



Whitefriars Church, Boughton Drive, Rushden, NN10 9JP

Lone Working Policy for Whitefriars Church.

SUMMARY:

Working alone is an essential practice for many in our church, either within the Bridge, in their own homes or other people's homes. Lone working cannot always be avoided. This policy recognises the risks, and tries to minimise them by common sense and appropriate measures.

GUIDELINES FOR WORKING:

- Whitefriars Church PCC wishes to ensure staff and volunteers are not exposed to unnecessary risk if working alone. These guidelines apply when working alone at the Bridge, or when making home visits to church members or members of the public, or attending other meetings/activities away from the Bridge which are related to church business.
- These guidelines have been drawn up to minimise the risk to employees and volunteers that may arise from seeing members of the public, either through allegations being made or having to deal with unwelcome or unacceptable behaviour.
- Whitefriars Church (through your line manager) will make risk assessments of any role that requires an employee to work alone on a regular basis. Training will be provided, as necessary, to help minimise risk.

THE RISKS

This list is not exhaustive but identifies some of the risks faced: -

- Physical accident (from injury, fire etc. such as when using the kitchen or maintenance equipment when there is no-one available to fetch help if necessary);
- Sudden illness, again where is no-one to raise the alarm;
- Physical violence or threat of abuse in any form from a visitor;
- Sexual behaviour or advances deemed to be inappropriate or threatening;
- Accusations by a visitor of inappropriate behaviour by staff/volunteers when there are no witnesses;
- Stress caused by working in isolation or from abusive calls or digital media.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PCC:

- The PCC will show that "reasonably foreseeable risks" have been identified and updated regularly with appropriate action taken to minimise them;
- The PCC will ensure that there is adequate insurance cover for all lone working, with standard practices adhered to;
- The PCC will ensure that vulnerable staff are equipped with appropriate communication tools so they can summon help when required.

LONE WORKING AT THE BRIDGE:

While on many occasions there is more than one person in the building there will be times where you may find yourself alone, particularly when opening or locking up.

- When working alone you should ensure that: -
 - If you are meeting someone, the seating arrangements allow you to exit the room/building leaving the person behind, if required;
 - 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.

- If you are the last person in the Bridge, or are responsible for locking up you should ensure that: -
 - Doors are only opened to allow entry to expected visitors or staff after they have been positively identified;
 - On leaving the Bridge, all windows are closed, doors locked and alarm set.
- If you suspect there is an unauthorised intruder: -
 - Carry out a visual check of the building to check for an intruder;
 - If you feel it is safe to do so, carry out an internal inspection, so far as you can. Do not put yourself at any unnecessary risk. Inspect the building externally if that is the safer option;
 - If an intruder is suspected call the police and call for other staff to help if needed;
 - Leave the building and secure the door behind you so the suspected intruder is locked in and wait for back-up to arrive. Do not re-enter the building alone.

VISITING PEOPLE AND PLACES WHICH ARE KNOWN TO YOU

If working alone away from the Bridge, you should consider if your visit might present a risk to you. Most working away from the Bridge (including home visits) are likely to be 'low risk', as most of the people and places where 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;
- Make a note in your office diary of who are where you are visiting;
- The nature and location of the meeting or activity;
- Your estimated time of return to the office or home;
- 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;
- Make sure that you have a mobile phone with you.

VISITING PEOPLE AND PLACES WHICH 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;
- Perform a 10 second risk assessment when the door is opened and do not enter if you feel it is not safe;
- When entering, try to shut the door yourself so that you can see how it is opened and how the lock works;
- 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;
- Ensure that you seat yourself near to the door so you can exit quickly if needed.

This policy was adopted by the PCC on 17th July 2017

This policy will be reviewed again in 2020

Signed _____ On behalf of the PCC

Date ____ / ____ / ____