

# Lone Working Guidelines

The Yare Valley Churches wishes to ensure that those working or volunteering are not exposed to unnecessary risk if working alone. These guidelines apply when working alone at the Church, or when making home visits to people in the parish or attending other meetings/activities away from the Church related to your role.

These guidelines are written to minimise the risk of problems that may arise either through allegations being made or having to deal with unwelcome/unacceptable behaviour.

The Church will make risk assessments of any role that requires someone to work alone on a regular basis.

Training can be provided to assist those working with Adults at Risk (Vulnerable Adults).

## Lone working at the Church

On many occasions there is more than one person in the church or church building but there are times where you may find yourself alone, particularly when opening or locking up.

When working alone you should ensure that: -

- The keys are secured and inaccessible to visitors.
- Call for back up if anything happens that you do not feel able to deal with alone.
- Carry a mobile phone with you so you can call for help if needed.
- If you are meeting someone in an office/meeting room ensure the seating arrangements allow you to exit the room leaving the person behind.
- If you are the last person in the building or responsible for locking up you should ensure that:
  - All windows and doors are secured to prevent unauthorised access so that the environment is as safe as possible.
  - Doors are only opened to allow entry to expected visitors after they have been positively identified.
- On leaving the Church premises windows are closed and doors locked and relevant alarms set (if applicable).
- If you suspect there is an intruder:
  - Carry out visual check of the building to check for an intruder.
  - If you feel it is safe to do so, carry out an internal inspection, so far as you can.
  - Do not put yourself at any unnecessary risk.
  - Inspect the building externally if that is the safer option
- If an intruder(s) is suspected call the police and call for back up.
- Leave the building and secure the door behind you so the suspected intruder is locked in and wait for back up to arrive. Do not re-enter the building alone.

## Visiting people and places who are known to you

If working alone away from the Church you should consider if your visit might present a risk to you.

Most visits including home visits are likely to be 'low risk' as most of the people are known workers and volunteers within familiar places.

However this is not always the case. It is good practice to tell colleagues before you go out on a visit.

You should always aim to do the following: -

- let your colleagues know where you are going.

- make a note in your office diary of who and where you are visiting, the nature and location of the meeting or activity and your estimated time of return to the office or home.
- If your plan changes you should contact a colleague or family member to let them know what is happening and that you are safe.
- Make sure that you have a mobile phone with you.

## Visiting people and places that are not known to you and may present a risk

If you have any concerns for your safety then consider whether the visit is necessary: can you arrange a more public venue? or take someone with you.

If this is not possible, it is important that a colleague or trusted person knows your whereabouts, where you are meeting the person, how long you expect to be and when you expect to return.

You should also:-

- Keep the mobile phone on during the meeting so that you can use it quickly in an emergency.
- Always follow the person into the building and ask that any dogs are removed from the room.
- Familiarise yourself with the quickest means of exit should you need to.
- Ensure that you seat yourself near to the door so you can exit quickly if needed.

## Emergency contacts

If there is an intruder or you are threatened dial 999, give the address of the Church or the place you are visiting.

Designated Keyholders:

*St Laurence Church, Brundall*  
 Rev'd Peter Leech (Rector)  
 Sarah Wiltshire (church warden)  
 Ian Dougall

*All Saints, Postwick*  
 Rev'd Peter Leech (Rector)  
 Ann Brownlee (Church Warden)

*St Michael and All Angels, Braydeston*  
 Rev'd Peter Leech (Rector)  
 Ann Walters  
 Tim Moorse (Fabric Officer)

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