



WHISTLE-BLOWING POLICY

Introduction

A “whistle-blower” is someone who discovers something that is wrong and alerts his/her employer or the relevant authorities to what is going on.

This Policy was adopted by the Parochial Church Council at its meeting on the 26th January 2026.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of Berwick Parish Church seeks to act with probity in its behaviour and aims to help office holders and volunteers to follow, and be seen to follow, the highest ethical and moral standards. Should there be a failure in this, the policy seeks to enable the PCC to be alerted to any potential problem or wrongdoing reasonably believed to exist, without fear of negative reprisal in response to the revelation.

To fulfil their commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults (collectively “vulnerable groups”) all organisations that provide services for, or work with, vulnerable groups or are required to have appropriate whistle-blowing procedures, and a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable groups to be addressed.

Whistle-blowing may also apply to situations of unacceptable practice, performance or behaviour in situations unrelated to vulnerable groups and these same principles can be applied

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 gives workers legal protection against being dismissed or penalised as a result of publicly disclosing certain serious concerns. Whilst the Act does not provide the same protection for volunteers, this PCC adopts the same approach in their protection.

The policy of this PCC is to safeguard the interests of any of its office holders or volunteers when they act as whistle-blowers regarding any neglect or abuse, mental, physical, emotional, sexual, racial/ethnic or financial, of service users or any similar abuse of colleagues.

The PCC accepts that it is bound by legislation in the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 and guarantees that procedures will be invoked in ways which do not prejudice the whistle-blower’s own position and prospects. The PCC will protect the office holder or volunteer against victimisation and provide support throughout the investigation process.

The PCC is committed to ensuring that office holders and volunteers have:

- Knowledge and understanding of protection procedures
- Are committed to emphasising that harassment is unacceptable
- Are enabled to identify oppressive abuse when it occurs
- Are informed regarding their individual duty to act to protect service users
- Are made aware of measures to safeguard their interests if they act as whistle-blowers
- Are made aware of their rights under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

Responsibility

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation is with the Vicar along with the members of the Parochial Church Council.

Review

This policy is reviewed annually and updated as required.

Procedure

The PCC encourages office holders and volunteers to regard it as their duty and obligation to raise legitimate concerns about suspected misconduct by colleagues or those with whom they serve.

The PCC sees its office holders and volunteers in the roles of whistle-blowers to promote the safeguarding of the rights of others, to log any concerns and report such concerns to one of the following:

- The Vicar – Fr Lee Taylor -Tel 01289 306136
- A Churchwarden – David Mason, Joyce Currie, Roger Barrow, Charles Borthwick via Berwick Parish Church website www.berwickparishchurch.co.uk
- The Archdeacon of Lindisfarne- The Venerable Dr Catherine Sourbut Groves – telephone 0191 270 4166

Whistle-blowers are not being asked to verify or prove that concerns are true. The PCC seeks to protect its office holders and volunteers from victimisation when they act as whistle-blowers.

Anybody who is concerned about any malpractice but unsure whether to act as a whistle-blower or to stay silent or are unclear about how to act as a whistle-blower may obtain free expert help from the independent charity:

Protect Advice, The Green House 244-254 Cambridge Heath Road London E2 9DA 9DA

Advice Line: 020 3117 2520 Website: protect-advice.org.uk

Updated May 2026

The Parish Safeguarding Officer is Joyce Currie

Email: curriejoyce@hotmail.com Tel: 07407 549543

Hirer's Declaration of Compliance: We will comply with the terms of this Whistle-blowing Policy for the duration of our hire and occupation of the premises.

(Sign two copies; one to be returned to us; one to be retained by you.)

Signed by (insert full name).....duly authorised by and on behalf of the Hirer

Signature.....Date.....