Lone Worker Policy

Parish of Preston Plucknett

Churches: St James, St Peters, and St Peters & St Pauls

Note: This policy covers Lone Working in the Church, Church Room / Hall (St James), and Lone Pastoral visits

This document explains how St James Preston Plucknett, St Peters Coronation Avenue, and St Peters & St Pauls Lufton will protect their staff as far as is reasonably practicable from the risks of lone working. Working alone is not in itself against the law, and it will often be safe to do so. However, the law requires employers to consider carefully and then deal with any health and safety risks for people working alone. This policy does not apply to outside hirers of the Church and Church Room. Those hirers must make their own Lone Working Arrangements.

Purpose

The Parish is committed to providing a safe working environment as far as reasonably practical that meets the needs of its staff and volunteers. Consideration shall therefore be given to the health and safety implications in respect of Lone Working.

Aims of the policy

The aim of the policy is to:

- Increase awareness of safety issues relating to Lone Working.
- Ensure that the risks of Lone Working are assessed regularly and that systems are put in place to minimise the risk as far as is practical.
- Ensure that appropriate training is available to staff and volunteers that equips them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on safety when Lone Working.
- Encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to Lone Working and reduce the number of incidents/injuries relating to Lone Working.

Policy

All staff and volunteers should be made aware of this policy. Anyone who is or who potentially may be a Lone Worker shall receive information, instruction and relevant training in respect of all identified hazards and the risks involved and all associated risks e.g. violence and aggression and vehicles/driving.

- It is the responsibility of The Parish Health & Safety Officer or in their absence a nominated Churchwarden to coordinate the risk assessment for Lone Workers in consultation with the Parish Incumbent or in their absence the PCC.

- It is a requirement of the Lone Worker to always have with them a mobile phone that is always switched on and that it is fully charged.
- Anyone who is Lone Working shall be given the opportunity to be provided with a personal alarm.
- It is a requirement of the Lone Worker to always have with them a working torch.
- It is the responsibility of the Parish Health & Safety Officer or in his absence a nominated Churchwarden to regularly re-assess risks, reporting the time and dates of monitoring and any changes to the Parish Incumbent or in their absence the PCC. It is the responsibility of the Parish Health & Safety Officer or in their absence a nominated Churchwarden to ensure that workers do not suffer from undue stress because of Lone Working.
- It is recognised that some workers are required to work alone for significant periods of time without direct supervision and in these situations the Parish will ensure that adequate support is provided.

Definition of lone working

Individuals are alone at work when they are on their own, they cannot be seen or heard by another worker, cannot expect a visit from another worker for some time and/or where assistance is not readily available when needed. Therefore, Lone Workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision. This includes establishments where:

- Only one person works on the premises
- One person works separately from others
- One person works outside normal hours
- Conducting work in someone's home other than their own
- Working in premises that are not leased or managed by the Church.

Risk assessment

Risk assessments are conducted for and by all individuals whose working practice makes them vulnerable, and recommendations should be made to eliminate or reduce the risk as far as possible. Where individuals work alone in buildings or conduct home visits, managers should complete the relevant lone workers checklist. Risk Assessments for all activities can be seen in St James' Parish Office or by arrangement with the Parish Health & Safety Officer or in their absence a nominated Churchwarden

Procedure

Individuals will receive information, instruction and supervision in respect of the hazards and risks associated with Lone Working. All individuals are to take relevant and sensible precautionary measures whilst Lone Working. If a member of staff feels that they are putting themselves at risk through Lone Working, they should discuss the situation with their line manager. Further efforts by

the line manager shall be made to eliminate or reduce hazards starting with a process of reassessment of the task.

Risks of lone working

Risk assessments for site based lone workers must include:

- Safe entry and exit
- Location, e.g. remoteness, transport, parking
- Risk of violence e.g. history of violence from the public or the client
- Safety of equipment for individual use
- Channels of communication in an emergency
- Site security
- Security arrangements i.e. alarm systems and response to personal alarms
- Level and adequacy of on/off site supervision

Risk assessments for mobile lone workers must include:

- Premises risk assessment where applicable
- Arrangements for home visits including consideration of alternatives
- Travelling between appointments
- Reporting and recording arrangements
- Communication and traceability
- Personal safety and security

Following completion of risk assessment, consideration must be given to any appropriate action that is required.

Office based staff – office staff

Whenever staff or volunteers work within the office, they should try to ensure that there are other members of the organisation in the building.

If a worker is meeting a client on their own in the office, they should ensure the client does not sit between them and the door and that they have clear access to leave via the door. It is also advisable to tell someone they are meeting with a client on their own.

- If there are concerns about a client, they should be seen in a large office with someone else present

- If this is not possible, make sure that the door is left open
- If a member of staff is seeing clients in the office when no one else is around, check for someone else in the building and make sure that the office door is left open
- Staff must record all details of any visits in their electronic diary which must be made available to all staff, including estimated time of return
- If there is a change to a member of staff's day, they must inform the manager of their expected arrival
- If a member of staff has not arrived by the stated time, a phone call will be made to contact that member of staff

Staff working out of office hours

All staff working out of office hours shall – whether in the office or on site:

- Contact a designated associate and leave the following information before attending the visit:
    - Name
    - Destination
    - Expected time of arrival on site
    - Vehicle make and registration
    - Contact telephone number
- On arrival on site, telephone or text their designated associate with the following information:
    - The expected length of time on site
- On leaving the site, contact their designated associate with the following information:
    - Time of leaving the site
    - Expected home time or details of next destination
- On arriving at home/next destination, contact their designated associate with the following information:
    - They have arrived safely home, or if at a new destination give another expected length of time on site. The process will then recommence until such time as the lone worker completes all works and has arrived safely home. The procedure ensures that the line manager is aware of the staff member's movements during the visit/s.

All delegated associates must be made aware of the line manager's number. If the employee does not telephone their designated associate after an outreach, the associate must contact the line

manager. The line manager will endeavour to contact the employee however if there is no response the police shall be informed.

General Support for Staff and Volunteers

All new Parish staff and volunteers should receive an induction, including reference to the lone worker policy.

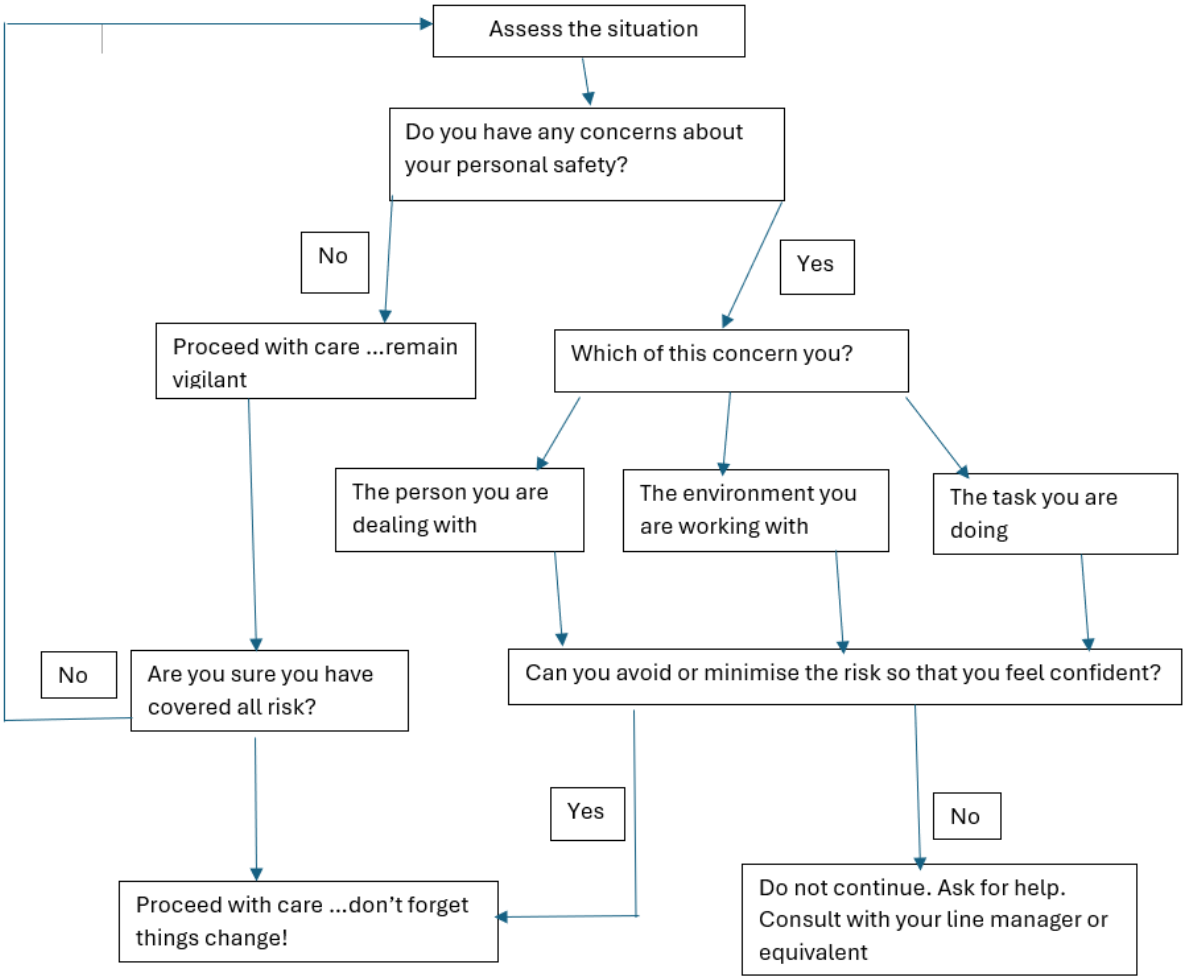
Parish staff and volunteers should know that their safety comes first. They should be aware of how to deal with situations in which they feel at risk or unsafe. They should also be able to recognise how their own actions could influence or even trigger an aggressive response. Managers must therefore ensure that all lone workers' training needs are assessed and that they receive appropriate training.

Those at Risk or considered to be Lone Workers

The following is a list of persons considered to be Lone Workers.

Clergy, Administrators, Lay Pastoral Assistants, Churchwardens, Gardener, Flower Ladies and Church Room / Room Keyholder, Cleaner, Bell Ringer, Youth Worker, Children & Families Worker, and any other person who does or could work alone in Church premises or on official church business.

Parish Lone Working Policy for those working for the Church – Flow Chart



Original document, Ian R Holloway - Parish Health & Safety Officer - August 2022

Review 16th October 2026 by Ivor Jones, St James Churchwarden.

This policy will be reviewed by The Parish Health & Safety Officer or in their absence a nominated Churchwarden , annually or at changes in routines or procedures.

Next review shall be October 2027.