



Morpeth Parish

St James the Great + St Mary the Virgin + St Aidan

Morpeth Parish supports wholeheartedly TOWARDS A SAFER CHURCH

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Lone Working Policy and Guidelines 2022/23

Purpose:

To provide guidance to anyone when working alone on behalf of the Parish of Morpeth in the three churches: St. Mary's, St. James', St. Aidan's or in the Parish Office or Manchester Street Hall (referred to as Parish Buildings).

Policy Statement:

The Parish of Morpeth seeks to promote best practice to support everyone's general safety and wellbeing when working in Parish Buildings. However, it is recognised that there may be occasions when an individual needs to make a reasonable assessment of any risks associated with their working alone.

Policy Guidance: Lone working in general:

When working alone in Parish Buildings you should observe the following precautions:

1. Do not work at height.
2. Do not use gas appliances unless you are familiar with their operation.
3. Ensure that you have a mobile phone with you that is on, charged and has credit.
4. Ensure that someone knows where you are, and when you expect to leave. Let them know that you have left safely. If you are in the church alone for more than 1 hour, check in with that person every hour to confirm that you are safe and still working.
5. Ensure that you are sufficiently fit and well to be carrying out your tasks alone.

Policy Guidance: Lone working:

In addition to the general guidelines:

1. Ensure that, whenever possible, Parish Buildings' doors are locked to prevent unauthorised entry.
2. Ensure that you know where to find the first aid kits.
3. Ensure that you are familiar with the procedures for dealing with fire.
4. When unlocking/locking Parish Buildings (particularly if it is dark), be vigilant for any threat that could potentially endanger you or to take your keys.
5. Clergy working alone in Parish Buildings should follow Diocesan best practice guidelines to safeguard themselves and others
6. If any situation occurs which you consider to be a potential risk or hazard, the details **MUST** be given to either a member of the clergy, Churchwardens or Parish Office as soon as possible. This will ensure that risks can be more easily understood and steps taken to eliminate any further re-occurrence.

This policy is reviewed each year by the Parochial Church Council

Signed by:

Rector and Churchwardens

Date 7th June 2022

Policy Guidelines for Lone Working 2022/23

Our priority is to enable working in Parish Buildings while ensuring the health and safety of our members as far as we can, and to minimise potential risks. We are all vulnerable to unforeseen occurrences. We do not want to limit the great work that goes on within our Parish but we must all have a full awareness of what is happening.

Please be aware of the following guidelines whenever working in Parish Buildings on one's own, be it arranging flowers, cleaning, practising the organ, photocopying, working on the computer, facilitating access for contractors etc.

1. Ensure you have read, and agreed to the policy statements and guidelines for Lone Working.
2. Ensure you follow the guidelines, in particular:
 - a) ensure you have told someone when you arrive and leave.
 - b) ensure you have a mobile phone on you (fully charged and with credit).
 - c) be vigilant when unlocking/locking Parish Buildings, particularly when it is dark.

Policy Guidance for Church Sitting in either St. Mary's St. James' or St. Aidan's

and other occasions when members of the public may come into church

- Ideally there should be two adults 'church sitting' each time, so that if one person is occupied talking to a visitor, this means that the other person is free to have a full awareness as to what else may be happening in the church. Whenever we church sit, we need to be vigilant as to who is coming and going, where they may be wandering to, and what they are doing.
- If someone chooses to be in the building on their own, they should pay extra attention to the guidelines ensuring they have told someone when they arrive and when they leave and also that they have a charged mobile phone with credit. They should accept that they could be potentially putting themselves at risk. They need to appreciate that they are taking on the huge responsibility of the church and its contents during this time.
- If someone chooses to church sit on their own they should have a key, so that if they need to go to the toilet, they can momentarily lock the doors as opposed to leaving the church open and unattended.
- If someone comes to church sit and their 'partner' is unable to attend, or forgets, they have the option to close the church if there is no-one else available to be with them. No-one needs to feel vulnerable.
- Anyone church sitting on their own should not regard another person working within the church as 'back-up'. Someone flower-arranging, practising the organ, cleaning, etc., should not be assumed to fulfil the role of second adult. They are in church to do their own job and need to concentrate on their own responsibilities otherwise it puts a very unfair expectation on them.