

Holy Trinity Bembridge Procedure Pastoral Visits

Purpose

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is responsible for ensuring that all lone working activities within the church are formally identified, and appropriate risk assessments are undertaken in order to identify and reduce the risks which lone working presents.

This Procedure is designed to control the risks to persons who may encounter hazards in carrying out pastoral visits.

Risk Group

Clergy, Pastoral Visitors

Procedure

Visits to people and venues that are known to the visitor are deemed to be low risk, and therefore a documented risk assessment may not be required. When visiting unknown people and venues (particularly vulnerable persons) a documented risk assessment should be completed. Mitigation may require the presence of a second person or other arrangements.

If there is a change of situation regarding the person(s) or the property the risk assessment should be updated, and the appropriateness of lone visits reviewed.

Modern mobile phones have an emergency call facility. It is recommended that Clergy and Pastoral Visitors employed in this parish should have mobile phone with this facility.

The Diocese of Portsmouth recommends that Lone Workers should be aware of their responsibilities in ensuring their personal safety when visiting people in their own homes. Risks occurring due to lone visits may be reduced by:

- Lone workers should always ensure that someone else, i.e. either their Group Leader and/or colleague/family member, is aware of their movements. This means providing them with the address of where they will be visiting, details of the person they are visiting, telephone numbers if known and expected arrival and departure times.
- All staff and volunteers who work in the community and undertake home visits should ensure that they have access to a mobile phone at all times, which is in good working order.
- All homes visits should be recorded, as clear and detailed record keeping may prevent problems in the future.
- No staff or volunteers should ever undertake a visit to a child or young person in their home unless another adult is present.
- Lone workers should be alert to any signs of potential danger during a home visit and be prepared to leave immediately if they have any concerns. Confrontation should always be avoided, and lone workers should never assume that violence won't happen, as while there are many home visits made safely every day, personal safety is paramount. Any incidents should be reported to the Group Leader and/or the Parish Safeguarding Representative as soon as possible.
- Staff and volunteers who undertake home visits should ask the person they are visiting if they can secure any pets, they may have which may present a safety risk.
- Where possible, home visits should be conducted in the morning or early afternoon, rather than the evening or late afternoon, in order that lone workers can avoid travelling in the dark, particularly in areas that they don't know, or may feel uncomfortable in. If this is not feasible, consideration should be given to working in pairs.

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Risk Assessment Background Information

A risk assessment is a system that enables the identification of Hazards, the Assessment of the risks posed by the hazard and Control Measures to reduce either the likelihood or the impact, or both, of that hazard.

Potential Hazards (something that has the ability to cause harm)

- Travel to and from the visit site
- Access to and egress from the property
- Health hazards due to the nature of the property or occupant(s)
- Verbal abuse
- Physical abuse
- Allegations of abuse harm against visitor
- Child in property with no other adult present
- Danger from contact with animals/pets within the property
- Other detected hazards

Risk Rating

Risks have 2 components Likelihood and Impact

Risk Likelihood	Rating value	Risk Impact	Rating value
Low May only occur in exceptional circumstances	1	Low The impact is small and easily managed	1
Medium Expected to occur in some circumstances	2	Medium The risk event could have a meaningful effect upon the individual/parish in terms of cost, health, reputation, etc	2
High Expected to occur in many/most circumstances	3	High The risk event could have a devastating effect upon the individual or parish in terms of cost, health, reputation, etc.	3

The overall risk rating is the product of Likelihood and Impact.

For example

Risk Likelihood is low = 1, Risk impact is medium = 2. Overall Risk Rating = $1 \times 2 = 2$

Risk Likelihood is Medium = 2, Risk impact is high = 3. Overall Risk Rating = $2 \times 3 = 6$

The Risk Rating for each identified hazard should be measured before control measure are put in place and again when the control measures are in place. Any risk that is assessed after Control Measures are in place, as having an Overall Risk Rating of more than 2 should be viewed as unsuitable for lone working.

Control Measures

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Control measures are actions to mitigate the risk caused by the hazard.

For example

Hazard	Risk Rating Before	Control Measure	Risk Rating Controls in place
Travel to and from the visit site	4	Own car safe/well-lit parking area. <i>(this control reduces the risk likelihood)</i>	2

In some cases it may not be possible to mitigate this hazard due to the nature of the area, such as an area frequented by drug abusers. In that situation a lone visit would be too high a risk.

Hazards that are not applicable to the particular visit situation should be recorded as such and any detected hazards must be recorded.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is a two-stage process.

- 1) Assess the hazards and the risks posed. This is done mainly by observation, and previous experience, but at time by feelings.
- 2) Documentation, which is proof that stage 1 has been done.

A Pastoral Visit Risk Assessment pro-forma is at Appendix A and should be completed for each lone visit.

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Appendix A - Pastoral Visit Risk Assessment

Name of Person visited			
Address			
Telephone Number			
Reason for visit		Regular visit	Yes/No
Visitor Safeguarding arrangements			
Date of Assessment			
Hazard	Risk Rating Before	Control Measure	Risk Rating Controls in place
Travel to and from the visit site			
Access to and egress from the property			
Health hazards due to the nature of the property or occupant(s)			
Verbal abuse			
Physical abuse			
Allegations of abuse harm against visitor			
Child in property with no other adult present			
Danger from contact with animals/pets within the property			
Other detected hazards (<i>please list</i>)			

Risk Assessment Update

Date	Reason		
Hazard	Risk Rating Before	Control Measure	Risk Rating Controls in place

Risk Assessment Review Date
