

## St Lawrence Eastcote

### Role Description:

### Sides people (duties carried out with the Church Wardens)

#### Overview: the role of sides people at St Lawrence's Church

Sides people prepare those visiting to participate most fully in our worship and are the first responders during worship in relation to safety and maintaining good order.

As the first representative of the church that a visitor or regular will encounter when they visit St Lawrence's, sides people create a first impression, but also set the mood for coming worship. In addition to giving a handout or service sheet, a visitor may need help getting into the church building or finding where they might best sit. Some will be best served by identifying who they might sit with to help them follow the service. Visitors may value some explanation as to how the service is structured and what they can expect.

Sides people also support the Church Wardens in some their practical duties with regards church property and money. Details are given in Appendix C, Duties of a Sides person.

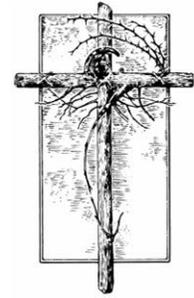
Safety for the congregation and individuals is also a concern for sides people. As church representatives, they will need to be ready to direct worshippers if there is a fire or other emergency. Should a member of the congregation be taken unwell, the Church Wardens and Sides people will be the first to respond, making an assessment of the appropriate response. If there is a disturbance which disrupts worship, sides people are legally empowered to respond, with powers including those of arrest! This can include dealing sensitively and supportively with children and their parents.

#### Appointment of a sides person

Sides people are appointed by the Parochial Church Council (cf. Section 2(2)f of the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956). This usually follows from recommendation by the Church Wardens.

#### Key relationships

Reports to:	Church Wardens
Key working relationships:	Members of the congregation Visitors to church and site Sunday School leaders Church Wardens Money counters



## Remuneration

This is an unpaid, voluntary position.

## Time commitment

On a rota basis, once a month as organized by the Church Wardens  
Arrive 30 minutes before a service starts and expect to leave 20-30 minutes after it ends  
Appointment is for one year and is renewable each year by mutual agreement

## Location

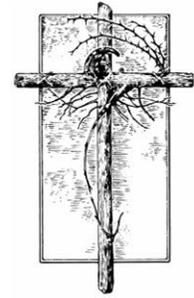
Sides people usually undertake their duties in the church building and on the wider site. When worship takes place outside of the church, sides people may be asked to support as an additional responsibility.

## Safeguarding

- Responsibilities
  - As those welcoming visitors for church and caring for their practical needs, members of the public may approach sides people with any safeguarding concerns they have, and may, exceptionally, make a disclosure if the sides person is held in trust;
  - It follows that sides people need a basic awareness of the safeguarding requirements of the Church of England and of those relating to a church community
  - Sides people will need to be familiar with the parishes Safeguarding procedures as they relate to congregational worship and know what to do if a Safeguarding concern is raised or disclosure made
- Safeguarding principles – see Appendix A
- Safer recruiting
  - Confidential declaration – required
  - DBS check – required; renewed every 3 years

## Skills and characteristics

- Sides people are in a people-facing role and need to be friendly and welcoming, concerned to help and support others
- Familiarity with the normal worship of the parish is needed to help worshippers find their way around the content of services
- Those wishing to be appointed as sides people must be listed on the electoral roll of the parish
- Experience in dealing with members of the public would be an advantage, however, this skill can be learned on the job – having enough confidence to greet a visitor is a sufficient start
- Sides people must be able to follow the directions of Church Wardens in event of an emergency and on occasion, may be called upon to lead and direct others
- Sides people should have sufficient confidence to be able to sensitively challenge the behaviour of someone who is disrupting public worship



## Key tasks

- Welcoming worshippers to church
- Assisting worshippers to enter church and find an appropriate seat (particularly visitors, those needing support with mobility and parents with children) and to leave at the end of worship
- Ensuing that worshippers have access to orders of service and hymn books; collecting these in and organizing them at the end of worship
- Taking the collection
- Communication: with other sides people, the wardens and with Sunday School leaders when groups need to return to worship in church
- Safety:
  - Identifying access to a telephone
  - Fire / emergency: knowing location of fire doors and ensuring that they are unlocked;
  - Illness: keeping an eye for anyone who is unwell; checking which First Aiders are present in the congregation and knowing where the First Aid kit is
  - Disturbance: knowing what to do if someone disrupts worship
  - Safeguarding: knowing what to do if someone raises a safeguarding concern

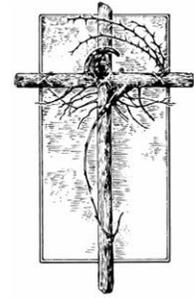
## Training

Induction & orientation

Basic Safeguarding training (CO)

Introduction to First Aid principles

Dealing with aggressive people ([link](#))



## Appendix A – safeguarding principles

### Volunteer Working with Children and /or adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect

The Church takes the safety of everyone within the church very seriously and expects that everyone will work within the church safeguarding policy. In particular, the Church expects anyone who becomes aware of a safeguarding risk or of actual abuse, to immediately report it.

#### Principles

Those working with children and/or adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect must have a commitment to:

- Treat individuals with respect;
- Recognise and respect their abilities and potential for development;
- Promote their rights to make their own decisions and choices, unless it is unsafe;
- Ensure their welfare and safety;
- The promotion of social justice, social responsibility and respect for others; and
- Confidentiality, never passing on personal information, except to the person to whom you are responsible, unless there are safeguarding issues of concern (e.g. allegations of abuse). Safeguarding issues of concern must **always** be reported to the Police or Social Care services and Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

#### Responsible to (named contact for support and resolution of any difficulties):

The Church Wardens

#### Key safeguarding responsibilities and accountabilities:

- To work with vulnerable people (children and adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect) in a way that meets and develops their personal, spiritual and social needs, exercising active pastoral concern.
- To work in accordance with the church's policy on safeguarding.

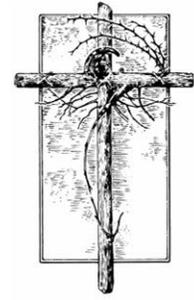
#### As a volunteer you can expect that we will do our best to ensure that:

We provide a supportive, inclusive and positive environment that ensures you enjoy your volunteering and that you are treated with respect and courtesy and provided with training.

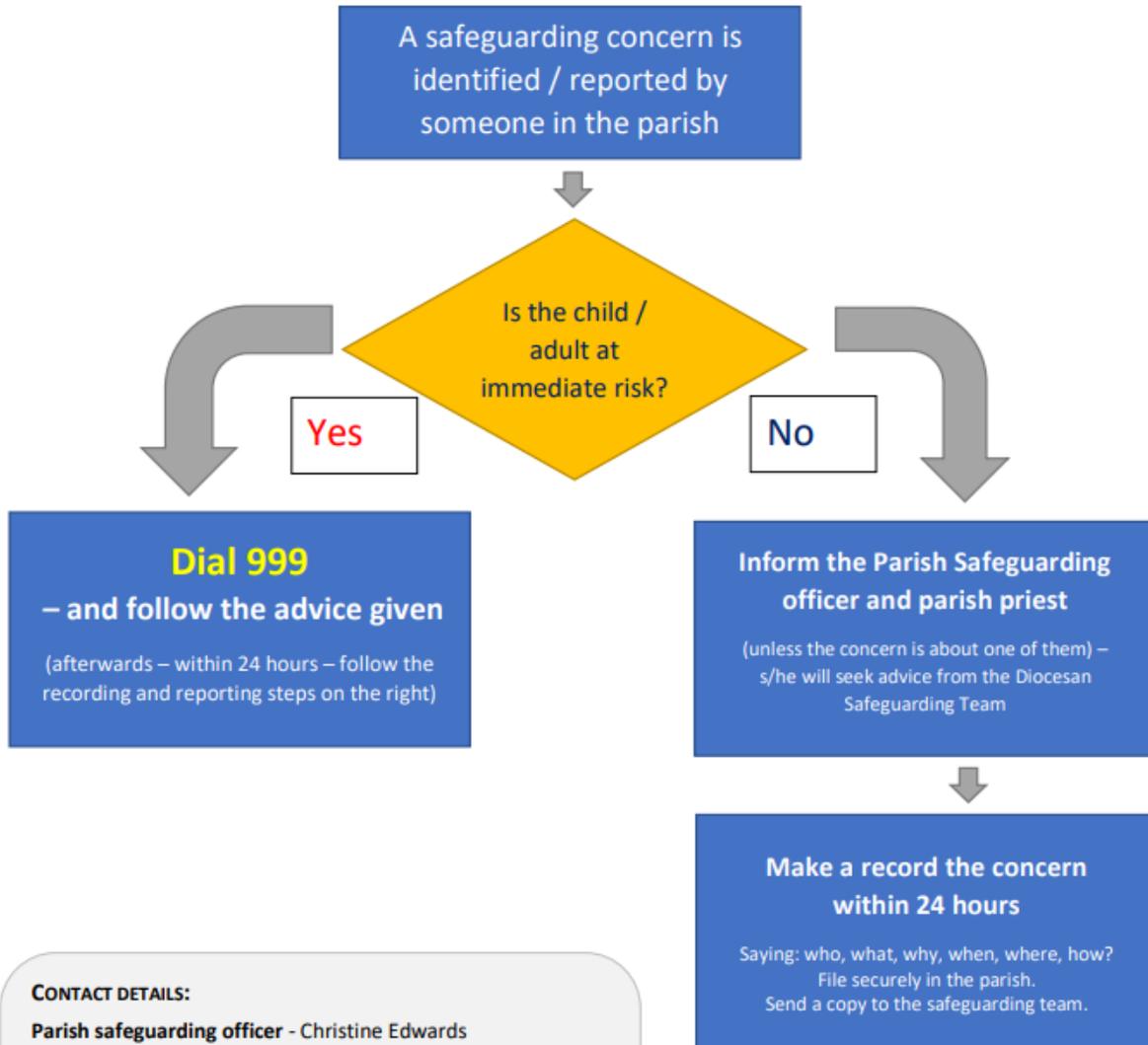
#### Person specification

1. Able to demonstrate an ability to work with people who are /may be vulnerable; and
2. A willingness to develop their skills and training

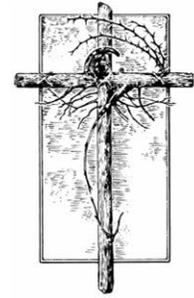
As a volunteer working regularly with people who are/may be vulnerable, this post may be eligible for a criminal record check which will be renewed at least every five years.



**Diocese of London flowchart: response to safeguarding concerns**



**CONTACT DETAILS:**  
**Parish safeguarding officer** - Christine Edwards  
tel. 07711 266644 email [chrismedwards@virginmedia.com](mailto:chrismedwards@virginmedia.com)  
**Parish priest** - Fr John  
tel. 0753 504 9710, email [john.seymour@london.anglican.org](mailto:john.seymour@london.anglican.org)  
**Diocesan safeguarding team**  
tel. 0207 932 1224, email [safeguarding@london.anglican.org](mailto:safeguarding@london.anglican.org)  
**Out of hours support:** Thirtyone:eight helpline  
0303 003 1111



## Appendix C – Duties of a sidesperson

### **In advance**

1. Check the rota
2. Ensure that you have swapped or someone has taken your place if you cannot be there.

### **Arrival**

1. Arrive about half an hour before the service.
2. Make sure that the vestry door is unlocked but bolted and that the Lady Chapel / disabled fire exit is not hindered.
3. Ensure that the collection plates are at the back of church.
4. Ensure that the layout of the Church is as required for the service and everywhere is neat and tidy.
5. In cold weather ensure that the path is safe.

### **Welcome**

1. Welcome people as they arrive.
2. If people seem unsure what to do show them to a seat and if possible introduce them to someone sitting nearby.
3. Hand out any books or papers as necessary.

### **During the Service**

1. Assist the wardens in maintaining good order in the service.
2. Take the collection plates round and then to the front at the appropriate point.

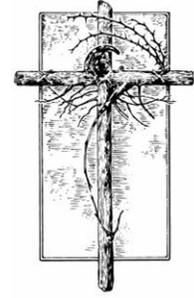
### **After the service**

1. Ensure that any books are collected in and in as much as possible that the church is left in a suitable state for the next event.
2. Invite visitors to stay for refreshments and to a magazine, term card or other such literature.

### **Dealing with disturbances**

#### **a) In the event of a fire**

1. There should be a warden or deputy and two sidespeople on duty for any main service. If there are not three people on duty ensure that a third person is asked to take on this responsibility.
2. The warden or deputy should take responsibility for the main door.
3. One sidesperson should endeavour to take responsibility for the vestry door and one for the Lady chapel & disable entrance door. Ensure that people exit safely and sensibly through the door and any needing help are assisted to get to the fire assembly point.
4. If possible shut the door when everyone has left the building.
5. If there is a fire whilst children are in their groups then off duty sides people are asked to assist the group leaders in getting children out of the building to the assembly point, marshalling them until the register has been checked and ensuring that they are handed over safely to their parent or other adult responsible for them on the day. Adults and children are to assemble on the grass beside the garden of remembrance.

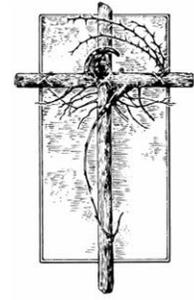


**b) If someone becomes unwell**

1. A sides person is likely to be amongst the first to notice if a member of the congregation becomes unwell, or to be the first that members of the congregation turn to for help and support if someone is unwell.
2. Sides people should therefore identify the First Aiders within the congregation so that they can quickly alert them to the concern or need. A First Aider will make an initial assessment of the problem and usually send a sides person to ask for help (e.g. by phoning 999.)
3. A sides person should also be ready to calm and reassure other members of the congregation that the situation is under control. If a member of the congregation needs to leave worship following a faint, trip or fall, a sides person may be called upon to sit with them

**c) Safeguarding**

1. As those welcoming visitors for church and caring for their practical needs, members of the public may approach sides people with any safeguarding concerns they have, and may, exceptionally, make a disclosure if the sides person is held in trust;
2. It follows that sides people need a basic awareness of the safeguarding requirements of the Church of England and of those relating to a church community
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## Appendix D

### **Legalities: Sections of Canon Law which relate to sides people**

#### **E 2 Of sidesmen or assistants to the churchwardens**

1. The sidesmen of the parish shall be appointed by the parochial church council.
2. No person whose name is not on the church electoral roll is eligible as a sidesman, but all persons whose names are on the roll are so eligible.
3. It shall be the duty of the sidesmen to promote the cause of true religion in the parish and to assist the churchwardens in the discharge of their duties in maintaining order and decency in the church and churchyard, especially during the time of divine service.

#### **F 15 Of churches not to be profaned**

1. The churchwardens and their assistants shall not suffer the church or chapel to be profaned by any meeting therein for temporal objects inconsistent with the sanctity of the place, nor the bells to be rung at any time contrary to the direction of the minister.
2. They shall not suffer any person so to behave in the church, church porch, or churchyard during the time of divine service as to create disturbance. They shall also take care that nothing be done therein contrary to the law of the Church or of the Realm.
3. If any person be guilty of riotous, violent, or indecent behaviour in any church, chapel, or churchyard, whether in any time of divine service or not, or of disturbing, vexing, troubling, or misusing any minister officiating therein, the said churchwardens or their assistants shall take care to restrain the offender and if necessary proceed against him according to law.