PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST MARTIN'S, EAST HORSLEY

COMPLAINTS POLICY

This Policy was adopted by the Parochial Church Council at its meeting held on 1 April 2025

The Parochial Church Council of St Martin's, East Horsley (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 come a time when you are unhappy about your treatment by St Martin's. The PCC has adopted this Policy to enable you to raise your concern. The PCC encourages an approach to the Rector or a Churchwarden to see if the matter can be resolved informally without making a formal complaint.

But this Policy does not apply if your complaint is about:
Safeguarding of Children or Vulnerable Adults: in the first instance please contact the Parish Safeguarding Officer by email (pso@easthorsleychurch.org.uk) or by letter to the Parish Office
The Rector or a member of the clergy team: please raise the matter with the Rector. If the matter remains unresolved you may contact the Archdeacon at archdeacon.dorking@cofeguildford.org.uk or by letter to Church House, Stag Hill, Guildford, Surrey GU2 7UP. 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): please follow the Diocesan policy at https://d3hgrlq6yacptf.cloudfront.net/64512e98ef5d6/content/pages/documents/dignity-at-work-policy.pdf
Paid services to the PCC: if you are a PCC contractor please refer to and follow the grievance procedure provided for in the PCC People policy.

Making a complaint to the PCC
Complaints should be made to the PCC Secretary in writing to the Parish Office (address below) or by email to sec@easthorsleychurch.org.uk (please mark "Complaint"). The PCC Secretary will determine if your complaint is subject to this Policy and will ensure that your complaint is:

- treated seriously
- handled fairly without bias or discrimination
- treated confidentially.

You should complain within 3 months of the last event that you are complaining about. You need to set out:

- your full name and address
- your email address, if applicable
- the dates of event(s) in question
- what you think went wrong and how it has affected you including sufficient 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 not consider your complaint unless accompanied by your signed written confirmation that person acts for you.

The PCC Secretary will record receipt of your complaint.

How your complaint will be dealt with

If your complaint is subject to this Policy and is complete, the PCC Secretary will write to you or send you an email (if applicable) to confirm receipt of your complaint within seven (7) days of his receipt and arrange for it to be considered by the PCC's Standing Committee (the Committee). If your complaint concerns persons who are members of the Committee, it will meet without them, provided that it remains quorate.

If your complaint is outside this Policy, incomplete or special arrangements are required, the PCC Secretary will advise you accordingly, including the applicable timescale.

The Committee will look fairly and objectively into your complaint and may seek evidence from any persons (whether or not members of the PCC) to whom your complaint relates (whether or not named). The Committee may appoint one or more persons to look into the matter on its behalf but the Committee will make decisions. The Committee will treat the matter in confidence and will require any appointed person(s) to do likewise.

The Committee will ordinarily consider your complaint as written. However, if deemed necessary or desirable, the Committee may invite you:

a) to clarify your complaint in writing; and/or
b) to present your complaint in person. If so, you may attend with a friend or representative (whether or not named as your representative in your complaint).

The meeting will be held as informally as practicable. The Chair will explain to you the purpose of the meeting, introduce the members and confirm confidentiality. The meeting will be minuted.

The PCC Secretary will write to you or send you an email (if applicable) with the Committee's conclusions and reasoning. The PCC Secretary will ordinarily aim to respond no longer than 6 weeks after his receipt of your complaint. If clarification or a meeting is required, response may take longer. Members of the Committee are mostly volunteers and timing is subject to their availability.

The PCC Secretary's response will be final.

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.

Stuart Hyder, PCC Secretary
sec@easthorsleychurch.org.uk
St Martin's Church, Parish Office: Ockham Road South, East Horsley, Surrey KT24 6RL

Parochial Church Council of St Martin's, East Horsley
Charity Registration Number 1128274

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