

NSS joins calls for Lord Carey to resign from Lords and face criminal investigation

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The National Secular Society has backed calls from abuse survivors for Lord Carey, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, to face police investigation over his role in the cover-up of sexual abuse in the Church of England.

In a [letter to *The Times*](#), survivors of abuse by Bishop Peter Ball, and lawyers representing many of Ball's survivors, say police must investigate whether Carey's deliberate concealment of evidence constitutes a criminal offence.

Lord Carey also faces calls to forfeit his right to sit in the House of Lords. "It is unacceptable that someone who was involved in concealing evidence of criminality should have a role in making laws for others", says the letter.

An independent review into the church's handling of former bishop Peter Ball found that George Carey was among senior figures in the Church who colluded over a 20-year period with the disgraced former bishop who sexually abused boys and men.

The letter, signed by the Head of Abuse at Slater and Gordon and NSS director, Richard Scorer; David Greenwood, a solicitor at Switalskis; and two of Ball's victims, Phil Johnson and the Rev Graham Sawyer, calls for "independent oversight" of safeguarding in the Church and the introduction of a "mandatory reporting law" requiring that knowledge or suspicion of abuse be reported to the authorities.

The National Secular Society originally wrote to the Metropolitan Police in July 2016, urging it to investigate whether Carey should be prosecuted in connection with the influence he brought to bear on the justice system, in relation to its investigations into Ball. However, no charges have been brought to date.

It is hoped that the findings of the independent report by Dame Moira Gibb will lead to Carey's actions being properly investigated.

This week Lord Carey stepped down from his role as honorary assistant bishop in the diocese of Oxford after the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, urged him to "consider his position".

Stephen Evans, National Secular Society campaigns director, said Carey should now face police investigation and resign from the House of Lords.

"It's clear from the independent review that Carey concealed evidence of criminality and acted as judge and jury over Ball, allowing him to evade justice for 20 years. It is surely inconceivable that those found to have covered-up evidence of criminality and shielded perpetrators from justice can act as legislators in the House of lords."

Carey served as Archbishop of Canterbury from 1991 to 2002, when he sat on the House of Lords' bench of bishops by virtue of his office. Upon stepping down he was immediately made a

crossbench life peer as Baron Carey of Clifton.

The National Secular Society has also written to the chair of governors at the George Carey Church of England Primary School in Barking, urging it to consider a name change. In a letter to the school, the NSS said it was "wholly inappropriate" for a school to be named in honour of Carey.

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