

Statement on the Independent Review into allegations made concerning Mike Pilavachi in relation to New Wine led by Fiona Scolding KC

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The independent review commissioned by New Wine and led by Fiona Scolding KC is now published: www.new-wine.org/independentreview

We invited Fiona Scolding KC with Ben Fulbrook and Alasdair Henderson, to undertake an independent review into the allegations made concerning Mike Pilavachi, to explore how they relate to New Wine, and to highlight what we can learn for the future. This forms an addendum to her [review into Soul Survivor](#), building upon its learnings. We fully accept this review's findings and commit to implementing the recommendations.

We are deeply sorry to all those who have suffered, and who are still suffering, from the harm they endured. We also recognise that an initial press statement by New Wine, when allegations first emerged, was inaccurate and underplayed the extent of the connections between New Wine and Soul Survivor. We are profoundly sorry that this statement further contributed to the pain caused to survivors and the New Wine community. Our utmost priority is to cultivate a safe and nurturing environment where survivors are not only heard but cherished with love and utmost respect.

Fiona Scolding's review shines light on the nature and extent of New Wine's relationship with Mike Pilavachi and Soul Survivor. It details that *New Wine and Soul Survivor had significant governance, staffing, financial, operational and other links. Soul Survivor was established out of New Wine and, in this context, New Wine had a responsibility to ensure Mike Pilavachi was fit for the role he was being sent to do.* The review highlights that there was no easily-accessible mechanism for raising "low level concerns" – as the review terms them – to address queries about the closeness of Mike Pilavachi's relationships with individuals.

In her addendum for New Wine, Fiona Scolding KC has set out four recommendations which we are implementing in full, in addition to the relevant learnings from the Soul Survivor review. Our action plan for implementation includes:

1. We have introduced a new safer recruitment procedure for promoting new leaders and developed vetting procedures for visiting speakers. This follows on from work carried out in 2023, to commission retrospective safer recruitment checks on all those in positions of responsibility. (Recommendations 1 & 2)
2. We are introducing a more robust and accessible system for complaints as well as a system for reporting, recording and monitoring low level concerns about the conduct of staff, leaders and visiting speakers. (Recommendations 3 & 4)
3. We have commissioned a governance review to enable best practice in our accountability of scrutiny and challenge; and we will look for opportunities for external scrutiny.
4. We are endeavouring to enable a culture where we lower the threshold of our feedback and welcome darkness coming to light

We will ensure that the New Wine community is kept informed about the progress of implementation of this action plan. In addition, two individuals provided evidence to Fiona Scolding KC about their experiences with New Wine which were outside the scope of her Review. We are following up on these disclosures to ascertain what further action may be

required. On 10th February, the Trustees received full details of one of these complaints which we commit to being fully & independently investigated.

We would like to thank Fiona Scolding, Ben Fulbrook and Alasdair Henderson for the thorough work they have undertaken which offers learnings for many church and para-church contexts.

For individuals and survivors of abuse seeking support or who have experiences related to Mike Pilavachi and Soul Survivor or New Wine, Safe Spaces is a free and independent support service which provides confidential spaces for you. Please contact them at safespaces@firstlight.org.uk for support.

Signed by:

Jill Duff on behalf of the Trustees of New Wine England

Rich Johnson on behalf of the leadership of New Wine England