

LONE WORKER POLICY

Policy reviewed and revised: End 2019. By: Sian Goddard. Agreed by PCC: January 2020

Summary

St Kea Church wishes to ensure staff and volunteers¹ are not exposed to unnecessary risk if working alone. The PCC acknowledges, and is committed to exercising its responsibilities for staff and volunteer safety. Staff and volunteers are also expected to take reasonable steps themselves to minimise risks. These guidelines support individuals to take appropriate action when working alone on church activity. 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 risks in working alone and to set out the respective responsibilities of the employer (PCC) and staff/volunteers to minimise such risks. The PCC commits to carrying out its 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 potential hazards, assess risks and put in place measures to avoid or control risks.

Please note: No lone working arrangements should prevent full adherence to the safeguarding policy, as detailed in the Parish Safeguarding Handbook. This policy states that wherever possible visits to a vulnerable person should be undertaken in pairs (p45-46 Parish Safeguarding Handbook). 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 or youth workers carrying out 1:1 sessions with young adults whether in a public place, 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 or alone in the office;
- Members of staff travelling by car or public transport on their own in the course of their work.

1

Definition of Volunteer: anyone undertaking an activity on behalf of St Kea Church. This would include activities such as pastoral visiting or CAP visits, gardening, cleaning or maintenance but does not include visits to a friend of church family member on an informal basis.

Potential Areas of Risk with Lone Working

- Operating machinery or lifting objects – risk of injury or harm
- Driving – risk of accident while working or volunteering for the church
- Visiting frail persons – risk of dealing with a medical emergency
- Visiting individuals (either on their own or couples/families, known or unknown) – risk to safety or risk of safeguarding breach
- Working alone – risk to safety when encountering individuals or risk of injury moving around alone in church buildings/grounds
- Handling money – risk to safety when transporting money

Responsibilities of the church

- To identify 'reasonably foreseeable risks' on a regular basis and take appropriate action taken to minimise risks. *For example lighting the pathway from church office to church through churchyard.*
- To ensure that there is adequate insurance cover for all lone working and staff and volunteers adhere to standard practices. *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 alone, windows for visibility and adequate locking devices on doors and windows.*
- To equip staff in vulnerable positions with communication tools (currently mobile phones) to ensure they can summon help when needed.
- To check 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 training as required. This may include first aid training, 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 or situations, with next-of-kin details.
- To remind staff and volunteers of the guidelines on safe lone working and their responsibility to act within them. To ensure that guidelines are adhered to (team leaders will be responsible for monitoring). *For example, not to undertake maintenance works at heights when alone, only to visit certain clients in pairs, always ensure church doors are locked.*

Responsibilities of staff and volunteers

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

All activities and events should be risk assessed using the St Kea church risk assessment document (included at the end of this policy).

Staff and volunteers should always act to avoid risk, wherever possible, and avoid placing themselves in unnecessarily dangerous situations.

When working alone staff and volunteers should ensure:

- If on church property, the office door, or door of the building, is kept locked
- They are able to call for back up if anything happens that you do not feel able to deal with alone
- A mobile phone is carried to call for help if needed, when away from home or workbase. If

someone does not have a mobile phone and is working alone on church business the church office should be contacted and the Strategic Operations Manager will provide access to a phone.

- If meeting someone alone in a room, that the staff member or volunteer's own exit route is clear. Doors should **not** be locked when holding a meeting.

When the last person in a building (or responsible for locking up) individuals 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 or unknown

If working alone away from the Church hall/offices, potential risk should still be considered in advance. Most working away including home visits are likely to be 'low risk' as most of the people and places visited are likely to be known to the Church. However this is not always the case. It must not be assumed that a known person or setting is less potentially risky than a new person or location.

These actions should always be taken:

- All new activities should be risk assessed.
- If you have any concerns for your safety then it is advisable to get a colleague to go with you.
- Letting a colleague, team leader or family member know the time and location of the visit, including the anticipated end time
- Updating this information if plans change.
- Taking a mobile phone which is switched on and has relevant numbers easily accessible. If this is not possible, it is important that a colleague or family member knows 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 and in your pocket during the meeting so that you can use it quickly in an emergency.
- Set up a code word with your line manager/team leader or family member in order that you can communicate that you are in danger easily; *for example "pink diary". This would allow you to ask the person to look in the pink diary to see if there are any appointments available.*
- Always follow the person into the building, ensuring doors are not locked behind you and ask that any dogs are removed from the room.
- Familiarise yourself with the quickest means of exit should you need to.
- Let your contact person know when you have completed your visit. If they do not hear from you, they will phone you and if there is no response, they will contact the police.

Emergency contacts

Working at church

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

Working in the community

Contacts in an emergency should initially be either your line manager/team leader, the church office 01872 262868 (Tues/Wed/Thurs 9-1) or one of the following:

Sian Goddard: 07779 306866

Ben Goddard: 07788 885507

Marc Baker: 07725 945830

Neil Bridle

Martin Handford

Actions Required

Office lone worker arrangements – door to be kept shut and locked when a worker is alone.

Door monitoring is installed in the church hall but is only used by staff when required. This is acceptable as it allows staff to assess their safety but as an employer, St Kea has ensured the systems are available.

Contact means for lone workers on visits –

- All staff and volunteers must inform someone in their team of their lone working situation, giving details of the venue, time and approximate duration of the appointment, and inform the same person of their safety at the end of the visit.
- Volunteers must ensure their mobile details are up to date on churchsuite. This will be particularly relevant for pastoral and CAP volunteers and staff.
- Volunteers who do not own a mobile phone will need to contact the church office in order that we can provide them with access to a phone when required
- Team leaders to check volunteers feel the church has taken all reasonable steps to ensure their safety
- Proper records of those in vulnerable locations with Next Of Kin details
- Code word for emergencies e.g. pink diary
- Check wardens would be happy to be contacted.



What is the activity or event?									
Where and when will it take place?									
Who will be involved in the activity and how many people in total?		Total attendance	Helpers		Children	Restricted mobility			
If you expect children to be attending or participating in the activity, please contact the Church Administrator for a copy of our Child Protection Policy									
H&S Officer /Team leader /Line Manager signature		Assessor's name		Assessor's signature		Date of Assessment		Date of activity	

What is the hazard?	Who is at risk?	Existing control measures	What harm could they suffer?	Risk rating	Additional control measures	Revised risk rating

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To score the risk rating, use the following tables. Quantify the ‘Likelihood of the occurrence’ and the ‘Severity of the risk’ and multiply these figures to give a ‘Risk rating’ for each hazard. Refer to the ‘Risk rating’ table to assess if further measures are required to reduce the risk further and record these findings in the risk assessment table above.

Likelihood of Occurrence (Probability = P)		
Identify the definition which best describes the likelihood of an accident or injury occurring.		
Not Likely	1	There is no risk at present. Only under freak conditions could there be any possibility of harm or loss. All reasonable precautions appear to have been taken. This should be the normal situation
Possible	2	If other contributing factors become present harm or loss might occur, but the probability is low and the risk is minimal.
Quite Possible	3	Harm or loss may happen if significant additional factors precipitate it, but it is unlikely to happen without them.
Likely	4	Harm or loss is likely to occur if the activity continues.
Very Likely	5	If the situation continues as it is, there is almost 100% certainty that a harm or loss will result.

Multiplied by

Severity of Risk (Severity = S)		
Identify the definition which best describes the severity of an accident or injury.		
Nil	1	No risk of harm or loss.
Slight	2	Causing minor injury which would allow the individual to continue work after First Aid treatment. The duration of the stoppage or treatment is such that the normal flow of Church activities is not seriously interrupted.
Moderate	3	Causing moderate harm or loss capable of keeping an individual off work for three days or more, or equipment rendered inoperable. Potential for financial loss (from damage to equipment / litigation).
High	4	Causing serious harm or loss to an individual or Kea Church. Potential for disruption to Kea Church activities. Potential for litigation / prosecution by failure to conform to statutory duties. Potential for adverse media coverage. Potential for damage to employees’ or congregation morale.
Very High	5	Causing single or multiple deaths and/or severe disruption to Kea Church. Potential for severe financial loss. Potential for adverse national media coverage. Potential for significant litigation cost. Potential prosecution of the Church / individuals.

Probability x Severity = Risk

Risk Rating Criteria (Rating = R)			
Risk Rating	Type of Action	Control Measures	Priority
20 to 25	STOP ACTIVITY	Change Process / Task	Immediate
16 – 19	Warnings/ Instructions / Safety Measures	Must Introduce	Very High
12 – 15	Review Safety Measures	Introduce where possible	High
6 to 11	Make Personnel Aware	Add if Possible	Medium
1 to 5	Monitor & Review	Consider if Appropriate	Low

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