

THE PARISH ⊕ F ST LE ⊕ NARD HYTHE

Pastoral Visiting Policy

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

“friends, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task [of the daily distribution]” – Acts 6:3

Pastoral Care Overview

Pastoral care is a fundamental ministry of the church; involving fellow believers ministering to people in need in our churches and in communities.

Pastoral Visiting

An important part of pastoral care is the pastoral visit. This is something which naturally occurs when visiting someone who is sick or dying, either at home, in hospital or in a nursing home; when someone is physically unable to get to church regularly, or when visiting a family who have just lost a loved one. Often, though not exclusively, these visits are to older people within our communities. Whatever the reason for a pastoral visit, there are a number of rules that are required to be observed.

Pastoral visiting has the capacity and objective to ascertain need and provide friendship, spiritual and practical care. Those who exercise pastoral care are called to minister God's love to others through their words, their actions and their prayers.

Informal visits may be made by any member of the church acting as an individual, but still bringing the good news of God's love for the world. This policy regulates formal visits undertaken by licensed and authorised ministers where the visitor may reasonably be seen as representing the church.

The guiding principles for any visit are: respect, dignity, privacy, recognition, affirmation, confidentiality and the rights all people have.

Pastoral Visiting Policy

The Pastoral Visiting Policy shall be as follows:

1. Clergy, retired clergy, licenced lay ministers, and authorised lay ministers, are authorised to make formal visits representing the church.
2. Anyone who regularly undertakes formal pastoral visiting should be a member of the Pastoral Working Group, authorised by the PCC to undertake pastoral visiting on behalf of the church. It is a requirement that members of the Pastoral Working Group are regular worshippers within the parish's Anglican congregations. They must have also been through the Safer Recruitment process. The incumbent is the Chair of the Pastoral Working Group and has overall oversight and responsibility for the group.
3. The incumbent, Team Leaders, PSO and PCCs shall ensure that appropriate training is provided for pastoral visiting. It will include the Church of England's National Foundation Safeguarding Course.

Those visiting vulnerable adults or children will require a DBS check, renewed every three years.

4. Members of the Pastoral Working Group are encouraged to offer prayer to those they visit, and how this should be done in accordance with the training given.
5. The Pastoral Working Group shall meet regularly to review the care that is being provided across the parish and to support the group's members. Support between members and the Incumbent outside of meetings is encouraged.
6. All Team members should be aware of all relevant guidelines and procedures regarding Pastoral Visiting and, if necessary, make the Parish Safeguarding Officer aware of any deficiencies or changes needed. The policies and procedures will be reviewed yearly by the PCC.
7. It is vital to understand that Pastoral Visiting is not counselling, and is not a substitute for counselling where it is required.
8. The Incumbent should be informed of visits and new referrals when the Pastoral Working Group meets.
9. A record of all pastoral visits should be kept, noting the arrival and departure times. Generally, visits should not be longer than one hour.
10. Visits should not take place late at night, except in case of emergencies and at the Incumbent's discretion.
11. Preparation for pre-planned visits should include personal prayer.
12. Whilst visits may often be on a one-to-one basis, the need for or value of two visitors should be considered, particularly if vulnerable adults or safeguarding issues may be involved.
13. Where individuals or the risks are unknown (e.g. if this is a first contact with someone we know little about), it may be better to meet in a public space (e.g. a church room when others are around). However, if a visit is considered necessary the visitor will inform the Incumbent and the Parish Safeguarding Officer of the situation, so that they can agree appropriate protocols before the visit.
14. Pastoral visitors may keep limited records as a memory aid, but these records are not for general dissemination. They may also be helpful if there is a subsequent onward referral. Visiting anyone in a pastoral capacity who is not a normal member of a congregation, should always be recorded.
15. Pastoral visitors may not receive any money for their ministry from those they visit. Where those being visited may offer money, a record of any amount over £10 should be made and signed by both the visitor and the one who has given the money. Any money received should be placed in the church donations at the earliest possible opportunity.
16. Pastoral visitors should keep a charged mobile phone on them at all times, and make others (either other members of the team, family or close friends) aware of their planned visit and when they aim to return.

17. Confidentiality is an important aspect of successful pastoral ministry. It is about respecting and building trust with those to whom we minister. What takes place during the pastoral visit should remain confidential to the visitor and the visited. However, in some situations it might be necessary or useful to share information about concerns or issues with the Incumbent and Pastoral Working Group in order to obtain further support. In these situations, the person visited should normally be made aware that information may be shared with others.
18. During the course of a pastoral visit, if any form of abuse or safeguarding concern is observed or suspected it must be reported to the Parish Safeguarding Officer and the Incumbent, using the attached *Hythe Safeguarding Referral Form*, within 24 hours. Should there be a safeguarding disclosure, the visitor should advise the person visited that safeguarding matters cannot be kept confidential and this must be reported within 24 hours.

Should there be imminent risk to life, the pastoral visitor should ensure their own safety and call 999 as soon as possible.

Care for The Pastoral Visitor

1. Pastoral visitors need to ensure they are taking care of their own health and well-being as they offer care to others. This includes ensuring they are obtaining sufficient rest, exercise and sleep and are looking after their own relationships, and being willing to admit when they have not got the capacity to take on specific individuals.
2. Pastoral visitors need to ensure they are not working out of their depth in a detrimental way to themselves or the person, that they are working within their abilities and competencies and that they are prepared to refer or signpost a person to others when needed.
3. The PCC and the Incumbent have a particular responsibility to offer pastoral care to the members of the Pastoral Working Group.

Key Contacts

Carolyn Chivers – Parish Safeguarding Officer:

Phone: 07971 086093

Email: safeguarding@slhythe.com

Fiona Coombs – Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor

Phone: 07548 232395

Email: safeguarding@diocant.org

Michael Darkins – Vicar

Phone: 01303 266217 (Mobile: 07765 578045)

Email: vicar@slhythe.com

Pastoral Email Address

Email: pastoral@slhythe.com

Signed: _____

Date: _____

THE PARISH OF ST LEONARD HYTHE

Safeguarding Disclosure Record

Incumbent: Revd Michael Darkins Contact number: 01303 266217 Email: vicar@slhythe.com	PSO: Carolyn Chivers Contact number: 07971086093 Email: safeguarding@slhythe.com
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Subject	Name & Address	Contact Details
☐ The Respondent (allegation) ☐ Alleged Victim/Survivor ☐ Convicted Perpetrator ☐ Proven Victim/Survivor		

Referrer	Position	Church/Agency?	Contact Details
Referral Date			
Subject	☐ Child	☐ Adult	☐ Allegation (church officer)
Abuse			
☐ Physical	☐ Sexual abuse	☐ Financial	☐ Modern slavery
☐ Neglect	☐ Historic sexual abuse	☐ Discriminatory	
☐ Physical	☐ Sexual exploitation	☐ Organisational	
☐ Psych/emotional	☐ Domestic abuse	☐ Online	

Disclosure