



St Andrew's & All Saints

Partnering with God in the flourishing of our communities

St Andrew's is Registered Charity Number 1128973. All saints in an Excepted Charity

Pastoral Visiting Policy

Agreed by the St Andrew's and All Saints PCCs at their joint meeting on the 27th January 2022

Pastoral Care Overview

Pastoral Care is a fundamental ministry of the church; involving fellow believers ministering to people in need in our churches and in communities.

Pastoral Visiting

An important part of pastoral care is the pastoral visit. This is something which naturally occurs when visiting someone who is sick, either at home, in hospital or in a nursing home, or when visiting a family who have just lost a loved one and during funeral preparation. Visiting may also take place to provide companionship or when making sure vulnerable people are getting the attention they need. Often, though not exclusively, these visits are to older people within our communities. Whatever the reason for a pastoral visit, there are a number of rules that are required to be observed.

Pastoral visiting has the capacity and objective to ascertain need and provide friendship and spiritual and practical care. Those who exercise pastoral care are called to minister the love of Jesus to others; through their words, their actions and their prayers.

Informal visits may be made by any member of the church acting as an individual to people in their Life Group or friendship group. This policy regulates formal visits, where the visitor may reasonably be seen as representing the church.

The guiding principles for any visits are: respect, dignity, privacy, recognition, affirmation, confidentiality and the rights all people have.

Pastoral Visiting Policy

The Pastoral Visiting Policy shall be as follows:

- a) Clergy, retired clergy and licenced lay ministers are authorised to make formal visits representing the church. Pastoral Visiting Teams may also be established, which clearly identify the members who represent the church when acting in that capacity. The Team members (sometimes referred to as Pastoral Visitors) are mutually supportive to other members and the incumbent and each Team should have a Team Leader.
- b) Membership of a Pastoral Visiting Team is authorised by the respective churches PCCs together with the incumbent. It is a requirement that Team members are regular worshippers at one of our congregations and have been through the 'safer recruitment' process. The incumbent has overall oversight and responsibility, but in many situations, this can be delegated to the leads of the different ministries.
- c) The incumbent, Team Leaders, PSO and PCCs shall ensure that appropriate training e.g. in listening and/or pastoral skills is provided for pastoral visiting. It will include the Diocese of Worcester C1 safeguarding training. Those visiting vulnerable adults or children will require a DBS check.
- d) Members of a Pastoral Visiting Team are encouraged to offer prayer to those they visit, and how this should be done in accordance with the training given.
- e) Each Team shall meet regularly to review and provide support to the members. Support between members and the Incumbent outside of meetings is encouraged.
- f) All Team members should be aware of all relevant guidelines and procedures regarding Pastoral Visiting and, if necessary, make the Parish Safeguarding Officer aware of any deficiencies or changes needed. The policies and procedures will be reviewed yearly by each PCC.

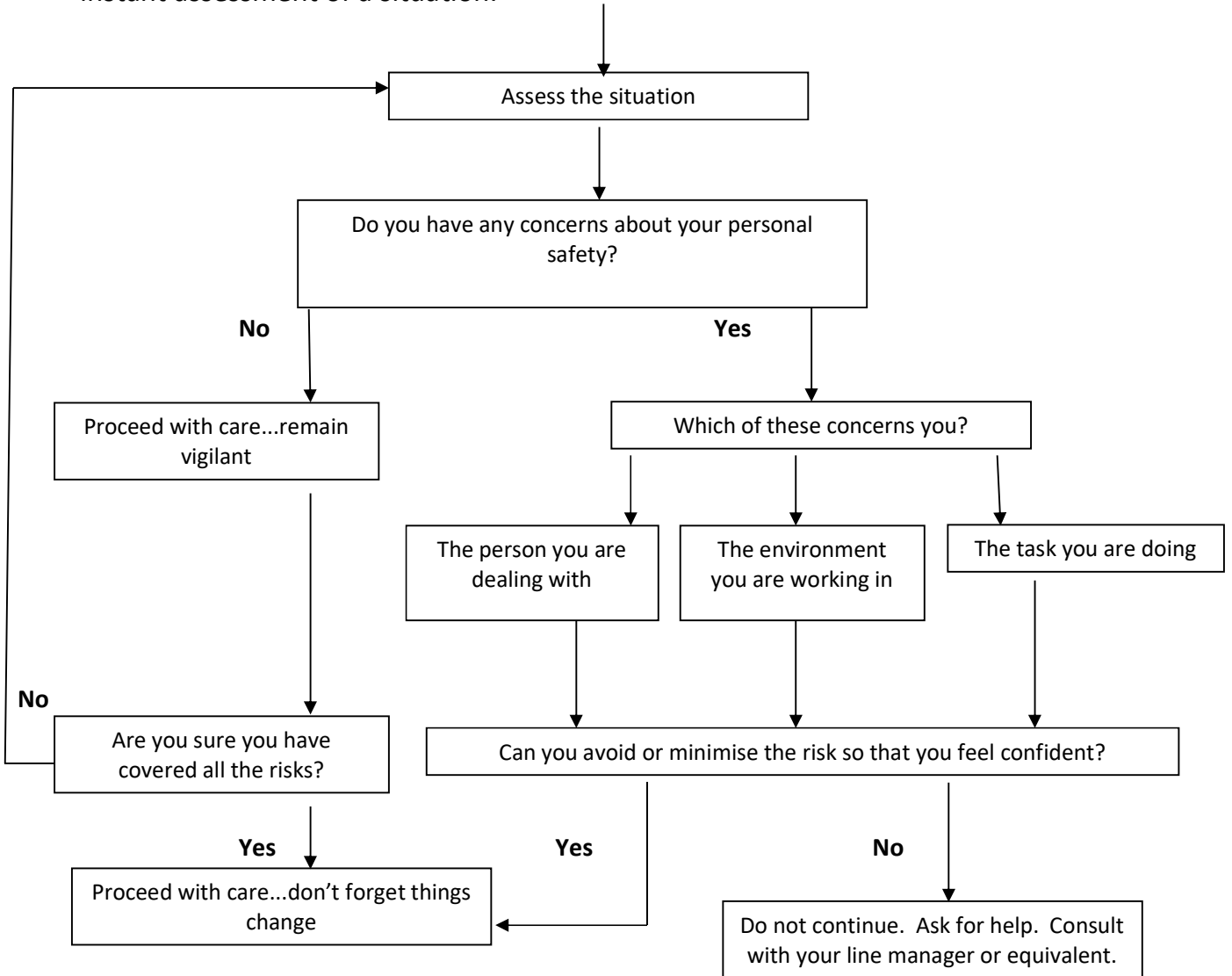
- g) Team members must always maintain the distinction between pastoral visiting and counselling. They must discern when and how to make appropriate referrals.
- h) The Team Leader should be informed of visits and new referrals.
- i) Home visits and home communions, by non-clergy, should be briefly recorded in the approved manner.
- j) Visits should not normally take place late at night. Preparation for pre-planned visits should include personal prayer and the use of the RISK1 flow chart attached
- k) Whilst visits may often be on a one-to-one basis the need for or value of two visitors should be considered, particularly if vulnerable adults or safeguarding issues may be involved. One-to-one visits should wherever possible be undertaken by people of the same sex as the person to be visited.
- l) Where individuals or the risks are unknown (e.g. if this is a first contact with someone we know little about), it may be better to meet in a public space (e.g. a church room when others are around). However, if a visit is considered necessary the visitor will inform a Team Leader or the Parish Safeguarding Officer of the situation so that they can agree appropriate protocols before the visit.
- m) Pastoral Visitors may keep limited records as a memory aid using form *REC1* (attached), but these records are not for general dissemination. They may also be helpful if there is a subsequent onward referral. Visiting anyone in a pastoral capacity who is not a normal member of a congregation, should always be recorded.
- n) Confidentiality is an important aspect of successful pastoral ministry. It is about respecting and building trust with those to whom we minister. What takes place during the pastoral visit should remain confidential to the visitor and the visited. However, in some situations it might be necessary or useful to share information about concerns or issues with their Team Leader or others in order to obtain further support. In these situations, the person visited should normally be made aware that information may be shared with others.
- o) In cases where if any form of abuse or safeguarding issue is observed or suspected, or there are potential safeguarding issues identified for the person visited or others, then the Pastoral Visitor must report this to the Incumbent and the Parish Safeguarding Officer and must complete *Form S1* (attached – use both sides). Should there be imminent risk to life; the pastoral visitor should call 999.

Care for The Pastoral Visitor

- a) Pastoral Visitors need to ensure they are taking care of their own health and well-being as they offer care to others. This includes ensuring they are obtaining sufficient rest, exercise and sleep and are looking after their own relationships, and being willing to admit when they have not got the capacity to take on specific individuals.
- b) Pastoral Visitors need to ensure they are not working out of their depth in a detrimental way to themselves or the person, that they are working within their abilities and competencies and that they are prepared to refer or signpost a person to others when needed
- c) Pastoral Team Leaders, PCCs and the Incumbent have particular responsibility to offer pastoral care to the members of the Pastoral Visiting Team.

RISK1 – Personal Risk Assessment

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



From Personal Safety at Work, Suzy Lamplugh Trust 2006, revised 2008

Further Action	
Details of how report made to Vicar: who, date, method	
Details of reporting to Diocese of Worcester: who, date, method	
Date reported to appropriate authority + notes	
Outcome/Follow-up/Pastoral care requirements	
Incident closed Signed Parish Safeguarding Representative or Vicar	Signature +Date:

