

COMBE DOWN PCC LONE WORKING POLICY

Purpose

This policy is designed to alert individuals to the risks presented by lone working and ensure they consider, in each case, whether there is reason to have concern for their safety. Where such a concern exists, the policy identifies the responsibilities they have and the procedures to follow to minimize such risks. Any reference to staff or work should also be taken to include volunteers and volunteering.

NB. CAP staff have their own policy guidelines. Pastoral Visitors should also refer to the additional HTCD Pastoral Ministry Team Guidelines

Definition

Lone working means situations where you as a member of staff, as part of your job, work alone in;

- the community
- in parishioners' homes
- in your own home
- in our premises (Holy Trinity, Church Rooms, St Andrews)

Responsibilities

As an individual you are responsible for;

- taking reasonable care of your own health and safety at work and that of other people who may be affected by what you do (or fail to do)
- complying with the procedures in this policy and any other safety procedures which apply to your work
- reporting incidents, dangers or potential dangers to your line manager
- taking part in any training relating to this policy
- Operating the 'Buddy System' see below

The Buddy System

Lone worker

- Carry a charged mobile phone with you and text your 'buddy' (previously agreed colleague or family member) with the location, telephone number of the premises and expected finish time of your lone working.
- If the visit takes longer than anticipated, phone your buddy at expected finish time let them know how long you expect the visit to last
- Text again to report the end of the lone working

The Buddy

- As a buddy you are responsible for calling the lone worker if they do not check in on time and calling their emergency contact and the emergency services if you do not receive a reply.

Lone Working on PCC Premises

- If you are working alone on PCC premises you must lock all access doors and ensure you have a local means of communication.
- Never let unplanned or suspicious persons into the premises when working alone.
- Use any access control systems installed.
- *Remember you are not obliged to let callers into the building if you feel unsafe.*

Lone Visits to Parishioners

Home visits are made to parishioners where appropriate.

Planning a Visit

Meeting in an individual's house can pose an increased risk to your safety, consider whether you should visit with a colleague. Before you go;

- seek out information from others who have visited the home or know the person
- ensure you operate the **Buddy System** *see above*.

If you have any personal safety concerns about a visit, it is essential you are accompanied by another member of staff.

In the home

- do not enter the house if the appropriate person is not available.
- show the parishioner your ID badge before entering their home – badges are available from the Church Office.
- leave your mobile phone switched on and on silent mode.
- make sure your option to exit is visible and accessible at all times.
- ideally have a barrier between you and the person i.e. a table

When to make an excuse, apologise and leave;

- If you become uneasy
- If any allegations are made during the visit about inappropriate conduct of staff. Escalate the incident immediately to your manager and provide a witness statement.
- If you are asked to stay alone in the property even for a short time.

What to do in the event of Problems

- If you have any problems that causes you to require assistance, phone your Buddy and use the alert phrase 'I need information from the big brown book'. Only use this in emergencies and if you are unable to exit the property. They will take the next steps.
- If you are concerned for the parishioner's health and safety for whatever reason, speak to your line manager.

Travel Arrangements – see Appendix 1

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Points to consider when travelling to appointments

In Your Car

- When driving, keep doors locked and park your car in well-lit areas. Only get out of the car when you feel safe to do so.
- If you see an accident/incident or someone tries to flag you down, consider whether it is safe; if necessary, indicate that you will go for help or telephone (either on mobile or drive to a call box).
- If you think you are being followed, do not stop, try to alert other drivers (using lights/horn), drive to a busy area and alert the Police.
- If approached when you are stationary, keep doors locked, only wind window down slightly so that you can hear them. If you are in any doubt about the situation, drive away. Do not leave valuables on view.
- If the car breaks down and you have a mobile 'phone, call a recovery service and stay in the car with the doors locked until assistance arrives. If you do not have a mobile 'phone, decide whether you are safe to go to a call box. If it is not safe to leave the car, try to attract help and ask them to 'phone for you. Keep the door locked and remain alert. If possible, use nearside doors and seats. Keep all valuables out of sight.
- Do not use your mobile phone when driving. Pull over in a safe place before answering or making a call.

On public transport,

- If you feel unsafe in getting off at a particular stop, then stay on the bus until it is safe. Stay downstairs and within sight of the driver.

On foot

- When walking, wear clothing that does not restrict your movement and try to keep at least one hand free, if possible; do not laden yourself down with bags or packages as it makes you less mobile.
- Try to keep to well-lit areas and, if there is no footpath, walk facing towards on-coming traffic.
- After dark, avoid poorly lit subways, waste ground, alleyways and poorly lit blocks of flats. Do not be tempted to take short cuts through potential problem areas, even if you are in a hurry.
- When using your mobile phone remain aware of your surroundings with regard to traffic and other people.