

Statement by the PCC of Christ Church New Malden relating to the Revd. Stephen Kuhrt

On 22nd June, our Vicar, Stephen Kuhrt was suspended from ministry by the Bishop of Southwark as a result of Stephen's attempt to whistle-blow about serious safeguarding failures by Southwark Diocese. Two allegations have been made against Stephen.

First, following the consistent refusal of both the Diocese and the National Safeguarding Team to engage with these concerns, Stephen shared a paper he had written with a small number of people trusted to advise him on how to respond to this non-engagement. In doing so, Stephen admits that he made a mistake in not redacting the names of people within the paper. It was this that enabled the Diocese to weaponise his concern for safeguarding against him.

Second, Stephen's paper also detailed an incident from 2007, when his actions resulted in the conviction of a sex offender despite the discouragement and inaction of the Diocese. Solely on the basis of information volunteered by Stephen in the paper, it is now alleged that he did not follow correct safeguarding procedures. Stephen strongly denies this allegation.

The Churchwardens and PCC are keen to assert:

- 1. that there have never been any allegations of improper behaviour towards any vulnerable person made against Stephen**
- 2. that they believe the Diocese's response to be disproportionate and inappropriate**
- 3. that they are resolute in their support of Stephen.**