

Lone Working Policy

1. General Statement of Policy

St Paul's Parochial Church Council wishes to ensure staff and volunteers are not exposed to unnecessary risk while working alone in St Paul's Church.

Lone workers will most probably include:

- The clergy
- The Parish Administrator and Parish Rooms Administrator
- Volunteers from church who come in to prepare the church for worship and associated activities
- Volunteers from church who come in as Welcomers during church opening hours or who unlock or lock the church each day.

2. Definition of Lone Working

Where staff or volunteers are engaged in work (either outdoors or indoors) where there are no other people who could reasonably be expected to come to their immediate aid in the event of an incident or emergency.

3. Risk Assessment

A Lone Workers Risk Assessment has been carried out and used to inform this policy.

4. Good Practice

- A lone worker should notify someone of their intended work hours, especially their return time. They should also ensure that a family member or friend has a contact number to call should they not return.
- A lone worker should ensure they have a method of communication via a mobile phone.

5. Procedures

5.1 Trips, Falls and Illness

- Only undertake tasks you are confident to do. Medium or high risk activities should never be undertaken if you are working alone.
- The Health and Safety Policy is followed to ensure that the building is as safe as possible and risks are kept to a minimum.
- People should only work alone if they are fit to do so and do not have an illness which might cause incapacity or unconsciousness.

5.2 Unfamiliar Visitors

- The exterior doors of the church should remain locked unless they are required to be open for the activity in question (eg for daily private prayer).
- If at any time the lone worker feels uncomfortable due to the presence of a visitor they should ask them to leave the building if they feel able to. If they do not feel comfortable doing this, they should themselves leave the building and call for assistance.
- If the lone worker feels threatened at any time, they should leave the building immediately and call for assistance. Nothing is more important than the wellbeing and safety of our volunteers and staff.

5.3 Intruder

If you suspect someone is in the building when you unlock the church:

- Call for assistance or advice from the Clergy or Wardens or Parish Administrator.
- Assess whether together you should call 999 for the police.
- Do not allow anyone in the building if there is any uncertainty.

If someone breaks into the building while you are inside with doors locked:

- Leave the building if you can do so safely and call for help.
- If you cannot leave the building safely then lock yourself in the vestry if possible and call 999.

If someone forces their way in when you unlock or lock up:

- Walk away from the building and call for help.
- Special care should be taken when locking up after dark – ensure you have a torch and mobile phone at hand.

6. Responsibilities

St Paul's PCC is responsible for:

- Assessing 'reasonably foreseeable risks' – identifying, evaluating and managing risks associated with lone working;
- Ensuring that employees and volunteers have a means of summoning help if they do not themselves possess such an item- they should tell us;
- Ensuring that contact details for employees and their next of kin are kept on file;
- Keeping a record of any health issues that might affect an employee's ability to work alone safely;
- Providing resources for putting the policy into practice;
- Ensuring that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the effectiveness of this policy is regularly reviewed;
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers are aware of the policy;
- Identifying situations where people work alone and considering alternative arrangements, where appropriate;
- Managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents;
- Ensuring that appropriate support is given to staff or volunteers involved in any incident;

Staff and volunteers are responsible for: -

- Taking reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their actions;
- Following guidance and procedures designed for safe working;
- Reporting any dangers or potential dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone;
- Reporting all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and asking for guidance as appropriate;
- Taking part in training designed to meet the requirements of the policy