

Parish Pastoral Care Good Practice Guide

Version 5.3, December 2025

Purpose of this Guide

The purpose of this guidance is to support parishes to provide good and safe pastoral care through the provision of a comprehensive framework for the safe recruitment, training and support of locally commissioned and recognised lay pastoral visitors and assistants.

The booklet is designed for those overseeing or leading parish pastoral care teams to support them in selecting, preparing and supporting lay pastoral visitors and assistants in their parish. It is not intended as a handbook for parish pastoral care visitors and assistants but there may be sections of it that are useful to share in full.

The guidance in this booklet will enable the provision of safe and consistent pastoral care:

- Protecting both the visitor/assistant and the person visited from potential exploitation,
- Providing a clear structure which supports the visitor/assistant, and
- Ensuring that pastoral ministry, exercised in the name of the Church, respects the dignity and integrity of all concerned, and is honouring to God

Introduction

As members of God's church we seek to love God and one another. This includes loving those we serve in the wider community. Pastoral care is a particular expression of this love involving intentional Christ-centred support seeking to meet the spiritual, emotional and physical needs of those within and outside the church community.

This booklet recognises the enormous contribution pastoral visiting makes to the lives of those visited and the ministry of God's. Pastoral Visitors and Pastoral Assistants play a key role in this pastoral ministry alongside their clergy and licensed lay ministers.

Whilst much of the pastoral care offered occurs in an informal and unofficial way, as Christians seek to help in practical ways and encourage one another in the faith, some care is offered more formally through locally commissioned and recognised parish church representatives on behalf of the PCC and church community. This booklet seeks to support parishes in providing safe and effective pastoral care through these formal Pastoral Visitors and Pastoral Assistants.

For ease of use, hyperlinks have been added to ease navigation through this booklet.

Definition: Pastoral Visitors and Pastoral Assistants

This booklet names two different locally commissioned pastoral care roles ; Pastoral Visitors and Pastoral Assistants. For the purpose of this booklet definitions of these different roles are included below. The [Appendices](#) contain a longer role description and working agreement template for each of them.

Pastoral Visitor: To provide pastoral care for adult church members, adult members of the parish and local community where appropriate. This role **must not include** provision of personal care, shopping or transport etc.

Pastoral Assistant: To provide pastoral care for adult church members, adult members of the parish and local community where appropriate. May also provide leadership/pastoral support to other LPAs/LPVs (as agreed with the Incumbent). This role **may include occasional** provision of provision of personal care, shopping or transport etc. if requested and agreed by the Incumbent and all relevant checks (e.g. DBS, insurance) and assessments are completed.

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Safer recruitment of pastoral teams

Pastoral Visitors are those selected and commissioned by the local church leadership who have a particular heart for serving the local church and parish in pastoral care. This may include:

- Visiting newcomers to the church.
- Visiting those who move into the local area.
- Praying with and for people when visiting, either informally or using formal written prayers.
- Visiting the sick, those in hospital, and the housebound.
- Providing pastoral care, support and assistance to those identified by the pastoral team lead or incumbent.

In all our interactions with others the church has both a duty of care to everyone and a duty to ensure that all visits are conducted safely with good safeguarding practice. Pastoral visits take place with a wide range of people including those who may be deemed a vulnerable adults. However not every visit will be to an adult who is considered vulnerable.

A vulnerable adult is defined in the Care Act 2014 as follows:

An adult at risk of abuse or neglect is defined as someone who has needs for care and support, who is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect and as a result of their care needs - is unable to protect themselves (section 42, The Care Act 2014)

If a visit is being made to a person who is at that time a vulnerable adult, the local church has a **legal requirement** to ensure that the relevant DBS checks have been completed by the person visiting

There are three levels of DBS check. The level required depends on the adult being visited and the type of care that is being given. For ease, we have defined below the three clear types of pastoral visits and the legal requirements relating to each.

The type of care expected must be defined in, and limited by, the role description of the parish pastoral carer. This needs to be agreed by the PCC and have the relevant risk assessments. (See Templates in Appendices)

Three levels of DBS Check

1. Pastoral visits to Non-Vulnerable Individuals – Basic level of DBS check

A visit with an adult who is **not** considered vulnerable according to the Care Act definition (see above). All visits should be completed with safety in mind, and the Diocese recommends that a basic DBS check is completed in these circumstances.

A Basic DBS Check is available to any individual or employer for any role that does not legally require an Enhanced DBS check. As its name suggests, it is the most basic level of screening that provides information on unspent convictions, helping employers and organisations make informed decisions. Basic DBS checks are widely used for roles that don't involve regulated activity with children or vulnerable adults requiring high levels of trust, but where PCCs wish to confirm basic criminal history.

2. Pastoral visits to Vulnerable Adults – Enhanced level of DBS check for adult workforce

This includes any form of care, supervision, training, teaching, instruction, assistance, advice, guidance, or conveying, provided on 4 or more days in any 30 day period or at least once overnight (between 2am-6am) where there may be face-to-face contact mainly to adults who:

- Live in residential accommodation provided in connection with required care, or
- Live in sheltered housing, or
- Receive, at the place where they live, care of any description or assistance provided by reason of age, illness or disability, or
- Receive any form of health care, including treatment, therapy or palliative care, or
- Receive support, assistance or advice for the purpose of developing or sustaining their capacity to live independently in accommodation, or
- Receive any service provided specifically for adults because of their age, illness or disability

And/or

Any form of work carried out on 4 or more days in any 30-day period or at least once overnight (between 2am-6am) where there may be face-to-face contact in a care home and which gives the person the opportunity to have contact with the adult residents at that care home

3. Pastoral visit – Regulated Activity with Vulnerable Adults - Enhanced plus barring DBS check for adult workforce

Visits with vulnerable adults that include any of the below will become a **Regulated activity** and eligible for an enhanced **plus** barred DBS check.

- Providing healthcare: the provision of healthcare which is undertaken by (or supervised/directed by) a healthcare professional
- Providing personal care: Involving hands-on physical assistance with washing, dressing, toileting, eating and drinking due to an adult's age, illness or disability; teaching/supervising/prompting someone to do these tasks is also included.
- Assistance with general household matters where the adult is in need of that assistance by reason of age, illness or disability, and where that assistance involves managing their cash, bills or shopping.

- Supporting the conduct of an adult's own affairs under a formal appointment i.e. Lasting Power of Attorney under the Mental Capacity Act 2005.
- Conveying adults by reasons of age, illness or disability, where the conveying is to/from a place which the adults will receive/has received health care, relevant personal care or relevant social work.

Recruitment, Training, Induction and Ongoing supervision

These are the 4 steps in the recruitment, induction and support of a new Pastoral Visitor:

1. Role Design including Identification of DBS Check Level
 2. Safer Recruitment to the Role
 3. Initial Training
 4. Induction
 5. Ongoing Supervision
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1. Role Design and Identification of DBS Check Level
 - i. A role description and working agreement is prepared and agreed by the PCC for the pastoral visitor role. (see templates towards the end of this document)
 - ii. The relevant DBS level for the role is determined (see above)
 2. Safer Recruitment to the Role
 - i. Applicants are identified by the Incumbent and/or Pastoral Team Lead.
 - ii. Applicants complete a short form which must include a [Confidential Declaration](#) and 2 referees.
 - iii. Form and satisfactory references are received
 - iv. Required Safeguarding training is completed. These are all accessed via the National Safeguarding portal found [here](#) . All Pastoral Visitors are required to complete the following safeguarding training:
 - a. Basic
 - b. Foundation
 - c. Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse
 3. Initial Training

Training for the practical and pastoral aspects of the role are offered. This can be covered in various ways:

The Diocese runs an annual introductory training course in the Spring of each year, details of which are found [here](#)

Training can be delivered in the parish. We encourage parishes to either access the diocesan resources for this training from the Diocesan Training Lead, or we recommend the online training and small group resources offered by [The Association of Christian Counsellors](https://www.cofeguildford.org.uk)

We also strongly encourage a commissioning to be held within a church service so that the Pastoral Visitors are identified within the congregation and affirmed in their ministry.

4. Induction

The new Pastoral Visitor must be accompanied by another experienced Pastoral Visitor for the first visit. The Incumbent/Pastoral Team Leader identifies an appropriate person for initial supervised support. The introductory supervised visit should model good practice around the following issues:

- Explanations of the role of Pastoral Visitor
- Setting boundaries
- Negotiating safe visiting practices
- Managing timekeeping
- Agreeing visit location
- Agreeing contact details

Furthermore, we recommend as good practice that any visit to someone seeking pastoral care for the first time should be carried out by two pastoral team members.

5. Ongoing Supervision and Training

Ongoing regular supervision is provided, either within the pastoral team or individually by an appropriate church leader. This ongoing supervision should involve regular (e.g. 4-6 weekly see guidance below) gatherings of pastoral visitors with a designated leaders and an annual 1:1 review (see below). This provides an opportunity to talk through any pastoral care issues in a confidential setting and support to be offered to the Pastoral Visitor.

Regular supervision also provides a vital opportunity to review the role description and working agreement against the role being carried out ensuring that the relevant DBS checks undertaken remain relevant and that activities being carried out are within the bounds of the role description. If changes are needed, they need to be risk assessed and a new role description written and approved by Incumbent and PCC ensuring the correct DBS checks and training are in place.

There are resources for this at the end of this document that are copied from the suite of resources available to parishes for the creation of role descriptions, commissioning of pastoral visitors and their ongoing supervision, within the **Lay Leader training Pathway** which found [here](#)

Receiving a Pastoral Assistant /Visitor from Another Parish

There are occasions when a parish receives a Pastoral Assistant/Visitor from another parish. As these are locally recognised roles, it is for the Incumbent to consider the needs of their pastoral team and whether the additional support is needed. All of the above steps in recruitment should be taken as part of the onboarding process including references from the previous parish which must include the Incumbent.

Annual Reviews

Pastoral Visitors should be given an annual review to create opportunity to reflect on the year past and re-set expectations within a revised role description. It also offers the opportunity to discuss further training needs. We recommend the use of the Annual Review Form found in the Appendix and within the Lay Leader Training Pathway [website page](#).

A review should also cover:

- Checking that safeguarding training and DBS certificates are up to date
- Asking the Pastoral Visitor to re-read this good practice guide
- Reviewing and updating their personal role description as necessary

Record keeping

The only records which are kept as part of pastoral care will be names and contact details, date of visits, and any relevant notes. Notes of visits should be completed within 48 hours of a visit and all records should be kept securely on church premises. We advise the use of the record keeping templates as found in the Appendix – these can be adapted to suit the parish needs, but should include:

- Date and time
- Record of the visit – name of Visitor(s), person visited and any other persons present
- Actions
- Follow-up plan
- Any concerns
- Details of referrals
- Date of next meeting

Please note : any safeguarding concerns identified during a visit must be reported within 24 hours to parish safeguarding officer or Incumbent.

Transportation and pastoral care

- Should you consider using a motor vehicle to transport a person in any voluntary capacity, you must contact your car insurance company and inform them, as you may require appropriate business insurance cover. Equally, as you are representing your parish, they should consult their insurers for any amendment to their public liability insurance and/or personal accident insurance that might be required.
- Should you provide transport in your official Pastoral Visitor role, you will be acting on behalf of your church/parish and as such, you will require a DBS check at enhanced plus barred level. If you are providing transport as a friend, a DBS check does not apply. However, due caution should be applied if providing transport as a friend in your official role, as this could cause liability issues regarding your insurance.
- An appropriate risk assessment should be completed, with all driving documents recorded by the parish; insurance, MOT (if vehicle over 3 years old) and driving licence. The current status of your driving licence must be checked by your parish prior to the commencement of your volunteer driving ([View or share your driving licence information - GOV.UK](#)) and then again at regular intervals. If there are any endorsement points on your licence, your parish will need to decide if you remain suitable to provide volunteer transport.
- The vehicle you use must be in a clean and roadworthy condition, with a current and valid MOT.
- You must be considered fit to drive and be the holder of a current and valid full UK/European driving licence for the category of vehicle you are driving.
- Consider carrying a suitable first aid kit.
- You must obey all traffic law, rules and regulations.
- Any journey you make whilst acting in a voluntary capacity must be recorded.
- Consider carrying the passenger in the rear of the vehicle.
- Consider the needs of any elderly/disabled people or children, particularly picking up and setting down passengers. Appropriate Health and Safety training should be considered.
- Any luggage or equipment should be secured in the boot of the vehicle.
- Pets can be carried with passengers at the discretion of the driver, providing the animal does not affect the safe running of the vehicle. Guide dogs for blind and deaf clients should be taken in the vehicle, unless there are good reasons for not doing so.
- If you are receiving any reimbursement for your transport costs, please click here [Do I need to pay tax on mileage payments as a volunteer driver - GOV.UK](#)

Personal Safety for Pastoral Visitors

The parish has a duty of care to those Pastoral Visitors visiting on their behalf. Things to consider include:

- An assessment of personal risk – see decision matrix in Appendices
- Adopting a home visiting risk assessment checklist – see template in Appendices
- Do you have or need a Parish Lone Working Policy or Checklist?
- How do you monitor and ensure safe completion of lone pastoral visits?
- Training / briefing pastoral visitors on personal safety

Pastoral Visit best practice guidelines

- Wear an identifying badge/lanyard including the level of DBS check undertaken
- Avoid cold calling – make advance arrangements wherever possible
- Discuss any issues with visiting opposite sex (male visiting female and female visiting male) with Incumbent/Pastoral Team Leader
- Negotiate lone visiting only after initial assessment with, and discussion with, Incumbent/Pastoral Team Leader
- The safe completion of lone pastoral visits should be monitored by a nominated person or use of an alert app to ensure safety of Pastoral Visitor
- A charged operative mobile phone is essential
- Where possible arrange visits during the morning and early afternoon to ensure appropriate referrals can be made within normal working hours
- Retain the right to curtail a visit if your safety is compromised
- Review risk assessment and update as necessary after each visit
- Decision making regarding the sharing of contact details
- Risk of using personal phone numbers
- Safer use of generic church domain email accounts rather than personal ones for pastoral care correspondence
- Decision making regarding timing and duration of visits
 - agree recommended one-hour visiting
 - agree frequency of visits
 - agree recommended 6-weekly/regular review of helpfulness of visits
 - agree changes to visiting pattern to fortnightly/monthly in preparation for stopping
 - gain consent for referrals, notification of prayer needs, communicating with church family e.g. small group leader
- Appropriate use of touch
- Negotiated use of prayer

You may also find the Church of England's [Code of Safer Working Practice](#) helpful. It includes a section on Acceptable Touch.

Conflicts of interest to consider

- Existing professional relationship
- Established friendship
- Different expectations of the visits (social versus pastoral)
- More than one member of the family needs support
- Don't accept gifts/cash
- Visits about sensitive ethical issues

Safeguarding: reporting concerns & decision-making flowchart

If you have any concerns regarding the welfare and protection of vulnerable people or groups, or if there are any concerns expressed to you by any other person, they must be taken seriously.

Remember the four Rs:

- Recognise** the signs that indicate abuse is happening
- Respond** sensitively and listen
- Record** what has been said to you factually and accurately
- Refer** immediately

A rough guide to levels of reporting:

Concern – If you have any general concerns, speak to the Pastoral Care Team Leader.

Abuse – If you have any concerns that abuse may be occurring, you should immediately report this to the Parish Safeguarding Officer or Incumbent; or, if neither is available, to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

Danger – If you have concerns that any person may be in immediate danger, you should immediately contact the police and/or social services.

See final appendix for [decision making flowchart](#).

Pastoral Team Supervision Guidance

There should be supervision meetings regularly (approximately 4-6 weekly) with the Incumbent/Pastoral Team Leader to provide support and accountability. These may be used to:

- Update on the situation generally, seeking advice and support as necessary
- Use the safe space of supervision and the annual review to reflect on practice
- Discuss current workload and availability
- Discuss gifts and talents and future learning needs
- Ensure safeguarding courses are updated according to notification from the Parish Safeguarding Officer
- Discuss any concerns, dependency, lack of progress, and be open to questions and suggestions from team members

- Discuss need to change Pastoral Visitor, for example because a holiday is approaching or there is a 'bad fit' between the person and the Pastoral Visitor
- Discuss any need for referring on or feeling out of depth
- Discuss peripheral concerns, e.g. home circumstances or care home/hospital standards of care

Appendices

[Personal risk assessment decision matrix](#)

[Home visiting risk assessment checklist](#)

[Pastoral visit record sheet](#)

[Pastoral visit record sheet \(vulnerability identified\)](#)

[Lay Pastoral Visitor Role Description and Working Agreement](#)

[Lay Pastoral Assistant Role Description and Working Agreement](#)

[The Commissioning of lay leaders in parish](#)

[Lay Leader Annual Ministry Review form](#)

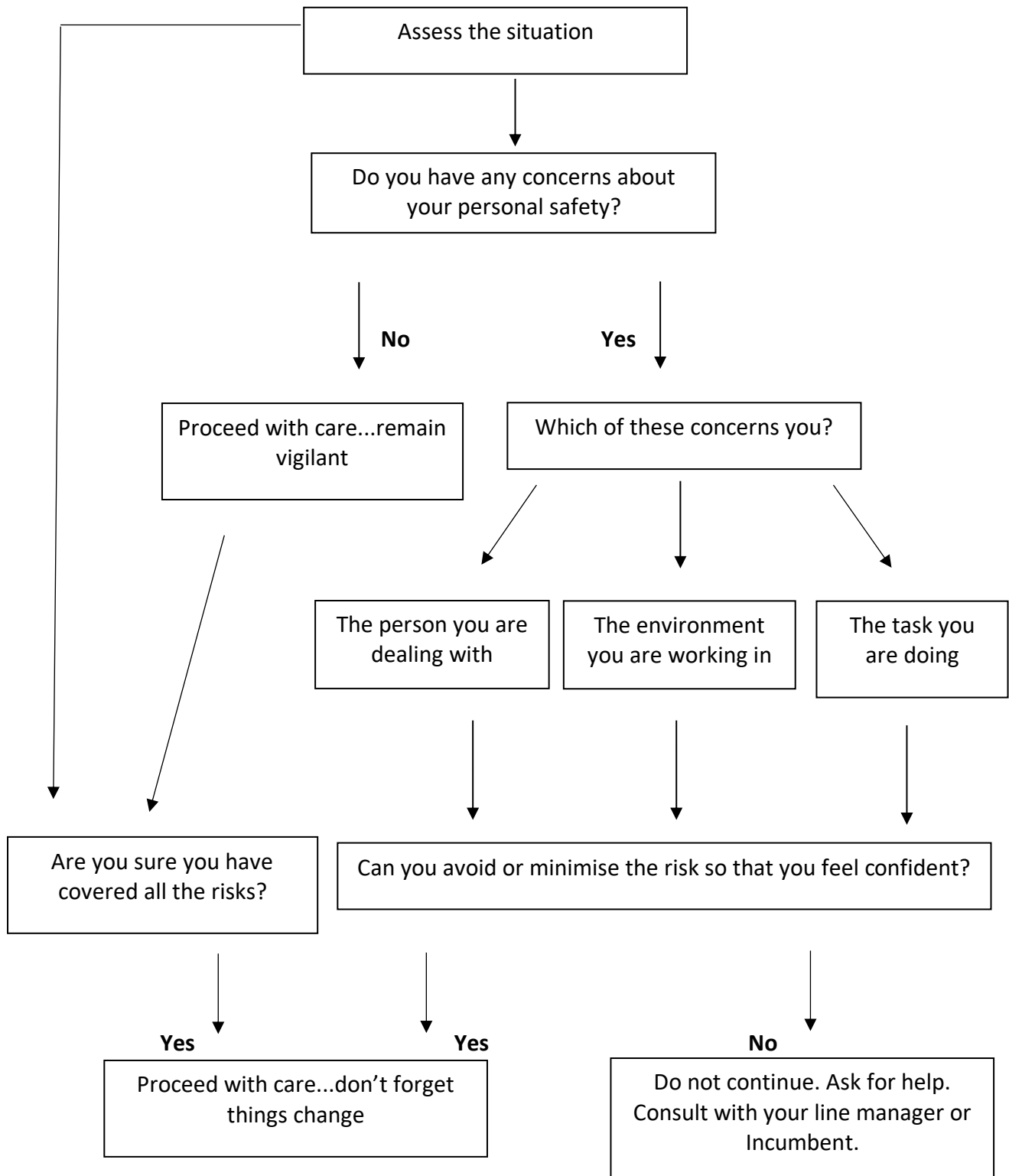
[Ongoing support & supervision for Lay Pastoral Assistants and Visitors](#)

[Pastoral visit safeguarding flowchart](#)

[Code of Safer Working Practice \(Church of England\)](#)

Personal risk assessment decision matrix

Use this to assess your environment, and your working practices, as well as for an instant assessment of a situation.



Home Visiting Risk Assessment Checklist

Name of adult to be visited

- | | | |
|----|---|----------------------------|
| 1. | Does the adult have a history of violence or threatening behaviour? <i>If yes, please detail below</i> | Yes/No

Not known |
| 2. | Is the adult a risk to themselves? | Yes/No

Not known |
| 3. | Does anyone living in the house have a history of violence or threatening behaviour? <i>If yes, please detail below</i> | Yes/No

Not
Known |
| 4. | Does anyone who visits the adult have a history of violence or threatening behaviour? <i>If yes, please detail below</i> | Yes/No

Not
Known |
| 5. | Does the adult have any vulnerabilities that would make it inappropriate for him/her to be visited alone (e.g. by a single male or female?) | Yes/No

Not
Known |

6. Does the adult have any health problems that may cause unpredictable behaviour? *If yes, please detail below* Yes/No
Not
Known
7. Are there any health risks associated with visiting the adult at home? (Examples might be infestation, hoarding, smoking, intravenous drug use, infectious diseases, dangerous pets.) *If yes, please detail below* Yes/No
Not
Known
8. Is the adult's home in a well-lit area? *Please detail below any difficulties you are aware of* Yes/No
Not
Known
9. Is there suitable parking nearby, and is this well-lit?
If known, please state below the best place to park Yes/No
Not
Known
10. Is there easy access to and exit from the home, more than one exit from the home? Are doors obstructed and not easily opened? *If yes, please detail below* Yes/No
Not
Known

11. Are there any other risk factors or hazards (Including mental health, substance/alcohol mis-use)? *If yes, please detail below*

Yes/No

Not
Known

12. What type of visit is required? Ensure you have the right DBS check in place.

Please detail below any other information you think is important

Completed by Role

Copy passed to Parish Safeguarding Officer on

Signed

Date

PASTORAL VISIT RECORD SHEET

NAME OF PASTORAL VISITOR: _____

NAME OF PERSON BEING VISITED (Please enter only first name and initial of surname e.g. Jim B):

Who	When	Where	What	Action	Vulnerability identified?
List key people involved and/or present at visit, e.g. spouse, carer, etc.	State date and time of each visit.	Specify where the meeting is taking place, e.g. home (do not give the address), coffee shop, church, etc.	Briefly summarise the purpose of the meeting, e.g. bereavement, illness, hospital visit, visit requested, etc.	Specify any follow-up actions required.	If yes, please complete the Pastoral Visit Record – Vulnerability Identified form, giving details of any concerns you have about the person, anyone involved in their situation, or yourself.

Please update for each visit and store securely on church premises.

PASTORAL VISIT RECORD – VULNERABILITY IDENTIFIED

NAME OF PASTORAL VISITOR: _____

DBS checked – *please tick relevant box*

- ☐ Basic
☐ Enhanced
☐ Enhanced plus barred

NAME OF PERSON BEING VISITED (Please enter only first name and initial of surname e.g. Jim B):

DATE FORM COMPLETED: _____

When	What	Who	Action
Date vulnerability identified.	Please specify your concerns – are these for the person being visited; someone else involved; yourself?	Who else is/has been made aware of your concerns, e.g. Parish Pastoral Team Lead, Safeguarding Officer, Incumbent?	What has or can be done to reduce vulnerability?

Please update for each visit and store securely on church premises.

Lay Pastoral Visitor Role Description and Working Agreement

This is a template, to be completed as required by the particular context and signed off by the PCC, taking note of what safeguarding training and DBS checks are required.

The Church of England is committed to promoting a safe environment and culture for children, young people and vulnerable adults. The individual appointed to this role will be expected to work within the policy and procedures of the relevant safeguarding policies and attend all required safeguarding training.

Name of church/body	
Role title	Lay Pastoral Visitor
Main purpose of the role	To provide pastoral care for adult church members, adult members of the parish and local community where appropriate.
What you will be doing	<p>This role may at any time include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To visit newcomers to the church • To visit those who move into the local area • To pray with and for people when visiting, either informally or using approved prayers • To visit the sick, those in hospital, and the housebound • To provide pastoral care, support and assistance to those identified by the pastoral team lead or Incumbent. <p>For DBS requirements, you will not as part of your role:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Manage anyone's bills, handle cash or do someone's shopping 2. Give anyone a lift to a healthcare appointment in a vehicle 3. Provide personal care
When and where you will be doing it	
Safeguarding responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All pastoral care will be provided in line with House of Bishops' Safeguarding Guidance best safeguarding practice

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain records of pastoral visits including where vulnerability is identified in line with data protection legislation • Report all safeguarding concerns to the Incumbent or Parish Safeguarding Officer within 24 hours • Signpost to expert support and partner agencies
Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced DBS Check required for adult workforce • Not eligible for Enhanced plus Barred DBS check • Recruited according to C of E safer recruitment guidelines
Training requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Awareness • Foundations Safeguarding • Lay Pastoral Visitors' Course (optional: this training may be delivered locally in parish)
Support you will be given	<p>Your supervisor is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision will be every:weeks ormonths • Annual Review will be in (<i>month</i>) of each year • Standardised or church-based email address (consider supplying church phone)
Person specification	<p>It is expected that those who are Lay Pastoral Visitors are identified as having</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient Christian maturity • Trustworthiness • Good standing in the parish • Been a worshipping member of the congregation for at least 12 months • Humility and self-awareness • An ability to be empathic with good listening skills • Ability to respect confidentiality (as per safeguarding guidelines)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal integrity, emotional maturity and honesty
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Lay Pastoral Assistant Role Description and Working Agreement

This is a template, to be amended as required by the particular context and signed off by the PCC, taking note of what safeguarding training and DBS checks are required.

The Church of England is committed to promoting a safe environment and culture for children, young people and vulnerable adults. The individual appointed to this role will be expected to work within the policy and procedures of the relevant safeguarding policies and attend all required safeguarding training.

Name of church/body	
Role title	Lay Pastoral Assistant
Main purpose of the role	To provide pastoral care for adult church members, adult members of the parish and local community where appropriate. To provide leadership/pastoral support to other LPAs/LPVs (as agreed with the Incumbent)
What you will be doing	<p><i>Any of the following, by agreement with the Incumbent. Please tick all that are applicable:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> To visit the sick, those in hospital, and the housebound <input type="checkbox"/> To support the dying and the bereaved <input type="checkbox"/> To visit newcomers to the church <input type="checkbox"/> To visit those who move into the local area <input type="checkbox"/> To support vulnerable families within the community <input type="checkbox"/> To administer Holy Communion by extension to the sick and housebound <input type="checkbox"/> To pray with and for people when visiting, either informally or using approved prayers <input type="checkbox"/> To do occasional shopping/bill paying with or for the person visited where the adult is in need of that assistance by reason of age, illness or disability

When and where you will be doing it	
Safeguarding responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All pastoral care will be provided in line with House of Bishops' Safeguarding Guidance best safeguarding practice • Maintain records of pastoral visits including where vulnerability is identified in line with data protection legislation • Report all safeguarding concerns to the Incumbent or Parish Safeguarding Officer within 24 hours • Signpost to expert support and partner agencies
Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) requirements	The role is eligible for a DBS check, Adult Workforce at Enhanced Plus Barred
Training requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Awareness • Foundations • Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse • Safeguarding Leadership training • Pastoral training (LPV or former PA training) • Foundations in Ministry Pastoral Care specialism
Support/supervision you will be given	<p>Your supervisor is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision will be every:weeks ormonths • Annual Review will be in (<i>month</i>) of each year • Standardised or church-based email address
Person specification	<p>It is expected that those who are Lay Pastoral Assistants are identified as having</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love for God: are rooted in established patterns of corporate worship, Bible reading, prayer, study and reflection

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call to ministry: have a call to serve in this ministry that is recognised and affirmed by others • Love for people: have an ability to be empathic with good listening skills; are able to respect confidentiality (as per safeguarding guidelines) • Self-care: are people of openness, stability and self-awareness and can nurture themselves while caring pastorally for others • Wisdom: show personal integrity, emotional maturity and honesty; handle conflict well • Fruitfulness: recognise their strengths and weaknesses, and resource themselves with good self-care; model humility
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Created by:

Date:

This role description and working agreement will be reviewed in (date):

Agreement

Incumbent name (printed):

Incumbent signature:

Date:

- I agree to serve within the framework of this role description
- I agree to complete any necessary safeguarding training
- I agree to respond to any safeguarding matters (Respond, Record, Report) in line with the Parish Safeguarding Policy

Post holder name (printed):

Post holder signature:

The Commissioning of Lay Leaders in parish

The Candidate(s) stand before the priest.

Priest: The risen Christ has entrusted his ministry to his Church, the whole people of God. The Holy Spirit equips us for work in his service, enabling us to discover and use our particular gifts through ministry within the Church and the parish.

Name(s).....

Will you undertake to work with me and your fellow Christians, doing all to the glory of God, to build up the Church and extend his Kingdom?

Lay Leader(s): I will, with the help of God.

Priest: *addressing the congregation*

I pray that you, the congregation, will support

Name(s).....

Let us pray [in silence] for them and for their ministry in this parish.

Priest: *addressing the Lay Leader(s)*

I commission you as *(Lay Pastoral Visitor(s))/Occasional Preacher(s)/Service Leader(s)* in this parish.

May God bless your ministry. May you serve him with joy, know his strength in times of difficulty and experience his forgiveness in times of failure.

Almighty God, by whose grace alone we are accepted and called to your service: strengthen us by your Holy Spirit and make us worthy of our calling, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

If the commissioning takes place at a Eucharist, it is recommended that it come between the Intercessions and the Peace.

Lay Leader Annual Ministry review form

The **Annual Ministry Review (AMR)** is a tool aimed at helping Lay Leaders (Pastoral Visitors/Assistants, Service Leaders and Occasional Preachers) and their Supporting Ministers reflect together upon their ministry and role and their personal spiritual growth and development.

As suggested good practice, there should be an annual review conversation, which includes updating the Ministry Role Description.

Our prayer is that these review conversations will enable Lay Leaders to feel equipped in their ministry, and also empowered as disciples of Jesus to live out their faith confidently and courageously in every aspect of their lives.

Three Steps

The AMR is based around the Role Description and follows three simple steps:

1. Preparation

A mutual date should be agreed and booked in to complete the AMR. In the meantime, the Lay Leader and Supporting Minister should read the most recent Role Description and then prayerfully go through the first 5 AMR questions, making notes in preparation for the meeting. In the case of Service Leaders (WSLs) or Occasional Preachers (OPs), the Supporting Minister may also wish to ask others within the parish for some feedback, using the relevant Ministry Feedback form.

2. Meeting

In the main meeting, the Lay Leader and Supporting Minister should go through the first 5 AMR questions together. This should not be rushed, and needs to be done in the spirit of encouragement and prayerful discernment. Following this, an action plan should be completed, before then signing off any final comments and agreeing the next meeting date.

3. Next Steps

Following the meeting, it is the responsibility of the Supporting Minister to update the Role Description and to send this to the Lay Leader for approval. A final copy then needs to be signed off by the PCC and kept on record.

Ongoing Support

Lay Leaders and their Supporting Minister are encouraged to repeat this process annually to make sure that the Role Description remains relevant and updated.

Annual Ministry Review Form

Lay Leader and role:

Supporting Minister:

Date of Meeting:

1. Working Well

Make a note below of any aspects of the current ministry and role that you feel are working really well.

2. Not Working Well

Make a note below of any aspects that you feel are not working so well. This can include things that are draining, discouraging or unhelpful. Once done, please note any ideas or suggested actions for addressing these issues.

3. Supervision, Support & Care

Do you feel that there is enough supervision, support and care in place in order to carry out the role effectively and sustainably? If not, what needs to be added or changed?

4. Further Training & Development

Do you feel there is enough ongoing training and development? If not, where are the gaps? And how might these be filled?

5. Personal Discipleship

How is their personal relationship with God? Are they getting enough spiritual growth and discipleship development? If not, what needs to be put in place?

Further Comments

Please list any final comments, thoughts or reflections that may be useful to consider.

Action Plan

Based on the questions above, please use the table below to list any key actions and any subsequent updates needed on the Ministry Role Description.

ACTION Please describe and name who is responsible for delivery
WHY is this action so important?
WHAT steps need to be put in place to achieve this? And are there any particular obstacles that need planning for?
WHO else may be needed for help and support?
WHEN is the deadline for this action?
UPDATES for Role Description

Ongoing Support and Supervision for Lay Pastoral Assistants & Visitors

Name of Volunteer:

Name of Responsible Person:

1. Action points from last time
2. What has the volunteer been doing since the last meeting?
3. What's gone well?
This is also a chance for the responsible person to talk about the volunteer's work, give positive feedback, as well as an opportunity to raise any minor problems or issues if necessary.
4. What hasn't gone so well?
5. What help or support does the volunteer need?
6. Safeguarding matters?
7. Development/motivation
Such meetings can be used to gauge whether the volunteer is still getting what they were looking for from the volunteer role; they may benefit from a minor change in their tasks or a fresh challenge.
8. Action points for next time

Pastoral Visit Flowchart - Request for Pastoral Visit

It is good practice for two members of the Pastoral Care Team to make a visit. If this is not an option, you must refer to the Lone Workers' Policy.

Is this the first visit?

YES

NO

Is this a home visit?

YES

NO

Ensure that you are in a space where you can comfortably and safely carry out your pastoral work.

Refer to any previous risk assessments or any other related matters before attending.

Complete the Home Visiting Risk Assessment Checklist.

For all visits, complete the Personal Risk Assessment Decision matrix.

RESPOND: inform your Parish Safeguarding Officer.

- ✓ If they are unavailable, inform the incumbent or the leader of your team.
- ✓ Your Parish Safeguarding Officer must be informed in any case.
- ✓ Decide whether to seek advice or make an immediate referral to the Police or Social Services for the welfare of that person.
- ✓ Contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team on 01483 790379 for advice and guidance.

RECORD: in your notes:

- ✓ Who was involved? (names of the key people involved)
- ✓ What happened? (facts not opinions)
- ✓ When did it happen? (time, date including the year)
- ✓ Sign and date your notes.

REFER: within 24 hours:

- ✓ Complete the [Safeguarding Concern Form](#) or click on the QR Code.



On attending the address / location, you identify a Safeguarding concern

YES

NO

RECOGNISE:

If the person is at immediate risk of physical harm and/or needs urgent medical attention, ensure their immediate safety and dial **999** to contact the Police and/or the Ambulance Service. State that you are calling regarding a safeguarding issue and follow the advice given by them. Now follow the Respond, Record and Refer process in the **GREEN** section within 24 hours.

Continue your visit as usual. Always remember to be vigilant that safeguarding concerns are not always obvious. For your safety, always ensure that you inform the relevant person when you leave your location, and complete the record of your visit promptly and secure all documents according to policy.