



***Chorley Parish Church of St. Laurence***  
***in the Church of England Diocese of Blackburn***

# **Volunteers' Formal Problem-Solving Procedure**

**Issue 3: July 2025**

**Next Review: July 2026**

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Volunteers are crucial to the life of our Parish. We rely on people giving their talents and skills freely to the benefit of the wider church community. Generally, this works well for the individual and the teams in which they work. Very occasionally things can go wrong and need to be resolved.

St. Laurence's PCC believes that clear, open and fair procedures for solving problems are necessary for the sake of volunteers and the organisation and are consistent with our Christian ethos.

It is hoped that by offering volunteers effective support, most issues and problems that arise can be resolved swiftly and fairly informally.

Should that not be possible, the following procedures can be used to ensure that matters are dealt with fairly and transparently.

### **Procedure for a volunteer to formally raise an issue:**

#### **Stage 1 – Verbal stage**

If a volunteer wishes to formally raise a problem about a member of staff, the organisation or another volunteer, they should do so at the earliest opportunity.

The issue should be raised with the Volunteer Coordinator. If the issue is related to the Volunteer Coordinator, then the volunteer should talk to one of the wardens.

#### **Stage 2 – Written stage**

If the issue cannot be resolved at the verbal stage, the volunteer can make a formal complaint in writing to the Churchwarden.

If the matter has already been discussed with that person, then the complaint should be made to the Rector.

#### **Stage 3 – next stage**

If the volunteer is not satisfied with the outcome of the written complaint, they should inform the PCC Secretary in writing within 5 working days of receiving a response to their written complaint. The PCC Secretary will refer the written complaint to the PCC or Standing Committee.

The appeal will be reviewed by the PCC. Following the appeal, the decision of the PCC will be communicated in writing.

That decision is final.

## Procedure for a member of staff to formally raise an issue about a volunteer:

St Laurence's PCC aims to support our volunteers so they are able to enjoy their volunteering and contribute positively to the life of the Parish. It is hoped that if volunteers find they are struggling with their role or task they will ask the Parish Warden(s) for additional support or training.

If problems arise and the PCC does not consider that additional support and training will overcome the issues, then the volunteer role can be ended. This should not be regarded as a failure for the volunteer. If possible, another more suitable role could be explored that better uses their skills and talents.

If discussion has not resolved a problem, or if a complaint is made about a volunteer, any of the following measures may be used, depending on the severity of the problem. The PCC reserves the right to judge the severity of a problem.

This procedure applies to the performance and suitability of volunteers. It also applies where it is deemed that the behaviour and comments of a volunteer are inappropriate and conflict with our Christian values and ethos and may have caused harm and distress to others.

### **Stage 1 – Discussion**

The volunteer will meet with the Volunteer Coordinator to discuss the issue or incident with the volunteer to try and identify its possible causes, and try to find a way to resolve the situation.

If necessary, the PCC may be able to provide extra support or training, or to review the volunteer's current role.

### **Stage 2 – Written stage**

If the issue hasn't been resolved through discussion, or if a serious problem has arisen, the volunteer will be contacted in writing, by the Parish Warden(s), outlining the problem and any action that might be taken to resolve it, with deadlines as appropriate.

If at this stage the Warden(s) do not believe that it will be possible to find a solution, this will be made clear. The matter will then be referred to the Rector and PCC for discussion and a decision.

### **Stage 3 – Ceasing volunteering**

The PCC reserves the right to require the volunteer to stop volunteering, with immediate effect if necessary. In this case, the volunteer will receive an explanation of why this decision has been reached. The decision of the PCC is final.

Signed:

*Neil Kelley*



Name: Fr. Neil Kelley

Position: Rector

Signed:

*Alex Barrack*

Name: Alex Barrack

Position: Parish Warden

Date: 12/07/2025

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Version History					
Version	Date	Detail	Author	Approved	Date
1.0	17/12/2019	New policy		PCC	17/12/2019
	January 2022	Review – no changes		PCC	January 2022
2.0	09/08/2024	Review and update to roles	C. Christie	PCC	19/08/2024
3.0	10/07/2025	Review – no changes	C. Christie	Rector & Wardens	12/07/2025