



CLERGY SECURITY

HANDBOOK

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Bishop Alastair writes:

Security is the foundation of wellbeing. To be saved is to be safe. Much of our ministry involves offering care that encourages a greater sense of security and salvation. There is always a mutuality about such encounters. ‘Love your neighbour as yourself’: we receive a sense of wellbeing both by being loved and by loving. But loving is always risky. Mutuality is not always to the fore. Sometimes the relationship is painfully uneven, sometimes it can be potentially damaging. For these reasons the issue of security is taken very seriously by the Diocese of Derby and we are keen that all who minister are able to do so safely.

We all like to feel safe and secure especially in and around our own homes. Whether we live alone or with a partner, friends or family, keeping safe is something we all need to think about, but sometimes take for granted.

This handbook has been written to provide a simple set of self-contained instructions on how to keep safe and outlines some of the many simple, practical steps we can take to improve personal safety in and around our homes.

There is no such thing as the “ABC” of dealing with security issues. Every incident is unique in bringing together different individuals, situations and events. What works in one situation may have the opposite effect in another. An approach made by one may feel totally alien to another. However, clergy and their teams should be prepared to practice and rehearse different ways to deal with difficult situations.

Personal safety is all about planning ahead, thinking about the possible risks and taking realistic, practical steps to avoid them if possible. No amount of precautions can make us completely safe but we can learn to avoid many of the dangers and learn how to react quickly when we are at risk.

While there is a focus on the particular security challenges encountered by clergy, many of the ideas will be relevant to all those who serve your church community, in whatever capacity.

This handbook outlines some of the many simple, practical steps we can take to improve personal safety in and around our homes.

As well as stating common-sense approaches, there are some innovative ideas which we hope you will find useful in your specific situation. Also if you have developed your own techniques for coping with difficult scenarios, we would be very pleased to hear them and maybe include them in a later edition. If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact Revd. David Railton, my assistant chaplain.

Let us be gracious in loving our neighbours, but equally committed to loving ourselves - to letting God give us the blessings of security too.

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I. IS THERE A PROBLEM

Taken from independent academic research

In 2001 an Independent study¹ of more than 1,000 Anglican Clergy showed that in the last two years:

- 7 out of 10 clergy surveyed had experienced some kind of violence
- 7 out of 10 clergy had been verbally abused
- 1 in 5 were threatened with harm
- 12% were physically assaulted
- 4 in 10 were afraid of becoming a victim while at work
- 90% of clergy had not received any personal safety training of any sort

The British Crime Survey 2000 stated that 11% of Police Officers were assaulted last year, as opposed to 12% of clergy).

In 2001 an Independent Study² of crime against Places of Worship in Somerset found:

- Of the 77 clergy surveyed, 16 had been assaulted a total of 26 times in the last 2 years
- 20 of the assaults occurred during robberies.

In July 2001, a charity produced a Community Safety practice briefing³ on Faith Communities for the Home Office, it states:

“In one of the local government areas where Nacro is conducting an audit of crime and disorder, 31 of the 37 people in public ministry roles (i.e. clergy or full time lay workers) had been threatened or assaulted. Of the 19 who had actually been assaulted 12 of them now have some persistent medical or psychological health burden as a result of their victimisation”.

¹ Royal Holloway University of London Violence against Professionals

² Morodoff Report, University of Leicester, September 2001

³ “Friends of Strangers” Nacro Crime Section July 2001

2. WHAT IS VIOLENCE

The best definition available is *“Any behaviour which produces damaging or hurtful effects, physically or emotionally, on people”*.

- Verbal abuse is violence if you feel uncomfortable, upset or threatened by it.
- Physical assault (whether injury is caused or not) is never acceptable.
- Violence can be used by anyone, even your colleagues or members of the congregation.

3. WHAT IS PERSONAL SAFETY

- Personal safety is not self-defence.
- A little self-defence may make a drama out of a crisis.
- Self-defence that does not work makes you a threat to the person attacking you who may use even more force to ensure you do not hurt them.
- Personal safety involves using techniques up to, but not including, physical force.
- Personal safety includes considering physical security such as locks, bolts, CCTV and alarms.
- The key to personal safety is preparation and communication.
- Preparation can mean looking at long term crime reduction methods such as installing a personal attack alarm in your office. It can also mean preparing to use the alarm seconds before an attack takes place.
- Communication can mean talking to the owners of your building, talking to your colleagues, before and after an incident. It can also mean communication to someone who is about to attack you.
- Personal safety means looking after others as well as yourself.
- No-one is exempt from assessing their risk whether you are an Archbishop or an Ordinand.
- Personal safety also means that you can do your job even if you are sometimes vulnerable, because you are aware of the risks and have thought through what to do if something happens.

4. PRACTICAL ADVICE AT THE CLERGY HOME

- Remember, it is your home and no-one has the right to enter without permission.
- It is good to remember how your house is perceived by others:
 - Clergy homes are often larger than other properties in the neighbourhood and often in a good position.
 - Your home is your office, therefore you are always available.
 - Clergy homes are often the only place after 5p.m. to find an 'official', (such as a police officer, teacher, doctor or other professional).
 - Clergy homes are often the only place where an official is present at all.
 - Clergy are rich because they have a good house, a nice garden and only work on Sundays.
- There are several reasons why you really must think about personal safety at the clergy home.
 - If you are alone, you are vulnerable or at least perceived by others to be vulnerable.
 - If you are married your spouse will answer the door as well.
 - Female clergy may be targeted by those who see them as 'weak'.
 - If you have children, they will also answer the door.
 - You are often perceived as the last chance for people who are desperate and think that they have tried all other alternatives.
 - Desperate people do desperate things. If you do not give them the answer they want, then violence is seen by them as achieving some sort of action.
- Desperate people will often start off politely and when they realise that they are not going to get what they want, will try and manipulate you. Often by saying things like:

“Call yourself a Christian, you have to help me!”

“I’ll tell the Bishop that you didn’t help me”.

4. PRACTICAL ADVICE AT THE CLERGY HOME (Cont.)

4.1 ON THE DOORSTEP

Make some simple preparations:

- If your door is solid, you **MUST** have some means to see who is outside. The cheapest way is a spy hole. If you have regular problems discuss them with your Archdeacon or the Parsonage Secretary.
- There should be at least two locks on the door, one of which is a deadlock.
- Do not leave the key in the lock, have it nearby usually behind a curtain or similar.
- Fit a chain on the door and make sure you use it if you are uncomfortable with the person you can see outside.
- You could put a garden bench near your door to allow people to sit and wait or to eat their food sitting down if you give them any.
- Keep a wedge of wood next to, but behind the door. If you are talking to someone and they are getting agitated use your foot to manoeuvre it into position behind the door as you talk to them. If they try and push the door open to get to you the door will jam against the wedge and prevent the door opening for a few seconds, allowing you to escape or call for help. If possible as soon as they release the pressure on the door, slam it shut. However, this may be difficult with a double glazed door.
- Alternatively get into the habit of placing your foot just behind the door as you speak to someone. If they do push the door your foot will stop it and you can slam it shut if appropriate.
- If you look through the spy hole or window and someone is holding an obvious weapon (even if they are not brandishing it about) **DO NOT** open the door. If the door is open, slam it shut immediately without communicating to the person. Then call the police. Carrying a weapon around is a very serious criminal offence.
- If you must communicate with them do so from an upstairs window or through the door. Do not be persuaded to open the door.
- Have a guard placed on your letterbox to prevent people seeing through, or reaching through to open the door. These are easily available and cost about £5.

4. PRACTICAL ADVICE AT THE CLERGY HOME (Cont.)

4.1 ON THE DOORSTEP (Cont.)

- Always make sure you have a minimum of two smoke detectors fitted to the hall (well away from the kitchen) and landing ceilings as recommended by the manufacturer. In some dioceses there have been a number of incidents recently where burning liquid has been poured into the clergy home via the letterbox. If possible have a small fire extinguisher nearby. Events like this are often a forerunner of serious problems if left alone.
- **Plan now.** What would you do if you have to slam the door in someone's face?
 - How would you call the police?
 - Can you get out of the house, if required, without being seen from the front?
 - Have you spoken to your spouse and children about what to do if there is a problem at the front door?
 - Who would you inform after an incident? See Diocese of Derby Incident Report form.
 - Can someone easily get around the back of the house if they wanted to?
 - Is there anyone who lives nearby who would help you if you had a problem?

It is important that clergy and their families feel safe in their homes.

Whilst it is not possible for the Parsonages Committee to simply supply every security device requested, all concerns will be treated seriously.

4. PRACTICAL ADVICE AT THE CLERGY HOME (Cont.)

4.2 AT THE FRONT DOOR

- Try to identify all callers before you let them in.
 - If a caller claims to be representing a company or organisation, ask for ID.
 - If you are uncertain about the ID, phone the organisation to check that the caller is genuine. Use the telephone number given in the phone book or on your utility bill if appropriate, rather than the one on the identity card.
 - Dishonest salesman or workmen often offer to buy or sell products or services at what seem like bargain prices. You will be safer getting quotes from reputable companies.
 - Sometimes a bogus caller will try and distract you whilst an accomplice robs you, often entering through a backdoor. Try and make sure other entrances into your home are locked when you answer the door.
- Never give money to someone at the door. The reasons for this are twofold.
 - You are not really helping that person. If they are a drug addict they will probably use the money on drugs and even the worst drug addicts are good actors. You will not know whether the story is genuine or not.
 - You are putting your colleagues at risk because they may not give money. If you do the person has ammunition to abuse your colleague. Giving money raises the expectation of these people that everyone will give money.
- However, this doesn't mean that you can't love these people but it really has to be tough love.
- Do not just say "No" to these people, try to offer an alternative.
- Have some tins ready for hungry people. Do not be afraid to ask the PCC for a small budget to assist you with this practical help in your ministry.
- Have some bin bags close by with some spare clothes and shoes in it. Let the person choose what they want outside.
- If someone asks for train tickets or similar, treat it as if they are asking for money. You will not be able to tell if the story is genuine or not, even if you are experienced. Almost all of these stories are false.
- Again, offer alternatives. Perhaps you could contact a relative or friend for them?

4. PRACTICAL ADVICE AT THE CLERGY HOME (Cont.)

4.2 AT THE FRONT DOOR (Cont.)

- Have 24 hour emergency numbers for social services, the local police station and health professionals near to hand. If you do not know them, ask your local police for them.
- Never let the person at the door use the phone. There have been incidents of people saying they need to use the phone to contact someone urgently and then making an obscene phone call to someone.
- Always phone first. Make sure the person on the other end is happy to receive the call.
- It is extremely useful to have some sort of portable phone for the people to speak from outside your door. Do not let them into your house under any circumstances.
- If the person at the door says, *“I need to speak to someone*” Try and make an appointment for the next day. This is usually no problem, unless it is truly a life and death situation.
- If the person is insistent and you think that it is genuine, try and deal with it on the doorstep, or perhaps sit on a garden seat outside. Avoid inviting them in unless it is absolutely necessary. Do not invite them in if you are on your own. Ask them to wait and make contact with someone nearby who is willing to pop around and sit in your kitchen while you deal with the person.
- Keep a record of the people who call in a small log book. You should do this:
 - for your own use
 - as a database
 - for the police to refer to if required and appropriate
 - for future use if something goes wrong
 - for any future clergy who may take over your parish
- Consider having an arrangement with a local takeaway. However, be slightly wary as food vouchers or other methods of obtaining food can become a currency amongst homeless people.

4. PRACTICAL ADVICE AT THE CLERGY HOME (Cont.)

4.3 THE FAMILY

- If you have a spouse and/or children, always talk through how you think that they should deal with callers at the door.
- You are trained and experienced, your spouse and your children are not.
- Contrary to popular parish belief, your spouse is not an unpaid curate. Encourage them not to become one. It's OK to say "NO".
- They are not necessarily pastors but they will have to deal with people pastorally now and then.
- Talk through the following issues:
 - When you are out, who answers the door?
 - Should the children ever answer the door?
 - If you have baby sitters, explain to them that they shouldn't answer the door unless you have made an arrangement. Be strict with them.
- If children are allowed to answer the door consider putting a spy hole in at child height and instruct them on when they shouldn't open the door.
- Get children to put the chain on the door every time when they open it. **Make it a habit.**
- If need be get them to say "I'm sorry my mum/dad is not available at the moment, please call back tomorrow". Tell them it's OK to then shut the door without getting into a conversation.
- Children under 12 really shouldn't answer the door and certainly without an adult being immediately behind them.
- It is good practice for clergy homes to have a personal attack alarm by the front door. If you have any specific concerns discuss them with your Archdeacon or Parsonage Secretary.
- Use the personal attack alarm if someone threatens you, attempts to attack you or actually attacks you. You can even use it if someone commits criminal damage to your door (i.e. kicks it) when you shut it because you feel unsafe.
- If someone should force their way into your home press your personal attack alarm immediately. If appropriate insist that they leave immediately. If they are at all violent or threatening, leave the house and go to a neighbour for help. Always call the police. What would you do if you had children in the house? **Think it through.**

4. PRACTICAL ADVICE AT THE CLERGY HOME (Cont.)

4.3 THE FAMILY (Cont.)

- If you have called the police, call a colleague for support. **Who would you call?** Warn other clergy in the immediate area as it is common for someone who is violent to go immediately to another clergy home.
- Never feel guilty about calling the police. They will not mind if it turns out to be a false alarm. They would rather turn up and find the person gone than be called because someone hasn't seen you for a while.

4.4 WELCOMING PEOPLE INTO YOUR HOME

- Almost all clergy homes are also part of their place of work. In an ideal world no member of the clergy should ever invite people they don't know very well into their home. This includes members of the congregation!
- If possible consider arranging appointments somewhere other than the home.
- It may take a few weeks for people to register that you would prefer to meet them elsewhere, particularly if your predecessor had an 'open house' policy. Stick to your guns, it's your home.
- Many clergy will not be able to talk to people elsewhere so you need to take some practical steps to protect yourself whilst in your home.

4. PRACTICAL ADVICE AT THE CLERGY HOME (Cont.)

4.4 WELCOMING PEOPLE INTO YOUR HOME (Cont.)

4.4.1 THE STUDY

- Make a definite separation between your work place (i.e. study) and your home. Always take people into your study to talk. You are allowed to have some privacy in your own home.
- Set your study up so that when you are sat with someone, you are nearest the door. Remember, you may have to leave quickly.
- Never leave anyone alone in your study.
- Have a kettle and some disposable cups in the study so you don't have to leave them to make a drink. Keep coffee, tea, water and soft drinks on hand.
- Have a ready supply of tissues, baby wipes and a cloth in case of any 'accidents'.
- If someone needs to use the toilet then escort them and wait nearby until they finish.
- If you are to be alone with someone, never shut your study door. If something is being said confidentially then just lower your tone of voice and lean forward. The person will naturally copy your level of voice.
- If someone is insistent that you close the door, be suspicious. Explain that you are not allowed due to Diocesan policy. Remember there have been accusations made when clergy have behaved properly, but have been on their own.
- If someone's behaviour becomes inappropriate, bring the meeting immediately to a close. Give an excuse, such as having a service or another appointment. Say that you will ring them. When you do, ensure that there is another adult present or nearby to ensure that the inappropriate behaviour doesn't repeat itself.
- Do not be afraid to tell someone to stop behaving inappropriately. It may be someone placing their hand on your knee. Just ask them to remove it and if they persist carry out the advice above. It is a good thing to mention this to a colleague soon after the incident.

4. PRACTICAL ADVICE AT THE CLERGY HOME (Cont.)

4.5 DEALING WITH THE LESS COMMON PROBLEMS IN THE VICARAGE

- Recognise that you do not have to deal with the less common problems on your own. There are people who will help. Try and confide in someone who can actually help, rather than someone who will give tea and sympathy because they haven't got any experience with dealing with these more difficult problems.
- Harassment – when someone decides to try and make your life difficult through repetitive actions. This could be by silent or abusive phone calls, letter writing or other actions.
- You must not ignore harassment in whatever form that it takes. It is usually best to seek 'official' help. For the telephone it may be BT, with abusive letters, the police are probably best.
- For someone (usually a parishioner) who is non-violent but persists in harassing you it is better to get a colleague to talk to them. This would usually be the Archdeacon. The important thing is to ensure that the pastoral care of the person is passed on and not just abandoned.
- Sometimes your home can become subject to repetitive attacks by youngsters or others. If this happens it is important that you tell someone, such as the police or community leaders.
- Make sure you make a record of every incident, this is vital for the police/council if they wish to apply for an ASBO (Anti-social Behavioural Order) against the people causing you problems.

5. PRACTICAL ADVICE IN THE CHURCH

Look at how you operate within your church:

- How busy is it? Have you a room in which you see people? How many people actually come to the church to ask for money?
- It is far better to see people in your church after making an appointment with them.
- Most violence comes from those who have arrived with no appointment.
- Any room that you use as a parish office or other meeting room should be laid out according to a study in your own house.
- All parish offices with any sort of equipment such as computers and photocopiers should be alarmed. This should preferably be a monitored alarm, but otherwise a very loud internal alarm.
- Always talk about personal safety and security with your staff whether volunteer or paid staff.
- Consider issuing personal attack alarms to your staff, not to scare them, but just to remind them that they are vulnerable and that they need to be careful no matter where they live.
- Think about how you would call the police if there was a problem. Does your church have a phone? Is it easily accessible? Do mobile phones work within your building? Whose responsibility is it to alert the police? Talk it through with your church council.
- How would you deal with a problem during a service? Although it is the responsibility of the churchwardens to deal with any disturbance, is that practical?
- Would you stop a service and deal with the problem yourself? Perhaps there are members of the congregation (such as police officers or ex-police officers) who could be able to deal with this? Try and identify them and talk through the likely problems.
- Have a policy about protesters. Even the smallest church can become a target for local protestors. A good method is to allow any person who disturbs a service in order to protest two minutes to say their piece. After two minutes they are asked to sit down or leave. This is a reasonable thing to do and you will find that people are so shocked at being given the opportunity to speak they usually waste the opportunity.
- If you have fairly frequent disturbances, such as youngsters banging on windows or drunks disturbing the service then encourage the police to enforce the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Act 1860 (the definition is in Appendix B). This is a law that stops people using 'indecent' behaviour with the church or churchyard and is an extremely useful tool in difficult situations.

6. VISITING OTHER PEOPLE'S HOMES

- It is very rare that you will have a problem in other people's homes. However, you will usually be there at a time of great stress and it may be that the emotion that people feel will manifest itself in violence.
- Ensure that it really is necessary for you to go into that person's home. Is there any way to get the person to your territory? (Either church or home).
- Try and plan ahead. Know exactly where you are going.
- Always tell someone where you are going or at least have an arrangement where you will ring someone at an appointed time to say that you are OK.
- Leave an itinerary in a sealed envelope at home if you do not wish people to know where you intend to go. It's vital that there is some way of tracing where you went if you failed to come home.
- Try and ascertain who is in the house you are intending to visit before you get there.
- Go in daylight if possible.
- Remember that you are entering their space.
- Let them know how much time you have if possible.
- Wait to be invited in or at least ask if you come in.
- Do not enter if you are uncomfortable (**i.e. when someone is extremely drunk or disturbed**).
- How would you leave? Perhaps you could pretend that your mobile phone is on silent and someone is calling you. You can always pretend that you have left something in your car.
- As you go in, note how the front door locks, you may need to leave in a hurry.
- Try and sit nearest the door.
- Do not spread documents around; you may not want to spend time gathering them up if someone becomes violent, or otherwise difficult.
- If there are pets, such as dogs, in the room where you are speaking to someone, consider asking them to be put in another room while you are there.

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Everyone has a lawful right to be able to work in a safe environment.
- Employers must by law provide a safe working environment for their employees. Churches are not exempt.
- Volunteers are, by law, to be considered as employees when looking at Health & Safety issues.
- Personal safety of employees comes under Health & Safety laws.
- Employees (whether paid or voluntary) must take reasonable care of their own personal safety.
- Some clergy choose to carry rape alarms which cost only a few pounds and can slip into a pocket or handbag for use both at home and while out and about.
- Although most clergy are not employees they must still take reasonable care of their personal safety.
- Owners of buildings are required, by law, to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of anyone using their property. This includes the owners of clergy housing.
- This also includes churches where church councils are responsible for the safety of persons using the building, including clergy.
- Reasonable steps are those that a court would consider reasonable in the circumstances.
- This responsibility extends to churchyards, church halls, car parks and other church owned properties.
- Ignorance is not a defence in law.
- Whatever the legal definition you have a moral duty to care for those who work, worship or visit our homes or place of worship.

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY (Cont.)

7.1 WHO NEEDS PERSONAL SAFETY?

- Everyone. Start with yourself.
- Then your immediate family (who opens the front door when the vicar is out)?
- Then your colleagues (whether paid or voluntary).
- Then anyone who uses your building for whatever reason.
- Most personal safety preparations will protect yourself and others anyway.
- Always put people before property. You can rebuild a church building, but not if the Church members are murdered.
- Remember, you have a duty of care, even for the criminals who are committing the crime.
- Everyone must be aware of their personal safety responsibilities. Talk about it.

“Preparation and communication is key.”

8. INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

- Understanding the process of an incident helps you to take action to prevent it
- There are three elements to any incident:
 - Victim
 - Offender
 - Opportunity
- Remove one of these elements and the incident will not occur or will stop.
- Thinking about common incidents now will save time and might make the difference between injury and nothing happening.
- Most clergy/churchwardens will deal with particular personal safety incidents again and again. Such as beggars at the door, the drunk at the church, homeless people, members of the community with mental illness.
- Start with the most common incidents you personally have to face in your place or worship and prepare.
- For example, do you have a list of statutory and non-statutory agencies for the homeless? Are their 24 hour numbers hanging by the phone?

8.1 DEALING WITH INCIDENTS

- There are three elements to dealing with any incident:
 - Calming
 - Reaching
 - Controlling
- **Calming – ensure that you are calm:**
 - Pause for a moment before opening that door.
 - Take a deep breath, savour the extra oxygen.
 - Relax your muscles.
 - Think through very quickly how you would deal with this situation.
 - What are the likely outcomes?
 - What if something unexpected happens?
 - Are you sending out non-verbal aggressive signals (such as pointing at someone)?
 - Do you usually appear aggressive and threatening or passive and able to be exploited? Ask someone who knows you and is honest enough to tell you.
 - Practice being firm but not overbearing or weak in an incident.

8. INCIDENT MANAGEMENT (Cont.)

8.1 DEALING WITH INCIDENTS (Cont.)

- **Calming – the other person:**
 - Avoid saying “Calm Down!”
 - Listen to what they are saying, there may be clues buried in a torrent of words.
 - Let them talk as long as possible, the more they talk the less inclined they may be to be violent as talking is exhausting.
 - Watch them, see if there are visible signs that they are calming down.
 - Do not argue, disagree by all means, but not in an argumentative or aggressive manner.
 - Be yourself. Do not hide behind a title or officialdom. This will only inflame a situation.
- **Reaching – if they are showing signs of calming down, begin to reach out to them:**
 - Once a dialogue has begun, try to understand the root cause of the upset.
 - Listen carefully, repeat the relevant facts back to them to ensure you understand the problem.
 - Smile, if appropriate. Don’t make it seem patronising.
 - If appropriate, make notes to show them that you are taking them seriously.
 - Deal with the simple matters first and then try and tackle the complex ones.
 - Always offer alternatives if you have to say “No” (i.e. do not give money, but offer food).
 - Never argue, inform the person of your intentions politely, simply and clearly.
- **Controlling – remember, you are in charge**
 - Do not allow the person to dictate to you.
 - Always be polite, but always firm.
 - Do not change your mind unless it is absolutely obvious you need to.
 - If you need to end a conversation, be honest and tell them why.
 - Know your priorities. Don’t let a small incident take over the larger picture.
 - Establish realities. Do not get their hopes up if there is no realistic prospect of something happening.

8. INCIDENT MANAGEMENT (Cont.)

8.2 BODY LANGUAGE

- 7% of communication is verbal.
- 38% of communication is voice tone.
- 55% of communication is non-verbal (i.e. body language).
- Body language is your way of identifying potential personal safety risk situations.
- Most body language cannot be hidden, even if you try.
- Your body language in an incident is as important as that of the potential offender.
- The reading of body language is a skill that everyone already has.
- Reading the body language is easy, interpreting and acting upon that information is the hard bit.
- Acting upon body language is a skill that needs to be practised.
- People who are violent can be one or more of the following:
 - Drunk
 - Drugged
 - Very angry
 - Fearful
 - Mentally ill
- With the first four of the above, body language before violence is actually enhanced and more easily spotted. With mental illness it is more difficult. However, those with a mental illness usually display verbal language that warns you that something is wrong.
- If words are saying one thing and their body language is saying another then be alert.
- Always trust your instincts. If something is making you feel uncomfortable never suppress it, ACT on it. The worse that can happen is that you feel a little bit of a fool. If you don't act on it you can become a victim.
- There are 156 physical changes to someone who is considering violence against you. These are caused when the cerebral cortex (the intelligent part of the brain) shuts down and lets the cerebellum and brain stem (the animal parts of the brain) take over. The cerebellum and brain stem are there to control the basics in life such as instinctive reactions (freeze, flight and fright) and fighting.

8. INCIDENT MANAGEMENT (Cont.)

8.2 BODY LANGUAGE (Cont.)

8.2.1 BODY LANGUAGE CAN BE DIVIDED UP INTO TWO DISTINCT AREAS: WARNING SIGNS AND DANGER SIGNS:

- **Warning Signs** are when someone is becoming agitated and violence is becoming an option for them. The signs include:
 - Prolonged staring. The person wants to show you that he is 'top dog' and you will do his will.
 - Facial colour may change – often the neck behind the ears, or the cheeks will redden as the heart pumps faster as the person unconsciously 'shows off'.
 - Head tilts back as person tries to 'stand tall' – this is especially true for someone shorter than you. In any confrontation it is better to be taller than someone to scare them. Think about policemen moving up and down on their toes, it's intended to intimidate.
 - Kicking the ground – this is an unconscious act to ensure the ground you're fighting on is firm. Much like a bull does in the bullring.
 - Changing weight on feet – similar to kicking the ground, it's about checking the ground is secure.
 - Exaggerated movement, especially arms and hands – a lot of this is about bravado. The person is trying to intimidate you into submission. They may not realise it but their animal brain knows that it is always better to not fight if at all possible.
 - Abrupt starting and stopping of nervous behaviour – almost like a schizophrenic who actually talks to themselves, most people will have this inner battle for a few seconds as they make the final decision to attack. The animal brain knows that to fight is dangerous, but will usually believe that it can win.

You may have 1 to 2 **MINUTES** when these warning signs are displayed and you can take action to interrupt the violence cycle (see overleaf).

8. INCIDENT MANAGEMENT (Cont.)

8.2 BODY LANGUAGE (Cont.)

8.2.1 BODY LANGUAGE CAN BE DIVIDED UP INTO TWO DISTINCT AREAS: WARNING SIGNS AND DANGER SIGNS (Cont.):

- **The danger signs.** This is when the animal brain of a person weighed the options and because it is acting out of the influence of drink, drugs, mental illness, anger or fear, it has decided to fight. You may see:
 - Clenching and unclenching of fists – this is to assist the heart (which is now beating very rapidly) to pump oxygen around the body, but especially the muscles.
 - Face goes pale as the blood pumps to the muscles and to the vital organs, such as the liver and kidneys. It will draw blood away from the surface of the skin.
 - Head drops forward to protect throat. From standing tall to impress, the animal brain will drop forward to protect the weakest part of the body, the throat. Hit the throat and death or serious injury is a likely outcome. The animal brain wants to protect the throat and will therefore drop the chin to cover it as much as possible.
 - Hands raise above the waist – in order to hit someone and to maintain balance, the animal brain will bring the arms up to allow them to be pulled back to add power to the punch. Almost no-one will hit when their hands are below their waist.

8. INCIDENT MANAGEMENT (Cont.)

8.2 BODY LANGUAGE (Cont.)

8.2.1 BODY LANGUAGE CAN BE DIVIDED UP INTO TWO DISTINCT AREAS: WARNING SIGNS AND DANGER SIGNS (Cont.)

- Stance changes to side on – again, like the hand raise, this allows a lot of force to be put into the arms in order to try for the ‘knockout’ blow. Also, the person has much better balance when they stand side on.
- Glancing at intended target – the person needs to be reassured that they will be hitting you. They will therefore glance to ensure they haven’t misjudged the situation. (Of course, due to their drink/drug/anger/illness/fear it will seem absolutely the right thing to do).
- Lowering the body before attack – again, in order to put the most amount of force onto target the person will slightly bend their legs to move suddenly against you.

You have 2 to 3 **SECONDS** to act when these signs appear. This may not seem long, but in a violent situation your body will dump adrenaline into your bloodstream and you will be amazed how quickly you can think.

8. INCIDENT MANAGEMENT (Cont.)

8.3 SELF RESCUE ACTIONS

When the warning/danger signs are displayed first and foremost you will need to interrupt the cycle of violence that starts with the warning signs being displayed. This can be achieved by trying any of the following:

- **Give in** – give the person what they want if it stops them assaulting you. Assuming that what they want is practical and involves no major loss to you. However, ensure that you report it to the police and your colleagues and review your procedures and security. Could you have dealt with it in a different way? Are there any security devices that may have helped?
- **Lie** – say something like, “hold on a second, I’ll just go and get what you want.” Or “I’ll just check with my colleagues whether that is OK”, most people will wait while you get away. Almost all will pause a few seconds while they digest what you have said. Don’t wait for them to answer or acknowledge, just get away and close your front door. Then call the police or ask someone to come around. Lying in order to prevent violence to you or any other person is absolutely acceptable.
- **Pretend to be sick** – this is especially effective if someone has hold of you or has actually hit you. Say you feel sick, bend over at the waist and hold your mouth. Look away from the person and stumble away as if looking for a toilet. Make the appropriate retching sounds. (A good tip is to practice this with your children, it’s quite entertaining). You are not very threatening if you are being sick. The person will back off and believe that he has incapacitated you. They will probably think that you are a big softy but in the end, if you get away without injury, who cares?

8. INCIDENT MANAGEMENT (Cont.)

8.3 SELF RESCUE ACTIONS (Cont.)

- **Get away if you feel threatened in any way** - never run, walk quickly if needed. Try not to turn your back literally, but walk away at an angle.
- **Step back while you are talking** – always step back when any of the warning or danger signs appear. Take a very slow, gentle step backwards to increase the distance between you, preferably out of their arms reach, but at least far enough away that if they do try and hit you it will be less force due to the distance the punch or kick has to travel.
- **Talk** – let them talk and then you talk. The more they talk, the more energy they will use and the less inclined they will feel like hitting you. If you are talking watch their body language to make sure you are saying the right things.
- **Put your hands up** – not as in surrender. Raise your hands above your waist with the palms open and facing almost upwards. This is a very non-threatening gesture. Should someone try and hit you, your arms and hands are in the way of the important parts of your body, and also it takes a microsecond to raise them up to protect your head. It is far less painful to be hit on the arm or hand, than on your body or head.
- **Stand sideways on** – whilst talking, put your favoured leg behind your weaker one to a distance of eight inches or so. Get your balance and keep your head facing the front. This presents the person with a side on view and less of a target to hit.
 - Practice this, linking it with stepping backwards and putting your hands up. If done slowly the person you are talking to will not notice that you are preparing, just in case violence is used. Try and make it natural, practice it with people who are no threat whatsoever. Eventually you will do this as a habit and this is a good habit to have.
- Try and be calm, confident and objective.
- Do not be domineering.
- Be non-critical.
- Do not touch anyone who is arguing with you.
- Do show concern and understanding.

8. INCIDENT MANAGEMENT (Cont.)

8.4 WHEN SOMEONE ATTACKS

Of course, sometimes people will be intent on attacking you, no matter what. Or perhaps you were preoccupied and didn't notice the signs. If this happens then try the following:

- Step backwards quickly, maintaining your balance.
- If not doing so already, stand sideways on.
- Raise your left arm to shoulder height and lock the elbow.
- Put your left palm facing the attacker in a 'stop' sign like the police use.
- Put your right hand at cheek level with your right elbow bent, the palm facing the attacker.
- As they lunge forwards, shout, "NO", "Leave me alone!" or similar.
- Keep standing backwards as far as possible, try not to be threatening.
- If you can't step backwards, step sideways. Keep moving. This posture is very non-threatening. However, you are literally keeping the person at arm's length. If they try and hit you again and again, keep shouting.
- Remember it is far less painful for your arms to be hit than your body or head.
- Keep shouting as if there is someone near. Hopefully there is, but your assailant will not know whether there is or not.

8. INCIDENT MANAGEMENT (Cont.)

8.5 SELF DEFENCE

- This means break away holds or control and resistant techniques.
- The law states that you may use 'reasonable' force deemed necessary and reasonable in the circumstances. 'Reasonable' means that amount of force which is sufficient to stop the attacker or to prevent yourself or someone else from being injured.
- **If you do decide to try and stop someone just remember that a person in a state of excitement, or who is struggling violently, will have a rapid heartbeat and be breathing rapidly. This means that they need more oxygen so it is always dangerous to sit on the person's chest or to put an arm around the throat from behind.**
- DO NOT use self-defence unless you are fully trained. It takes 3 to 5 years to master a self-defence technique to an adequate standard.
- Violence breeds violence.
- Once you become a threat (i.e. you have tried to fight back using self-defence) the person attacking you may well move up the level of violence in order to win. This might mean they pull out a knife and stab you. Remember these are not people behaving rationally. Your job is to stay alive.
- If someone uses violence against you, always dial 999 as soon as practicable after the event.
- You have a duty to protect other people. If you do not report the violence then your colleagues or others may well have violence used against them by your attacker because having used it once, they won't worry about using it again.
- You do not have to reveal to the police what was said by the offender prior to the violence if it was said in confidence, such as in confession. The offence is the assault on you, which is not covered by confidentiality.

REPORT IT!

9. INCIDENT REPORTING PROCEDURE

9.1 WHY REPORT INCIDENTS

Logging an incident helps:

1. The Diocese to acknowledge and respond to incidents that affect you and improve future strategies concerning clergy security.
2. To build up a current picture of incidents affecting the security of our clergy.

9.2 WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN I COMPLETE AN INCIDENT REPORT?

1. Please submit the Incident Report to your Archdeacon either by post or email. The form is available to download on the Diocesan website www.derby.anglican.org
2. All Incident Reports will be logged.
3. All Incident Reports will be monitored by the Bishop's ordained chaplain and the Communications Officer. The Communications Officer will only use the information to be aware of any incidents which may be picked up by the press.
4. All Incident Reports will otherwise be treated as confidential although statistics derived by reports may be used in the diocese.
5. In most cases you will simply receive an acknowledgement unless you have indicated that a response is needed or the Archdeacon decides that a response is needed. Incident Reports will allow the Archdeacons to monitor clergy in their Archdeaconry.
6. Submitting an Incident Report will never be seen as indicative of a failure of ministry.

9. INCIDENT REPORTING PROCEDURE (Cont.)

9.3 WHAT SORT OF INCIDENTS SHOULD BE REPORTED?

1. Any behaviour which produces damaging or hurtful effects physically, emotionally or mentally on yourself or your family.
2. Any incident which damages or threatens parsonage or personal property.

9.4 IF THE INCIDENT IS SERIOUS

For example if you or a member of your family is assaulted – you should first contact the Police. You may also wish to phone one of the Archdeacons.

You should not interfere with any evidence that is left behind by any offender.

Always try and protect any evidence from being degraded, such as covering blood etc. if it's raining and likely to be washed away.

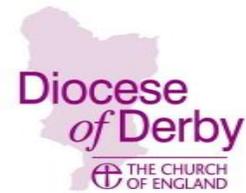
9.5 WHAT IF I'M UNSURE WHETHER OR SUBMIT A REPORT?

1. If you are unsure, we suggest that you initially keep a personal note.
2. If you find that the incident or similar incidents are repeated, or if the incident continues to concern you, we suggest you complete a report form.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We are very grateful to the author Nick Tolson of Churchwatch who allowed us in 2006 to reproduce some of his work. This version is enhanced using data available from the public domain.

INCIDENT REPORT FORM



Please submit the following details:

Name _____

Parish Name _____

Type of incident (please tick box)

Verbal abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Threat of violence	<input type="checkbox"/>	Physical assault	<input type="checkbox"/>
Damage to property	<input type="checkbox"/>	Theft	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Where did the Incident take place _____

When did the incident take place Date _____ Time _____

Did the incident involve you or a family member

Description of what happened (please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Did the incident result in (tick as appropriate)

Shock, needing support	<input type="checkbox"/>	Injury, needing first aid	<input type="checkbox"/>
Injury, needing doctor's attention	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hospitalisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Police involvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	Time off work	<input type="checkbox"/>
Damage to property/theft	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Was the perpetrator

Well known	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recognised	<input type="checkbox"/>
A stranger	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unseen	<input type="checkbox"/>

Has the incident been reported to the Rural Dean or other clergy? YES/NO

If YES please provide details _____

What action, if any, has been taken?

Please submit this form to your Archdeacon either by post or email.

Do you require a response other than an acknowledgement to this report? YES/NO

TOP TEN PERSONAL TIPS

- 1. You MUST have some means to see who is outside your front door.**
- 2. Never give money to someone at the door, however, always offer an alternative of some sort.**
- 3. Keep a record of the people who call in a small log book.**
- 4. Always carry a mobile phone and a personal attack alarm with you.**
- 5. Think about how you would call the police if there was a problem in the home. What would you do while you wait for them to arrive?**
- 6. Always ensure that someone knows where you are going.**
- 7. Trust your instincts and know your limitations.**
- 8. Have a list of resource centres to which a caller can be redirected (e.g. Social Services, Citizens Advice Bureau, Alcoholics Anonymous, Cruise, Relate etc.)**
- 9. Always report incidents, no matter how minor they may seem.**
- 10. Remember – “Preparation and communication is key”.**

APPENDIX I – USEFUL WEBSITES

Diocese of Derby: www.derby.anglican.org

National Churchwatch: www.nationalchurchwatch.com

EIG: www.ecclesiastical-insurance.co.uk where you can find some guidance on security and details about insurance.