

# **The ARCH Benefice with Norton and Lenchwick**



## **2025 List of Policy's**

1. Agreement to adopt Safeguarding Policies across the Benefice
2. Policy for Safeguarding
3. Policy for Good Practice in Safer Recruiting
4. Policy for the recruitment of Ex-Offenders
5. Policy for responding to Domestic Abuse
6. Policy for Reporting Serious Incidents to the Charities Commission
7. Benefice NAG Policy
8. Policy for Parish Meetings
9. Benefice policy on Mission Giving
10. Policy for burials and internment of Ashes in the Church Yard
11. Policy for the Care and Upkeep of Graves and Memorials
12. Policy for Data Protection
13. Health and Safety Policy
14. Benefice Church Policy for the Handling, Storage and Disposal of Disclosure Information
15. Benefice Disclosure Policy

## The ARCH Benefice with Norton and Lenchwick



### Revision History Table

Version	Creation Date	Agreed by Co-ordinating Group	Agreed by Abbots Morton	Agreed by Rous Lench	Agreed by Church Lench	Agreed by Harvington	Agreed by Norton and Lenchwick	Review Date
1	08/10/25							Nov 25
2	11/10/26						14/10/25	
3	19/10/26							

## **The ARCH Benefice with Norton and Lenchwick**



### **Agreement to adopt Safeguarding Policies across the Benefice**

The nominated Benefice Bishop's Representative for Safeguarding is:

Name: Jill Francis  
Address: 49 Hughes Close, Harvington, Evesham, Worcs, WR11 8NZ  
Tel no: mobile 07484 206412 or 01386 870117

Tel no:

The Benefice is committed to the safeguarding and welfare of vulnerable adults and children within its church community. To this end, each Parish within the Benefice will follow the same Policies and Procedures, which will be agreed at a Benefice meeting annually. These will be signed by a representative from each Parish as well as the Safeguarding Officer and the Vicar to the Benefice.

In addition to the Benefice Safeguarding Policies, each Parish will follow:

- **Promoting a Safer Church; House of Bishops policy statement (2017) and updated House of Bishops' Safeguarding Guidance and Safeguarding Code of Practice e-manual:**
  - Declaration of Conflict of Interest -Deborah McGovern, Church of England (March 2025)
  - Anti-bullying Guidance for Church of England Schools (2024)
  - Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults – Deborah McGovern, Church of England (2021)
  - Safeguarding Learning and Development Framework - Lisa Clarke, Church of England (August 2024)
  - Safeguarding Serious Incident Reporting to the Charity Commission - Eva Abeles, Church of England (March 2021)
  - Safeguarding Practice Reviews - Deborah McGovern, Church of England (July 2023)
  - Responding well to Victims and Survivors of Abuse – Dr Godfred Boahen, Church of England (2021)
  - Promoting a Safe Church (safeguarding policy for adults) 2006

Diocese of Worcester Domestic Abuse Policy Statement.

This policy will be reviewed and updated in 2026

# **The ARCH Benefice with Norton and Lenchwick**

## **A POLICY FOR SAFEGUARDING**



We will fully accept and implement the Policy Statement of the Church of England – **Promoting a Safer Church; House of Bishops policy statement (2017) and updated House of Bishops’ Safeguarding Guidance and Safeguarding Code of Practice e-manual** as the policy statement for this Parish/Benefice/LEP/Cathedral

We commend also for use within the Parish [\*\*The Parish Safeguarding Handbook\*\*](#)

In accordance with the Church of England Safeguarding Policy our church is committed to:

- Promoting a safer environment and culture.
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the church.
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons.
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons.
- Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others.

The Parish will:

- Create a safe and caring place for all.
- Have a named Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the incumbent and the PCC to implement policy and procedures.
- Safely recruit, train and support all those with any responsibility for children, young people and adults to have the confidence and skills to recognise and respond to abuse.
- Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the parish.
- Display in church premises and on the Parish website the details of who to contact if there are safeguarding concerns or support needs.
- Listen to and take seriously all those who disclose abuse.
- Take steps to protect children and adults when a safeguarding concern of any kind arises, following House of Bishops guidance, including notifying the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) and statutory agencies immediately.
- Offer support to victims/survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.
- Care for and monitor any member of the church community who may pose a risk to children and adults whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality and the safety of all parties.
- Ensure that health and safety policy, procedures and risk assessments are in place and that these are reviewed annually.

- Review the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Practices at least annually.

**This Benefice appoints Mrs Jill Francis as the Parish Safeguarding Officer.**

Policy Review Date 2026

## The ARCH Benefice with Norton and Lenchwick



### A POLICY FOR GOOD PRACTICE IN SAFER RECRUITING

#### A Checklist for those appointing new 'Workers' in the ministry of the church

(to be used in conjunction with the **Churches' Safer Recruiting Guidelines** – available at [www.cofe-worcester.org.uk](http://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk); hard copies in Benefice Policy Folder.

1. The Role of the Worker must be clearly established. Best practice is to provide a brief written Role Outline (description), with responsibilities and line manager indicated.
2. A decision as to where in the Criminal Record Check Eligibility Circles this role falls (see Safer Recruiting, p8). This decision may need to be made in consultation with the Safeguarding Officer and/or the clergy. If a DBS clearance is required, this must be made known to the applicant in the role description and in any advertisement for the post.
3. Where the role is eligible for a DBS check, the Safeguarding Officer [the Bishop's safeguarding representative for the benefice – currently Jill Frances] is given the volunteer's contact details, plus the name/nature of the role, and is asked to action the required checks.
4. Where appropriate and necessary, the Appointer may arrange for an interview (formal or otherwise) with the applicant. References may also be sought as part of the discernment process in relation to the applicant's suitability for the appointment.
5. The Safeguarding Officer will communicate with the Appointer regarding the outcome of the DBS risk assessment received from the 'Registered Body' (ie the Diocese of Worcester, c/o Liz Toone). Assuming that the applicant is thus cleared to undertake the role in question, the Appointer then ensures that the applicant knows that their appointment is confirmed.
6. The Safeguarding Officer will ensure that the Worker undertakes any diocesan training required within the appropriate timeframe.
7. Any appropriate training and/or mentoring is arranged as necessary. As a minimum, the Worker must read the following documents, and confirm that they have done so.
  - The PCC's policies on safeguarding and disclosure
  - *All God's Children* [if the role involves children and young people]
  - House of Bishops' Safeguarding Guidance and Safeguarding Code of

## Practice e-manual

8. The Worker must also declare that they know who they must contact any safeguarding concern that may arise.
9. The Appointer ensures that a record of the appointment process is kept. The checklist attached is suggested.

Policy to be reviewed in 2026

## SAFER RECRUITING – CHECKLIST FORM

*Appointers should complete and retain one of these forms for each new recruit. One copy of completed form to be given to Safe guarder*

**Name of Worker:**

**Title / Role of Worker:**

**Name of Worker's Supervisor / Line Manager:**

Recruitment Stage	Decision/Outcome	Noted/Comments	Date
1. Define role of Worker			
2. Criminal Record Check Eligibility for Role			
3. Safeguarding Officer actions DBS check			
4a. Appointer arranges interview with worker			
4b. Appointer seeks reference(s) for worker			
5. DBS check & risk assessment returned 'clear' and outcome communicated with worker			
6a. Diocesan training required? Safeguarding Officer informs worker and training is booked			
6b. Diocesan training is completed			
7a. PCC Safeguarding Policies and other necessary documents read and understood by worker			
8. Worker declares that they know who to contact in the case of a safeguarding concern			
9. Recruitment process completed			

**Name of Appointer:**

**Signature on completion:**



## **The ARCH Benefice with Norton and Lenchwick**

### **POLICY FOR THE RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS**



As an organisation using the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, the Diocese of Worcester complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

This written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders is made available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

A Disclosure is only requested after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a disclosure is required all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of an individual being offered the position.

Where a Disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process we encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information ('Confidential Self Declaration') is sent under separate, confidential cover to a designated person within the Diocese of Worcester and we guarantee that this information is only seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

Unless the nature of the position allows the Diocese of Worcester to ask questions about an entire criminal record we only ask about "unspent" convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

We ensure that all those in the Diocese of Worcester who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, ie the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

At interview, or in separate discussion, we 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. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

We make every subject of a DBS Disclosure aware of the existence of the DBS Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.

We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Policy to be reviewed in 2026

## **The ARCH Benefice with Norton and Lenchwick**

### **POLICY FOR RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC ABUSE**



**All forms of domestic abuse are wrong and must stop. We are committed to promoting and supporting environments which:**

- Ensure that all people feel welcome, respected and safe from abuse;
- Protect those vulnerable to domestic abuse from actual or potential harm;
- Recognise equality amongst people and within relationships;
- Enable and encourage concerns to be raised and respond to appropriately and consistently.

#### **We recognise that:**

- All forms of domestic abuse cause damage to the survivor and express an imbalance of power in the relationship;
- All survivors (regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity) have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse;
- Domestic abuse can occur in all communities;
- Domestic abuse may be a single incident, but is usually a systematic, repeated pattern which escalates in severity and frequency;
- Domestic abuse, if witnessed or overheard by a child, is a form of abuse to the child;
- Working in partnership with children, adults and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of any child or adult suffering abuse.

#### **We will endeavour to respond to domestic abuse by:**

##### **In all our activities –**

- Valuing, listening to and respecting both survivors and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.

##### **In our publicity –**

- Raising awareness about other agencies, support services, resources and expertise, through providing information in public and women-only areas of relevance to survivors, children and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.

##### **When concerns are raised –**

- Ensuring that those who have experienced abuse can find safety and informed help;
- Working with the appropriate statutory bodies during investigation into domestic abuse, including when allegations are made against a member of the church community.

##### **In our care –**

- Ensuring that informed and appropriate pastoral care is offered to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse;
- Identifying and outlining the appropriate relationship of those with pastoral care responsibilities with both survivor and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.

Within this vision we accept and abide by the policies as written in:

**House of Bishops' Safeguarding Guidance and Safeguarding Code of Practice e-manual**

**Review date 2026**

## The ARCH Benefice with Norton and Lenchwick

### Policy for Reporting of Serious Incidents to the Charity Commission Date:



#### 1. Background

1. The members of the PCCs, as charity trustees, are responsible for reporting ALL Serious Incidents to the Charity Commission in a timely manner. The trustees delegate the reporting of Serious Incidents in accordance with these Resolutions.
2. The Charity Commission has approved specific Church of England guidance and templates for PCCs to use when reporting Serious Incidents to it ("**PCC Guidance**"). The PCC Guidance separates Serious Incidents into two types: safeguarding Serious Incidents and all other Serious Incidents. Safeguarding Serious Incidents are reported in a different way from how all other Serious Incidents are reported and so there are separate delegations for reporting safeguarding and non-safeguarding Serious Incidents.
3. If a safeguarding incident occurs within the ARCH Benefice with Norton and Lenchwick, the Safeguarding Officer (or, where there is no employed safeguarding officer, the person with responsibility for safeguarding in the PCC) (**PCCSO**) must inform the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (**DSA**) and respond to and manage the incident in accordance with the relevant House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Guidance.
4. Where a non-safeguarding incident is identified, the Rector Glenn Reading or appropriate Church Warden should be informed immediately. They are responsible for taking such immediate steps or actions as may be required to secure and protect the ARCH Benefice with Norton and Lenchwick property, assets and reputation, in accordance with any internal policies or procedures.

#### **DELEGATION of responsibility to report all OTHER Serious Incidents to the Charity Commission in accordance with the PCC Guidance**

1. In order to facilitate the confidential and timely reporting of any Serious Incidents, the responsibility for the reporting of Serious Incidents is delegated to Rev Glenn Reading, Rector and the Church Wardens.
2. Rev Glenn Reading, Rector and the Church Wardens are responsible for deciding whether, in accordance with the PCC Guidance, the incident is sufficiently Serious to require reporting to the Charity Commission. If a decision was taken that an incident does NOT need to be reported to the Charity Commission, the reasons for this decision should be agreed with the PCC Group and recorded in writing by PCC secretary.
3. Rev Glenn Reading, Rector and the Church Wardens are responsible for preparing and submitting the Serious Incident Report to the Charity Commission. Where the report relates to a high-risk incident, the draft report should be provided to the PCC for approval.

4. Rev Glenn Reading, Rector and the Church Wardens are responsible for providing the PCC's with a copy of any Serious Incident report submitted to the Charity Commission.

Policy for review 2026

# The ARCH Benefice with Norton and Lenchwick

## POLICY FOR GROUP COUNCIL OF NORTH AVON GROUP



### Background

As part of forming a Group between our two benefices – the ARCH Benefice and Inkberrow, Cookhill, Dormston and Kington. As of 2026 this group will also include Norton and Lenchwick.

### Why?

It is good practice. The Group Council is the unit/entity whose role is to support the mission and pastoral ministry of PCCs. It is an entity that enables the PCCs within the group to discuss and agree what tasks and roles can be done better together – and which are best left to each PCC.

A group comprising the two incumbents, associate ministers and readers from across the two benefices drew up this draft proposal for the PCCs to consider and it has been legally adopted. We have looked at this as best practice established by current Groups within the diocese (*as Groups are a long established method of parishes working together*) and share their experience.

### Membership of the Group Council?

Two lay members from every PCC in the group, licensed clergy (incumbents and associate ministers, curates and readers).

Lay members to be appointed on a 3 year basis (with the expectation that they would normally change after that – but as this may be difficult for smaller parishes dispensation is offered here).

All members are to be members of PCCs – either by election or ex-officio with the possible exception of the Secretary who may be co-opted.

All Group Council office holders to hold their appointments on an annual basis.

### Who are the Office holders within the Group Council?

A Chairperson, vice Chairperson (to take over if the Chair is unavailable), a Treasurer and Secretary. If the Chair is a lay person, the Vice Chair would be clergy (and vice versa).

### What functions are to be delegated to the Group Council?

Only those agreed by all the PCCs. The delegated functions, once they are agreed, to be reviewed regularly on an agreed time cycle by all the PCCs and if necessary be renegotiated.

## **The ARCH Benefice with Norton and Lenchwick**



### **A POLICY FOR PARISH MEETINGS - GUIDELINES AND PROTOCOL**

Church meetings need to be conducted in an atmosphere of prayer, good humour and friendship, yet they are not social occasions.

People come together to consider and make important decisions about the life and mission of the Church. Time restrictions and boundaries ensure that changes and new developments in the life and mission of the Church have sufficient time to be processed and managed. These boundaries can provide an appropriate balance to unnecessary, untimely and unimportant developments.

Church committee members, lay and ordained, often lead full and busy lives outside of the Church, and face many family, community and occupational demands. Our time together is precious and to be respected, as is our family life, and the following guidelines are to help us order well our time and meetings together.

- Meetings to begin promptly and end at the agreed time (only to be extended with the agreement of the meeting).
- Meetings to last a maximum of two hours; agenda items to be allocated guide timings by the chair.
- Discussion to be limited to agenda issues only.
- Urgent non-agenda items to be presented at the beginning of a meeting rather than under AOB. If the meeting agrees that this needs to be discussed it should replace other non-urgent item(s).
- Only one person to speak at a time without interruptions or background conversations. All comments and contributions to be put through the chairperson unless an open conversation has expressly been agreed.
- If an open conversation has been granted by the chairperson this is to be given a set time boundary after which the chairperson can close discussion and offer a summary for consideration.
- To enable sufficient time for discussion and consideration a limit to be imposed of only one major item per meeting.
- Major issues are to be discussed as early as possible in the meeting to avoid time pressure and fatigue affecting judgment.



- It is acceptable to challenge statements expressed, but not a person's right to their own and differing opinion. Personal remarks are not acceptable and are to be followed by a public apology. If personal remarks persist the person or people in question will be asked to leave the meeting.
- Discussions to remain focussed on the item under discussion.
- It is acceptable to contribute further to a previously expressed viewpoint to consider implications and developments etc, but it is unnecessary and unhelpful to repeat previously expressed viewpoints.
- Public meetings provide an opportunity for all people to attend and express their viewpoints. People who cannot attend may write a letter or designate another person to express their views. Their views, together with their names, can then be presented to the gathered meeting. People attending such public meetings, however, are to present generalised and unverifiable contributions.
- Common sense and good manners to be used at all times!

Policy to be reviewed 2026

## **The ARCH Benefice with Norton and Lenchwick**



### **A POLICY FOR MISSION GIVING**

In thanks to God for his love and generosity toward us and in response to his call for us to be generous also, the Benefice commits to tithe 10% of the church's unrestricted income in support of God's wider work through mission and charitable giving.

Unrestricted income is defined as including:

- Covenanted income (envelopes and standing orders) and associated tax refund
- Collections – apart from those specifically designated to charities
- General fund donations where not designated to specific use or work

Other Income is defined as including:

- Fees for wedding and funerals
- Rent
- Special events
- Book of Remembrance payments
- Interest on bank accounts
- Sundry Income

The PCC review its choice of charities yearly. At this review the PCC determines the number and nature of charities to be supported. Charities are chosen dependant of the feeling of the PCC and congregation.

We accept that a 10% commitment may at times be unachievable and so this commitment may be altered individually within parishes to reflect the current financial situation.

Note: The financial year is 01 Jan – 31 Dec, in line with the Church of England, with the Gift Aid financial year and in line with HMRC

Policy to be reviewed in 2026

## **The ARCH Benefice with Norton and Lenchwick**

### **POLICY FOR BURIALS AND INTERMENT OF ASHES IN THE CHURCHYARD**



#### **New Burial Plots and Interment with Memorial**

All PCCs will consider requests for new burial plots for deceased persons only when at least one of the following circumstances apply:

- a) The deceased was resident in the Parish at the time of death;
- b) The deceased was not resident in the Parish at the time of death, but habitually resided in the Parish no more than 5 years before the time of death;
- c) The name of the deceased was included on the current Electoral Roll of the Parish at the time of death.
- d) The deceased has a connection with the church or is part of a family plot.

#### **Reservation of Burial Plots**

As a benefice we do not arrange or accept the reservation of a grave-space.

#### **Interment of Ashes without Memorial**

- a) Anyone may apply for ashes to be interred in the designated area for the Interment of Ashes without Memorial.
- b) A memorial may not be placed in this area but an annual plant may be placed each year, which will be cleared at the end of the flowering season.
- c) An application may be placed for the name to be recorded in the book of remembrance.
- d) There is no defined site for placement of ashes or record of the actual plot within the garden to be kept, but a standard record of the burial would be included in the burial records.

#### **Note**

This Policy represents the usual basis upon which requests for new burial plots will be considered. The Incumbent may consider any such requests, which fall outside the above policy, individually, on their merits.

#### **Note**

Lenchwick and Norton: The interment of ashes which we accept as there is an allocated area

Policy to be reviewed in 2026

## The ARCH Benefice with Norton and Lenchwick

### POLICY FOR THE CARE AND UPKEEP OF GRAVES AND MEMORIALS



The Benefice seeks to provide the churchyards as a place of precious memories, prayer and peace. In order to ensure that the graveyard and cremated remains sections are kept tidy and beautiful for everyone, we are providing these simple guidelines for all those who tend and visit graves.

If you have any concerns, or need help or advice on any of these matters, please don't hesitate to get in touch with the Rector:

**Rector:** Rev'd Glenn Reading on 01386 870527

#### General Rules for all Graves

1. The Church asks families and friends of the deceased to keep their graves tidy and well-tended, as far as they are able.
2. Floral tributes and wreaths should be removed as soon as the flowers have died. Wreaths placed at Christmas should be removed by the end of January.
3. For up to the first 12 months after the death of the deceased or until a permanent memorial is erected (whichever is the sooner), the Church will consider requests to allow appropriate items of remembrance, symbols or artefacts to be placed on the grave. In such cases, permission should first be sought from the parish priest or churchwardens. After 12 months, only floral tributes will be allowed.
4. Families are asked not to introduce any chippings, fencing or edging as these cause serious health and safety issues. Any such items may be removed without warning by the Church Council.
5. Plastic or Silk flowers are not suitable – please do not leave them in the churchyard.  
*(Artificial flowers fade quite quickly and then look tatty; because they are light they are vulnerable to being blown off the grave in bad weather; they can become damaged by machines used to cut or trim the grass.)*
6. Please ensure that packaging and oasis from arrangements is taken home or placed in the **BLACK BIN** if there is one available in the church yard. However, dead flowers and greenery may be placed in the **BROWN Compost bin** situated in the church yard if there is one available. Alternatively dead flowers may be placed in one of the black compost bins situated within the church yard if available.

*Please do NOT place plastic, glass or wreaths containing metal or plastic on the compost heaps or compost bins.*

7. Ideally cut flowers or pot plants brought to the churchyard should be removed when they have died. However, it is appreciated that some visitors come from a distance; therefore, the churchyard team will tidy up from time to time to remove dead plants.

### **Burial Plots (full-sized graves)**

1. Floral tributes and wreaths are welcome but should be removed when the flowers have died.
2. It is not appropriate to plant shrubs or large bushes such as roses or rosemary. The only 'perennials' that may be planted within the grave space are spring bulbs – which can be easily mown or strimmed after they have flowered.
3. In the first two years after a burial, small annual plants may be planted close to the headstone within the grave space. Thereafter, for ease of mowing, it is more appropriate for the grave area to be restored to level turf.
4. It is the responsibility of the relatives of the deceased to make sure that the grave surface is kept level as the ground may continue to sink for some years.

### **Garden of Remembrance Plots for Cremated Remains**

1. Floral tributes and wreaths are welcome but should be removed when the flowers have died.
2. A maximum of one pot plant or equivalent is allowed on the plot at any one time. *(These must be moved by the churchyard maintenance team to prevent the strimmer from damaging them. When several pots are placed it is difficult for the team to remember which plot they belong to. They also overflow onto adjacent plots.)*
3. It is not appropriate to plant shrubs or large bushes such as roses or rosemary. The only 'perennials' that may be planted around the grave space are spring bulbs – which can be easily mown or strimmed after they have flowered.

### **Garden of Remembrance or area for Cremated Remains without Memorial**

1. There are specifically no permanent memorials to be left in this area.

2. An annual plant may be placed each year, which will be cleared at the end of the flowering season.
3. An application can be made to have a name placed in the book of remembrance as a permanent memorial for ashes in this area.

## **Diocese of Worcester - Rules for the Introduction of Churchyard Memorials**

### **Memorials**

All our churches have churchyards which are 'open' - that is, there is space in each for burials and cremated remains. The introduction of memorials, to mark places of burial, are subject to Rules set by the Chancellor of the Diocese of Worcester (see below). These rules seek to ensure that churchyards are both reverent and beautiful and are kept wisely for future generations; and, that memorial stones match their surroundings and can gradually weather with the passing of time.

### **Reservation of a grave space**

As a benefice we do not arrange or accept the reservation of a grave-space. If the applicant resides outside the Parish at the time of death, they must show a relevant connection with the church or churchyard concerned, and the Parochial Church Council must agree to support their application. This is because there is limited space in the churchyards, and priority must be given to residents of the Parish.

### **Standards for memorials**

#### **1. Dimensions of Headstones**

a) Headstones should be no larger than 4 ft (1200 mm) high measured from the surface of the ground, 3 ft (900mm) wide and 6 ins (150mm) thick. They should be no less than 1 ft 8 ins. (500mm) high, 1 ft 8 ins. (500mm) wide, and no less than 3 ins. (75mm) thick, except in the case of slate materials, which may be thinner but no less than 1 ½ ins. (38mm) thick.

b) Horizontal slab stones not exceeding 2 ft (600mm) wide and 6 ft (1800mm) length, sunk so that the surface of the whole is level and flush with the surrounding earth.

c) Simple crosses not exceeding 3 ft (900mm) in height.

#### **2. Base and Foundation Slab**

A headstone may stand on a stone base, if it is an integral part of the design and does not project more than 4 ins. (102mm) beyond the headstone in any direction, except where a receptacle for flowers is incorporated. The vase must be flush with the top of the base, which may then extend up to 8 ins. (200mm) in front of the headstone. The base must be fixed on a foundation slab set flush with the ground and extending from 3 ins. (75mm) to 6 ins. (150 mm) all round so that a mower may pass freely over it. The base of a memorial may be so shaped that it can be inserted directly into the ground at sufficient depth to ensure stability.

#### **3. Materials**

a) All memorials must be made of natural stone with no reflecting finish, or of hardwood. Stones traditionally used in local buildings, or stones closely like them in colour and texture, are to be preferred. Black, green, blue or red granite are not permitted under these terms and conditions, nor granite darker than Rustenburg grey, no black nor white marble, synthetic stone or plastic.

b) An Incumbent or Priest in Charge may propose to the Diocesan Advisory Committee that stones of other types and colours should be permitted in a particular churchyard and, when the proposal has been considered by the D.A.C. he may seek the authority of the Chancellor to introduce such stones into the churchyard. If the Chancellor authorises the introduction of such stones, he will specify the further types and colours which may be used.

#### **4. Designs**

Headstones need not be restricted to a rectangular shape, and curved tops are preferable to straight-edged tops. Memorials in the shape of a heart or a book are not permitted, nor are photographs, portraits, kerbs, railings, chains, chippings or glass shades.

#### **5. Sculpture**

Figure sculpture and other statuary can only be authorised by faculty.

#### **6. Epitaphs**

Inscriptions must be simple and reverent and may include appropriate quotations from literary sources. Inscriptions should be incised, or in relief, and may then be painted. Plastic lettering is not permitted.

#### **7. Trademarks**

No advertisement or trademark should be inscribed on a headstone. The mason's name may be inscribed at the side in unleaded letters, no larger than ½ in (13mm) in height.

#### **8. Flowers and Vases**

Except where the design of a headstone includes an integral receptacle, any flowers must be placed in a removable container sunk completely into the ground. Small stone vases not exceeding 12 ins. (300mm) x 8 ins. (200mm) x 8 ins. (200mm) may be permitted- Consent for these must be obtained and the appropriate fee paid- The use of plastic and other artificial flowers is not permitted.

9. The Parochial Church Council may level any grave mound at its discretion at any time more than twelve months after the latest interment in the grave.

10. Prior to any headstone being erected, the person responsible for installing that stone shall make the grave free of any dip or mound.

11. Commemoration after cremation and burial of ashes: The Parochial Church Council (PCC) encourages the use of a Book of Remembrance. However, individual memorial stones are allowed; they should be of standard material, size and design. Such memorial tablets may be erected vertically or horizontally and must not exceed 21 ins. (520mm) x 21 ins. (520mm). The total surface of a horizontal stone must be level and flush with the ground.

**Review date 2026**



### **POLICY FOR DATA PROTECTION**

The Benefice uses personal data about living individuals for the purpose of pastoral care.

The Benefice recognises the importance of the correct and lawful treatment of personal data. All personal data, whether it is held on paper, on computer or other media, will be subject to the appropriate legal safeguards as specified in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) act for 2018.

The Benefice fully endorses and adheres to the principles of GDPR. These principles specify the legal conditions that must be satisfied in relation to obtaining, handling, processing, transportation and storage of personal data. Employees and any others who obtain, handle, process, transport and store personal data for the Benefice must adhere to these principles.

#### **The Principles**

The principles require that personal data shall:

1. Be processed fairly and lawfully and shall not be processed unless certain conditions are met
2. Be obtained for a specified and lawful purpose and shall not be processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose
3. Be adequate, relevant and not excessive for those purposes
4. Be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date
5. Not to be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose
6. Be processed in accordance with the data subject's rights
7. Be kept secure from unauthorised or unlawful processing and protected against accidental loss, destruction or damage by using the appropriate technical and organisational measures
8. And not transferred to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area, unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data.

#### **MAINTAINING CONFIDENTIALITY**



All personal data is to be treated as private and confidential information and is not to be disclosed to anyone other than those who need access to the personal data in order to facilitate Pastoral Care and Staff Administration in the administration of and day-to-day ministry of the church.

There are four exceptional circumstances to the above permitted by law:

- Where we are legally compelled to do so
- Where there is a duty to the public to disclose
- Where disclosure is required to protect our interest
- Where disclosure is made at your request or with your consent

## **USE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION**

Use of personal data is for the purpose of Pastoral Care and Staff Administration which includes: -

The Day-to-Day Administration of the Church: e.g. Pastoral care and oversight including calls and visits, preparation of ministry rotas, maintaining financial records of giving for audit and tax purposes, Electoral roll, Membership of groups and committees.

Contacting you to keep you informed of Church Activities

## **THE DATA:**

Data held by and on behalf of the individual churches within the Benefice will not be used for any other purposes than set out in this section.

Data is distributed among several computers (both Church and privately owned) and in paper format by those who have a need to either maintain, process or use the data.

A record of where data is located, what the data is, what it is to be used for and who maintains, process or uses the data is to be maintained by the Church office under the authority of the Data Controller. Due to the distributed nature of the data there is no obvious master data set, therefore, data which is master data is to be declared in the data record held by the Church office, and is to be used to maintain subsidiary data sets. When the circumstances surrounding the holding of data change then the Church office is to be notified of the changes.

The Rector will act on behalf of the Bishop of Worcester as the Data Controller for the Benefice. The Vicar may further delegate data controller status to others for pastoral care.

Where data is stored electronically it is to be stored on a machine that is adequately protected physically and electronically with the latest updates to the operating system, antivirus, firewall and any other technical measures which are necessary.

Electronic data is to be password protected. On computers that are dedicated to Church use, logon passwords with appropriate inactivity time shall be the minimum protection. For other machines, file and/or programme passwords must be used to protect the data.

When data is no longer required, electronically held data is to be erased, ensuring that temporary files and backups are also erased, and paper records are to be shredded.

Personal information will not be passed onto any third parties outside of the church environment.

**Subject Consent:** The need to process data for normal purposes has been communicated to all data subjects. In some cases, if the data is sensitive, for example information about health, race or gender, express consent to process the data must be obtained.

**Retention of Data:** No Data will be kept for longer than its purpose except in areas of Safeguarding and finance.

### **Rights to Access Information**

Employees and other subjects of personal data held by the Benefice, have the right to access any personal data that is being kept about them on computer and also have access to paper-based data held in certain manual filing systems. This right is subject to certain exemptions: Personal Information may be withheld if the information relates to another individual.

**Subject Access:** All individuals who are the subject of personal data held by the Benefice is entitled to:

- Ask what information that the benefice holds about them and why.
- Ask how to gain access to it.
- Be informed how to keep it up to date.
- Be informed what the benefice is doing to comply with its obligations under the GDPR act 2018.

Any person who wishes to exercise this right should make the request in writing to the Data Controller, using the standard letter that is available online from [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)

The Benefice aims to comply with requests for access to personal information as quickly as possible, but will ensure that it is provided within one month of receipt of a completed form unless there is good reason for delay. In such cases, the reason for delay will be explained in writing to the individual making the request within the original one month.

A Data Privacy Notice will be displayed in the individual churches within the Benefice, inline with the requirements of GDPR.

### **Photograph and Media Policy**

Sharing photos and videos of parishioners and events within the benefice is a privilege for us, and we intend to respect and honour it.

In this digital age, the church takes many pictures of baptisms, choir performances and concerts, worship services, mission trips, special presentations, Sunday School, fellowship activities and community outreach projects. We intend to use these pictures to record, to promote, and to celebrate our church ministries. Pictures are used on bulletin boards, in slide shows and PowerPoint presentations, in printed publications, and on our church web site and social media.

- Printed publications include church newsletters, brochures, invitations, books, newspapers, magazines, etc.
- Online sharing includes church newsletters (online version), website, Facebook page and groups.

### **Media Use Policy**

- Photos and videos are almost always of people in public spaces, and/or at public events.
- We will not knowingly post anything that would be embarrassing, objectionable or hurtful to anyone in a photo or video.
- We do not identify children or youth by name in the photos and videos we use in our online and printed publications.
- To ensure the privacy of children and adults, the use of full names or personal identifying information requires verbal approval for adults and written approval for children from the parent or legal guardian.
- If copyright for a photo or video is held by someone other than the benefice, we will receive permission to post it and gladly provide credit if desired by the photographer.
- We will gladly remove any photo or video upon request from our online sites. If you see a photo that includes you or your child and would like it removed from the site, please call Bruce Rienstra on 01386 792222

### **Media Opt-Out Form**

Some persons may choose not to have their photos, or photos of their children, used and we respect their wishes. Therefore, we are providing a Media Opt-Out form for individuals or families who prefer NOT to have photographs of themselves used by the church. If you have no objection to the use of your photos, you do not need to sign or return this form.

Copies of this form are available in the church office and online.

## **Permissions for Use of Our Media and Content**

We ask for your respect in return. Unless otherwise indicated, photographs and videos are the property of and are copyrighted by the benefice and may not be used for any purpose (including but not limited to: downloading, printing, distributing, linking) without permission from the incumbent.

We grant permission for limited sharing of our media and content. You may share YouTube Videos, website articles and Facebook stories on social media. You may link to our posted content but may not download and share content on a personal web page without permission. Please add attribution to the Benefice for any media you share with permission.

Policy for review in 2026

# DATA PRIVACY NOTICE

## The ARCH Benefice with Norton and Lenchwick



### 1. Your personal data – what is it?

Personal data relates to a living individual who can be identified from that data. Identification can be by the information alone or in conjunction with any other information in the data controller's possession or likely to come into such possession. The processing of personal data is governed by the General Data Protection Regulation (the "GDPR").

### 2. Who are we?

The PCC's of the ARCH Benefice with Norton and Lenchwick are the data controller. This means they decide how your personal data is processed and for what purposes.

### 3. How do we process your personal data?

The PCC complies with its obligations under the "GDPR" by keeping personal data up to date; by storing and destroying it securely; by not collecting or retaining excessive amounts of data; by protecting personal data from loss, misuse, unauthorised access and disclosure and by ensuring that appropriate technical measures are in place to protect personal data.

We use your personal data for the following purposes: -

- To enable us to provide a voluntary service for the benefit of the public in a particular geographical area as specified in our constitution;
- To administer membership records;
- To fundraise and promote the interests of the charity;
- To manage our employees and volunteers;
- To maintain our own accounts and records (including the processing of gift aid applications);
- To inform you of news, events, activities and services running in The ARCH Benefice with Norton and Lenchwick
- To share your contact details with the Diocesan office so they can keep you informed about news in the diocese and events, activities and services that will be occurring in the diocese and in which you may be interested.

### 4. What is the legal basis for processing your personal data?

- Explicit consent of the data subject so that we can keep you informed about news, events, activities and services and keep you informed about diocesan events.
- Processing is necessary for carrying out legal obligations in relation to Gift Aid or under employment, social security or social protection law, or a collective agreement;
- Processing is carried out by a not-for-profit body with a political, philosophical, religious or trade union aim provided: -
  - the processing relates only to members or former members (or those who have regular contact with it in connection with those purposes); and
  - there is no disclosure to a third party without consent.

## **5. Sharing your personal data**

Your personal data will be treated as strictly confidential and will only be shared with other members of the church in order to carry out a service to other church members or for purposes connected with the church. We will only share your data with third parties outside of the parish with your consent.

## **6. How long do we keep your personal data<sup>1</sup>?**

We keep data in accordance with the guidance set out in the guide “Keep or Bin: Care of Your Parish Records” which is available from the Church of England website.

Specifically, we retain electoral roll data while it is still current; gift aid declarations and associated paperwork for up to 6 years after the calendar year to which they relate; and parish registers (baptisms, marriages, funerals) permanently.

## **7. Your rights and your personal data**

Unless subject to an exemption under the GDPR, you have the following rights with respect to your personal data: -

- The right to request a copy of your personal data which the PCC's of the ARCH Benefice with Norton and Lenchwick holds about you.
- The right to request that the PCC's of the ARCH Benefice with Norton and Lenchwick corrects any personal data if it is found to be inaccurate or out of date.
- The right to request your personal data is erased where it is no longer necessary for the PCCs of the ARCH Benefice with Norton and Lenchwick to retain such data.
- The right to withdraw your consent to the processing at any time
- The right to request that the data controller provide the data subject with his/her personal data and where possible, to transmit that data directly to another data controller.
- The right, where there is a dispute in relation to the accuracy or processing of your personal data, to request a restriction is placed on further processing.
- The right to object to the processing of personal data.
- The right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioners Office.

## **8. Further processing**

If we wish to use your personal data for a new purpose, not covered by this Data Protection Notice, then we will provide you with a new notice explaining this new use prior to commencing the processing and setting out the relevant purposes and processing conditions. Where and whenever necessary, we will seek your prior consent to the new processing.

## **9. Contact Details**

To exercise all relevant rights, queries or complaints please in the first instance contact the benefice administrator at [arch@archbenefice.org.uk](mailto:arch@archbenefice.org.uk)

You can contact the Information Commissioners Office on 0303 123 1113 or via email <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/email/> or at the Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire. SK9 5AF.

# **The ARCH Benefice with Norton and Lenchwick**

## **Health and Safety Policy**



As a benefice, we understand that we owe a duty of care to ensure the safety of those who visit or use our church, hall or churchyard. We also know that, where we are an employer or control premises in certain circumstances, we have to meet the requirements of health and safety law.

In particular, we know that if we are an employer having five or more employees, we are required to have a written health and safety policy. As such, we have drafted this policy to meet our duty under Section 2(3) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

### **General statement of policy**

Our policy is to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that our activities are carried out safely and do not pose a risk to the health of our employees, volunteers, congregation, visitors and others who may use the church, churchyard or any other building we are responsible for. This will be in accordance with good practice and any relevant statutory provisions where they apply.

The Parochial Church Council for each individual Parish (PCC) accepts its overall responsibility for this. We will ensure that adequate resources are made available to achieve this objective. Any decisions we make will have due regard for it. We will appoint a member of the PCC to have specific responsibility for this policy and its implementation. To keep matters under review, we will include 'health and safety' as a standing item on the agenda for all meetings of the PCC. We will monitor the effectiveness of the policy, amending it where we believe it is no longer valid.

It is the duty of each employee and volunteer to exercise personal responsibility for their own safety and that of others. This policy will be brought to their attention. We will try to ensure that everyone involved with the church plays their part in its implementation.

Further detail about our organisation and arrangements for managing health and safety is set out in this document.

### **Organisation and responsibilities**

1. The person with overall responsibility for implementing our policy is:  
The Church Wardens, or another person designated by the Parochial Church Council. They will ensure that the arrangements set out in this policy satisfy any health and safety law, seeking specialist health and safety advice if necessary.
2. All employees and volunteers have a responsibility to cooperate in the implementation of this policy and to take reasonable care of themselves and others while on church

business or premises.

## **Arrangements**

This section sets out our general arrangements for managing health and safety and dealing with specific risks. We have removed any points that do not apply to our activities.

### **General Arrangements**

#### **Risk Assessment**

Where necessary, we will complete risk assessments to identify what we need to do to comply with health and safety law. We will record our findings, implementing any necessary precautions. We will review and revise these where we suspect that they are no longer valid.

We will ask all users of the church for uses beyond normal services to undertake a risk assessment of their event to ensure compliance with our policy and the law.

#### **Information and Training**

We will provide any necessary information and training for our employees and volunteers in a timely manner. We will keep a record of what is provided. We will also give relevant information to contractors and self-employed people, and casual users of the building, who may need this to complete their work safely.

#### **First Aid**

We will provide adequate first aid facilities including – as a minimum – a suitably stocked first aid box and a person who will take charge of the first aid arrangements. We will also provide relevant information for employees and volunteers.

Our first aid box is located in:

Harvington Church - The Choir Vestry, commonly referred to as the kitchen

Church Lench – The Vestry

Abbots Morton – The welcome cabinet by the front door

Rous Lench – The vestry

The person in charge of first aid arrangements is: The Church Wardens

#### **Accident Reporting**

We will record details of any accidents that occur, (in an accident book if required). We will report to the enforcing authority and keep records of certain accidents to employees, volunteers and members of the public in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations.

All events are to be reported directly to the Church Wardens as soon after the incident as is possible. Contacts can be found in the church porch.

#### **Monitoring**

We will make periodic checks to ensure that our precautions remain effective and adequate. We will also ensure that any lifting, work or electrical equipment and



church utilities are inspected as necessary to ensure that they remain safe. We will keep records of the checks we make.

### **Contractors**

If we employ contractors, we make sure that they have their own health & safety policy and Public and Employers Liability insurance by asking to see copies of the relevant documents.

### **Specific Arrangements**

#### **Asbestos**

We will take steps to identify the presence of asbestos in our buildings and, if so, assess any risk from it. We will then implement any plan to manage that risk. We will also provide relevant information to others who might need it (e.g. building contractors). We will keep records of the checks, assessments and plans we have made.

#### **Bell Ringing**

We will ensure that adequate precautions are in place to protect bellringers and others who may enter the ringing room and bell chamber. This may include any emergency evacuation procedure; a safe means of heating; the provision of fire extinguishers, the provision of emergency lighting and the notification of safety procedures to visiting bellringers. All guest groups using the chamber will be informed of this policy and made aware of the necessary requirements and contacts.

#### **Church Buildings**

We will ensure that the fabric of our buildings is regularly inspected to make sure it is safe. Defects will be repaired as soon as is practicable bearing in mind that a faculty may be required. Where necessary, temporary measures will be taken to prevent danger until permanent repairs can be made. This will include glazing. A log of these needs and timeframe for their repair will be kept by the Church Wardens and reported to PCC as and when they occur or are resolved.

All members of the PCC are asked to report issues they note as soon as possible to the Church Wardens.

#### **Churchyard**

We will ensure that boundary walls and gates are kept in good repair. Where appropriate, we will have trees inspected by a competent person and have any necessary work carried out to make them safe. Headstones, tombs and monuments will be checked each quinquennial period to ensure they are properly maintained. Where our churchyard is formally closed, we will report any concern to the Local Authority or Parish Council.

#### **Construction Work**

Where maintenance, refurbishment and restoration work is planned for our church, we will identify what we need to do to ensure the safety of all those concerned before work starts. We will also determine if we have any responsibilities under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations and comply with these if necessary.

## **Electricity**

We will ensure that any electrical system, fixed machine and portable appliances is inspected, PAT tested and maintained by someone who is competent to prevent danger. Any defective equipment will not be used until it is repaired or replaced. We will keep records of the checks made.

## **Events**

Where we intend to hold large or unusual concerts, services or other fund-raising events, we will identify any additional precautions that are necessary and implement these. Such events, beyond usual services, will require a separate health and safety risk assessment to be undertaken, and logged with the Church Wardens.

## **Fire**

We will complete a specific risk assessment to identify what steps are necessary to prevent, detect and take in the event of a fire. We will record our findings in a report to the PCC and retain them within the minutes, implementing any necessary precautions. We will review and revise these where we suspect that they are no longer valid, and minimally in each quinquennial period.

## **Heating Systems**

We will ensure that any heating system is suitably maintained and checked annually by a competent person. Any defects found will be corrected immediately and we will keep records of the checks made.

## **Hazardous Substances**

We only use domestic cleaning or horticultural products and petrol. We will ensure that these are stored, used and disposed of in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions taking any necessary precautions that are specified.

## **Lifting Equipment**

We will ensure that any lifting equipment is properly maintained and thoroughly examined periodically by a competent person.

## **Manual Handling**

We will avoid the need for lifting or carrying heavy objects as far as possible. Where this is not practical, we will make use of lifting aids (such as trolleys) or other precautions including team lifting.

## **Preparation of Food**

It is the policy of the PCC that food is not prepared on the premises. However, we, and all those who use the kitchen, will ensure that when pre-prepared food is brought into the building for serving, that we use a clean and disinfected work surface, utensils and equipment. We will store food in such a way as to avoid contamination and meet Food Standard Agency good practice.

We will provide hand-washing facilities and suitable arrangements for the disposal of waste.

However, we require all users of the premises to remove their own waste and recycling at the conclusion of their event.

**Slips and Trips**

We will implement suitable precautions to prevent slips or trips, taking account of any difficulty the frail, elderly or disabled may have in negotiating access. We will make periodic checks to ensure that floors, coverings, steps and pathways remain in good condition, free from obstruction and that any precautions (such as handrails, lighting) remain adequate. We will correct any defects identified, keeping records of the checks, we make. We will have arrangements in place to manage pathways in winter weather.

**Working at Height**

Where possible we will try and avoid the need for work at height. Where this is not practicable, we will ensure that any work is properly planned to identify suitable precautions. We will make sure that these are implemented, including the provision of any training and checks to ensure the safety of any equipment used.

**Work Equipment**

Any work equipment (including any hand tools) we provide will be suitable, in good condition and properly maintained. Where necessary, some equipment (such as ladders) will be regularly checked to make sure they are safe. We will keep records of any checks we make.

**Working Alone**

We will identify circumstances where our employees and volunteers work alone and implement suitable precautions to ensure their safety.

This policy is to be reviewed in 2026

## The ARCH Benefice with Norton and Lenchwick

### A POLICY FOR HANDLING, USE, STORAGE AND DISPOSAL OF DISCLOSURE INFORMATION



Disclosure information is stored in the parishes of the benefice by the relevant appointed individuals. A log is kept on behalf of the benefice by the Bishop's Representative for Safeguarding, listing

1. applications sent to the Diocesan DBS & Safeguarding Administrator, together with the reasons for requesting either enhanced or enhanced plus disclosure;
2. any posts for which it has not been deemed necessary to request a disclosure, together with the reasons for the decision

When the notification of the outcome of a disclosure is received, including any conditions, this is stored with the applicant's self-declaration form in a locked filing cabinet or safe which is under the control of either the incumbent/priest in charge/team vicar, or the appointed Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Copies of application forms are not taken and parishes do not accept or hold copies of an applicant's copy of the disclosure.

Out of date self-declaration forms and DBS notifications are not disposed of but kept in perpetuity.

Following diocesan protocol:

- Records of any children's activities, Sunday school/junior church/youth clubs/choirs and related safety risk assessments should be retained for **50 years** after the activity ceases.
- Personnel records relating to lay workers who do not work with children and vulnerable adults should be retained for **6 years** after employment ceases.
- Personnel records relating to lay workers whose role involves contact with children and vulnerable adults including applications, references, disciplinary matters, job descriptions, training and termination documentation should be retained for **75 years** after employment.

It remains the case, of course, that routine parish records of adoption of Safeguarding Policies and the appointment of PCC volunteers and any employees working with children or vulnerable adults (e.g. confidential declarations, log of CRB/DBS check processes, CRB/DBS check outcome letters, references, job descriptions etc. and records of appointments) should be securely retained in line with these guidelines.

This policy is to be reviewed in 2026

## **The ARCH Benefice with Norton and Lenchwick**



### **A POLICY FOR DISCLOSURE STATEMENT**

***Statement of policy in respect of Disclosures from the Disclosure & Barring Service when using the facility offered by the Bishop of Worcester in his corporate capacity as an Umbrella Body registered with the Disclosure & Barring Service.***

The Benefice:

1. Is committed to complying with the DBS Code of Practice and committed to the fair and sensitive use of Disclosure Information, and where an applicant feels that this has not happened an appeal process will be available, details of which can be obtained in writing from the PCC Secretary or from the Diocesan Secretary, 16 Lowesmoor Wharf, Worcester WR1 2RS.
2. Is committed to the recognition of each individual's abilities, skills, experience and qualifications and will take every step to ensure that these are given appropriate weight and consideration in the appointment or recruitment process.
3. Will ensure that each paid post or volunteer position is assessed for the appropriateness of a DBS Disclosure, that any advertisement or other indication of a paid post or volunteer position will indicate the level of Disclosure to be sought, and that any offer of a paid post or volunteer position will be subject to the receipt of satisfactory Disclosure information. Every change in role or responsibilities will be regarded as a new post for DBS Disclosure, in line with recommendation from the House of Bishops.
4. Will request candidates for a paid post or volunteer position to submit in writing any convictions or other disqualifying behaviour that might be revealed in the Disclosure process in order to assist the recruitment decision process. This information will only be taken into account when relevant to the post in question. It should be submitted in an envelope clearly marked 'Private and Confidential' and handed to the person specifically identified for this purpose in the recruitment process.
5. Is committed to encouraging the re-submission of applications for Disclosure in respect of all paid employees and volunteers for whom this is appropriate as part of its ongoing strategy for the protection of children and vulnerable adults, in line with recommendations from the House of Bishops.
6. Is committed to the safe storage and disposal of disclosure outcome information in line with guidance from the Diocesan Office. Its policy is attached.

### **Appeals and complaints procedure**

Every effort is made to ensure that all recruitment decisions involving Disclosure information are made sensitively and fairly. Should an applicant for a paid post or volunteer position feel that this has not happened in their case the matter can be referred to the Diocesan Secretary, 16 Lowesmoor Wharf, Worcester WR1 2RS who will instigate an independent assessment of the issues in question.

The applicant should submit the appeal or complaint in writing within six months of the Disclosure, stating their name and address, the nature of the complaint or appeal, the date of the Disclosure document concerned, the identity of the person or appointing body responsible for making the appointment to the paid post or volunteer position, and any other relevant information.

This policy is to be reviewed in 2026