



— DIOCESE OF —
LONDON

The Parish Church of St Andrew's, Kingsbury



THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL'S **LONE WORKER POLICY**

Summary:

Working alone is an essential practice for many in our church, either within the church buildings, in their own homes or other people's homes. Lone working cannot always be avoided. However, this policy recognises the risks, and tries to minimise them by common sense and appropriate measures.

Authorisation:

This policy was adopted and authorised by the PCC in 2019 and will be reviewed annually by the PCC. It forms one part of our wider Church Health and Safety at Work Policy which is available from the Parish Office, along with our current insurance policies and risk assessments.

Who does this affect?

- The Vicar and Churchwarden(s)
- The Pastoral Assistant
- All key holders who are not listed in the volunteer groups below
- Volunteers who come into church for: cleaning, sacristy matters, service preparation, arranging the flowers, church administration, or preparing the church for special services, fundraising events and concerts
- Those doing maintenance in church
- The Organist
- The Choir Director
- Those counting money or taking cash to the Bank

The Policy:

The purpose of this lone worker policy is to ensure that all church members are aware of the specific risk in working alone and to set out the respective responsibilities of the PCC and each individual to minimise such risks. The PCC commit to carrying out their responsibilities in a thorough and disciplined way. It is expected that all church members will abide by this policy.

The Risks:

This list is not exhaustive but identifies some of the risks faced:

- Physical accident (from injury, fire, etc when there is no one available to fetch help if necessary)
- Sudden illness, again when there is no one to raise the alarm
- Pre-existing medical conditions which might place you at increased risk
- Physical violence or threat of abuse in any form from a visitor
- Sexual behaviour or advances deemed to be inappropriate or threatening

- Any increased risks to women and young persons
- Hazards such as the use and handling of equipment which normally requires more than one person to operate safely
- Accusations by a visitor of inappropriate behaviour by staff / volunteers when there are no witnesses

Responsibilities:

The PCC / Church Warden(s) should show that “reasonably foreseeable risks” have been identified and updated regularly with appropriate action taken to minimise them. They should also ensure that there is adequate insurance cover for all lone working, with standard practices adhered to. For example the accident books are in place and properly monitored. To equip vulnerable staff with appropriate communications tools so they can summon help when needed. To ensure that every member of the church feels that the PCC has taken all reasonable steps to ensure their safety. To insist that everyone follow the guidelines laid down on safe solo working. Individuals (staff and volunteers) – also need to ensure that they don’t put themselves in unnecessary danger. If possible do visits in pairs. Do not agree to meet anyone in an isolated place. Consider carrying a personal alarm. Be alert to possible dangers and minimise them – for example keep lights on until a building is completely vacated; using safety guards on power tools – and not using them when in the building alone. Inform the Wardens or Vicar of any suspicious behaviour noted or any threats made to them.

Advice:

- When working in the church alone (or visiting someone in their home) make sure someone else knows where you are, and what time you are due home. Get them to check on you if you are not home when expected and if they can’t contact you, to raise the alarm by contacting the Vicar in the first instance - 07905 535703.
- Do not work at heights when alone; do not use power tools when alone.
- When in the Church at night please switch on enough lights for safe movement around the building and for your own peace of mind.
- Cash should only be counted in the Choir Vestry or Sacristy.
- Choose different routes to the bank, when taking cash.
- A charged pay-as-you- go mobile is available in the Choir Vestry to be used in case of emergency. Workers are also encouraged to carry a personal charged mobile phone if they have one, to use in case of emergency.
- If working in church alone, do not unlock the main doors until someone else has joined you.
- The side gate should ordinarily be held open with the latch when there are people in the Church but the back door kept shut.
- If you should find yourself alone in the church and in a vulnerable position, move to the back door porch and bolt the door into the Church. From here make contact with the emergency services and / or the Vicar. Leave the church by the side door if you think it is safe enough to do so. If you do not feel it is safe to leave, please lock the back gate closed and use the mortise lock on the side door also to secure your position.
- Periodic visits and observations of the person working on their own

DATE: 2021

REVIEW DATE:2022