

## PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST ANDREW'S BEDFORD

### FORMAL COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is committed to its role which primarily includes “*cooperation with the minister in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.*” But there may be a time when you need to complain. This complaints procedure is for those who are unhappy about matters for which the PCC is responsible that have affected them. Prior to using this formal procedure, the PCC encourages an informal approach to the Vicar or a Churchwarden to see if the matter can be resolved in that way.

**NB:** Any safeguarding concern should be raised through the processes outlined in our safeguarding policy.

But if your complaint is about:

**The Process of Safeguarding Children or Vulnerable Adults;** please in the first instance contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser at [safeguarding@stalbans.anglican.org](mailto:safeguarding@stalbans.anglican.org) ; telephone 01727 818107.

**The Vicar or another minister;** please raise the matter with the Vicar.

If the matter remains unresolved you could contact the Archdeacon, at [archdbed@stalbans.anglican.org](mailto:archdbed@stalbans.anglican.org).

You may wish to read the Clergy Discipline Rules on the Church of England website at <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/leadership-and-governance/legal-services/clergy-discipline/clergy-discipline-rules-forms>

**Bullying or Harassment** (by adults); you may find it helpful to consult the Diocesan policy on this at [www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/preventing-bullying-and-harassment-policy/](http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/preventing-bullying-and-harassment-policy/)

**Your employment by the PCC;** if you are a PCC employee please refer to and follow the grievance procedure provided in your terms and conditions of employment.

#### Making a formal complaint to the PCC

Complaints should be made in writing, marked “Confidential”, and sent to the PCC Secretary whose name and contact details are set out below. The PCC Secretary will ensure that your complaint is:

- treated seriously
- handled fairly without bias or discrimination
- treated confidentially.

If you are addressing a specific event, you should complain as soon as you can after the event that you are complaining about. You need to set out:

- your full name and address
- what you think went wrong and how it has affected you including enough details to show why you are aggrieved
- what (if anything) you think the PCC should do to put it right

If someone else complains on your behalf, the PCC will need written confirmation from you saying that you agree for that person to act for you. If you need help or support to make a complaint, please speak to any member of the PCC.

The PCC Secretary should immediately record receipt of a complaint in a confidential log.

*Formal Complaints Policy & Procedure: Draft – March 2023*

## How your complaint will be dealt with

The PCC Secretary will write to you or send you an email to confirm receipt of your complaint within 7 days of its receipt and arrange for it to be considered by the PCC's Complaints Committee. The Standing Committee will adopt the role of Complaints Committee for this purpose. If your complaint is about particular individuals who are members of the Standing Committee, it will meet without them being present.

The Standing Committee will look fairly into your complaint including seeking the views on the matter from any individuals, whether members of the PCC or otherwise, to which your complaint refers. The Standing Committee may appoint one or more persons to look into the matter on its behalf but it will be the Standing Committee that makes any decisions. The Standing Committee and any such appointed persons will treat the matter confidentially.

The Standing Committee may invite you to present your complaint to them. If so, you may attend with a friend / representative if you wish. The meeting should be held as informally as possible. The Chair will explain the purpose of the meeting, introduce the members and emphasise confidentiality. The meeting will be minuted.

The PCC Secretary will write to you with the conclusions from Standing Committee's review and reasons for that outcome. The PCC Secretary will aim to respond to you in this way as soon as possible, and no longer than 6 weeks after receipt of your complaint.

This will be the PCC's final response to your complaint.

If you remain dissatisfied:

- You may wish to consult the Diocesan Disputes Advisory Service – [www.stalbans.anglican.org/ministry/dispute-advisory-service/](http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/ministry/dispute-advisory-service/)
- Ultimately, you may wish to consider contacting the Charity Commission as, while Parochial Church Councils are independent bodies, they are charities and as such are regulated by the Charity Commission. Information about how to contact The Charity Commission can be found via the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity>

The PCC will reconsider, amend and re-adopt this Policy each year.

PCC Secretary:           Roseanne Kinvig Love  
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PCC of St Andrew's Bedford  
Charity Registration Number number 1130171