

St Helen's Parochial Church Council

Complaints Procedure

As a Christian community we aspire to live by the principles set out in Matthew Chapter 18 but this Complaints Procedure aims to provide a mechanism should a complaint or concern to be raised about the work of St Helen's Church or the conduct of those who represent St Helen's Church.

St Helen's PCC aims to do everything possible to resolve complaints quickly and to the satisfaction of all parties.

Key points about the Complaints Procedure.

In all matters concerning complaints St Helen's PCC will:

- try to be approachable and to sort out any concerns voiced informally before a problem gets so bad that a formal complaint is made.
- make people fully aware of their complaints procedure.
- inform people that complaints can be made by any means e.g. phone, email or letter.
- take all complaints seriously and learn from them.
- hold all meetings at a venue and time convenient to the person making the complaint.
- inform people that they can bring someone with them to a complaint meeting if they wish.
- ensure that anyone who is the subject of a complaint cannot be involved in the complaints procedure in any way.
- all parties should respect the confidentiality of the situation.

Stages of a Complaint

The aim of the procedure is to resolve the problem to everyone's satisfaction as swiftly as possible and to minimise the stress caused to any party.

Stage 1:

- Anyone who has a concern should, in the first instance, talk it through with the Incumbent or Churchwarden or, for matters relating to the Heritage Project with the Heritage Officer or Incumbent.
- Most issues should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.

Stage 2:

- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, an official complaint should be raised. Receipt of an official complaint will be acknowledged within two days and the Incumbent and Churchwardens will

St Helen's Parochial Church Council

appoint an investigating officer who will then arrange to meet the complainant and any other appropriate parties to gather the facts and investigate.

- The investigating officer will convene a mutually convenient meeting between the parties to review the outcome of his/her investigation, seek any final clarifications and decide appropriate steps to resolve the matter. At this meeting there will be the investigating officer, an additional representative of St Helen's PCC, the person making the complaint and anyone they choose to bring along to support them. If the complaint involves a Heritage Volunteer, the Heritage Officer may also be in attendance.
- This meeting is to be held within 28 days of the official complaint being raised
- If any party, including the complainant, chooses not to attend this meeting they will be copied the written record of the discussion.
- An agreed written record of the discussion will be made as well as any decision or action to take as a result. All parties present will sign the record and receive a copy within seven days. The summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 3:

- If the person making the complaint is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation they can request that the complaint be taken to stage three. At this stage St Helen's PCC will invite an independent person to review the investigation evidence and convene a meeting with the person making the complaint and two members of the PCC, one of whom should be the investigating officer.
- At the meeting the independent person should hear from the complainant as to why they are not satisfied with the outcome of stage 2; clarify any points needed with the investigating officer; and recommend any further or alternative actions.
- An agreed written record of the discussion will be made as well as any decision or action to take as a result. All parties present will sign the record and receive a copy. The summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record, which will be audited for implementation of the recommendations and regularly reviewed.

Last reviewed at the meeting of the PCC on 17th January 2017

Incumbent.....

Churchwarden.....

Churchwarden.....

Date.....