



## The @BBCNews gets it wrong. Again.

Peter Ball pled guilty this week to 18 charges of sexual abuse of men between the 1970s-1990s, whilst the Bishop of Lewes and then Gloucester. The CPS has also been forced to apologise for cautioning Peter Ball in 1993 rather than prosecuting in spite of the fact that there was sufficient evidence.

The details of the failures of the Church of England, police and CPS to deal appropriately with Bishop Ball are, unfortunately, quite common. What is equally common is the inability of the BBC to use appropriate terminology. Throughout their article '[Bishop Ball sex charges caution 'wrong' admits CPS](#)', the BBC uses the word 'sex' rather than 'sexual assault':

A retired bishop who has admitted sex offences against young men ...

...guilty to 18 charges of sex abuse involving men...

When we have pointed out this failure to adhere to [responsible guideline's on reporting violence against women and girls](#), the BBC has responded with multiple excuses - the most common being that 'there wasn't enough characters available' as though they aren't an online news source. This excuse about lack of space in titles isn't usable for inappropriate terminology within articles. Yet, the BBC continues to conflate the consensual activity of sex with sexual abuse.

There is simply no excuse for the BBC to continuing using inappropriate language when writing about sexual assault and rape. There are numerous, free guidelines on how to report accurately. A national media service can and must do better.