LONE WORKING

# Summary

St Kea Church wishes to ensure staff and volunteers are not exposed to unnecessary risk if working alone. These guidelines apply when working alone on church activity, together with the actions we expect such workers to take themselves to minimise risks. This policy forms part of our wider church Health and Safety policy.

# Policy

The purpose of this lone worker policy is to ensure all staff and volunteers are aware of the specific risks in working alone and to set out the respective responsibilities of the employer (PCC) and staff/volunteers to minimise such risks. The PCC commit to carrying out their responsibilities in a thorough and disciplined way. There are no restrictions on working alone but the law insists that an employer, in this case St Kea Church, must identify hazards of the work, assess the risks and put in place measures to avoid or control risks. Staff and volunteers have a duty to take reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their work. The best way of doing this is by producing a risk assessment for each type of lone working activity.

# People who work alone in our church ministry

* Staff or volunteers, including caretakers/wardens/cleaners working alone within a church building;
* Associate Minister alone with one or more teenagers whether in a public place, in a school or on private property;
* Anyone working on maintenance or in the grounds of the church on their own;
* A solo pastoral visitor going to people’s homes;
* CAP manager and support team workers;
* One volunteer taking cash to the bank;
* Members of staff who work from home, alone;
* Members of staff travelling by car or public transport on their own in the course of their work.

# Responsibility of the church

* To show that ‘reasonably foreseeable risks’ have been identified and updated regularly with appropriate action taken to minimise them. *For example lighting the pathway from church office to church through churchyard.*
* To ensure that there is adequate insurance cover for all lone working with standard practices adhered to. *For example, the accident book is properly maintained.*
* To install all reasonable security equipment and systems. *For example CCTV, entry phone system with locked doors when anyone is working along, windows for visibility and adequate locking devices on doors and windows.*
* To equip staff in vulnerable positions with communication tools to ensure they can summon help when needed.
* To ensure that each member of staff feels that the church as employer has taken all reasonable steps to ensure their safety. *For example through regular checks with each person concerned at supervision with line manager or team leader.*
* To offer appropriate training in personal safety to those who work alone (and on all other issues of H & S). This to include what to do in the case of fire or suspicion of intruders, how to exit the building quickly and safely, and where to find first aid kits. To keep proper records of those in vulnerable locations with next-of-kin details.
* To insist that staff and volunteers follow the guidelines laid down on safe solo working. *For example, not to undertake maintenance work at heights when alone, only to visit certain clients in pairs, always to ensure church doors are locked after dark.*

# Responsibilities of staff and volunteers

The behaviour and actions of the employees and volunteers can make a significant difference to the level of safety too.

Avoid placing yourself in unnecessarily dangerous situations.

When working alone you should ensure that:  
• Your office door or your property should be kept locked  
• You are able to 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, especially if you are away from home or workbase. If you do not have a mobile phone and are working alone on church business please contact the church office and the Strategic Operations Manager will ensure you have access to a phone for this purpose.  
• If you are meeting someone in the office/another hall room, the seating arrangements allow you to exit the room leaving the person behind. Doors should not be locked when holding a meeting.

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 working environment is as safe as possible

• Doors are only opened to allow entry to expected visitors or staff after they have been positively identified

# Visiting people and places who are known to you

If working alone away from the Church hall/offices, you should consider if your visit might present a risk to you. Most working away including home visits are likely to be ‘low risk’ as most of the people and places staff and volunteers visit are likely to be known to the Church. 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;

• if office based, make a note in your office diary of who and where you are visiting;

• If your plan changes you should contact a work colleague or family member to let them know what is happening and that you are safe.

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

If you have any concerns for your safety then it is advisable to get a colleague to come with you. If this is not possible, it is important that a colleague or family member 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.

# Emergency contacts

If there is an intruder or you are threatened dial 999, give the address of the Church: St Kea Church, Killiow, Truro, TR3 6AE

Contacts in an emergency should initially be either your line manager or

Neil Bridle: 01872-862770 or 07798-882552

Jonathan Larkin: 01872 241716 or 07769-933668

Ben Goddard: 07788 885507

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