

POTTERS BAR PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St Mary the Virgin and All Saints, Potters Bar 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.

If your complaint is about:

Safeguarding of Children or Vulnerable Adults; if you have a complaint about the handling of a safeguarding issue in the parish, please in the first instance contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser at safeguarding@stalbans.anglican.org

The Vicar or another minister; please raise the matter with the Vicar. If the matter remains unresolved you could contact the Archdeacon of Hertford at archdhert@stalbans.anglican.org. You may wish to read the leaflet “I have a complaint about misconduct by a member of the clergy – what can I do?” available at: <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/1937470/makingcomplainta4.pdf> .

Bullying or Harassment (by adults); you may find it helpful to consult the Diocesan policy at <https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/Preventing-Bullying-and-Harassment-policy.pdf>.

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, or in case of the Secretary’s absence, a designated person with access to the PCC Secretary’s correspondence, 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 or designated person should immediately record receipt of a complaint in a log.

How your complaint will be dealt with

The PCC Secretary or designated person 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 Standing Committee (which acts as the PCC's Complaints Committee). If your complaint refers to particular individuals who are members of the Standing Committee, it will meet without them being present.

The PCC's 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 by the Committee.

The PCC Secretary or designated person will write to you with the conclusions from the PCC's Standing Committee's review and reasons for that outcome. The PCC Secretary or designated person will aim to respond to you in this way as soon as possible, and no longer than 6 weeks after the 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	Mrs Elizabeth Liney
Address	c/o Parish Office, St Mary's Church, The Walk, Potters Bar, Herts, EN6 1QQ
Email	pccsecretary@stmaryspb.org.uk

If you are submitting your complaint by post, rather than email, please write "Complaint" clearly on the envelope to ensure the correspondence is opened promptly.

PCC of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Potters Bar
Charity Registration Number 1174737