

Lone Working Policy

Purpose of this policy and procedure	2
The scope of this policy	2
Policy	2
Definition	2
Responsibilities	2
Risk assessments	3
Ways in which lone working risks can be reduced	3
Health and wellbeing	3
Reporting incidents	4

Purpose of this policy and procedure

The Parish Council recognises that some of our staff work alone, and where this is the case, seeks to ensure the health and safety of all lone workers. This document:

- Raises awareness of the safety issues relating to lone working,
- Identifies and assesses potential risks to an individual working alone,
- Explains the importance of reasonable and practicable precautions to minimise potential risks,
- Provides appropriate support to lone workers, and
- Encourages reporting of all incidents associated with lone working so that they can be adequately managed and used to help reduce risks and improve working arrangements for the future.

The scope of this policy

It applies to all staff, whether full time, part time or temporary workers. It does not apply to councillors.

Policy

We will protect staff from the risks of lone working, as far as is reasonably practicable. Working alone is not in itself against the law and it is often safe to do so. However, the Parish Council's policy is to consider carefully and deal with any health and safety risks for those who work alone.

Definition

'Lone Worker' refers to people who work by themselves without work colleagues either during or outside normal working hours. Examples include:

- A caretaker/cleaner who opens and closes a hall at any time of day/evening,
- Office worker who works alone on the premises,
- A groundsman tending to green spaces and,
- Homeworkers

Any worker under the age of 18 years, or anyone working in confined spaces is not permitted to work on their own.

Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility for the health and safety of work colleagues. The key responsibilities are as follows:

Parish Council:

- Will try to avoid the need for lone working as far as is reasonably practicable;
- Ensure that the worker is competent to work alone;
- Ensure that all lone working activities must be formally risk assessed. This should identify the risk to lone workers; and control measures necessary to minimise those risks; and emergency procedures;
- Arrangements for lone working must be made clear to staff and the details of what can or cannot be done while working alone explained;
- Lone workers must be informed of the hazards and understand the necessary control measures that need to be put in place and have the opportunity to contribute to the risk assessment;

- Must raise the alarm if staff cannot be contacted or do not return as anticipated
- Must ensure that all staff are aware of this lone working policy and procedure and provide appropriate levels of training and guidance on lone working.

Lone workers

- Take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their work
- To follow any instructions given by management or the Parish Council
- Raise with the Clerk or Chair of the Employment Committee any concerns they have in relation to lone working
- Not to work alone where there is adequate information to undertake a risk assessment
- Inform the Clerk or chair of the Employment Committee at the earliest opportunity of an accident, incident of violence or aggression while working alone

Risk Assessments

The Clerk or Chair of the Employment Committee must complete (or ensure the completion of) a Lone Working Risk Assessment prior to every lone working activity and update as appropriate. The risk assessment should be reviewed by the lone worker before undertaking the work and communicated to all relevant staff or councillors.

People who work alone will of course face the same risks in their work as those doing similar roles/tasks. However, they may additionally encounter hazards such as:

- Sudden illness
- Faulty equipment
- Travelling alone
- Remote locations
- Abuse from members of the public
- Animal attacks

Ways in which lone working risks can be reduced

Every lone working environment and situation is different, and therefore it is not possible to implement a 'one size fits all' approach. Where there is regular or anticipated lone working, the Parish Council will devise and implement a lone working plan that meets the needs and risks of their particular circumstances. The plan should be proportionate to any risks that are identified from the risk assessment. The plan for a groundsman working alone with machinery will be more detailed than an administrator working late in the office. This should be written down and communicated to all relevant staff and where appropriate, councillors.

Health and wellbeing

In order to ensure your personal safety, it is important that you share any details of any aspects of your health that could lead to increased risk with your manager or specific councillors. This includes pregnancy. You can then jointly plan to mitigate any potential risks caused by your circumstances. This information will be treated on a strict 'need to know' basis with your confidentiality of the utmost importance.

Reporting incidents

Any incidents or perceived risks encountered while lone working should be recorded, reviewed and acted upon. The report should include:

- A brief note of what happened, when and who was involved,

- For any work-related aggression (verbal or physical) including threatening behaviour, all of the details of the incident and of the perpetrator should be captured, which could then be used if the police take any formal prosecution action. This might be particularly important for more serious incidents of work-related violence, and,
- In either instance, this might also include recording details of any circumstances you think might have contributed to the incident, e.g. the context of the interaction, perceptions about the condition of the perpetrator, or any environmental circumstances. This information would then support us to review our risk assessment process and see if any additional measures are needed.

If you feel unsafe, unwell, or become injured call the emergency services if you need immediate assistance. If possible, call your Clerk or Chair of the Employment Committee to let them know (or ask someone to do so on your behalf).

Call the Clerk or Chair of the Employment Committee if your plans change because you feel unwell or if you have a domestic emergency when working alone.

This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

Date of policy: October 2026

Approving committee: Employment

Date of committee meeting: Full Council Meeting October 2026

Policy version reference: 1

Policy effective from: October 2026

Date for next review: October 2028

Wortham & Burgate Parish Council

LONE WORKING RISK ASSESSMENT

IDENTIFIED RISK	POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCE OF RISK	ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT (H/M/L)	LIKELIHOOD OF RISK OCCURRING (H/M/L)	CONTROLS TO MANAGE RISK AND FURTHER ACTION NEEDED IF NECESSARY
Training & Competency	Has necessary information, instruction and training been given to the lone worker and is the lone worker competent to carry out the work alone?	H	M	Any person authorised to be in the building must be fully conversant with emergency procedures.
Emergencies & Access	The lone worker must have access to emergency warning devices to raise the alarm in the event of an emergency (eg fire alarms, motion sensors).	H	M	A safe means of access for the lone worker (consider lighting and personal security issues and means of escape in an emergency) Fire alarms, extinguishers etc are checked annually. Entrances in the vicinity of the pavilion and car park are well lit. Lone worker must know how to respond in the event of a fire or emergency.
Risk of violence from members of the public	Staff at risk of verbal or physical assault	H	M	Wherever possible, staff should not be alone with members of the public. If a member of staff is alone in a building with a member of the public, a councillor should be made aware of this. Staff should avoid being left on their own with any new contacts - if possible arrange for a councillor to be present. Staff should always have channels of communication in case of an emergency.

				Staff to report and record all adverse incidents.
First Aid	Arrangements should be in place to deal with a situation where the lone worker becomes ill or has an accident (Access to first aid facilities)?	M	M	A first aider is unlikely to be present. A first aid box is available at the contents checked regularly. In the event that the lone worker feels unwell they should if possible return home
Manual Handling	Staff risk injuries or back pain from handling heavy/bulky objects	H	L	Staff members leave any heavy deliveries in a safe place and wait for assistance wherever necessary.
Electrical Equipment	Staff using laptops, vacuum cleaners or any electrical equipment	H	L	Ensure that all office equipment, heaters, vacuum cleaner etc is electrically tested. Electrical cables and plugs visually inspected for damage. Do not interfere with plugs or power supply
Slips, trips & falls	Staff may be injured if they trip over objects or slip on spillages.	H	L	General good housekeeping. Keep areas well-lit and clear from trip hazards e.g. no trailing leads or cables, uneven flooring or torn carpets. Pavilion is cleaned regularly. Ensure the member of staff has access to first aid equipment. Know local arrangements on how to respond in the event of fire or other emergency. Do not work with any hazardous substances. Regular inspection of areas to ensure that any trip hazards
Working at height	Falls from any height can cause bruising and fractures	H	L	No working from height is to be carried out whilst lone working
Risk of violence from members of the public or contractors etc.	Staff at risk of verbal or physical assault	H	M	Staff to inform the Chair or Vice Chair where they are going and their estimated time of arrival back. If plans change significantly, this should be communicated back to the Chair or Vice Chair. If a visit is deemed high risk, delay the visit until staff can be

				<p>accompanied.</p> <p>Carry a first aid kit suitable for treating minor injuries.</p> <p>Provide a mobile phone.</p> <p>Before making home visits, the lone worker must have full knowledge of the hazards and risks to which they may be exposed to and apply control measures to eliminate or reduce the potential risks. If possible, staff should be accompanied by a councillor.</p>
Unsuitability of staff members to work alone.	Have staff any medical conditions and /or disabilities which would make it unsuitable and/or unsafe for lone working.	H	M	<p>Chair or Vice Chair to monitor suitability of staff for lone working.</p> <p>Staff to ensure that any medical conditions which might be relevant to their working alone are fully disclosed to the Chair or Vice Chair. Individuals with temporarily impaired mobility must not work alone.</p>

Adopted October 2026 next Review October 2028