

Within the Benefice of Kingsdown, Creekside and High Downs

Policy Statement



Safeguarding Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

**Further information can be found within the new
Safeguarding CofE e-manual**

Policy and Procedure for the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

The **High Downs PCC** has adopted within this policy statement the guidance of the church of England house of Bishops.

At High Downs Parish we will follow the guidelines contained within this policy document on all occasions and seek further guidance as required from the Diocese on all matters relating.

The main guidelines of this policy can be found on the Church of England Safeguarding webpages, which is summarised in this policy document and explained in depth within the Safeguarding CofE e-manual.

The Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) or relevant person will liaise promptly with the PCC on any updates or changes as they become available.

Practice Guidance: Safeguarding: Recruitment of Ex-Offenders to positions within High Parish Parish

St. Mary, Eastling
St. Mary, Stalisfield
St. Michael and All Angels, Throwley

Approved by the High Downs PCC meeting of: 24th November 2025

Signed by the PCC Chair:.....

Date:.....

Date of Issue: 24th November 2025

Review Date: November 2026

Further updates required will be added as an addendum.

Recruitment of ex-offenders Policy

Introduction

This policy statement applies to all recruitment and selection process where High Downs Parish is the employer or recruiter. It applies to all roles where the Church of England's Safer Recruitment and People Management Guidance | The Church of England, indicates that an enhanced or enhanced plus DBS check is required.

The Code of Practice published under section 122 of the Police Act 1997 advises that it is a requirement that all registered bodies must treat DBS applicants who have a criminal record fairly and not discriminate automatically because of a conviction or other information revealed. A copy of the Code of Practice can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice>

Within current legislation certain old and minor cautions and convictions are no longer subject to disclosure. In addition, employers will no longer be able to take an individual's old and minor cautions and convictions into account when making decisions. All cautions and convictions for serious violent and sexual offences, and other specified offences of relevance for posts concerned with safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, will remain subject to disclosure.

In addition, all convictions resulting in a custodial sentence, whether or not suspended, will remain subject to disclosure, as will all convictions where an individual has more than one conviction recorded. Further guidance is available from the Disclosure & Barring Service regarding the filtering of old and minor cautions and convictions which are now 'protected' and therefore not subject to disclosure to employee. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-filtering-guidance>.

Our Policy Statement

As an organisation, The **High Downs Parish** will assess applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order, using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Currently, we are engaging DDC (Due Diligence Checking) to process all applicants.

- The **Parish High Downs** will comply fully with the code of practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly:

- The **Parish of High Downs** undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed:
- The **Parish of High Downs** can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that the Parish is legally entitled to know about. Where a DBS certificate at either standard or enhanced level can legally be requested, eg. (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975, as amended, and within appropriate Police Act Regulations, as amended), we will do so:

Recruitment of ex-offenders Policy

- The **Parish of High Downs** can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that would be filtered through the DBS application process:
- The **Parish of High Downs** is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background:
- The **Parish of High Downs** actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records:
- The **Parish of High Downs** selects all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience matched only against the essential criteria of the role description:
- An application for a criminal record check is only submitted to DBS after the completion of the House of Bishop's Confidential Declaration Form and an assessment indicates it is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned:
- For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position:
- The **Parish of High Downs** will ensure that all those involved in the recruitment of posts subject to a DBS check have received appropriate training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders:

- The **Parish of High Downs** will engage in a separate discussion with the applicant. This is to ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment:
- The **Parish of High Downs** undertakes to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate as outlined in the Safer Recruitment and People Management Policy.

This policy has been proved at the PCC meeting on 24th November 2025

Review date: November 2026

A copy of this policy can be downloaded from the link below: