

LONE WORKING POLICY & PROCEDURES

Purpose

St Oswald's Church acknowledges that lone working, either on a regular or ad hoc basis, is a necessary practice for many and may take place on the church premises, in your own home or other venues. Lone working is perfectly safe and legal, but you do need to take some basic precautions to ensure that you minimise any risks to your health or safety and the purpose of the Lone Worker Policy & Procedures is to ensure that you are equipped to recognise any potential risks and are able to minimise them by using your own common sense and by adopting any appropriate measures that are suggested.

Who works alone?

This policy will apply to anyone who works alone either on a regular or ad hoc basis and will include you if you:

- are ever working entirely alone in the church buildings or grounds where you are out of sight of other colleagues – this might be for a variety of reasons
- are attending/preparing for a meeting or undertaking some other church other activity
- are travelling alone either by car or public transport in the course of work [but not commuting];
- working from home if you are alone.

This list is not exhaustive.

The risks Lone working poses many risks including, but not exclusively:

- physical accident 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 when there are no witnesses – this is not covered in this document but is covered in detail in the Church of England's Code of Safer Working Practice [code-of-safer-working-practice-02.07.2021.pdf](#)

Your Responsibilities

If you are ever working alone, you must be alert to possible dangers and minimise them by: following these basic precautions:

- reading the Lone Working Policy & Procedures and familiarising yourself with the content including the Personal Safety Assessment below;
- telling someone where you are working and asking them to check on you if you are not home/back in the office etc when expected and if they can't contact you, to raise the alarm;

- always carrying a fully charged mobile phone or radio and having the telephone numbers that you might need to call;
- ensuring the security of the area that you are working in for example locking doors;
- always carrying your keys with you so that you can exit by another route/door if necessary;
- reporting any hazards or safety concerns immediately to the Vicar and or Churchwardens as soon as reasonably possible
- reporting any incidents that make you feel uncomfortable or any suspicious behaviour as appropriate, as soon as possible
- not working at heights or using power tools when alone – you must have a colleague with you;
- ensure that an appropriate risk assessment is undertaken – see a template in Appendix 2 below
- please also check the attached Appendices for more specific lone worker guidance. If you are responsible for other employees or volunteers (e.g. clear up days where people may follow up tasks not completed at a group opportunity), you must ensure that they are provided with any more specific lone worker requirements that are appropriate to their role.

APPENDIX 1: PERSONAL SAFETY ASSESSMENT

Courtesy of Suzy Lamplugh Trust. Use this flowchart for your own personal safety to assess your environment and working practices and to obtain an instant assessment of the situation.

Assess the situation – what are you planning to do?				
Question	Do you have ANY concerns about your personal safety?			
Answer	NO	YES		
Action/ Answer	Proceed with care and remain vigilant	PERSON you are dealing with	ENVIRONMENT you are working in	TASK You are doing with
Question	Are you sure that you have covered all the risks?	Can you AVOID or MINIMISE the risk so that you feel confident?		
Answer	YES		NO	
Action	Proceed with care ...don't forget that things change!		DO NOT continue. Ask for help. Consult with an appropriate manager ASAP.	

APPENDIX 2: RISK ASSESSMENT

Identify all foreseeable hazards	Identify who is at risk	Apply a risk rating	Identify control measures	Revised risk rating
<i>Think about the worst case scenario – what could go wrong</i>	<i>This could be employees, volunteers, members of the public, visitors etc or specific groups of people eg the young, the elderly, the differently abled etc</i>	<i>This will usually be either LOW [unlikely to happen] MEDIUM [likely to happen] or HIGH [very likely to happen]</i>	<i>What can you do to minimise the impact of the hazard, think about every action and capture them all here</i>	<i>After applying your control measures, what is your revised risk rating? If it isn't LOW - seriously consider whether there is a safer way to carry out the activity or whether the lone worker should be accompanied.</i>

APPENDIX 3: WORKING ALONE IN THE CHURCH

It may be necessary to work alone in the church. Please ensure that:

- Someone knows that you are lone working.
- Tell them what you are planning to do and how long you are expected to be so that they can raise the alarm on your behalf if you fail to check back in with them.
- You should text them when you enter and when you leave the building.
- The front door should be locked behind you and keys removed (so that other people with keys can still enter the building)
- Keep your mobile on and sufficiently charged to ensure that you can use it if you need to. You should always keep your mobile with you as you move around the premises, not simply left on the side or in your coat pocket (which you have taken off).
- You should know where all the fire exits, and all other exit routes are as a key holder of the church premises.
- If you feel remotely uncomfortable you should take action to remove yourself from the situation or get someone to help you. Trust your instincts!
- Your mobile should have key Church members in the address book for ease (in addition to the notices for emergencies in the porch and rear notice board). Use these numbers as appropriate but for emergencies please call 999.

Issue Date: March 2025

Updated link May 2025

review Date: March 2026

Distribution: All key holders & Church Members