THE PARISH OF
ST WILFRID
HARROGATE

Media Management Policy

Introduction

In a media age, it is vital that a PR/Media strategy evolves to allow good communications with the media. This is a dual aspect. There are times when the parish may wish to be *proactive* making sure that its voice is heard and that a story is presented positively as part of a media strategy, press release, or planned approach. There are other times when this needs to be *reactive* as the parish is asked to comment on a national, local or specific situation.

Whilst many media outlets are responsible in their approach, there can be times when, without appropriate training or experience a comment or quote can be made to the media which has unintended consequences. Most organisations, and larger parishes have a single point of reference (or dedicated Media Team) for all media/PR enquiries and operations. This allows the effective control and dissemination of information. In most parishes, this is often one of the clergy, who has media training or experience. They may then delegate to other appropriate people, who themselves have experience or training, and who, in such a situation can also be briefed on the 'line' or 'message' that needs to be communicated.

Policy

1. Without exception, all approaches for stories, interviews, quotes, information, etc, should be referred to the Team Rector as the official 'spokesman' for the parish.

2. For specific areas of work, the Team Rector may delegate media management to a named individual who must liaise with the Team Rector about the content of any article(s) to be places in the public domain.

3. If the Team Rector is unavailable, off sick, or away, then contacts should be worked though on the attached media contacts list, starting from the top and working downwards. During a longer absence a primary contact will normally be the next person on the list.

4. If a journalist is insistent that they need a comment because of a deadline, anyone contacted **must** refer them to the available lead media contact. This is the case even if the enquiry might seem trivial. The person contacted should send an immediate text to the Team Rector or the appointed Primary Contact with the details below in point (4).

5. If a member of staff, officer or senior layperson is contacted by the media they should:
    a. Refer the journalist to the Team Rector or the Primary Contact
    b. Make note of their name, organisation and ask for a contact number
    c. Ascertain the nature of the enquiry and the urgency of the response required.
    d. Be positive and helpful!

6. Should a member of staff, officer or senior layperson feel put under pressure, please **do not** say 'no comment' – simply refer the caller to the Team Rector or Primary Contact.

7. No press release, interview or comment may be given by a member of staff, officer or senior layperson without the prior approval of the Team Rector or Primary Contact.

8. No journalist, photographer, cameraman or film crew may conduct an interview, film or photograph in the church or within the grounds without the prior consent and approval of the Team Rector (or Primary Contact). Without permission, this is trespass. Any such journalist must be asked to stop, and contact the Team Rector (or Primary Contact).

9. In the absence of the Team Rector, (or Primary Contact) or other eligible person from the communications list, the Diocesan Communications Officer should be contacted (Canon John Carter 07798 652707).

10. Should any journalist wish to interview or ask comment from any member of staff, officer or senior member of the laity, they should refer this to the Team Rector (or primary contact) who may decide to be present at any such meeting.

11. All members of the congregation should be discouraged from speaking to the media, unless cleared first with the Team Rector (or Primary Contact).

12. The control of the parish website, and social media accounts may be delegated to a named member of staff or individual. They should have due regard to this policy and liaise with the Team Rector as a matter of normal practice.

Approved by the PCC:	
Review date:	
Signed: PCC Chairman	
Signed: PCC Secretary	