

THE PARISH ⊕ OF ST LE⊕NARD HYTHE

Lone Working Policy

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St Leonard, Hythe

'We aim to be an ever-more welcoming, inclusive, and caring Christian community that reaches out to all, thankful to God who draws us together and gives us life in all its fullness.'

The PCC of St Leonard's, Hythe, is committed to the health and safety of all of our employees and volunteers. This policy is in place to minimise risks to workers and volunteers who may need to work alone and clearly lay out the responsibilities each person has in this situation.

Lone workers are defined as follows:

Employees or Volunteers in the church building:

- who are working out of sight and earshot of another colleague
- who are working alone on the premises
- who are working outside of normal hours, e.g. cleaners

Employees or Volunteers away from the church building:

- who are visiting another premises or venue
- who are working from home
- who are carrying out a home visit to an individual

The potential risks faced by a lone worker include:

- Sudden illness or physical accident which makes the lone worker unable to carry out appropriate first aid on themselves or to call for medical assistance.
- Fire
- Lack of training
- Threat of abuse or physical violence from any visitor.
- Theft and threat of abuse or physical violence from intruders.
- Stress caused by working in isolation or abusive calls or messages on digital media.
- Accusations by a member of the public of inappropriate behaviour by a staff member or visitor when there are no witnesses.
- Sexual advances deemed to be inappropriate and/or threatening.

Principles

The Church recognises that there are times when lone working is necessary, therefore we will carry out the following items to ensure the safety of church personnel. We will:

1. Carry out a risk assessment on the safety of the building to see if it can be improved. E.g. improve lighting, ensure door locks are adequate and carry out any maintenance required promptly.
2. Ensure all First Aid kits will be clearly signposted.
3. Have a clear procedure for lone workers to raise the alarm if an incident occurs (found in Appendix B).
4. Produce a list of key telephone numbers to contact in the event of an incident (found in Appendix A).

Whilst this policy applies to lone working on the church premises, in order to meet the legal responsibilities of the PCC as an employer, the same principles should be applied to lone working from home.

Responsibilities of a lone worker

A prerequisite of lone working is that all staff and volunteers are aware of and can activate and follow the health and safety procedures laid out by the PCC in the event of a fire; threat of abuse and/or physical violence; injury or an intruder. These include a knowledge of basic First Aid, the location of the First Aid boxes and a familiarity with the contents; updated knowledge of emergency exits on the church premises and an awareness of who to call in the event of an emergency.

No person under the age of 18, who is classified as vulnerable themselves or who has a health condition which may lead to sudden collapsing or an inability to follow the health and safety procedures laid out may undertake lone working.

A lone worker:

- Should not take any undue risks in regards to their own health and safety and the health and safety of others. This includes not informing visitors or people on the phone that they are alone in the work place.
- Should safeguard the safety and health of other people affected by their work.
- Should not undertake repair works, use maintenance equipment or work at heights without another person present.
- Should be aware and have taken account of the potential risks before commencing any lone working task.
- Should refer to their line manager for advice if it is unclear if their lone working task will present any undue risk and if their line manager assesses the task to be an unacceptable risk, the task will not go ahead without control measures in place to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.
- Should not misuse equipment provided for their health and safety.
- Should report all accidents, incidents, near-misses and dangerous occurrences.
- Co-operate with the health and safety procedures laid out by the PCC.
- Should use tools and equipment properly in accordance with any training they have been given and following relevant safety instructions.
- Should lock the doors if they are working alone after dark.

Home Visits

Home Visits can also present risks to lone workers and all lone workers who are conducting home visits should make sure they have carried out the relevant risk assessments and precautions first. Lone workers should also ensure their own personal safety whilst visiting people in their homes. If circumstances allow, consideration should be given as to whether two members of staff/volunteers are able to carry out the home visit.

- Lone workers should make others aware of when and where they will be working alone, as well as their planned arrival and departure times.
- Lone workers out in the community should have their mobile phones on them at all times, charged and in good working order.
- Lone workers under no circumstances should conduct a home visit with a child or a person under the age of 18 in their home unless another adult is present.
- Lone workers should always be aware of their safety in someone else's home. Confrontation should be avoided and if the lone worker has any concerns for their own health and safety they must leave immediately.
- Where possible, home visits should be conducted during the morning or early afternoon to prevent the lone worker travelling in the dark through areas that they may not know or feel comfortable in. If this is not possible, working in pairs should be considered.
- Lone workers should ensure that their cars are well-maintained with suitable fuel, MOT and insurance up-to-date and park in well-lit areas.

Something to bear in mind: The Church has a very visible public profile and thought should be given to public notices (e.g. prayer points) and whether they carry a certain risk if the individual concerned is vulnerable.

In the case of an incident (whether it be minor or major) whilst lone working on the church premises, during a home visit or whilst working at home a lone worker must contact one or more of the emergency contacts listed in Appendix A.

In the case of emergencies contact 999. The incident should also be reported in person to your line manager and logged in the incident book located in the choir vestry kitchen.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix A

Emergency Contacts:

Michael Darkins – Vicar

Phone: 01303 266217 (Mobile: 07765 578045)

Email: vicar@slhythe.com

John Wren - Churchwarden

Phone: 01303 487285 (Mobile: 07787 517189)

Email: john261142@outlook.com

Helen Waymouth – Churchwarden

Phone: 07927 277615

Email: oliverwaymouth@gmail.com

Carolyn Chivers – Parish Safeguarding Officer:

Phone: 07971 086093

Email: safeguarding@slhythe.com

Brin Hughes – Crypt Manager

Phone: 07734 806260

Email: brin.hughes@btinternet.com

Appendix B

Procedure for lone worker to raise the alarm if an incident occurs

1. Prior to arriving on site, the lone worker must make others aware of when and where they will be working alone, as well as their planned arrival and departure times.
2. The lone worker should ensure that they are safe; this may involve leaving the where they are lone working.
3. They should call one (or more) of the emergency contacts listed above and inform them of where they are and what incident has occurred.
4. If feeling unsafe, they may return to their own home or go to one of the two addresses listed:

a. The Vicarage
Oak Walk
CT21 5DN

b. Vergers
Church Road
CT21 5DP

In the case of emergencies contact 999.