



United Benefice of Sileby, Cossington & Seagrave

Whistleblowing Policy

The following policy was agreed at meetings of each of the PCCs of Sileby, Cossington and Seagrave and subsequently signed at the Benefice Council meeting on June 8th 2026 by the incumbent and a churchwarden of each parish acting on behalf of their PCC.

In this document each reference to Benefice Council indicates that this body is acting on behalf of the PCCs of Sileby, Cossington and Seagrave.

Introduction

The Benefice is committed to upholding the highest possible standards of integrity and recognises that clergy, lay staff and volunteers are often the first to become aware of, or identify serious concerns.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (“the Act”) protects **workers** who raise concerns from victimisation or harassment, where there is a public interest in so doing. In accordance with the Act, the Benefice welcomes staff members who have serious concerns about any aspect of the Benefice’s work to come forward and voice their concerns, in confidence, within the Benefice.

The Benefice relies heavily upon the contribution of **volunteers** and recognises that they are in an important position to recognise and report concerns. While voluntary roles are not within the scope of the Act, the Benefice encourages volunteers to use this process, with the relevant principles of protection under the Act applied to them, wherever possible.

This policy is in place to ensure that an internal process is available to encourage and enable workers and volunteers to raise serious concerns, which would not meet the criteria for a complaint, in confidence and without fear of reprisals. The process will ensure that the Benefice, in fulfilling its principal role of “*co-operating with the minister in promoting in the three parishes the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical*”, continues to provide the highest standards of integrity and accountability.

Principles

This policy is based on the following fundamental principles:

- All office holders, lay staff and volunteers have the right to raise concerns about perceived unacceptable practice or behaviour.

- All office holders, lay staff and volunteers are responsible for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour, safeguarding concerns and any health or safety risks.
- The Benefice does not tolerate victimisation or harassment and will take action to protect office holders, lay staff and volunteers when they raise a concern in good faith.
- The Benefice will endeavour to protect the identity of any individual who raises a Whistleblowing concern and wishes to remain anonymous. In certain circumstances, however, such as an inquiry arising from the concern, the individual may be required to provide a signed statement. The Benefice may also have to disclose the identity of the individual without their consent e.g. where a risk to others is involved. The reasons for this would be discussed with the individual.
- Office holders, lay staff and volunteers who raise concerns will be given appropriate advice and support and kept informed about the progress and outcome of any enquiries, wherever possible.
- Any malicious or vexatious allegation or one that is not substantially believed to be true made by clergy or lay staff may lead to disciplinary process for the individual concerned. A similar allegation made by a volunteer may lead to dismissal or suspension from their church role.
- Victimisation or harassment of a whistleblower by clergy or lay staff may also lead to disciplinary process and by a volunteer to dismissal or suspension from their church role. All may face civil action by the whistleblower for compensation.

Relevant Concerns

Office holders, lay staff and volunteers are encouraged to raise concerns in cases where:

- A criminal offence may have been committed.
- A person is failing to comply with a legal obligation or Benefice policies or procedures may have been breached.
- A miscarriage of justice may have occurred.
- The health or safety of any individual is being endangered.
- The welfare or safety of a child or adult is at risk.
- There is information or evidence that any of the above matters is being concealed deliberately.

NB: The Whistleblowing Policy is not an alternative to the Grievance Procedure. An employed member of staff who is aggrieved about their own personal situation should use the latter procedure. An aggrieved volunteer should speak to the Rector or one of their churchwardens.

How to Raise a Safeguarding Concern

The Whistleblowing policy is not usually appropriate for raising safeguarding issues. Concerns about the welfare of children and adults at risk of harm must be raised without delay to prevent any ongoing risk of harm. They should be reported immediately to the Rector or the persons named below:

Our Safeguarding Officer is:

Annette Bowdrey, 39 Greedon Rise, Sileby, LE12 7TE.
T: 01509 814078. M: 07986 656566. E: nettyb77@gmail.com

Our Safeguarding Administrator is:

Joy Wood, 2Windsor Close, Mountsorrel, LE12 7SS
T: 01509 812493 M: 07940 799144 E: secretaryscsparishes@gmail.com

The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser is:

Rachael Spiers, St. Martins House, 7 Peacock Lane, Leicester, LE1 5PZ.
T: 0116 261 5341. E: rachael.spiers@leccofe.org.

How to Raise a Whistleblowing Concern

The concern should be raised with the Rector, unless the concern is about the Rector, in which case it should be raised with the relevant churchwarden or with the Archdeacon of Leicester. You can call, write or arrange to meet any of them. In the case of a meeting, you may wish to invite a supporter to attend with you. Contact details are set out below

Our Rector is: The Revd. Duncan Beet, The Rectory, 11 Mountsorrel Lane, Sileby, LE12 7NF
T: 07814 536648. E: scsparishes@gmail.com

The Archdeacon is: The Ven. Richard Trethewey, E: richard.trethewey@leicestercofe.org

Signed: D. Beet	(Incumbent)	Date: 8 th June 2026
Signed: L. Whitwell	(Church warden of Sileby)	Date: 8 th June 2026
Signed: G. McCague	(Church warden of Cossington)	Date: 8 th June 2026
Signed: G. Winkfield	(Church warden of Seagrave)	Date 8 th June 2026