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Parish Data Protection Complaints Procedure

Template for PCCs

Compliant with the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018

1. Purpose

This procedure sets out how the PCC will receive, investigate, respond to, and record complaints relating to the handling of personal data.

The Data Protection Act 2018, as amended by the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, requires all organisations that process personal data to have a formal process for handling data protection complaints. Complaints must be acknowledged within 30 days, investigated appropriately, and responded to without undue delay.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to complaints regarding:

- Use of personal data.
- Parish mailing lists.
- Electoral Roll information.
- Parish directories.
- Safeguarding-related personal data.
- Parish websites and social media.
- Photography and video.
- Subject Access Requests (SARs).
- Other individual rights requests e.g. right to rectification, right to erasure etc.
- Personal data breaches.
- Any other concerns regarding compliance with data protection legislation.

3. Who May Make a Complaint

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Any individual who believes that the PCC has not complied with data protection law may submit a complaint.

This includes:

- Members of the congregation.
- Volunteers.
- Employees.
- Electoral Roll members.
- Service users.
- Members of the public.

4. How Complaints Can Be Made

Complaints may be made:

- By email.
- In writing.
- By telephone.
- In person.

All complaints should be directed to:

Parish Data Protection Lead: _____

Email: _____

Telephone: _____

Address: _____

5. Complaint Handling Procedure

Stage 1 – Receipt of Complaint

Upon receiving a complaint, the PCC will:

- Record the complaint in the Data Protection Complaints Log.
- Allocate a reference number.
- Record the date received.

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- Retain any supporting information.

Stage 2 – Acknowledgement

The PCC will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 30 calendar days.

The acknowledgement should:

- Confirm receipt.
- Outline the next steps.
- Provide a contact point.

Stage 3 – Investigation

The PCC will:

- Review the issues raised.
- Gather relevant evidence.
- Speak to relevant parish officers where necessary.
- Review records, policies and correspondence.
- Determine whether a breach of data protection legislation has occurred.

Where appropriate, external advice may be sought from the Diocese.

Stage 4 – Outcome

The PCC will provide a written response without undue delay.

The response will:

- Summarise the complaint.
- Explain the findings.
- Confirm whether the complaint has been upheld.
- Identify any action taken.
- Explain any further actions planned.

6. Right to Escalate

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If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

Information Commissioner's Office

Website: www.ico.org.uk

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

The PCC will cooperate fully with any ICO investigation.

7. Record Keeping

The PCC will maintain a Data Protection Complaints Log recording (see appendix 1):

- Complaint reference number.
- Date received.
- Name of complainant.
- Nature of complaint.
- Actions taken.
- Outcome.
- Date closed.

Records will be retained securely in accordance with the PCC's retention arrangements.

8. Learning and Improvement

Following resolution of a complaint, the PCC will consider whether:

- Policies require updating.
- Additional training is required.
- Procedures should be improved.
- Further safeguards should be introduced.

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Appendix 1 - Data Protection Complaints Log Template

Ref No.	Date Received	Name	Complaint Summary	Investigation Completed	Outcome	Date Closed
DP001						
DP002						

Appendix 2 - Suggested Privacy Notice Wording

If you have concerns about how the PCC has handled your personal data, you may make a data protection complaint by contacting the Parish Data Protection Lead. The PCC will acknowledge your complaint within 30 days, investigate it, and provide a response without undue delay. If you remain dissatisfied, you have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).