Compliance with CofE Safer Environments and Activities with regard to Lone Working

1. **Those working or volunteering with children** on behalf of the church should avoid situations where they are on their own with a child.
    a. This includes 'formal' situations such as youth groups, choirs and bell-ringing, and so on, and less formal setting such as before and after those groups, giving lifts home, and so on.
    b. If only one adult is available to lead the activity, it should be postponed until an appropriate amount of adult leaders are available.
2. **Youth Groups and at Home** Youth Groups - As in every situation, sensible safer working practice arrangements should be followed, with particular diligence given to the prohibition against lone working. Two adult leaders should always be present. If the youth group is led by a couple, there should be a third adult leader/helper present. The reason for this is that a primary reason for the 'two adult helper' rule is that adults can keep each other accountable for how they behave around young people. The relationship between a married couple may make such mutual accountability difficult and arrangements to ensure the presence of a third adult are required.
3. **Home Visiting**: Visiting adults at home can be a valuable aspect of pastoral care. This will often be done on an informal, neighbourly basis. Such arrangements fall outside of the scope of this guidance, which only applies to 'formal' visiting done in the name of the parish church. Visiting at home is especially important for adults who are home-bound, for instance through disability or illness, and can contribute greatly to the quality of their lives. Care must be taken, however, both for the protection of those being visited and for the those doing the visiting. There should be accountability and transparency in the manner in which church officers engage in lone working or visits to homes.
    a. Good Practice when visiting people at home: (currently n/a as HTH do not do home visits).
        - Ideally let people you are visiting know in advance that you are going to visit, particularly if it is your first visit.
        - If this is a first visit, or if the conversation is likely to move onto sensitive pastoral matters, ensure that the person is aware that the conversation is confidential, but also what the boundaries of confidentiality are If possible, visit in pairs - again, especially if it is the first visit. However, it is recognised that much pastoral visiting, particularly by clergy, is done alone and this guidance does not place a restriction on that, as long as the other aspects of safer working practice in this guidance are followed.
        - Carry some identification on the first visit and be proactive in letting the person see it. This is particularly important for elderly people living alone, who may have other people ('bogus callers') visiting to exploit them in some way. Letting them know that they have a right to see identification does them a great service.

- Consider the risks of the visit. Is the person, or another occupant, volatile or unpredictable? Do they have a dog who does not like visitors? You may not know everything before a first visit but try and find out what you can. (See the Model Risk Assessment Check List for Home Visiting further guidance).
- Carry a mobile phone and let someone know where you are and when you expect to return.
- Ask the person whether they would like repeat visits, whether and how they would like to be contacted again, and so on. Leave them feeling fully in control of your contact with them.
- Make a note of the visit; store all such notes in accordance with data protection requirements. The note does not need to be extensive, but the date, time of arrival and departure, and any significant observations or points of conversation should be recorded. Let the person you are visiting know that you keep brief records, and always be prepared to show them your notes should they ask.
- If you are asked to make any purchases on behalf of the person, always retain receipts and return both them and any change to the person immediately. Keep a record of any transactions and the reason for them.
- Set appropriate boundaries: be wary of over-promising. If you do not have the ability to meet the needs of the person you are visiting, say that you will try and find suitable help, but avoid getting drawn into a dependant relationship that ultimately disempowers the person you are visiting.
- Take care regarding accepting any gifts other than token items, to avoid misunderstandings or subsequent accusations from the person or their family. If courtesy demands that you accept a small gift, declare it to someone at church, for instance a church warden or the PCC Treasurer, to ensure transparency. If someone wants to make a donation to the church, put it in an envelope, mark it on the outside as a donation and obtain a receipt from the Treasurer.

4. **Lone Working Online** - Avoid 'lone working' in the online world: Practically, this means avoiding one-to-one online chat (e.g. direct messaging) between adults and young people.

Holy Trinity, Hartshill PCC agree to comply with the Church of England Safer Environments and Activities Lone Working guidelines

Signed D. Miles

Date 2/11/2026