

Scheduled for review at PCC annually

LOAN WORKER POLICY (for people working alone)

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of Berkswich

Purpose and scope of policy To provide guidance to staff and volunteers at Berkswich Parish when working alone on behalf of Berkswich Parish, either at the Church, or elsewhere outside their own home. In this policy the term “lone Worker” is seen as the accepted term used to describe anyone who works alone. (on either a short term or long term basis)

Policy Statement The church seeks to minimise the risks of lone working to sensible and acceptable levels. General guidelines for specific situations are provided below. However, it is the responsibility of the individual worker to make a reasonable assessment of any risks when working alone, and to discuss those risks and the appropriate risk control measures with their immediate supervisor.

It is the responsibility of supervising staff (where applicable) to ensure that lone workers under their supervision have the awareness and competency to follow these guidelines.

Policy Guidance

The Lone Worker “Buddy” System

Anyone acting in a lone working situation with any degree of risk should adopt the “buddy” system with another trusted individual. This is an arrangement with another identified individual who acts as a “buddy” and has details of someone’s movements, location and expected time of arriving at home (or at another location). Once the lone worker arrives home at the expected time they contact the “Buddy” to let them know they are safe. However, if they fail to arrive home at an expected time the “buddy” takes responsibility for firstly trying to contacting the lone-worker, then contacting the place they visited, and in a last resort the buddy contacts the police with the details of the lone worker’s movements to raise the alarm.

The “Buddy” must be a specific and named person who agrees to the arrangements and takes responsibility for ensuring the safety of the lone worker. It is therefore important that both the lone-worker and their “Buddy” agree to any specific arrangements, recognise their responsibilities, and maintain the necessary communications to avoid any false alarms.

Procedures to Follow When Lone-Working

Specific Procedures for Lone Working in a Church building:

- I. When any hazards are identified, or work involves any significant risk, you need to ensure that appropriate risk assessments are put into place – whether using existing policies or creating a specific assessment for that task

2. If you are being left on your own after an event or activity check that the building is empty, with another person before they leave,
3. Ensure that all church doors are locked to prevent unauthorised entry to the building and know how to exit the building in an emergency and location of keys
4. Ensure that you have a mobile phone with you that is on, charged and has credit.
5. Ensure that someone knows where you are and when you expect to leave, using the “Buddy” system as detailed above. Let the “Buddy” know when you have left safely.
6. Ensure that you are sufficiently fit and well to be carrying out your tasks alone.
7. Do not attempt anything that you are not trained to do or don't feel safe doing
8. Ensure that you report any incidents or accidents on an incident or accident form (This can also be done by your “Buddy” if necessary)
9. Ensure that you know where to find the first aid kits
10. Ensure that you are familiar with the procedures for dealing with fire

Specific Procedures for Lone Working in the Parish Office

1. The Parish office is relatively isolated and there are times when only one person may find themselves working in the office
2. If you are working alone in the parish office you should ensure that all church and office external doors are locked so that no visitors can enter.
3. If anyone calls at the parish office who is unknown to you, they should not be let in.
4. Instead you should communicate with the caller but make it clear that you cannot let them in to the building and you should redirect them to other sources of help, or advise them of a time to call back when other people will be there.
5. If the visitor is persistent and/or you feel threatened, you should seek help and if necessary call the police

Specific Procedures for Lone Working Outside of the Church

If working alone away from the Church you should consider if your visit might present a risk to you. Most working away from the Church including home visits are likely to be 'low risk' as most of the people and places staff and volunteers visit are likely to be known to the Church. However, this is not always the case, and for people and places that are unknown to you there is a higher degree of risk. The procedures you adopt must therefore take into account your assessment of any risk before you visit and you should seek advice if you are at all unsure.

Visiting people and places who are known to you: (Low Risk)

1. If using the “Buddy” system let your “Buddy” know where you are going, the nature of your visit and your expected time of arrival back
2. Once back safely, let your buddy know you are safe
3. When visiting other locations be aware of hazards such as dogs or unsafe environments, and if you feel unsafe leave.
4. Make sure that you have a mobile phone with you.

Visiting people and places that are not known to you, or where there is a higher degree of known risk.

1. Wherever possible first meetings with an unknown person should be arranged at a public location.
2. If you are visiting someone in their own home for the first time then you should always make the first visit with someone else.
3. Once any risks are established, and if it is felt safe to do so, subsequent visits can be done alone but you must use the “Buddy” system as detailed above. You should ensure that your “Buddy” has full details of your visit, location, and expected time of return and you should contact your buddy once you are safely returned.
4. If, after the first visit you feel that a risk remains to your safety, then subsequent visits must continue to be done with someone else or not at all. Please seek advice on this.

In addition, when visiting people and places unknown you should also:-

1. Carry a mobile phone with you
2. Keep the mobile phone on during the meeting so that you can use it quickly in an emergency.
3. Always follow the person into the building and, if uncomfortable, ask that any dogs or other dangerous pets are removed from the room.
4. Be vigilant to any environmental hazards that may exist in someone’s home and if you feel unsafe leave
5. Familiarise yourself with the quickest means of exit should you need to.
6. Ensure that you seat yourself near to the door so you can exit quickly if needed.

Emergency contacts

If there is an intruder at a church building or you are threatened dial 999 and give the address of the Church:

Holy Trinity Church, Baswich Lane, Stafford, ST17 OBY

St Thomas the Confessor, Kitlings Lane, Walton-on-the-hill, ST17 OLE

All Saints, The Green, Brocton, ST17 OTP

Key holders are as follows; contact them or the designated person for that day.

Holy Trinity

Fr Graham Adamson: 01785 251057, 07979 963 707

Congregational Warden: Mrs B. Foster. 01785 246433

St Thomas’

Fr Graham Adamson 01785 251057, 07979 963 707

Congregational Warden: Mr C. Jones 01785 663883

All Saints

Fr Graham Adamson 01785 251057, 07979 963 707

Congregational Warden: Mr B. Gilson. 01785 660010

(Health and Safety advice is available from Warren Low – 07501 221667)

Declaration

This policy was last approved by the PCC on 12th Sept 2019 and will be reviewed no later than Sept 2020.

Incumbent 

Churchwarden (signed electronically).....

Churchwarden ... (signed electronically).....

DATE 12/9/2019