

## **Statement from Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby**

“Bishop George Bell is one of the great Anglican heroes of the 20th century. The decision to publish his name was taken with immense reluctance, and all involved recognised the deep tragedy involved. However we have to differ from Lord Carlile’s point that ‘where as in this case the settlement is without admission of liability, the settlement generally should be with a confidentiality provision’. The C of E is committed to transparency and therefore we would take a different approach.

“Lord Carlile does not seek to say whether George Bell was in fact responsible for the acts about which the complaint was made. He does make significant comments on our processes, and we accept that improvement is necessary, in all cases including those where the person complained about is dead. We are utterly committed to seeking to ensure just outcomes for all. We apologise for the failures of the process.

“The complaint about Bishop Bell does not diminish the importance of his great achievement. We realise that a significant cloud is left over his name. Let us therefore remember his defence of Jewish victims of persecution, his moral stand against indiscriminate bombing, his personal risks in the cause of supporting the anti Hitler resistance, and his long service in the Diocese of Chichester. No human being is entirely good or bad. Bishop Bell was in many ways a hero. He is also accused of great wickedness. Good acts do not diminish evil ones, nor do evil ones make it right to forget the good. Whatever is thought about the accusations, the whole person and whole life should be kept in mind.”