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**Lone Worker Policy**

Version 1 agreed on 9th November 2022

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section heading** | **Page Number** |
| Table of contents | 2 |
| Preamble | 3 |
| Responsibilities | 3 |
| Risk assessments | 4 |
| Suitable precautions:  Administrative staff  Volunteers  Pastoral visits  Contact details  Further information on personal safety | 4  4  4-5  5-7  7  7 |
| References | 7-8 |
| Model Lone Working Risk assessment | 9-10 |

**Lone Worker Policy**

**Preamble**

The Parochial Church Council(PCC) acknowledges that there are situations when volunteers and staff are on their own when conducting their duties and, further, that visiting vulnerable adults at home is an essential element of many church workers’ role (Church of England, 2018). No worker should ever plan to be alone on church premises with children or young people; but if they do find themselves in that situation, it is important that another adult is made aware immediately. The worker should assess the risks involved in sending the child or young person home, against the risks and vulnerability of being alone with them.

This policy aims to assist everyone in undertaking lone working safely and in accordance with the Code of safer working practice within the Safer Environment and Activities Practice Guidance (2019). Furthermore, the church must adhere to Governemnt guidance (HM Governement, 1999) in the knowledge that it is a requirement that when an organisation employes more than five people, a simple risk assessment should be recorded and control measures identified for their work.

**Responsibilities**

The PCC has a duty of care for all those who work on their behalf, whether paid or unpaid, and believes that all people should be able to serve in a safe environment. It is the responsibility of the PCC to try to mitigate any risks, but recognises that it may not always be possible to eliminate all risks.

It is the responsibility of the lone worker to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others and not intentionally or recklessly interfere with, or misuse anything provided in the interest of health, safety or welfare. They must observe all health and safety rules and procedures at all times, and report any unsafe conditions or practice in writing to their line manager, Health and Safety representative, Churchwarden and/or the incumbent.

**Examples of situations where workers are likely to be working on their own include:**

* Administrative staff in offices/church buildings
* People conducting their duties in church alone (e.g organist, verger, open church volunteer or other volunteer)
* People conducting pastoral visits on their own

**Risk Assessments**

In situations where there is a regular prospect or working alone, a risk assessment should be conducted (see template within this document) and should include the following factors:

* Risk of violence- a good working definition of this is *any behaviour which produces damaging or hurtful effects, physically or mentally on people* (Suzy Lamplugh Trust, 2022).
* Tools, equipment, tasks
* Medical conditions - is the person able to undertake this role safely on their own?
* Physical environment

Completed risk assessments should be filed with appropriate security in the parish office at St Godwald’s or St John’s.

**Suitable precautions**

The proposed lone working should be planned in advance and noted in an appropriate diary or other record. Where possible it should be notified to an appropriate person but this is not necessary when work is done at home and does not involve face to face contact with other people.

**Administrative staff**

* Are you able to control who can get into your working environment?
* Is there a First Aid kit in the office or your working area?
* Is the Accident Book kept up to date?
* Do you know the specific address of your place of work in the event of a need to contact the emergency services?
* Have you got an exit strategy in place?
* Is your point of exit well lit with no hiding points?
* Is there a personal alarm that you can use?
* Is your mobile phone fully charged?
* If you are leaving the office, do you have a mobile phone safety app on the phone(‘bsafe’ or ‘SOS-Stay Safe’ are available for Android or iphones)?
* Is all equipmemt that you use checked to ensure it is safe?
* Have you been trained to use this equipment?
* Are there any hazardous materials in your working environment?
* Are there any hazards in your working environment?
* Has a risk assessment been undertaken for your role?
* Do you regularly review safety in your working environment?

**Volunteers**

**Entering and leaving the Church or church building**

On entering the church, any lone worker should lock the door behind them and immediately ensure that all other exits are secure and locked. All doors should be kept locked and only opened if you are sure of the person wishing to gain entry. Should you find another exit unlocked, you should leave the building immediately, only re-entering when accompanied by a second responsible adult.

On leaving the building, ideally, one person will lock up and another must remain present until the building is secured which enables double checking that all candles are extinguished, lights out, sound system and heating are off. In the instance of a lone worker leaving the building, then all of the afore-mentioned should also be checked.

If in doubt, always phone someone to let them know your situation.

**Pastoral visits**

## Before the visit

* Gather as much relevant information as possible about the person being visited and use this to assess the risks of the visit and any measures that might need to be taken to reduce these:
  + What is known about the individual’s current circumstances?
  + Have they experienced some recent trauma that might increase the risk of assault? (Bereavement, separation from a partner, prosecution, removal of children etc.)
  + Have other church officers, or other agencies, had recent contact that could provide insight into the individual’s current temperament?
  + Are there drug or alcohol issues?
  + Are other people going to be present – who and how are they related, and might they exhibit any risk as far as is known?
* Ensure an agreed person knows where you are going and when you expect to return
* If you’re part of a team, keep a team diary, (online if possible), recording when, where and who you are visiting, that all members of the team have access to
* Ensure you have a charged mobile phone with you
* Where appropriate, carry a torch and/or personal attack alarm
* Pre-arrange visits – avoid unannounced visits whenever possible
* Be clear about why you are visiting and the limit of your ‘helping’ relationship
* Carry identification with you that shows you are representing the Church
* Complete the Lone Visiting Checklist at the end of the guidelines in this policy

## Before entering the premises

* Always try to park in a well-lit area, facing the direction in which you need to leave
* Carry with you the minimum required for the purpose of the visit
* Listen and observe and try and evaluate what is happening within. If you are uncertain, it is better to leave than to put yourself at risk
* Before entering the premises consider the presentation, disposition and demeanour of the occupant
* Be aware of any dogs on the premises and ask the owner to put the dog in another room if you feel uncomfortable
* Always follow the person into the premises – do not walk in front of them
* Upon entering the room consider where the visit is to be conducted and try and position yourself in easy reach of a clear exit, unimpaired by furniture or a closed door

## During the visit

* Keep your mobile phone switched on during the visit so that you can use it quickly in an emergency
* It is advisable to never give or accept money or gifts of any kind from the person being visited, although it is acknowledged that this is not always possible. If a donation is made to the church during a pastoral visit, cash or cheques should be handed over to the church treasurer or other finance official as soon as possible following the visit and include a record of the person’s name, donation, date and time.
* If you feel uncomfortable or threatened at any time, leave as soon as possible, or make an emergency alert call, in accordance with a pre-agreed procedure. e.g. The lone worker under threat contacts an agreed person and says *“I’m running late, can you let Mr. Smith know!”* The person who receives this call should immediately notify the Police, providing them with all relevant details of the church officer’s location and circumstances and then contact the appropriate church officer (Clergy or church warden).

After the visit

* Contact the agreed person to inform them you have arrived home safely
* Pass on any safeguarding concerns to one of the Parish Safeguarding Officers
* When appropriate, share information with other members of the Team in order for any lessons to be learned and practice improved
* Keep a record of visits- date, time, people present and any concerns
* All records and case files of any concerns should be retained and stored securely and in line with good safeguarding practice and General Data Protection Regulation(GDPR) 2018, thus acknowledging the requirement of accountability and transparency in relation to personal data

**Contact details**

**CLERGY: Rector:** David Ford 07973 412625

**Team Vicars:** Rayman Khan 07952 170840

Paula Honniball 07902 098500

Curate: Richard Sandland 07970 068150

**Health & Safety Representatives:**

**Administrative staff:** Irene Caswell-Berwick

Lauren Jones 01527 577759

**Parish Safeguarding Officers:**

Suzanne Thompson, All Saints and St. Godwald’s: 07790 249510

Adrienne Hall, St. John’s and St. Andrew’s: 07712 945318

Eleanor Newbold, Christ Church, Catshill and St Luke’s, Marlbrook: 07837 351203

Dorothy Woodhouse, Holy Trinity and St Mary, Dodford: 07840 905799

**Further information on personal safety is available from:**

Suzy Lamplugh Trust: [www.suzylamplugh.org](http://www.suzylamplugh.org)

National Churchwatch: [www.nationalchurchestrust.org/clergy-home-security](http://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/clergy-home-security) or [www.national](http://www.national) churchestrust.org

Home Office: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office>

West Mercia Police <https://www.westmercia.police.uk>

Victim Support <https://www.victimsupport.org.uk>

**REFERENCES**

Church of England (2018) *Parish Safeguarding Handbook*. Church House Publishing: London.

HMGovernemnt (2003) The Management of Health and Safety at Work and Fire precautions (Workplace) (Amendment) 2003. Accessed at: [https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2003/2457/contents/made on 28.09.202](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2003/2457/contents/made%20on%2028.09.202)

National Safeguarding Team (2019) *Safer Environment and Activities.* Church House Publishing: London.

Suzy Lamplugh Trust. *Lone Working Policy for those working in the Church.* Accessed at:

[*https://d3hgrlq6yacptf.cloudfront.net/5f209069c4808/content/pages/documents/1582502418.pdf*](https://d3hgrlq6yacptf.cloudfront.net/5f209069c4808/content/pages/documents/1582502418.pdf)on 28.09.2022

Model Lone Working Risk Assessment checklist

Name of adult to be visited

Address of adult to be visited

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Does the adult have a history of violence, or threatening behaviour?  *If yes, please detail below* | *Yes/No/*  *Not known* |
|  | |
| 2. Is the adult a risk to themselves? | *Yes/No/*  *Not known* |
|  | |
| 3. Does anyone living in the house have a history of violence or threatening behaviour?  *If yes, please detail below* | *Yes/No/ Not Known* |
|  | |
| 4. Does anyone who visits the adult have a history of violence or threatening behaviour?  *If yes, please detail below* | *Yes/No/ Not Known* |
|  | |
| 5. Does the adult have any vulnerabilities that would make it inappropriate for him/  her to be visited alone (e.g. by a single male or female?) | *Yes/No/*  *Not Known* |
|  | |
| 6. Does the adult have any health problems that may cause unpredictable behaviour?  *If yes, please detail below* | *Yes/No/ Not Known* |
|  | |
| 7. Are there any health risks associated with visiting the adult at home? (Examples might be infestation, smoking, intravenous drug use, infectious diseases, dangerous pets?)  *If yes, please detail below* | *Yes/No/ Not Known* |
|  | |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 8. Is the adult’s home situated in a well-lit area?  *Please detail below any difficulties you are aware of.* | *Yes/No/*  *Not Known* |  |
|  | |
| 9. Is there suitable parking nearby; is this well- lit?  *If known, please state below the best place to park* | Yes/No/  *Not Known* |
|  | |
| 10. Is there easy access to and exit from the home, more than one exit from the home. Are doors obstructed and not easily opened.  *If yes, please detail below* | *Yes/No/ Not Known* |  |
|  | |  |
| 11. Are there any other risk factors or hazards (Including mental health, substance/alcohol misuse)?  *If yes, please detail below* | *Yes/No/ Not Known* |
|  | |
| 12. Please detail below any other information you think is important | |
|  | |
| Where you have responded ‘yes’ or ‘not known’, detail below what action you need to take to reduce the risks to both yourself and to the adult being visited and anyone you have spoken to in order to receive  advice: | |
|  | |
| *Completed by ……………….......................... Role:*  *Copy passed to Incumbent/ Parish Safeguarding Officer on ……………………………... Signed ……………………………………………………*  *Date:* | |