

**SAINT MARY  
NEWINGTON**



KENNINGTON  
LONDON SE11 4JQ

## **Lone Worker Policy**

The PCC are 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 the church or visiting adults who may be vulnerable in their homes (or nursing homes) on behalf of the church.

### **Working alone in the church**

1. Prior to commencing any work in church or hall the person involved should familiarise themselves with the appropriate risk assessment document, and undertake their own visual checks prior to working.
2. Lone workers should ensure they know where all exits are situated.
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 friend or one of the people listed below:

Lone Worker WhatsApp Group. All members of staff and volunteers likely to work alone will be added to this group and should report arrival and departure whether on site or off site (home visits etc).

On leaving the premises, the person you have informed, should be made aware that is the case.

4. Lone workers must ensure they have a charged mobile phone with them at all times.
5. Lone workers planning to work for an extended period (e.g. beyond half a day), should arrange to make calls at frequent intervals.
6. Whilst working alone in the building at night, all external doors must be kept locked for security and safety reasons; keys should not be left in locks.
7. Ladders and power tools must not be used whilst working alone.
8. Exiting and locking up the church after an event should, if possible, be undertaken by two people.

### **Visiting adults alone in their homes or nursing homes**

Visiting adults, who may be vulnerable, in their homes (or nursing homes), is an essential element of many church officers' roles. The Church of England defines a church officer as "anyone appointed by or on behalf of the Church to a post or role, whether they are ordained or lay, paid or unpaid." Many parishioners will be well known to the church officer

and where there have been no previous concerns the level of risk to the church officer or parishioner during visits will usually be low. However, unexpected circumstances can be encountered, some of which may place a church officer at risk. For example, the unexpected presence in the home of a relative or friend with a history of violence or threatening behaviour. Unfortunately, case histories also show that a parishioner may be at risk from a church officer. For these reasons it is very important to ensure that church officers and parishioners are as safe as they can be, and that there is accountability and transparency in the manner in which church officers engage in lone working or visits to residential homes.

9. A risk assessment should always be undertaken for a first visit, whether the person to be visited is known or not (see appendix); further risk assessments will need to be undertaken if there are any material changes in circumstances.
10. If there are any concerns or risks known, a risk assessment should be undertaken prior to each visit, using the questions below. In these circumstances, careful consideration should be given as to whether the visit is absolutely necessary, or whether it would be better to be accompanied by another adult.
11. Risk assessments should be undertaken periodically (at least once a year) in relation to all parishioners visited at home.
12. A written record should be kept by the Adult Safeguarding Officer of all risk assessments undertaken

To assure the person being visited of their safety, and for the safety of the church officer, and irrespective of whether a risk assessment has been made:

13. A charged mobile phone should always be carried on a home (and nursing home) visit.
14. The church officer should tell the Lone Working WhatsApp group where they are going and when they are expected to return and should message the group when they leave to return home/to church.
15. Wherever possible, the church officer should avoid calling unannounced but by arrangement (this may be a telephone call just before going).
16. If the church officer is not known to the person they are visiting, they should carry identification, photographic, if possible, or a note of introduction from the church.
17. The church officer should always knock on the door before entering a room or home, respecting the person's home and possessions.
18. If appropriate and necessary, the church officer might leave information about how and where they can be contacted (by telephone or email) and a central contact point for the church (incumbent).  
Unless absolutely necessary they should not give their home address or phone number.
19. The church officer should always endeavour to be clear about what behaviour from a vulnerable adult is acceptable and what is not, as well as about the purpose and limitations of any pastoral care / support that they are able to offer.
20. The church officer must never offer 'over-the counter' remedies to people on visits or administer prescribed medicines, even if asked to do so.
21. The church officer should not accept any gifts from adults other than token items, to avoid misunderstandings or subsequent accusations. It is preferred that donations are made using the DONA machines on site. If someone wants to make a donation

to the church ,it should be put in an envelope, marked on the outside as a donation, and a receipt (e.g. a handwritten note) given to the donor.

22. Where the church officer considers it necessary to refer the person to an external agency, they should in the first instance speak with the Safeguarding Officer and/or the Incumbent (unless there is an immediate danger). They should then talk this through with the vulnerable adult, seeking his/her permission before passing on personal information. If it is more appropriate for the vulnerable adult to do so themselves, make sure they have all the information they need and that their contact will be expected. If the church officer is concerned about a person and they do not wish to be referred, they should consult with the Safeguarding Officer who may contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.
23. If the church officer is uncertain about what to do, they should seek advice from the Parish Safeguarding Officer and/or Incumbent, either of whom may subsequently seek further advice from the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

Signed:

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**Fr Stuart Singh-Labran**

*Rector*

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**Vicky Okusaga**

*Safeguarding Officer*

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**Joe Isard-McNulty**

*Churchwarden*

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**Hilda Shyllon**

*Churchwarden*

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX: Risk Assessment Checklist for Lone Home (and nursing home) Visits**

Name of adult to be visited: \_\_\_\_\_

Does the adult have a history of violence, or threatening behaviour? If yes, please detail below.	Yes / No / Not known
Is the adult a risk to themselves? If yes, please detail below.	Yes / No / Not known
Does anyone living in the house have a history of violence or threatening behaviour? If yes, please detail below.	Yes / No / Not known
Does anyone who visits the adult have a history of violence or threatening behaviour? If yes, please detail below.	Yes / No / Not known
Does the adult have any vulnerabilities that would make it inappropriate for him/ her to be visited alone (eg by a single male or female?). If yes, please detail below.	Yes / No / Not known
Does the adult have any health problems that may cause unpredictable behaviour? If yes, please detail below.	Yes / No / Not known
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
Is the adult's home in a well lit area? Please detail below any difficulties you are aware of.	Yes / No / Not known

Is there suitable parking nearby, is this well lit? If known, please state below the best place to park.	Yes / No / Not known
Is there easy access to and exit from the home, with more than one exit route and unobstructed doors? If no, please detail below.	Yes / No / Not known
Are there any other risk factors or hazards (Including mental health, substance/alcohol mis-use)? If yes, please detail below.	Yes / No / Not known

Please detail any other information you think is important.

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Risk assessment completed by:

Role:

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

[ ] copy given to the Parish Safeguarding Officer .