

Document Control Information

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Distribution List	
Name	Title
	PCC
	Website

St Bartholomew's Church Ducklington

St. Bartholomew's, Ducklington **Lone Working Policy**

1. Purpose

This policy sets out how lone working should be managed safely within St Bartholomew's Church, Ducklington. It applies to clergy, staff, and volunteers who work alone, whether on church premises, during home visits, or in other settings. The policy ensures compliance with the Church of England's national safeguarding and health & safety standards to protect both those who serve and those they support.

2. Scope and Definition

Lone working refers to situations where an individual is undertaking duties without direct supervision or without others present who can provide immediate assistance if required. Examples include clergy working alone in church or at home, volunteers cleaning or locking up the church, and pastoral visitors conducting home visits.

3. Safeguarding and Church of England Context

This policy must be read alongside the Church of England's 'Promoting a Safer Church' and the national 'Safer Environment and Culture' practice guidance (2023). Lone working forms part of creating a safe environment for ministry and mission. Any safeguarding concern or incident arising from lone working must be reported immediately to the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) or Rector, and where appropriate, to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA). Confidentiality must never prevent the sharing of information where someone may be at risk of harm.

4. Responsibilities

The Rector, Churchwardens, and PCC have a duty to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to identify, assess, and manage risks associated with lone working. This includes ensuring appropriate training, supervision, and clear reporting procedures are in place. The Health and Safety Officer and Parish Safeguarding Officer will assist in maintaining and reviewing these procedures.

5. Who This Policy Affects

This policy applies to:

- Rector and clergy
- Church administrator and office staff
- Cleaners, vergers, and maintenance workers
- Volunteers preparing the church, arranging flowers, or cleaning
- Those locking and unlocking the church
- Pastoral visitors and lay ministers making home visits
- Volunteers handling church cash or banking
- Anyone working alone in the church or their home on parish business

6. Training and Checks

Anyone carrying out lone working on behalf of the parish must:

- Have completed the Church of England Basic Awareness and Foundation safeguarding training modules.
- Hold a current DBS check if their role involves pastoral contact which includes:

provision of health care;

personal care;

transporting adults to or from places where they will receive healthcare;

social work services;

assistance with cash

paying bills or shopping.

This is known as regulated activity.

- Have read the Parish Safeguarding Policy and this Lone Working Policy.

7. Potential Risks

Potential risks include:

- Physical accident or sudden illness
- Threat of violence, aggression, or inappropriate behaviour
- Allegations or misunderstandings about conduct
- Emotional stress or isolation
- Security risks such as theft or vandalism

8. Lone Working Practice Guidelines

While lone working should be avoided where possible, it is sometimes necessary. The following guidelines apply:

1. Inform someone (e.g., Rector, Churchwarden, or colleague) where you are working and when you expect to finish.
2. Carry a charged mobile phone and keep it accessible.
3. Lock doors if appropriate when working alone, especially after dark.
4. Avoid high-risk activities such as working at height or using power

tools when alone.

5. Report building defects, safety hazards, or incidents promptly to the Churchwardens.

6. Avoid unnecessary risk—if uncomfortable, leave immediately.

7. Use a pre-agreed safe code (e.g., “red folder”) to discreetly request help if needed.

8. Report suspicious behaviour or threats to the Rector or Churchwardens.

9. Record any incidents or visits using the Pastoral Care Visit Record Form.

9. Lone Working in Pastoral and Ministry Settings

One-to-one pastoral contact must always be properly planned, risk assessed, and recorded. Boundaries of appropriate physical, emotional, and spiritual contact must be respected. Confidentiality should not be confused with secrecy—private conversations can take place safely in public or visible spaces. Meetings should be prearranged, in appropriate venues, and within agreed time limits.

10. Ministry from Home or Private Residences

Where parish activities are formally organised in a private home, the following must apply:

- The Rector must give consent for the activity.
- A risk assessment of the space must be completed.
- Two unrelated adults should be present throughout the activity.
- Meetings must not take place in inappropriate areas such as bedrooms.
- Adequate insurance cover must be confirmed.

11. Supervision and Review

Lone working arrangements should be reviewed regularly with the Rector or Pastoral Lead. Volunteers and staff are encouraged to raise concerns regarding safety or stress. The PCC will review all lone working incidents annually as part of the parish’s safeguarding and health & safety audit.

12. Data Protection and Confidentiality

All records related to lone working and pastoral visits will be stored securely and in line with the Parish Data Protection Policy. Information may be shared with the Rector, PSO, or Pastoral Lead where necessary for safeguarding or accountability.

13. Review and Approval

This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier if national Church of England guidance changes. Implementation of the policy is overseen by the Rector and PCC, with safeguarding oversight from the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Signed Parish Priest/Incumbent *Andrew Colquhoun*

Churchwarden *P. Hylleberg*

Churchwarden *Martin Davies*

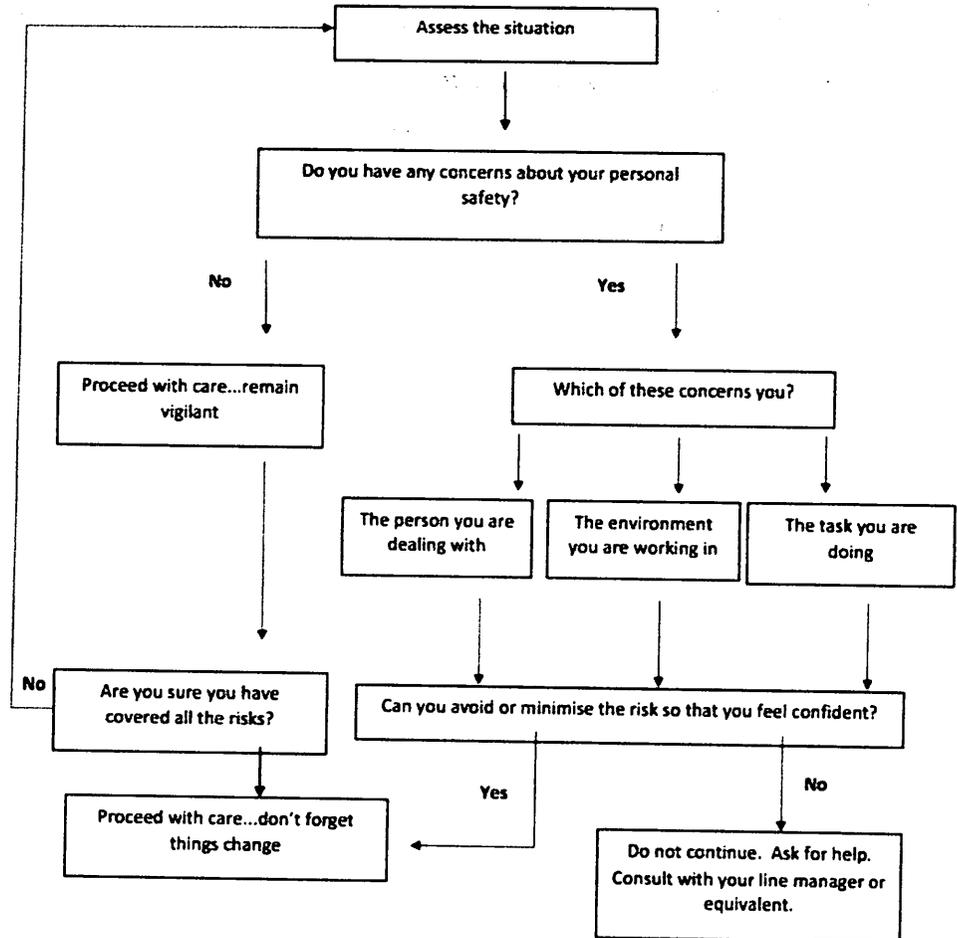
Date *15/01/26*

St. Bartholomew's Church, Ducklington

Lone Worker Policy

Personal Safety Risk Assessment

Use this to assess your environment, and your working practices, as well as for an instant assessment of a situation.



From Personal Safety at Work, Suzy Lamplugh Trust 2006, revised 2008

Policy adapted from Diocese of Newcastle lone worker policy

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