**Notes for the PCC:**

In adopting this policy, the PCC will need to decide:

Who will receive complaints? This would normally be the PCC Secretary or Parish Administrator. It could be a Churchwarden or incumbent.

Who will review complaints? The PCC should nominate a Complaints Committee (this should have a list of names with reserves if necessary) at the first meeting after the APCM each year. It may be that the PCC decides that the Standing Committee should act as the Complaints Committee.

The timescales that will apply to complaints made to your PCC.

The Policy and Procedure should be adapted accordingly, including the link to the Diocesan Whistleblowing and Raising Concerns Policy. Having decided how to proceed the PCC will need to pass a resolution appointing the Complaints Committee, authorising it to act as such and requiring it to report back on its work.

The Diocesan Whistleblowing and Raising Concerns Policy can be found at: [elydiocese.org/edbf-policies-and-procedures](https://elydiocese.org/edbf-policies-and-procedures)

**Complaints Policy and Procedure:**

A template for Parishes

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is the board of Trustees of the parish church. It includes the vicar or minister of the parish and is a charity, governed by Charity Law and Church of England Canons and Measures. It is committed to its role which primarily includes *“co-operation with the minister in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.”* It strives to be open, honest, fair and responsible, but recognises that from time to time it will fall short of expectations and 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.

**But if your complaint is about:**

Safeguarding of Children or Vulnerable Adults; please contact the Diocesan SafeguardingTeam on **01353 652747**

The Vicar or another minister; please raise the matter with the Vicar. If the matter remains unresolved, you may contact an Archdeacon, at: [elydiocese.org/xdb/find-a-person](https://elydiocese.org/xdb/find-a-person?tags%5B%5D=57&search=&sort=)

You may wish to read the leaflet “*I have a complaint about misconduct by a member of the clergy – what can I do?*” at:
[churchofengland.org – makingacomplaint](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/makingcomplainta4.pdf)

Bullying or Harassment; you may find it helpful to consult the Diocesan policies on this at: [elydiocese.org/edbf-policies-and-procedures](https://elydiocese.org/edbf-policies-and-procedures)

**Your employment by**

# Making a complaint to the PCC

Complaints should be made in writing or by email to the PCC Complaint Handler whose name and contact details are set out below. The PCC Complaint Handler will ensure that your complaint is:

* treated seriously,
* handled fairly without bias or discrimination, treated confidentially.

You should complain within 3 months of the event that you are complaining about. You need to set out:

* your personal details (name, address, telephone number, e-mail, etc.),
* a clear statement of what your complaint is,
* details about the complaint (when, where, what happened, etc.),
* the evidence you provide to justify the complaint (this may be statements, letters, etc.),
* a declaration that what you state is the truth,
* 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 have difficulty with written material, the PCC can provide a person to assist you.

The PCC Complaint Handler should immediately record receipt of a complaint in a log.

# How your complaint will be dealt with

The PCC Complaint Handler will write to you or send you an email to confirm receipt of your complaint within **[X]** days of its receipt and arrange for it to be considered by the PCC’s Complaints Committee. If your complaint refers to particular individuals who are members of the Complaints Committee, it will meet without them being present.

The PCC’s Complaints 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 Complaints Committee may appoint one or more persons to look into the matter on its behalf, but it will be the Complaints Committee that makes any decisions. The Complaints Committee and any such appointed persons will treat the matter confidentially.

The Complaints 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 by the Committee.

The PCC Complaint Handler will write to you with the conclusions from the PCC Complaints Committee’s review and reasons for that outcome. The PCC Complaint Handler 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.

# Unacceptable behaviour

‘Unacceptable behaviour’ means acting in a way that is unreasonable, regardless of the level of someone’s stress, frustration or anger. It may involve acts, words or physical gestures that could cause another person distress or discomfort. Unacceptable behaviour might include someone harassing our staff or volunteers or continuing to contact us about a complaint which has been given a final response. We reserve the right to ignore complaints that are made accompanied by unacceptable behaviour, even if the complaint itself may be valid.

If you remain dissatisfied, 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. The Charity Commission can be contacted either via their website [gov.uk/complain-about-charity](https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity) or by writing to them at Charity Commission First Contact, PO Box 1227, Liverpool L69 3UG.

**PCC Complaint Handler Name & Address
Tel Number & email**

*This policy was adopted by the* ***Parish PCC*** *on Day Month Year*The review period for this policy is **2 years**.
Date of next review: Month Year

