



Lone Working Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

Church staff and volunteers will from time to time be in situations where they are a “lone worker”. Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the employer has a duty of care to advise and assess risk for workers, when they work by themselves in these circumstances.

In a church context, staff and volunteers are all regarded as “workers”. In the rest of this document, “church workers” covers both staff and volunteers.

Risks associated with Lone Working include both physical and Safeguarding concerns. It is a general rule that

No adult should be alone, unless within eyeline of another adult, with a child under 18 years of age or a vulnerable adult in person or online.

Church workers also have a responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work.

2. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy applies to all situations and includes

- those working in a church building on their own; more than one person working in the church but in different locations eg: bell tower and church; working when the church is not normally open.
- those working on behalf of the church in other premises eg: Home Communion including Care Homes, Pastoral visits by clergy and others to someone’s home.

3. AIMS OF THE POLICY

The aim of the policy is to:

- Increase church workers’ awareness of safety issues relating to lone working;
- Ensure that the risk of lone working is assessed in a systematic and ongoing way, and that safe systems and methods of work are put in place to reduce the risk, as far as is reasonably practicable;
- Ensure that appropriate support and training is available to all church workers, that they are equipped to recognise risk and provided with practical advice on safety for when working alone;

- Encourage the full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working;
- Minimise the number of incidents and injuries to staff related to lone working.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4(a). THE CHURCH IS RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- Assessing 'reasonably foreseeable risks' – identifying, evaluating and managing risks associated with lone working.
- Requesting that church workers have a means of summoning help if necessary.
- Providing the resources for putting the policy into practice.
- Ensuring adequate arrangements are in place for monitoring incidents linked to lone working, so that the effectiveness of this policy is regularly reviewed.
- Ensuring all church workers are aware of and given a copy of the policy.
- Identifying situations where people work alone and considering alternative arrangements where appropriate.
- Managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording of incidents.
- Ensuring that appropriate support is given to church workers involved in an incident.

4(b). CHURCH WORKERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- Taking reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their actions.
- Following guidance and procedures designed for safe working.
- Notifying the church of appropriate contact details.
- Reporting any dangers or potential dangers they identify, or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone.
- Reporting all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and requesting guidance as appropriate.
- Reporting any personal health issues which may affect their safety when working alone.
- Taking part in training designed to meet the requirements of the Lone Working Policy.
- Being aware of and complying with the requirements of the Lone Working Policy.
- Having emergency contact details available (eg on a card or on their phone) which may be accessed by first responders as needed.

5. GUIDANCE FOR RISK ASSESSMENT FOR LONE WORKING

- Is the person medically fit and suitable for lone working?
- Are there adequate channels of communication in an emergency?
- Does the workplace or task, present a special risk to the lone worker?
- Is there risk of violence?
- Are women especially at risk if working alone?
- Is any known risk attached to a home visit?
- Has an alternative to a home visit been considered?
- Has safe travel between appointments been arranged?

- Have appropriate reporting and recording arrangements been made?
- Can the whereabouts of church workers be traced?

6. WORKING ALONE IN THE PARISH

- All activities which may result in lone working should be subject to a risk assessment and recommendations agreed to enable them to be carried out with minimal personal risk-
- The PCC / DCC will undertake risk assessments and put into place appropriate procedures, recording mechanisms, information, training given etc with a date for review and identify person/s responsible for carrying this out.
- Any person working in church whilst it is open to the public should receive training specific to the role.
- Where possible, all church workers should leave details of where they are going and estimated time of arrival back to base/home with a designated person/the Parish Office.
- Ideally, all church workers should carry a mobile phone, the number of which is known to a designated person/the Parish Office.
- When arranging one-to-one meetings, church workers should consider whether contact could take place in an alternative location where confidentiality can be maintained, but other persons would be in the vicinity.
- Church workers should be aware of the location of first aid facilities.
- No work should be undertaken alone at height or on electrical systems.
- All church workers should be given a copy of the Lone Working Policy and be aware that the church will not be responsible for any harm they may suffer if they work outside it.

6 (a). Working alone at St Helens

- When working alone in the main body of the Church the main external door should be closed, except when the church is open to the public and unattended when the doors should be kept open.
- When working alone in the vestry, the outer Church door should be closed, but the vestry door must remain open.
- When working alone in any church room, kitchen or boiler room, the door of the room where work is taking place must remain open.
- When working alone in the Parish Centre office the outer door may be closed but the office door must remain unlocked.

6 (b). Working alone at St. Michaels

- When working alone in the sacristy, the main body of the church, or the church room/kitchen, all external doors must be locked against access from the outside, the door to the corridor may remain unlocked.
- When working alone in the boiler room the door to the corridor should remain open.

6 (c). Working alone at St Nicolas

- Any person working alone in the church whilst it is open to the public should receive training specific to the role.

- When working alone in the vestry with the outer Church doors locked, the vestry door must remain open.

6 (d). Home Visits

- Ideally, visits should not be made alone when a home is being visited for the first time.
- Should not be made alone if there is a known history of physical abuse, aggression, drug abuse or mental health issues.
- Alternatives to a home visit should be considered if arrangements can be made to ensure confidentiality.

7 REPORTING AN INCIDENT

Any incident (including 'near misses') should be reported as soon as practicable to a member of the clergy, church warden or the Parish Centre, and recorded appropriately

Details must include:-

- Name of worker.
- Location/ address where the incident took place.
- Time of incident.
- Nature of incident.
- Name of perpetrators, if known.
- Type of incident e.g. accident, abuse, violence.
- Details of any injuries.
- Details of help summoned, eg Police.

ACCIDENTS should be recorded in the appropriate accident book.

Revd Dr Jen Brown

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