St James' Church Hemingford Grey

Lone Working Policy

St James' Church is committed to the health and safety of all of our employees and volunteers. This policy is in place to minimise risks to workers and volunteers who may need to work alone and clearly lay out the responsibilities each person has in this situation.

Lone workers are defined as follows:

Employees or Volunteers in the church, the churchyard or Parish Centre:

who are working out of sight and earshot of another colleague
or who are working alone on the premises
or who are working outside of normal hours

The potential risks faced by a lone worker include:

- Sudden illness or physical accident which makes the lone worker unable to carry out appropriate first aid on themselves or to call for medical assistance.
- Fire
- Threat of abuse or physical violence from any visitor.
- Theft and threat of abuse or physical violence from intruders.
- Stress caused by working in isolation or abusive calls or messages on digital media.
- Accusations by a member of the public of inappropriate behaviour by a staff member or visitor when there are no witnesses.
- Sexual advances deemed to be inappropriate and/or threatening.

Principles

The Church recognises that there are times when lone working is necessary, therefore we will carry out the following steps to ensure the safety of church personnel. We will:

1. Carry out a risk assessment on the safety of the building to see if it can be improved. E.g. improve lighting, ensure door locks are adequate and carry out any maintenance required promptly.
2. Ensure all First Aid kits are clearly signposted.
3. Have a clear procedure for lone workers to raise the alarm if an incident occurs and a means of communicating easily with others if an issue arises.
4. Ensure lone workers have contact details of other church personnel eg the vicar/ church warden/parish office. These phone numbers are clearly available on the church and parish centre notice boards and in the church office.

Whilst this policy applies to lone working on the church premises, in order to meet the legal responsibilities of St James' Church as an employer, the same principles should be applied to staff lone working from home and to volunteers who are working alone.

Responsibilities of a lone worker

A prerequisite of lone working is that all staff and volunteers are aware of and can activate and follow the health and safety procedures laid out by St James Church in the event of a fire; threat of abuse and/or physical violence; injury or an intruder. These include the location of the First Aid boxes and a familiarity with the contents; updated knowledge of emergency exits on the church premises and an awareness of who to call in the event of an emergency.

No person under the age of 18 or who is classified as vulnerable themselves or who has a health condition which may lead to sudden collapsing or an inability to follow the health and safety procedures laid out may undertake lone working.

A lone worker:

- Should not take any undue risks in regards to their own health and safety and the health and safety of others. This includes not informing visitors or people on the phone that they are alone in the work place.
- Should not undertake works involving maintenance equipment which could cause physical harm or work at heights without another person present.
- Should be aware and have taken account of the potential risks before commencing any lone working task.
- Should refer to their line manager for advice if it is unclear if their lone working task will present any undue risk and if their line manager assesses the task to be an unacceptable risk, the task will not go ahead without control measures in place to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.
- Should not misuse equipment provided for their health and safety.
- Should report all accidents, incidents, near-misses and dangerous occurrences to the Parish Operations Manager or vicar.
- Co-operate with the health and safety procedures laid out by St James Church
- Should use tools and equipment properly in accordance with any training they have been given and following relevant safety instructions.
- Some lone workers may feel more comfortable locking the door of the building, but if this does occur, a mobile phone must be on the person at all times.
- Lone workers should where ever possible ensure another person is aware of their location, that they are working alone and their expected finish time.

Home Visits

Home Visits can also present risks to lone workers and all lone workers who are conducting home visits should make sure they have carried out the relevant risk assessments and precautions first. Lone workers should also ensure their own personal safety whilst visiting people in their homes. If circumstances allow, consideration should be given as to whether two members of staff/volunteers are able to carry out the home visit.

- Lone workers should always ensure that their manager or a colleague is aware of their whereabouts at all times. This includes giving the address they are visiting, details of the person they are visiting, telephone numbers if known as well as an approximate arrival and departure time. The lone worker should message or phone

the person they made aware of their whereabouts upon departure from the visit. If the designated person does not receive the message within half an hour of the scheduled departure time, they should ring the lone worker and if they do not answer, inform the vicar or a church warden.

- Lone workers out in the community should have their mobile phones on them at all times, charged and in good working order.
- Lone workers under no circumstances should conduct a home visit with a child or a person under the age of 18 in their home unless another adult is present.
- Lone workers should always be aware of their own safety in someone else's home. Confrontation should be avoided and if the lone worker has any concerns for their own health and safety they must leave immediately.
- Where possible, home visits should be conducted during the morning or early afternoon to prevent the lone worker travelling in the dark through areas that they may not know or feel comfortable in. If this is not possible, working in pairs should be considered.
- Lone workers should ensure that their cars are well-maintained with suitable fuel, MOT and insurance up-to-date and park in well-lit areas.

In the case of an incident (whether it be minor or major) whilst lone working on the church premises, during a home visit or whilst working at home, a lone worker must contact the vicar or Parish Operations Manager. In the case of emergencies contact 999. The incident should also be logged in the incident book kept in the Parish centre.

	Signed	Date
Incumbent	T. Mew	24.9.26
Churchwarden		