



Parish of St Mary the Virgin, Ringmer
Registered Charity number 1131869

POLICY ON THE RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS
(Adopted 23rd June 2025)

**The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St Mary the Virgin Parish Church,
Ringmer**

Preface

The PCC of St Mary the Virgin Ringmer recognises the diversity of the community that it serves and within which it functions. St Mary the Virgin is an Inclusive Church (<https://www.inclusive-church.org/>). It strives to reflect the diversity of its community in its membership, and to treat all who approach the church, as worshippers and visitors, as employees and potential employees, and as volunteers, fairly and equitably.

As such, the PCC of St Mary the Virgin welcomes all applications for paid or voluntary posts from all interested and suitably qualified people, including those with

criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

As an organisation using the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS), including the DBS Update Service and associated registered bodies, to assess applicant's suitability for eligible posts, the PCC of St Mary the Virgin undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly and not to discriminate on the basis of conviction or other information revealed. We follow:

- legislation outlined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- the requirements of the Church of England's Safer Recruitment and People Management Guidance
(<https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/safer-recruitment-and-people-management-guidance>)
- the DBS Code of Practice when handling disclosure information, including that obtained from the DBS Update Service (all registered bodies are also required to comply with this). A copy of the Code of Practice can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice>

Procedures

1. Criminal Records

An application for a criminal record check is only submitted to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>) after the completion of the Church of England Confidential Declaration Form (CDF) (https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/protection_of_children_and_vulnerable_adults.pdf) and an assessment indicates that it is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned.

The PCC of St Mary the Virgin recognises that within current legislation certain old and minor cautions and convictions are no longer subject to disclosure, and that it is not lawful to take such records into account when making employment decisions.

The PCC of St Mary the Virgin does recognise that all cautions and convictions for serious violent and sexual offences, and other specified offences of relevance for posts concerned with safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, do remain subject to disclosure. All convictions resulting in a custodial sentence, whether or not suspended, will remain subject to disclosure, as will all convictions where an individual has more than one conviction recorded. The PCC follows the guidance provided by the DBS regarding the filtering of old and minor cautions and convictions which are now ‘protected’ and therefore not subject to disclosure to employee (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-filtering-guidance>).

2. DBS checks and CDFs

The completion of a Church of England Confidential Declaration Form (CDF) will be required as an initial stage of the recruitment process for all those wishing to work with children and/or adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect. It applies to all roles, including clergy, employees, ordinands and volunteers who are to be in substantial contact with children and / or adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect. The CDF is available at: <https://christianjobs.co.uk/sites/default/files/2024-04/20240405%20Confidential%20Declaration%20Form.pdf>.

A disclosure is only requested where DBS eligibility criteria are met (see <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dbs-checking-service-guidance>—2).

CDFs will only be viewed by those who need to see them as part of the recruitment and selection process, including the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers who will assess any information disclosed.

At interview, or in a separate discussion, the PCC will ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position.

3. Advertising

The PCC of St Mary the Virgin selects all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience matched only against the Essential criteria of the role description.

For those positions where a disclosure is required, the level of check will be made explicit on the job advertisement. Advertisements are required to state that a DBS check will be requested in the event of an individual being offered the position.

4. Training

All involved in recruitment are sign-posted to suitable training, including the Church of England Safer Recruitment module and DBS-specific training for those requiring it, including guidance in the relevant legislation, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. For further information and training material, see:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/safer-recruitment-and-people-management-guidance>.

5. Consequences of Non-Disclosure

Job offers are conditional based on satisfactory completion of the DBS check.

Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant could lead to withdrawal of the offer of a post. In the case that disclosure information is received, the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers will be informed so information contained can be assessed, although this is not necessarily a barrier to the person undertaking the post for which they applied.

Members of the PCC, including the current chair, undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of work (paid or voluntary).