

Bishop at Lambeth
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Private and Confidential

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Dear Bishop

Bishop Peter Ball

In the aftermath of Peter's resignation and retirement, there have been one or two suggestions in the media that the hierarchy failed to provide proper pastoral care for one or more of the young men who laid complaint against him, and/or have attempted a 'cover-up'.

It may be helpful, therefore, for you to have the following facts, both for your own information and in case of enquiries. The reportage in the 'Sun', in particular, has at times given a different impression of the matter.

1. Complaints about the Bishop's conduct reached the Bishops of Chichester and Southwark during the last days of November and the first days of December. Neil Todd first met the Bishop of Chichester on 4 December. (NB This was after Neil Todd's first suicide attempt, which was probably in mid-November.)
2. These two bishops, after checking so far as possible the authenticity of the complaints and attempting some reconciliation, reported the matter to Lambeth on Friday 11 December.
3. The following morning, Saturday 12 December, Lambeth was informed that Neil Todd had again taken an overdose, that his parents had visited him in hospital, and that an allegation had been made to police at Brixton that morning. Neil was understood to have already returned to Nottingham with his parents.
4. The Bishop of Southwell arranged immediately for pastoral care, and two counselling sessions took place, at the Church's expense; the first was as early as 15 December. These sessions are understood to have been discontinued at Neil's request.
5. The same day, 15 December, the Bishop was interviewed by the Archbishop. The matter was by now the subject of an investigation by the Gloucestershire police, and he had been formally arrested, though not charged, the previous day, 14 December.
6. The Archbishop issued a press statement immediately after his interview on 15 December. It promised that he would initiate his own enquiries, and such enquiries have been, and are, proceeding confidentially. The allegation made by Neil Todd was, in the Archbishop's judgement, best left out of this enquiry until the police had completed their own investigation. In the end, this took much longer than anyone thought, and the decision that the Bishop was to be cautioned was not announced until 8 March. He resigned immediately. It needs to be borne in mind that right up to that date the Bishop was entitled to the normal presumption of innocence; he had not even been charged with an offence.

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