

## RISK ASSESSMENT LONE WORKING

<b>Name of Church</b>	<b>Assessment undertaken by</b>
WOODBRIDGE METHODIST CHURCH ST JOHN'S STREET WOODBIDGE SUFFOLK IP12 1ED	M.J. PORTER - SAFETY ADVISOR Contact at:- <a href="mailto:WMCroombooking@gmail.com">WMCroombooking@gmail.com</a>
Initial Assessment 1/2/2026 Next Annual Review 1/1/2027	Area of the premises assessed ALL INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SPACES
Next Full Reassessment Date: 1 January 2031	

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All Church members and people hiring or using the Church Premises should regularly view and check the church website (<https://woodbridge.methodistic.org.uk>) for the up-to-date versions of all relevant Safety Documents, including this one.

### SAFEGUARDING POLICY

THIS SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT BEFORE HIRING OR USING CHURCH PREMISES. DETAILS ARE AVAILABLE ON THE CHURCH WEBSITE:-  
<https://woodbridge.methodistic.org.uk>

## **DEFINITIONS**

### **1. 'Lone Working' definitions for the purpose of this Risk Assessment.**

People are deemed to be 'Lone Working' if they are present at or on Woodbridge Methodist Church (hereafter referred to as 'WMC') premises, even if for only short periods of time, in any of the following circumstances: –

- i. As an Employee of WMC, or of the Ipswich Methodist Church Circuit, or Eastern District of The Methodist Church.**
- ii. As a member, adherent or regular attender of WMC and who has been issued with a key to access the premises.**
- iii. A contractor working on their own at or on WMC premises at the request of, or on behalf of the Church.**
- iv. A person who has hired the Church Premises and is the only person present within the WMC buildings.**
- v. More than one person who, by the nature of their situations or activities at the church, feel vulnerable when at or on the premises.**

The term 'work' includes activities as well as employed work; for example, church officials, volunteers or helpers, organists, flower arrangers. The terms and scope of this document is not meant to be exclusive!

## **VULNERABILITY**

- ### **2. People on their own, or in small numbers may feel vulnerable. The Church is a large building and is accessible by many organisations and members of the public. Often there are many people at the site, but at times, individuals or small groups may be left on their own. The building is old and as such, is likely to make 'noises' that can be perceived as being disconcerting. Some activities are by their nature, noisy (organ or other music playing or vacuuming for example) and a person may not hear someone else come into the premises.**

Lone workers may feel vulnerable because of isolation within the building – if they are suddenly taken ill, or suffer a mishap that leaves them unable to take care of themselves, rapid help may not be readily available. There is no 'land-line' telephone at the church.

Special precautions may need to be implemented if working alone OUTSIDE the building. If tools and equipment are available, they may need securing to prevent misuse, damage or theft.

## **RISKS AND MITIGATING ADVICE**

### **3. Risks:**

- a. When alone in the building, a person may suffer incapacitation – illness or accident and need assistance. Other people may not call at the premises for several hours or even days.
- b. A person alone or in a small group may be vulnerable to assault or other abuse if others have access to the buildings.
- c. Where the building was open for public access, people with malicious intent may enter the building unobserved and ‘hide’ until most or all people have left.

### **4. Mitigating Advice:**

Anyone who is likely to find themselves alone (or in small groups) at WMC premises should consider the following advice, offered to mitigate the risks associated with being alone in the building:-

- a. Before attending for a ‘lone work session’, have to hand a mobile phone that is fully functioning (battery charged and otherwise working) and that mobile signals are checked before commencing the ‘work’ period.
- b. Before attending WMC, inform someone that they are going to the Church and will be on their own – and that they will tell this other person(s) when they have returned home (or some other agreed place).
- c. Only come in to a ‘lone work’ session if they are feeling confident and well enough to do so.
- d. Anyone working in a ‘remote’ area of the Church – for example, the loft areas or cellar, should not do so unaccompanied unless they have informed a responsible person of their intentions to do so and make provisions for follow up action if they do not return or make suitable contact by an agreed time.
- e. If a ‘lone worker’ is regularly in attendance at the Church, inform the Property & Finance Committee that they do so, using the contact details at: - [WMCroombooking@gmail.com](mailto:WMCroombooking@gmail.com)
- f. When entering the premises as a ‘lone worker’, after unlocking the main entrance door, to prevent unauthorised access, it may be

locked again from the inside, using the top lock only and checking the doors are secured before entering further into the building. The key SHOULD NOT be left in the lock as this would prevent another keyholder from accessing the building (either for their own purposes or, if called to assist the lone worker!) If on first entering, the door is already locked only with the top lock, it most likely means that another 'lone worker' is on the premises. In that situation, after re-locking the door as mentioned above, an attempt should be made to determine where this other person is and alert them to their own presence on the premises. It is also recommended that a mutual agreement is reached to let each other know when they leave and for the first one to leave to re-lock the top lock of the door after doing so. Similarly, if the doors are unlocked on arrival, it most likely means there are other people on the premises. In those circumstances, the doors should not be locked to allow for any emergency escape. The lone worker should make their presence known to the other people on the premises and let each other know when they are leaving.

- g. Where a person proposes to 'lock' themselves in the building, they should familiarise themselves with the alternative means of escape from the building in case of fire or some other emergency. There are 2 sets of 'Fire Escape' doors that are operated by 'crash-bars' and do not need a key to unlock them, they are sited in the Octagon and at the end of the ground floor corridor near the toilets, lift and stairs. If necessary, the 'old' front entrance doors can also be open from inside the building without a key – they are however heavy and awkward to move! After using any such emergency exit, the door should be made secure or notify a Church Keyholder to enable the premises to be made secure again. There is an internet connection which is usually available with the network name and password displayed on noticeboards and in most rooms. **WMC Guest – password is: w3Lcome2u**
- This system should be checked and connected to before commencing 'work'
- h. If a lone worker discovers an unauthorised person inside the premises, they are advised, if safely possible, to leave the premises through an emergency exit door and to contact the Police and a Church Representative for assistance.