The Parochial Church Council of the Parish of New Town & The Hythe, Colchester, St Stephen's Church (The PCC)
Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders

- This is The PCC's written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders and will be made available to all applicants whose role requires a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check, at the start of the recruitment process.
- We make every subject of a criminal record check submitted to DBS aware of the existence of the DBS Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.
- We are committed to the fair treatment of our current and potential employees, volunteers and office holders regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.
- We are committed to equality of opportunity for all applicants and aim to select people for roles with us based on their skills, abilities, experience, knowledge and, where required, qualifications and training.
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 was introduced to ensure that ex-offenders who had not re-offended for a period of time since their last conviction are not discriminated against when applying for jobs. Unless a post is exempted from the 1974 Act, we are not allowed to discriminate on the grounds of spent convictions. We will only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that we are legally entitled to know about.
- As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended in 2013 and 2020), and where appropriate the Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) Regulations 2002 (as amended), using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), we will comply fully with the DBS code of practice, all relevant legislation and the House of Bishops' Safer Recruitment & People Management Guidance together with all other relevant House of Bishops' policy, and undertake to treat all applicants for positions fairly.
- For roles that are exempt from the provisions of Section 4(2) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 by virtue of being included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended in 2013 and 2020), and where appropriate in the Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) Regulations 2002 (as amended), we will ask applicants to disclose all criminal history, spent and unspent (other than protected cautions and convictions) and require them to apply for a standard or enhanced DBS check appropriate to the role.
- For roles covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 we will not ask an applicant to disclose any criminal history that is spent. We will only ask an applicant about their unspent criminal history.
- An application for a criminal record check will only be required where a role has been thoroughly assessed against the relevant DBS criteria and indicates that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for the relevant level of DBS certificate will be required.
- Where criminal history, or a potential risk of harm, is disclosed at any point in the recruitment and selection process, including a blemished DBS certificate, we will ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place about any offences or matters that might be relevant to the position. We will refer this information to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team who have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences.
- We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar an

individual from working with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offences.

- We undertake to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment or appointment to a voluntary position.
- Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to the withdrawal of an offer of employment or appointment to a voluntary position.
- We will ensure that all those who are involved in the recruitment and selection process have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the recruitment of ex-offenders and eligibility of a role for a criminal record check.
- This Policy will be reviewed every three years.

Approved: By the PCC **Date October 2026**