

Effective Date: July 2025

Review Date June/July 2026

### 1. Purpose

St Matthew's Church is committed to ensuring the health, safety, and well-being of all employees, volunteers, and contractors who may work alone in the church premises or during church-related activities. This policy outlines the procedures and measures to minimize risks associated with lone working and to comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and other relevant regulations.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who may work alone at St Matthew's Church, including but not limited to:

- Clergy and church staff
- Volunteers (e.g., those involved in maintenance, cleaning, or administrative tasks)
- Contractors performing work on church premises
- Individuals conducting outreach or community activities on behalf of the church

Lone working refers to situations where an individual works without direct or immediate supervision or access to assistance, whether on the church premises or in the community.

### 3. Definitions

**Lone Worker:** An individual who performs their duties without close or direct supervision, in isolation from others, or without immediate access to assistance.

**Church Premises:** Includes the main church building, associated halls, offices, grounds, and any other facilities owned or managed by St Matthew's Church including The Art House.

### 4. Risk Assessment

St Matthew's Church recognizes that lone working may expose individuals to additional risks. A risk assessment will be conducted to identify and mitigate potential hazards. Key considerations include:

- **Physical Risks:** Slips, trips, falls, or accidents involving equipment (e.g., ladders, cleaning tools).
- **Personal Safety:** Risks of violence, aggression, or theft, particularly when working alone in the church or meeting visitors.
- **Medical Emergencies:** The absence of immediate assistance in case of illness or injury.
- **Mental Health:** Isolation or stress from working alone for extended periods.
- **Access and Egress:** Safe entry and exit from the premises, especially during early morning or evening hours.

The risk assessment will be reviewed annually or whenever there is a significant change in activities or premises. The designated Health and Safety Officers (The Churchwardens) will oversee this process.

## **5. Responsibilities**

### **5.1 Church Leadership (Vicar, Churchwardens, PCC)**

- Ensure that lone working is minimized where possible and only undertaken when necessary.
- Conduct and review risk assessments for lone working activities.
- Provide training and resources to lone workers to ensure their safety.
- Maintain a record of lone workers and their schedules.
- Ensure compliance with this policy and relevant legislation.

### **5.2 Lone Workers**

- Follow all procedures outlined in this policy and any specific risk assessments.
- Report any incidents, near-misses, or concerns immediately to the designated contact (e.g., Churchwarden or Vicar).
- Use provided safety equipment (e.g. mobile phones) as instructed.
- Inform a designated contact of their working schedule and check-in/check-out times.

### **5.3 Designated Contact**

- A nominated individual (e.g., Churchwarden, Parish Administrator, or Vicar) will act as the point of contact for lone workers.
- Maintain regular communication with lone workers during their tasks.
- Respond promptly to any check-in failures or emergency reports.

## **6. Procedures for Lone Working**

To ensure the safety of lone workers at St Matthew's Church, the following procedures must be followed:

### **6.1 Pre-Work Planning**

- Approval: Lone working must be approved by a supervisor or church leadership unless it is a routine task covered by an existing risk assessment.
- Scheduling: Lone workers must inform the designated contact of their intended working hours, location, and expected completion time.
- Risk Assessment: Review the specific risks associated with the task and ensure appropriate controls are in place (e.g., locked doors, adequate lighting).

### **6.2 Communication**

- Lone workers must carry a fully charged mobile phone or other communication device
- A check-in system may be implemented:
  - Check-In: Lone workers must notify a friend, colleague or church officer that they are working alone.
  - Periodic Check-Ins: For tasks exceeding two hours, lone workers must check in with the designated contact at agreed intervals (e.g., every hour).
  - Check-Out: Lone workers must confirm when they have completed their task and left the premises.
- If a lone worker fails to check in, the designated contact will attempt to contact them. If contact cannot be established within 30 minutes, emergency procedures will be initiated (e.g., contacting emergency services or a nominated emergency contact).

### **6.3 Personal Safety**

- Access Control: Doors should remain locked in church outside of opening hours 10-6pm if someone is working alone.

- Visitors: Lone workers should avoid admitting unknown visitors to the premises particularly the vestry and sacristy.
- Emergency Procedures: Lone workers must be familiar with the location of first aid kits, fire exits, and emergency contact numbers.

#### **6.4 Working Off-Site**

- For lone working in the community (e.g., pastoral visits), workers must:
  - Share their itinerary and expected return time with the designated contact/ friend/ family member or colleague.
  - Avoid high-risk areas or situations, as identified in the risk assessment.
  - Carry identification and contact details for St Matthew's Church.
  - only make visits if specifically authorized by the leadership team

#### **7. Specific Considerations for St Matthew's Church**

- Building Layout: The church's historic structure may include areas with limited mobile phone reception or isolated spaces (e.g., vestry, crypt). Lone workers should avoid these areas unless accompanied or equipped with appropriate communication devices. They should familiarize themselves with the building and where signal is best or weakest on their network.

#### **8. Training and Awareness**

- All lone workers will receive training on this policy, including:
  - Risk awareness and mitigation strategies.
  - Emergency procedures, including first aid and evacuation protocols.
  - Use of communication devices.

#### **9. Incident Reporting**

- All incidents, including near-misses, must be reported to the Churchwardens immediately.
- An incident log will be maintained, and serious incidents will be reported to the appropriate authorities (e.g., Health and Safety Executive, police) as required.
- The Parochial Church Council (PCC) will review incidents to identify improvements to this policy.

#### **10. Emergency Procedures**

- In case of an emergency (e.g., injury, fire, or security threat):
  - Lone workers should contact emergency services (999) immediately.
  - Notify the designated contact as soon as it is safe to do so.
  - Notify anyone in the adjacent Art House if appropriate
  - Follow the church's emergency evacuation plan, if applicable.
  - Emergency contact numbers (e.g., Vicar, Churchwarden, or Parish Office) will be prominently displayed in the vestry and provided to all lone workers.

#### **11. Monitoring and Review**

- This policy will be reviewed annually by the PCC or sooner if there are significant changes in legislation, church activities, or premises
- Feedback from lone workers will be sought to ensure the policy remains effective and practical.

#### **12. Contact Information**

- Designated Contacts:
  - The church wardens
  - [churchwarden@carverstreet.co.uk](mailto:churchwarden@carverstreet.co.uk)
  - Emergency Services: 999

# Our Church Risk Assessment

Name of church:

Address:

Date(s) assessment carried out:

Date review of assessment required:

Signed\*:



## How we carried out the risk assessment

1. First of all, we looked at information produced by Ecclesiastical Insurance Group to help us understand where hazards could occur in our church. This included their Health and Safety Made Simple Guide, the introduction to this template, and the guidance provided on their website at [www.ecclesiastical.com/healthandsafety](http://www.ecclesiastical.com/healthandsafety). We also looked at relevant information provided by the Health and Safety Executive at [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)
2. We discussed if anyone could remember if there had ever been any accidents in the past.
3. We then discussed if any other users of the church or anyone who had done work for the church had reported any concerns regarding health and safety.
4. We then walked around the church, the grounds and any other buildings we are responsible for and noted anything that might cause harm. We considered how accidents might happen and how serious the outcome of those might be. We noted if there were any precautions in place or any additional ones we could take. If it was possible to eliminate the risk entirely, we did this as soon as we could. This was based on what we had learned from the information we had reviewed above (note one).
5. We also considered any hazards presented by other activities, such as festivals, concerts or other events including tower tours and fetes. Where these were to be held, we agreed that we would review health and safety precautions before holding the event.
6. We recorded the findings of our assessment using this template.
7. We communicated the findings to all our employees and volunteers, including anyone new who joins us.
8. We have put the risk assessment into practice, making sure that each identified action is progressed and noting when each one is completed on this template.
9. We will review and update our risk assessments where we suspect they are no longer valid.

\*Designated member of the PCC with responsibility for health and safety.

## Area assessed:

1.

Internal areas of the church normally open to the public (for example, nave, aisles, porches, balconies, etc.).

Who might be harmed?

Members of the congregation, employees, volunteers, visitors, clergy, in fact anyone visiting the church.

What could cause harm?	Tick here if risk or N/A	Existing precautions in place	Additional precautions required	Who needs to take action?	When does this need to be completed by?	Tick when completed	Completion date
<p><b>Trips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worn or unfixd carpet edges, rugs or doormats</li> <li>• Trailing wires, cables or leads</li> <li>• Worn, damaged or uneven steps or stairs</li> <li>• Poor lighting</li> <li>• Missing or defective handrails</li> <li>• Variations in the level of floors (for example, ramps)</li> <li>• Restricted access including doorway widths</li> <li>• Other.</li> </ul>	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p><b>Slips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smooth floor surfaces</li> <li>• Cleaning activity making floors slippery (for example, wet mopping, use of polishes, etc.)</li> <li>• Wet or contaminated floors from poor maintenance (for example, leaking roofs)</li> <li>• Spillages of food or drink (particularly in kitchen areas)</li> <li>• Walk-in contaminant from adverse weather (for example, mud, rainwater, etc.)</li> <li>• Other.</li> </ul>	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<input type="checkbox"/>	

What could cause harm?	Tick here if risk or N/A	Existing precautions in place	Additional precautions required	Who needs to take action?	When does this need to be completed by?	Tick when completed	Completion date
<p><b>Falls From Height:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When changing lightbulbs</li> <li>• When cleaning or decorating</li> <li>• When putting up decorations or displays</li> <li>• Inadequately guarded balconies or other areas at height</li> <li>• Fragile ceiling material where work or access is required</li> <li>• Trap doors in bell-ringing chambers</li> <li>• Damaged ladders, stepladders or other access equipment</li> <li>• Other.</li> </ul>	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p><b>Fire:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accumulations of combustible waste</li> <li>• Accumulations of flammable materials</li> <li>• Blocked or obstructed exit routes</li> <li>• Locked escape doors</li> <li>• Portable heaters</li> <li>• Votive candles</li> <li>• Matches</li> <li>• Other.</li> </ul>	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p><b>Electricity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faulty or damaged fixed wiring</li> <li>• Faulty, damaged or unauthorised portable electrical equipment</li> <li>• Faulty or damaged extension cables or adaptors</li> <li>• Other.</li> </ul>	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	

What could cause harm?	Tick here if risk or N/A	Existing precautions in place	Additional precautions required	Who needs to take action?	When does this need to be completed by?	Tick when completed	Completion date
<p><b>Gas:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defective or poorly maintained gas boilers or pipework</li> <li>Other.</li> </ul>	Risk <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p><b>Work Equipment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defective or poorly maintained power tools (for example, vacuum cleaners, floor polishers etc.)</li> <li>Defective or poorly maintained hand tools (for example, garden shears, hammers, etc.)</li> <li>Other.</li> </ul>	Risk <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p><b>Asbestos:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In insulation, lagging or fire protection</li> <li>In wall and roof linings</li> <li>In organ blowers</li> <li>In motor housings</li> <li>Other.</li> </ul>	Risk <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	

What could cause harm?	Tick here if risk or N/A	Existing precautions in place	Additional precautions required	Who needs to take action?	When does this need to be completed by?	Tick when completed	Completion date
<p><b>Glazing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-safety glass in doors, partitions or floors</li> <li>• Other.</li> </ul>	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p><b>Hazardous Substances:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cleaning products (for example polish, drain cleaner, etc.)</li> <li>• Other.</li> </ul>	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p><b>Manual Handling (lifting or carrying):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bulky or unwieldy furniture</li> <li>• Heavy audio visual or computer equipment</li> <li>• General rubbish that may include breakages (for example, glass)</li> <li>• Other.</li> </ul>	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	

## Area assessed:

2.

Outside areas of our church (for example, towers, tower roofs and other high levels, other outbuildings, churchyard, car park, etc.).

Who might be harmed?

Members of the congregation, employees, volunteers, visitors, clergy, in fact anyone visiting the church.

What could cause harm?	Tick here if risk or N/A	Existing precautions in place	Additional precautions required	Who needs to take action?	When does this need to be completed by?	Tick when completed	Completion date
<p><b>Trips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uneven footpaths</li> <li>• Damaged paving stones and slabs</li> <li>• Worn, damaged or uneven steps</li> <li>• Gravestones, kerbs or ledger stones causing obstruction</li> <li>• Protruding tree roots and undergrowth</li> <li>• Poor lighting</li> <li>• Missing or defective handrails</li> <li>• Other.</li> </ul>	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p><b>Slips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor drainage of footpaths</li> <li>• Growth of algae or moss</li> <li>• Accumulations of wet leaves or loose materials</li> <li>• Inadequate precautions for adverse weather (for example snow, ice, etc.)</li> <li>• Walk-in contaminant from adverse weather (for example mud, rainwater, etc.)</li> <li>• Other.</li> </ul>	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<input type="checkbox"/>	

What could cause harm?	Tick here if risk or N/A	Existing precautions in place	Additional precautions required	Who needs to take action?	When does this need to be completed by?	Tick when completed	Completion date
<p><b>Headstones, Tombs and Monuments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Damaged monuments</li> <li>• Displaced headstones</li> <li>• Other.</li> </ul>	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p><b>Falls from Height:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access requiring the use of ladders, hatches, sloping roofs, etc.</li> <li>• Restricted access widths around spires</li> <li>• Inadequate protection afforded by parapets</li> <li>• Unprotected roof lights or other fragile roofing material</li> <li>• Low parapeting or castellations along the tops of external walls</li> <li>• Damaged ladders, stepladders or other access equipment</li> <li>• Inadequate temporary edge protection (such as guard rails and toe boards)</li> <li>• Other.</li> </ul>	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	

What could cause harm?	Tick here if risk or N/A	Existing precautions in place	Additional precautions required	Who needs to take action?	When does this need to be completed by?	Tick when completed	Completion date
<p><b>Tower Tours:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overcrowded tours</li> <li>• Inadequate numbers of stewards</li> <li>• Inadequate emergency evacuation procedures</li> <li>• Unauthorised access to areas not on the tour (for example, roofs)</li> <li>• No means of communication between stewards</li> <li>• Inadequate safety briefing for those on the tour</li> <li>• Restricted access (such as, doorway widths, height restrictions or other projections)</li> <li>• Other.</li> </ul>	Risk <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p><b>Trees:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Damaged or displaced trees</li> <li>• Protruding tree roots</li> <li>• Diseased trees</li> <li>• Other.</li> </ul>	Risk <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p><b>Car Park:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entrance and exits not clearly marked</li> <li>• Poor lighting</li> <li>• Potholes</li> <li>• Other.</li> </ul>	Risk <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	

What could cause harm?	Tick here if risk or N/A	Existing precautions in place	Additional precautions required	Who needs to take action?	When does this need to be completed by?	Tick when completed	Completion date
<p><b>Electricity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faulty or damaged fixed wiring</li> <li>• Faulty, damaged or unauthorised portable electrical equipment</li> <li>• Faulty or damaged extension cables or adaptors</li> <li>• Other.</li> </ul>	Risk <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p><b>Gas:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) bottles incorrectly sited</li> <li>• Pipework damaged</li> <li>• Other.</li> </ul>	Risk <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p><b>Work Equipment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defective or poorly maintained power tools (for example, lawnmowers, strimmers, etc.)</li> <li>• Defective or poorly maintained hand tools (for example, garden shears, hammers, etc.)</li> <li>• Other.</li> </ul>	Risk <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	

What could cause harm?	Tick here if risk or N/A	Existing precautions in place	Additional precautions required	Who needs to take action?	When does this need to be completed by?	Tick when completed	Completion date
<p><b>Hazardous Substances:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance products (for example, petrol, liquefied petroleum gas, etc.)</li> <li>• Horticultural products (for example, pesticides, weedkillers, fertilisers, etc.)</li> <li>• Other.</li> </ul>	Risk <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p><b>Other:</b></p>	Risk <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p><b>Other:</b></p>	Risk <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	