



## Benefice of Topsham and Wear Complaints Policy

Due for review: Autumn	Approved by PCC on	Chair of PCC signature
2025		
2027		
2029		

The Parochial Church Councils (PCC) of St Margaret’s Church Topsham and St Luke’s Church Countess Wear are committed to their 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:

***Safeguarding of Children or Vulnerable Adults***; please in the first instance contact the Parish Safeguarding Representative at [safeguardingtopshamwear@gmail.com](mailto:safeguardingtopshamwear@gmail.com)

***The Vicar or another priest***; please raise the matter with the Vicar. If the matter remains unresolved you could contact the Archdeacon, at

[archdeacon.of.exeter@exeter.anglican.org](mailto:archdeacon.of.exeter@exeter.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?” at

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/makingcomplainta4.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 on A Church Near You for Topham [here](#) and Countess Wear [here](#). 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 will 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 14 days of its receipt and arrange for it to be considered by the PCC's Complaints Committee which comprises of the PCC Standing Committee (if a standing committee is not currently formed the Complaints Committee will comprise of the Incumbent, Church Warden, The Parish Safeguarding Representative and 1 other member of the PCC). If your complaint refers to particular individuals who are members of the Complaints Committee it will meet without them being present (calling another member of the PCC to ensure a quorum of 4 if needed).

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, however it will follow an appropriate level of rigour. The Chair will explain the purpose of the meeting, introduce the members and emphasise confidentiality. The meeting will be minuted by the PCC Secretary.

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.

The Complaints' Committee will be required to report back to the whole PCC on its work, in a confidential manner.

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.