

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 Rector, Vicar or Churchwardens to see if the matter can be resolved in that way.

If your complaint is about:

Safeguarding of Children or Vulnerable Adults, please in the first instance contact the Southwark Diocesan Safeguarding Team (safeguarding@southwark.anglican.org / 020 7939 9441)

The Rector, a Team Vicar or another minister, please raise the matter with the Rector or a Team Vicar. If the matter remains unresolved you could contact the Archdeacon of Reigate through the Croydon Area Episcopal Office (020 8256 9630).

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> .

Bullying or Harassment (by adults); you may find it helpful to consult the separate Parish policy on Bullying and Harassment.

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 Parish Administrator:

Louise Page
Parish Administrator
St Dunstan's Church
Church Road
Cheam SM3 8QH
Email: office@cheamparish.org.uk
Telephone: 020 8641 1284

The Parish Administrator will ensure that your complaint is:

- passed to the relevant person or people in the PCC;
- 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, when it happened, 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 Parish Administrator should immediately record receipt of a complaint in a log.

Whilst it is unusual to consider a complaint relating to an incident occurring more than 3 months previously, we recognise that there may be circumstances which have led to the delay. If that is the case, please do speak with the Rector, a Team Vicar, or a churchwarden to explain the reason for the delay, and they will advise you of the actions to take

How your complaint will be dealt with

The Parish Administrator will write to you or send you an email to confirm receipt of your complaint within one week of its receipt and arrange for it to be considered by the PCC. If your complaint refers to a particular individual or individuals who are members of the PCC it will consider your complaint without them being present.

The PCC 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 PCC may appoint one or more persons to look into the matter on its behalf. The PCC and any such appointed persons will treat the matter confidentially.

The PCC 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 PCC.

The Parish Administrator will write to you with the conclusions from the PCC review and reasons for that outcome. The Parish Administrator 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.

Policy agreed and adopted by the PCC at a meeting on 7th July 2025