my apology to anyone who has been adversely impacted by the role of the Church of England in the Diocese of Bath and Wells in historical adoption practices. Whether that was in the setting of a mother and baby home or as a result of the influence the church and its ministers had in a society which, at that time, understood compelling mothers to give their babies up for adoption to have been acceptable, and even beneficial.

Having had the privilege of meeting with some local people impacted by historical adoption practices recently, it is clear that all those so affected need to receive a proper, heartfelt apology that goes to the heart of their suffering and their rightful desire for acknowledgement and justice, that acknowledges the lifelong impact on so many lives and relationships, and that gives space for lament.

The research that led to this apology is the beginning of the work to learn more fully about our Church's involvement in historical adoption practices. This is learning that we shall be undertaking here in Bath and Wells.

The people impacted with whom I have met generously gave their time to help us get to a point of understanding, where we can begin to atone for our part in such practices by supporting those with lived experiences. We need to continue to listen to them, to work alongside them, and to be genuine allies. I hope we can get to a point where they, and others, can share their stories with us so we can get a common understanding of this deeply distressing part of our history.

I am holding all those affected by historical adoption practices in my prayers. I hope they feel they can draw on any of the support available to them, whether through the church or specialist agencies.

+ Michael Bath & Wells

Bishop of Bath and Wells