

Code of Conduct for PCC Members



1. Purpose of the Code

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) recognises that membership is voluntary, yet members also act as charitable trustees and employers. It is therefore essential that clear standards of conduct are upheld for the good of the Church, its beneficiaries, and its employees.

This Code expresses how PCC members respond to the Gospel call to love God and neighbour, and it reflects expectations of the Diocese of Newcastle and the Charity Commission. It applies to elected, ex-officio, and co-opted members.

The Code is reviewed annually or sooner if required.

2. Spiritual Commitments

PCC members commit to holding the work of the PCC in prayer and to deepening their faith as disciples of Jesus Christ. Members recognise their leadership role within the parish and seek to act in ways that build trust, honesty, and accountability.

3. Duties of PCC Members

Members must ensure that the statutory functions of the PCC are fulfilled in cooperation with the Incumbent and in line with Church of England regulations and secular law. This includes responsibilities relating to buildings, finances, safeguarding, employment, and governance.

Members must remain familiar with relevant legislation and diocesan or national guidance. Advice is available from the PCC Secretary.

4. Term of Office

Elected PCC members serve a three-year term, with one third retiring each year. When vacancies are filled, the elected member serves the remainder of the three-year term.

5. Principles of Conduct

Members must act in ways that uphold the reputation of St George's Church and avoid any behaviour that could bring the PCC or the church into disrepute.

Members commit to the Seven Principles of Public Life: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, Leadership.

Members also seek to represent the interests of the whole congregation and parish.

6. Conduct at PCC Meetings

Collective Responsibilities

- All contributions are made through the Chair.
- Members listen respectfully, with only one person speaking at a time.
- Discussions are conducted with grace and love, especially in disagreement.
- Meetings must be safe spaces where all can contribute.
- Details of discussions and individual viewpoints remain confidential.
- Members do not use email, letters, or social media to debate PCC business outside meetings.
- Members may disagree during discussion, but once a decision is made, the PCC speaks with one voice.
- Members act with honesty, integrity, and good judgement, seeking professional advice where needed.
- Members act in the best interests of the parish and comply with all relevant laws and House of Bishops' guidance.

Individual Responsibilities

- Members prioritise attendance and give apologies in advance.
- If unable to attend, members may submit views to the Chair for inclusion.
- Members read all papers before meetings.
- Members treat all meeting papers, including draft minutes of meetings, in the strictest confidence.
- Members conduct themselves with integrity and avoid damaging the reputation of the Church or its people.
- Conflicts of interest are declared to the Chair and recorded.
- Members accept constructive feedback and avoid personal criticism.
- Relevant documents for agenda items are shared with the Secretary beforehand and by the required date.
- Suggestions for agenda items are sent to the Secretary with supporting papers if needed by the required date.
- Members comply with safeguarding training, DBS checks, and PCC policies.

7. Conflicts of Interest

Members must avoid actual or perceived conflicts between personal interests and PCC responsibilities. Any conflict must be declared immediately, and the member must withdraw from related decisions. If unsure, members should seek advice from the Chair or Secretary.

8. Speaking on Behalf of the PCC

Members may not speak publicly for the PCC unless authorised by the PCC, Standing Committee, or Chair.

Members must ensure that their use of social media does not bring the PCC into disrepute.

9. Trustee Responsibilities

Members must complete the required “Fit and Proper Persons” declaration and ensure they are not disqualified from acting as charity trustees.

Trustees must ensure that PCC funds and assets are used appropriately, that financial responsibilities are met, and that risks and reserves are managed responsibly. Trustees must ensure proper accounting records are kept, sufficient to show the financial position of the PCC at any time [this is usually carried out by the PCC’s Honorary Treasurer, but all have responsibility to meet this responsibility].

Trustees must also ensure the preparation of annual accounts, appointment of an independent examiner or auditor, and presentation of reports to the APCM.

10. Safeguarding Responsibilities

Members must be familiar with the PCC’s Safeguarding Policy, complete required declarations, undertake DBS checks, and complete safeguarding training. The PCC must ensure compliance with House of Bishops’ Practice Guidance and diocesan policies.

11. Confidentiality and Communication

Members keep PCC discussions confidential and communicate openly and appropriately within meetings. They do not use private channels to influence decisions outside the agreed processes.

12. Failure to Comply with the Code

Concerns about breaches of the Code must be submitted in writing to the PCC Secretary. The Chair and Vice-Chair [usually the Lay Chair] will consider the matter and may commission an enquiry.

If a minor breach is confirmed and accepted, the Chair may issue a verbal or written warning.

For major breaches or contested findings, a panel of three Standing Committee members not previously involved will hear the case. If the complaint is upheld, the PCC may:

1. Issue a written warning.
2. Publicly censure the member.
3. Request that the member stand down from the PCC.

13. Functions of the PCC (according to the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956)

The PCC’s statutory functions include:

- Working with the Incumbent to promote the whole mission of the Church—pastoral, evangelistic, social, and ecumenical.
- Discussing matters concerning the Church of England or wider public interest.
- Implementing provisions from diocesan and deanery synods.
- Advising synods on matters referred to the PCC.
- Raising matters with synods as appropriate.
- Maintaining church buildings and churchyard.
- Managing parish finances and employment responsibilities.
- Being consulted on worship, pastoral schemes, and appointments.
- Appointing sidesmen/assistants to the churchwardens.

These functions emphasise the partnership between the Incumbent and PCC.

14. Agreement to the Code

Members confirm their commitment to this Code of Conduct by signing the declaration provided.

Date adopted by PCC	19 May 2026
Date of next review	May 2027

To be completed and returned to the Chair of the PCC

I confirm that I have read the Code of Conduct for PCC Members, and agree to abide by this Code of Conduct.

Name (print):

Signature:

Date: