



Lone Worker Policy

The PCC are very aware that there are possible dangers for those who work alone in church and is mindful of its responsibility to care for and protect all its clergy, authorised ministers, employees and volunteers. On this basis, this policy offers guidance to all those who find themselves working alone in our churches, halls, and other buildings.

For pastoral visiting, including visits in homes and nursing homes, refer to our separate Guidelines For Pastoral Visiting.

A number of people work alone in our churches both as paid employees and volunteers. Such people might include on a regular basis:

- The Parish Administrator;
- Members of the Ministry Team;
- Sacristans;
- Churchwardens;
- Flower Arrangers;
- Cleaners;
- Those undertaking maintenance work.

The Risks

This list is not exhaustive but identifies some of the risks faced by lone workers in our buildings:

- Physical accident (from injury, fire, etc such as when using kitchen or maintenance equipment when there is no one available to fetch help if necessary);
- Sudden illness, again when there is no one to raise the alarm;
- Physical violence or threat of abuse in any form from a visitor;
- Sexual behaviour or advances deemed to be inappropriate or threatening;
- Accusations by a visitor of inappropriate behaviour by staff / volunteers when there are no witnesses;
- Stress caused by working in isolation or from abusive calls or digital media.

The PCC has agreed to the following guidelines on working alone in our buildings:

1. Lone working should be avoided where possible;
2. Lone workers should ensure they know where all exits are situated and carry keys at all times;
3. Lone workers must ensure that someone knows where they are, what you are doing and for how long you expect to be there. This person would be most likely be a family member but if this were not the case it could be a member of the ministry team or a churchwarden;
4. On leaving the premises, the person you have informed must be made aware;
5. Lone workers must ensure they have a charged mobile phone with them at all times;
6. Lone workers planning to work for an extended period (e.g. beyond half a day), should arrange to make calls at intervals;
7. Whilst working alone in the building all external doors must be kept locked for security and safety reasons;

8. If working alone in the Parish Office at St Dunstan's, the office door must be kept locked, although the main church door may be left open;
9. Ladders (other than a short step ladder) and power tools should not be used whilst working alone;
10. Lone working should not take place when it is dark outside.
11. All incidents, defects, suspicious behaviour, or threats should be communicated to the Churchwardens or Incumbents.
12. **In an emergency, always phone 999.**

Policy agreed and adopted by the PCC at a meeting on 24th April 2024.