



**HILL
STREET**
Presbyterian Church

Complaints Procedure

Approved by the Kirk Session June 2026

Review every 3 years

1. Introduction

This procedure explains how we handle complaints about the behaviour, decisions, or activities of church staff, elders, volunteers, or members.

We encourage concerns to be resolved **informally** where possible, but a **formal process** is available when needed.

2. Who Can Make a Complaint?

Anyone who has a genuine concern about any aspect of church life and feels it cannot be resolved informally.

3. What This Procedure Covers

A complaint may relate to:

- A person
- A group or activity
- A service provided by the church

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not.

4. What This Procedure Does *Not* Cover

4.1 Safeguarding concerns

These must be reported immediately to the **Designated Person for Safeguarding**. Safeguarding concerns do **not** follow this complaints process.

4.2 Employment grievances

These follow the staff grievance procedure.

5. How to Make a Complaint

You may complain:

- In person
- By phone
- In writing

We will always try to resolve the issue **informally first**. If this is not possible or appropriate, the complaint will move to the **formal process**.

6. Informal Process

We encourage concerns to be addressed directly and respectfully, following Biblical principles of reconciliation where appropriate.

If informal resolution is not possible, the formal process begins.

7. Formal Process

Complaints should be made to the **Minister** or **Clerk of Session**.

When a complaint is received, we will:

1. Acknowledge it within 7 days
2. Begin reviewing it within 14 days
3. Gather information and speak to those involved
4. Inform the person complained about (unless this would prejudice the process)
5. Recommend what action, if any, should be taken
6. Write to the complainant with the outcome

8. Multiple or Complex Complaints

Where several related complaints are received, the Kirk Session may consider them together. Complex or historic complaints may take longer to review.

9. Police Investigations

If the police are involved, the church may need to pause its review until their investigation is complete.

10. Reporting Obligations

The church may need to report certain matters to statutory authorities or the Charity Commission. If so, we will inform the complainant.

11. Confidentiality

We handle complaints sensitively and share information only with those who need to know. However, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if external reporting or legal advice is required.

Complainants should also keep matters reasonably confidential.

12. Appeals

If you are unhappy with the outcome, you may appeal to the **Kirk Session** within a reasonable timeframe.

The Session will:

- Acknowledge the appeal within 7 days
- Review it within 14 days
- Appoint someone to consider it
- Confirm the outcome in writing

Appeals should not introduce new evidence unless it could not reasonably have been provided earlier.

If still dissatisfied, you may contact the **Presbytery Clerk** or the **Charity Commission**.

13. Vexatious Complaints

If repeated complaints are made about the same issue after it has been addressed, the church may decide not to respond further.



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COMPLAINTS FORM

Your Details	
Name	
Address	
Phone	
Email	

Is anyone else involved in making this complaint or are you raising the complaint on behalf of someone else?
Please give details:

Complaint Details

Date(s)

Person(s)
Involved

Please clearly describe the nature of your complaint:

Supporting Information

State the name of the person who is the subject of the complaint				
State what happened, when and where				
Provide the contact details or statements of any witnesses				
Include any additional information that you think would be helpful				
Have you tried to resolve this matter informally?	Yes		No	
If no please explain briefly why you decided not to try to resolve the matter informally.				

If you tried to resolve this matter informally, what happened?

Declaration

HSPC will treat your data carefully and in accordance with the church's privacy policy.

The church cannot guarantee to keep the fact and details of your complaint confidential if it is necessary and proportionate to share that information in order to review and resolve your complaint.

Signature:

Date: