

**Lone Working Policy**

**Guidelines**

St George’s Church Lincoln wishes to ensure that those working or volunteering are not exposed to unnecessary risk if working alone. These guidelines apply when working alone at the church, or when making home visits to people in the parish or attending other meetings/activities away from the church related to your role. These guidelines are written to minimise the risk of problems that may arise either through allegations being made or having to deal with unwelcome/unacceptable behaviour. The church will make risk assessments of any role that requires someone to work alone on a regular basis. Training can be provided to assist those working with Adults at Risk (Vulnerable Adults).

**Lone working at the Church**

On many occasions there is more than one person in the church or church building but there are times where you may find yourself alone, particularly when opening or locking up. When working alone you should ensure that: -

* The keys are secured and inaccessible to visitors.
* If entering an empty building, lock the doors behind you.
* Call for back up if anything happens that you do not feel able to deal with alone. (see emergency contact numbers on office notice board and in the Vestry.)
* Carry a fully charged mobile phone with you so you can call for help if needed.
* If you are meeting someone in an office/meeting room ensure the seating arrangements allow you to exit the room leaving the person behind.
* If you are the last person in the building or responsible for locking up you should ensure that:

All windows and doors are secured to prevent unauthorised access so that the environment is as safe as possible.

Doors are only opened to allow entry to expected visitors after they have been positively identified.

On leaving the church premises windows are closed and doors locked and relevant alarms set (if applicable).

* If you suspect there is an intruder:

Carry out visual check of the building to check for an intruder. If you feel it is safe to do so, carry out an internal inspection, as far as you can.

Do not put yourself at any unnecessary risk.

Inspect the building externally if that is the safer option.

If an intruder(s) is suspected call the police and call for back up.

Leave the building and secure the door behind you so the suspected intruder is locked in and wait for back up to arrive. Do not re-enter the building alone.

**Visiting people and places on behalf of St George’s Church**

If working alone away from the church premises you should consider if your visit might present a risk to you. Most visits including home visits are likely to be ‘low risk’ as most of the people will be known to you through church, but this is not always the case. If meeting people for the first time consider meeting in a public place and if possible take someone with you.

The following also applies if you are meeting with someone in your own home.

You should always aim to do the following: -

* Whenever possible make prior arrangements to ‘meet’ rather than ‘meet on demand’
* Make a note on the online logging portal the date, time and who and where you are visiting, the nature of the meeting or activity, your estimated time of return to the office or home.
* If you live alone ensure that you arrange with a colleague or trusted person to ring/text to tell them you are home.
* Keep your mobile phone on during the meeting so that you can use it quickly in an emergency.
* Always follow the person into the building, ensure that you seat yourself near to the door so you can exit quickly if needed. (Where meeting in your own home/garden take appropriate precautions.)
* After the pastoral meeting - (face to face, emails, phone) always make a record either in a diary or electronically with the following details:

-When & where meeting/ discussion took place.

-Purpose of meeting

-The time you/ other person left

- who else was present (if applicable)

- brief factual account of what was discussed/ agreed

- any potential or actual safeguarding concerns identified

- any action taken/ to be taken and any decisions made, including advice taken and who shared with.

- sign and date the record and store securely.

* Make sure that you have a fully charged mobile phone with you.
* Supervisors of pastoral visitors should occasionally visit, accompany or observe lone workers to ensure safe practice.

If your plan changes you should contact a colleague or your trusted person/ family member to let them know what is happening and that you are safe.