



St Andrew's Church Bedford

Lone Working Policy

Purpose

St Andrew's PCC seeks to minimise the risks of lone working. General guidelines are provided below. It is the responsibility of each individual to make a reasonable assessment of any risks associated with their working alone, in discussion with their line manager (for paid staff) or activity coordinator (for volunteers.) The Church of England safeguarding standards advise that lone working should be avoided where possible. This policy is to ensure that the church complies with Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations 1999.

Who is 'Lone Working'?

1. This policy applies to anyone who works alone either on a regular or on an hoc basis and includes those who work alone in the church or church centre, on church property or out of sight of other colleagues. Reasons for this might include:
 - staff absences
 - working late or early when there aren't any colleagues around
 - coming into the church or centre out of office hours for any reason
 - having a private one to one meeting
 - unlocking or locking up the church and centre
 - undertaking tasks in church during quiet periods of the day
 - praying in the chapel.
 - any other occasion when you need to be alone for church-related activity.

This policy covers all clergy, staff, parishioners and volunteers

What are the risks?

Lone working poses many risks including, but not exclusively:

- Physical accident when there is no one available to fetch help if necessary.
- Sudden illness, when there is no one to raise the alarm.
- Dealing with people who are mentally distressed.
- Dealing with people who are under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Being robbed when handling cash, transporting cash, handling valuable items, accessing the strong room or emptying the safe.
- Physical violence or threat of abuse in any form.
- Inappropriate or threatening sexual behaviour or advances.
- Accusations of inappropriate behaviour when there are no witnesses.

Risks are heightened after dark or in the early morning and when working in concealed spaces such as the church porch or the bell tower.

General Lone Working

If you are working alone, you should be alert to possible dangers and minimise them by taking the following actions, as appropriate:

- Read the Lone Working Policy and familiarise yourself with the content, including the personal safety assessment (Appendix 1.)
- Read the Parish Safeguarding Handbook, have completed up to date and appropriate safeguarding training, have the name and contact details of the Parish Safeguarding Officer and / or Vicar.
- Read the Church Health and Safety Policy (available [here](#), or on the Church Website: www.standrewschurch.org → 'Other' → 'Documentation' → 'Health and Safety Policy.')
- Read the pastoral visiting risk assessment (this applies specifically to St Andrew's visitors).
- Ensure that you are sufficiently fit and well to be carrying out your tasks alone.
- Consider advising your line manager, activity coordinator and/or other appropriate personnel (e.g. first aider) of any health condition that may affect your fitness or require treatment at work e.g. mobility issues, diabetes, epilepsy, or asthma, to help ensure your health and safety and appropriate treatment in case of emergency.
- Carry a charged mobile phone, having saved on it the telephone numbers that you might need to call.
- Plan potential exit routes.
- All accidents must be reported to the church office, or, if out of office hours, to the Vicar or Wardens, so that they may be recorded in the accident book
- Report any incidents that make you feel uncomfortable or any suspicious behaviour to your line manager or activity coordinator, Vicar or Parish Safeguarding officer, as appropriate, as soon as possible.
- Consider carrying a personal alarm.
- Avoid ever being alone with children or vulnerable adults. If you need to talk to a child or vulnerable adult move to a room close to other people and leave the door open.

Working alone in the Church and Centre

Please note that 'working alone' potentially includes leading morning and evening prayer. You should always use the personal safety risk assessment (Appendix 1) to inform your thinking as you assess what you need to do to feel safe.

- Ensure the security of the area that you are working in. For example, consider locking doors.
- Always carrying your keys with you so that you can exit by an alternative route/door if necessary, or you can lock yourself into a safe space.
- Do not working at heights or using power tools when alone – you must have a colleague with you.
- Ensure that you know where to find the first aid kits.
- Ensure that you are familiar with the procedures for dealing with fire – see Health and Safety Policy for further information (available [here](#), or on the Church Website: www.standrewschurch.org → 'Other' → 'Documentation' → 'Health and Safety Policy.')
- When locking up the Church and Centre, consider starting with the outside doors.
- In an emergency make use of the panic alarms found in the community room, quiet room and office.

Visiting people and places known to you

If you are working away from the church/ church centre you should consider whether your visit might entail a risk to you, potentially a physical risk to your person, or a risk of a false accusation of misconduct on your part.

Most work away from the church, including home visits, is likely to be “ low risk “, as most of the people/ places visited will be known to the church. However, if this is not the case, it is good practice to in phone a colleague, friend or family member before setting out.

Regular St Andrew’s Visitors should refer to the **Pastoral Visiting Risk Assessment**

Always do the following:

- Let someone know where you are going, the nature and location of the activity and your estimated time of return home or to the office
- Make a note in your diary of who/ where you are visiting
- In the case of a formal pastoral visit on behalf of the church make a note on the pastoral data base of the person/ date/ time/ whether Holy Communion was received
- If your plan changes or you are detained, contact the colleague or friend to let them know of the change of plan and reassure them that you are safe

Visiting people and places not known to you

If you have any concerns about your safety, then it is advisable to take someone with you. If this is not possible, be sure that a colleague/ family member/ close friend knows:

- Your whereabouts
- Where you are meeting the person
- How long you expect to be there
- When you expect to return

When you make the visit you should:

- Keep your mobile phone on, so that you can use it quickly in an emergency
- Follow behind the person when entering the building
- Ask for any dog(s) to be removed from the room
- Familiarise yourself with the room and the means of rapid exit
- Seat yourself near the door

Emergency contacts

If there is an intruder on church premises or you are threatened, dial 999, give the address of the Church:
St Andrew's Church, Kimbolton Road, Bedford, MK40 2PF

The Vicar: The Reverend Canon Lucy Davis 01234 354234 07803 357891

Operations Manager: Kelly Agler Good 01234 216881

Parish Safeguarding Officer: Jo Newton 07469 654090

Church Warden: Ian Riches 07967 646834

Church Warden: Michele Swales 07778 635645

Review and monitoring of this policy

This policy will be reviewed, monitored and revised every 12 months (or sooner if church activities change significantly or legislation changes) by the PCC.

This version adopted by the PCC of St Andrew's Church Bedford on 25th February 2025

Appendix 1

Personal Safety Risk Assessment

