



## Lone Working Policy 2023

### Guidelines

St Peter's Church, Wolvercote and All Saints' Wytham wish to ensure that those working or volunteering are not exposed to unnecessary risk if working alone. These guidelines apply when working alone at the Church, or when making home visits to people in the parish or attending other meetings/activities away from the Church related to your role. The guidelines were considered and endorsed when the PCCs met on 17 and 24 January 2023 respectively.

These guidelines are written to minimise the risk of problems that may arise either through allegations being made or having to deal with unwelcome/unacceptable behaviour. The Church will make risk assessments of any role that requires someone to work alone on a regular basis.

Training can be provided to assist those working with Adults at Risk (Vulnerable Adults).

### 2. Lone working at the Church

On many occasions there is more than one person in the church or church building but there are times where you may find yourself alone, particularly when opening or locking up. When working alone you should ensure that: -

- The keys are secured and inaccessible to visitors.
- Call for back up if anything happens that you do not feel able to deal with alone.
- Consider carrying a mobile phone with you so you can call for help if needed.
- If you are meeting someone in an office/meeting room ensure that arrangements allow you to exit the room leaving the person behind.
- If you are under 16 years and using the church for organ practice you will need to be accompanied by an adult.  
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 environment is as safe as possible.

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- On leaving the Church windows are closed, heating is turned off, doors locked and relevant alarms set (if applicable).

If you suspect there is an 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 safe option.
- If an intruder(s) is suspected call the police and call for back up.
- 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.

### **3. Visiting people and places who are known to you**

If working alone away from the Church you should consider if your visit might present a risk to you. Most visits including home visits are likely to be 'low risk'. 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 and 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 colleague or family member to let them know what is happening and that you are safe.
- It is advised that anyone working alone, in church or out visiting, has a mobile phone with them.

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

If you have any concerns for your safety then consider whether the visit is necessary: can you arrange a more public venue or take someone with you? If this is not possible, it is important that a colleague or trusted person 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.
- Ensure that you seat yourself near to the door so you can exit quickly if needed.

## 5. Emergency contacts

If there is an intruder or you are threatened dial **999**, give the address of St Peter's Church or the place you are visiting:

Others to contact:

Vicar, Revd. Kate Tuckett (07410 978921);

Churchwardens, Edward Wates (St Peter's 07951 967049); Kathy Day (All Saints 07860636367);

Parish Safeguarding Officer, Sarah Pepys (07931 664034).

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Signal\\_for\\_Help#/media/File:Signal\\_for\\_Help\\_gestures.png](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Signal_for_Help#/media/File:Signal_for_Help_gestures.png)

### Signal for Help



From Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia

The Signal for Help:

1. Palm to camera and tuck thumb
2. Trap thumb

The **Signal for Help** (or the **Violence at Home Signal for Help**) is a single-handed gesture that can be used over a video call or in person by an individual to alert others that they feel threatened and need help. Originally, the signal was created as a tool to combat the rise in domestic violence cases around the world linked to self-isolation measures that were related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The signal is performed by holding one hand up with the thumb tucked into the palm, then folding the four other fingers down, symbolically trapping the thumb by the rest of the fingers. It was designed intentionally as a single continuous hand movement, rather than a sign held in one position, so it could be made easily visible.