

# **SFA's 'profound apology' to those with personal experience of sexual abuse in football**

**The board of the Scottish FA, having reviewed the final report of the Independent Review of Sexual Abuse in Scottish Football, wishes to reiterate its profound apology to those who have personal experience of sexual abuse in our national game.**

Now that the final report has been published, we express our thanks to Martin Henry, the chair of the independent review, and his team, who for the past three years have dedicated themselves to this considerable and unprecedented undertaking.



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They have produced a comprehensive review of non-recent sexual abuse in Scottish football, provided recommendations that the game is implementing at all levels to ensure a safer future for young footballers, and, crucially, have given survivors a voice that was previously denied to them.

The personal testimony provided by those survivors is a tribute to their courage and while the final report makes difficult reading it is only by learning lessons from the past that we can truly commit to the highest standards of wellbeing and protection for young people involved in Scottish football.

Today is a day for reflecting on an incomprehensible period in Scottish football's history, and for ensuring the collective voice of the survivors is heard.

Ian Maxwell, Scottish FA Chief Executive: "As Chief Executive of the Scottish FA I am deeply upset by the contents of the final report into sexual abuse in Scottish football and, in particular, by the deeply personal, traumatic experiences endured by young players who were abused by people in whom they and their families placed their trust.

"I reiterate my sincerest apology on behalf of Scottish football to all who have experienced abuse in our national game.

"The report also recognises the progress that the Scottish FA and its members have made to achieve the highest standards of wellbeing and protection for children and young people to play our national sport safely today.

"Since the board issued a directive in 2016 we can report that 80% of the original recommendations are either completed or in progress. The work is ongoing, overseen by the Independent Wellbeing and Protection Advisory Board and implemented through our Wellbeing and Protection department: themselves evidence of our commitment to the review and its recommendations.

"As the report also states, football provides a tremendous outlet for young people in Scotland and it is the responsibility of everyone involved in Scottish football to protect and cultivate that for future generations."