

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST THOMAS A BECKET CHURCH, RAMSEY

COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St Thomas a Becket, Ramsey 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.

But if your complaint is about:

a) Safeguarding of Children or Vulnerable Adults; please in the first instance contact

Jane Cusworth 01487 814984 safeguarding@ramseysandupwood.org

OR

Rebecca Boswell · Email: rebecca.boswell@elydiocese.org · Telephone number: 01353 652731 · Mobile Number: 07904 487912

b) The Vicar or another minister; please raise the matter with the Vicar. If the matter remains unresolved you could contact the Archdeacon (Richard Harlow), at archdeacon.handw@elydiocese.org

You may wish to read the leaflet “I have a complaint about misconduct by a member of the clergy – what can I do?” at

<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/1937470/makingcomplainta4.pdf> .

c) Bullying or Harassment (by adults); you may find it helpful to consult the Diocesan policy on this at the end of this policy

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

Making a complaint to the PCC

Complaints should be made in writing or by email 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.

You should complain within 3 months of 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.

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

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 10 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 Secretary will write to you with the conclusions from the PCC Complaints 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 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 <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity> or by writing to them at Charity Commission First Contact, PO Box 1227, Liverpool L69 3UG.

PCC Secretary = Val Malloy
Email = valmolloy@hotmail.com

PCC of St Thomas a Becket Church, Ramsey
Charity Registration Number 245456

Appendix



Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure

The Diocese of Ely is committed to the highest possible standards of integrity and recognises that clergy, lay staff and volunteers are often the first to become aware of or identify serious concerns. When such concerns arise, barriers to coming forward could be in relation to misplaced loyalty to colleagues or the Church, or fear of harassment or victimisation.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (the 'Act') protects workers who raise concerns from victimisation or harassment. In accordance with the Act, the Diocese of Ely welcomes staff members who have serious concerns about any aspect of the Diocese's work to come forward and voice those concerns, in confidence, within the Diocese.

The Church of England and Diocese of Ely rely heavily upon the contribution of volunteers and recognise that they are in an important position to recognise and report concerns. While voluntary roles are not included within the Act, The Diocese of Ely encourages volunteers to use this process with the relevant principles of protection applied to them.

This policy is in place to ensure that an internal process is available to encourage and enable workers and volunteers to raise serious concerns which would not meet the criteria for a complaint in confidence and without fear of reprisals, to ensure that the Diocese of Ely continues to provide the highest standards of integrity and accountability.

Principles

This policy is based on the following fundamental principles:

- All Office Holders, lay staff and volunteers have the right to raise concerns about perceived unacceptable practice or behaviour.
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- All Office Holders and lay staff are responsible for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour, safeguarding concerns and any health and safety risks. We also invite volunteers to raise these matters.
- The Diocese of Ely does not tolerate victimisation or harassment and will take action to protect Office Holders, lay staff and volunteers when they raise a concern in good faith.
- The Diocese of Ely will endeavour to protect the identity of any individual who raises a whistleblowing concern and wishes to remain anonymous. However, in certain circumstances, such as any inquiry arising from the concern, the individual may be required to provide a signed statement. In certain circumstances the Diocese may have to disclose the identity of the individual without their consent, for example where there is risk to others involved. The reasons for this will be discussed with the individual.
- Office Holders, lay staff and volunteers who raise concerns will be given appropriate advice and support and kept informed in relation to the progress and outcome of any inquiries.

- Any malicious or vexatious allegations made by clergy or lay staff may lead to a disciplinary process for the individual concerned.

How to raise a concern

The Diocese of Ely recognises the difficulties in raising a concern about the behaviour of a colleague. However, raising the concern at an early stage may protect others, prevent the problem getting worse, and prevent individuals themselves becoming implicated

Office Holders, lay staff and volunteers are encouraged to raise concerns in cases where:

- the law may have been broken
- Diocesan policies and procedures may have been breached
- there are concerns of a safeguarding nature

Special Note: Safeguarding

The Diocese of Ely is committed to safeguarding the welfare and protection of children and adults at risk of harm. Concerns about the welfare of children and adults at risk of harm should be raised without delay to prevent any ongoing risk of harm.

If the individual who has a concern does not feel confident to report the matter within the diocese they are encouraged to refer directly their relevant Local Authority or Constabulary

Who to tell:

Office holders, lay staff and volunteers should raise concerns initially with their incumbent, line manager, volunteer co-ordinator or Parish Safeguarding Officer, Archdeacon or Bishop.

Of course this is dependent upon the nature of the concerns and who might be involved.

Alternatively, clergy staff and volunteers may approach the following:

Paul Evans - Diocesan Secretary - 01353 652702 or 07837707516

paul.evans@elydiocese.org

Rebecca Boswell - Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser 01353 652731 or 07904 487912

rebecca.boswell@elydiocese.org

Clergy staff and volunteers can call, write to or arrange to meet with either of the above. In the case of a meeting the individual raising the concern may wish to invite a supporter.

Written concerns should:

- identify that it is a whistleblowing disclosure;
- detail the background and history of the concerns;
- give names, dates and places (where possible); and
- note the reasons why the individual is particularly concerned about the situation.

What could happen?

This will be dependent upon the nature of the concern. The matter may be:

- investigated internally
- referred to the Police and / or other statutory agencies;

- independently investigated
 - referred for consideration under the Clergy Discipline Measure
- or
- a combination of the above

Anonymous Allegations

The Diocese of Ely encourages staff, Office Holders and volunteers to identify themselves when reporting a concern. However any anonymous concerns will be investigated as far as reasonably possible based upon the information provided.

Or contact:

Cambridgeshire or Norfolk Police – dial 101 or in an emergency dial 999

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Children's Services

Cambridgeshire Tel: 0345 045 5203

Peterborough Tel: 01733 864180

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Adult Services

Cambridgeshire Tel:0345 045 5202

Peterborough Tel: 01773 747474

Emergency Out of hours (Cambridge & Peterborough Adults and Children) Tel:01733 234724

Norfolk Children's Services

Tel: 0344 800 8020

Norfolk Adult Services

Tel: 0344 800 8020

Independent, free, expert help and advice in relation to whistleblowing is also available from **Protect**
0207 3117 2520

whistle@protect-advice.org.uk