

SHOREHAM BY SEA METHODIST CHURCH

POLICY FOR LONE WORKERS

Introduction

Shoreham Methodist Church is committed to taking all reasonable precautions necessary to secure the health and safety of any person working for the organisation. This commitment extends to those who might be alone on the church premises and anyone representing the church away from the premises.

Definition

A **Lone Worker** is someone who is working in isolation or others or who is unable to summon appropriate help if a situation arises and could include the following:

- Only one person on the church premises i.e. the minister working in the vestry, people carrying out maintenance work etc.
- People located in separate parts of the building
- The cleaner working alone in the premises
- Those working away from the premises i.e. attending a meeting at another premises, visiting a person home etc.

Aims of the Policy

The aim of the policy is to: -

- Increase awareness of safety issues relating to lone working;
- Ensure that the risk of lone working is assessed and that safe systems and methods of work are put in place to reduce the risk so far as is reasonably practicable;
- Encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working;
- Reduce the risk of incidents and injuries to staff related to lone working.

Responsibilities

The Church is responsible for:

- Identifying situations where people work alone and considering alternative arrangements, where appropriate
- Assessing 'reasonably foreseeable risks' in relation to lone working and identifying any control measures necessary to reduce the risk.
- Ensuring that employees or volunteers have a means of summoning help if necessary;
- Ensuring that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the effectiveness of this policy is regularly reviewed;
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers are aware of the policy;
- Ensuring that appropriate support is given to anyone involved in any incident;

Employees and volunteers are responsible for:

- Taking reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their actions;
- Following guidance and procedures designed for safe working;
- Reporting any dangers or potential dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone;
- Reporting all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and asking for guidance as appropriate;
- Taking part in training designed to meet the requirements of the policy.

Guidance for Lone Working

- **Working alone on the Church premises**

Working alone on the church premises will be avoided if at all possible.

However If it is necessary to enter the unoccupied church premises alone the following procedure should be followed:

- Inform a responsible person of the time you anticipate being in the building i.e. this could be a relative, friend or other church official etc. and they should then be informed when you leave the building. If possible make sure you have a mobile phone with you. If you do not have a mobile phone then the church mobile phone located in the annexe should be made available during the time spent on the premises. This responsible person should know the lone workers mobile number, the churches mobile number and the contact details for key holders
- If the job to be undertaken by a lone worker in the church exceeds the originally anticipated time to complete the work, the lone worker should inform the responsible person of the change to the time they will be leaving the building. When the work is completed the lone worker should phone the responsible person to confirm they have left the building.
- If the responsible person has not heard from the lone worker within a reasonable time after the anticipated departure time from the building, they should first telephone the lone worker's mobile telephone and /or the church mobile phone to ascertain if there is a problem. If there is no reply the responsible person should raise the alarm by contacting a church key holder immediately. The responsible person and the key holder should then go to the church to check the premises to ascertain if the lone worker has been taken ill or had an accident. If an incident has occurred the responsible person and key holder should take the appropriate action.
- Lone workers must not undertake any work which involves the use of ladders or climbing on chairs or tables.
- If anyone passing the church premises and sees a light on late in the

day they should notify a key holder and check the premises to see if there is a problem.

Working alone away from the Church Premises

There may be a number of various occasions when the minister, church officials, members etc. may represent the church away from the premises at meetings or visiting people in their own homes. When this is the case the following guidelines when appropriate should be followed:

- All visits need to be properly planned and risk assessed. This may involve considering the following
 - What is the nature of the visit – any known problem?
 - When the visit is taking place i.e. at night or in the daytime
 - Is there any issues with the location, e.g. unfamiliar place, dark alleys lifts, stairs etc.
 - How you are going to get there, by car, public transport or walk
 - Are there any safeguarding issues
 - How long is the visit or meeting
 - Who needs to know you are going
- If travelling by car ensure your car is in good condition, you belong to a breakdown service and your route is planned and in particularly consider where to park especially if the visit is in the evening
- If travelling on public transport check times beforehand
- If walking keep to busy well lit areas
- Make sure someone knows where you are going and how long you plan to be – this could be a partner, relative, friend or church official
- Make sure you have a mobile phone with you

Additional Information and guidance can be found at www.suzylamplugh.org