

Lone Working Policy



Policy Statement

The aim of this policy is to ensure that there are adequate systems in place for the health, safety and welfare of all staff and volunteers. The health and safety of all staff and volunteers working for Selsey Community Forum is paramount and the Charity will make health, safety and welfare an equal priority to all other Charity objectives.

Selsey Community Forum recognises that at any given time staff or volunteers may be working alone, whether that is in our office space, attending meetings or making home visits. The Charity has a responsibility to assess the risks to lone workers and to take steps to avoid or control the risks where necessary. Staff and volunteers also have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and others in lone working situations. Lone working is not inherently unsafe and proper precautions can reduce the risks associated with working alone. This policy is designed to raise awareness of the risks presented, to identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation and to give guidance on how to manage such risks.

Our values have been reflected in this policy and these are:-

- **Community and Service users** – we look out for those in need
- **Work together** – we work together with internal and outside partners to achieve the best results
- **Trust and respect** – we act with honesty, openness and integrity and recognise the contribution each of us makes
- **Be effective** – we deliver a high-quality service, using our resources well to deliver value

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers who may find themselves working alone at any time whilst undertaking duties for the Charity.

Definition

A lone worker is defined as a member of staff or volunteer who regularly or occasionally works on their own without direct supervision or support.

Examples include, but are not limited to a person who:

- Works from home
- Works alone in a Selsey Community Forum office
- Works on their own outside normal office hours
- Carries out home visits alone
- Travels on their own
- Stays away from home overnight on their own for work purposes
- Works at a venue for the purposes of running a group

Policy principles

The following principles underpin this policy:

- No staff member or volunteer should be in a situation where they feel at risk
- Everyone is responsible for avoiding and managing any risks that arise from lone working. This is essential as the Lone Working Policy clearly cannot envisage every situation, and hence staff members and volunteers are expected to demonstrate common sense and to also take responsibility for their own actions and safety
- The Charity will involve staff and volunteers in identifying risks that arise from lone working and consider ways to manage them
- Lone working risks should be identified and eliminated where possible and where this is not

- possible should be limited and managed
- Staff and volunteers will be provided with support, guidance and where applicable, training to assist them to stay safe
- Where appropriate, specific situations will be assessed for risk and an approach agreed with the lone worker and their line manager
- Precautions should consider both normal working conditions and foreseeable emergency situations e.g. fire, equipment failure, illness and accidents
- All incidents arising from lone working must be reported to a manager, project lead or a Trustee for monitoring and reporting purposes
- A failure to follow agreed safety procedures increases risk and is a decision taken by individuals for which they are personally accountable. Any failure to follow agreed procedures may be dealt with as a disciplinary offence for staff. For volunteers it may be dealt with under the procedures in the Volunteers' Handbook

Reporting

A member of staff or volunteer must report any concerns, lone working incidents or near misses to their manager, in the first instance or to the Selsey Community Forum Chair of Trustees. Managers will keep records of all lone working incidents reported to them and responsible for completing the Incident Log. The Operations Lead will identify and implement learning to mitigate against future risk.

Lone Working Risk

The following general risk areas that may arise from lone working include:

- Home visits
- Working alone in an office out of hours
- Meetings in empty or unfamiliar venues
- Lone activities e.g. parking vehicles at night
- Travel on public transport
- Overnight stays
- Meetings in public places

Assessing Risk

Safe working arrangements are based on the following process:

- An assessment of the likeliness and seriousness of the risk
- The limiting of the risk
- Control or management of the risk

A Risk Assessment and, if necessary, a Vulnerability Management Plan must be completed by the manager before starting any lone working activity. If an unacceptable level of risk is identified, the activity will be reviewed.

The risk assessment must take account of:

- The individual's ability to carry out their activities safely in the environment
- The potential for the individual to be subject to harm, aggression, verbal or physical abuse
- A person's living environment including animals present
- The individual's ability to request assistance or withdraw safely from a dangerous situation
- The individual's fitness to carry out the work alone
- Sudden personal illness, medical conditions or personal emergencies
- Building conditions

The above list is not exhaustive; each situation is different and individual risks for situations must be considered.

Volunteers and staff must leave the location if there is imminent or actual danger of any sort and

must contact their manager to let them know the situation.

Completed risk assessments and individual risk assessments will be retained.

Lone Working situations

- Each office location will have guidance notes for staff wishing to work alone out of hours
- Staff working from home should consider the risks of any meeting arranged in their own home when alone and ensure appropriate steps are taken to minimise risks
- Staff and Volunteers must assess the risks of meetings with third parties at premises other than the Charity offices. Particular care should be taken in respect of meetings in non-public places

Responsibilities

Staff and volunteers are responsible for ensuring that they are working in a safe environment and that they safeguard their own and others' personal safety.

Senior Management Team responsibilities:

- Ensuring that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluation and managing risk associated with lone working
- Providing resources for putting policy into practice
- Ensuring there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the effectiveness of this policy is regularly reviewed

Operations Lead responsibilities:

- Ensuring that staff are aware of the guidance and procedure
- Ensuring staff have access to appropriate training, as necessary
- Advising on any changes in legislation which may affect the policy and making necessary updates
- Receiving and holding data on any lone working incidents or near misses
- Reporting to Trustees as required

Project Leads responsibilities:

- Ensuring that volunteers are aware of the guidance and procedure
- Ensuring that volunteers have access to appropriate training, as necessary
- Ensuring that volunteers understand their responsibilities and the means of checking and raising concerns

Line Manager:

- Communicating this document to all staff and volunteers they manage and support
- Complete the Risk Assessment and Vulnerability Management Plan to identify and control risks and share the plan with the lone worker
- Having up-to-date contact details of their staff and volunteers
- Follow Selsey Community Forum guidance and procedures
- Reporting lone working incidents or near misses
- Complete the Incident Log on behalf of their staff member or volunteer if they are unable to report the incident themselves

Staff and volunteer responsibilities:

- Avoiding lone working where possible
- Identifying risks that may arise from lone working
- Taking everyday precautions to ensure their own safety
- Follow Selsey Community Forum guidance and procedures
- Complying with any precautionary measures agreed with their line manager
- Reporting risks to the Charity
- Keeping their line manager updated on their whereabouts
- Reporting lone working incidents or near misses to their line manager

Recording Whereabouts of the Lone Worker

Staff

- Must ensure their appointments are logged in their Outlook Calendar. Logged information should include:
 - ✓ Where you will be working, the time and anticipated length of the meeting
 - ✓ Name and Charity Log number (if relevant) of the persons you will be meeting
- Line managers should know where their staff and volunteers are and follow procedures to record and identify the whereabouts of staff
- Line managers must ensure that their staff receive appropriate training and guidance on personal safety as part of their induction
- Must follow the personal safety working arrangements
- Must report personal safety related incidents and near misses

Volunteers

- As part of the application process volunteers are asked to provide details of a friend or family member who can be contacted in an emergency
- Must make sure you complete the agreed 'check in' phone calls, texts or emails with your trusted contact
- Project Leads must ensure that volunteers receive appropriate training and guidance on personal safety as part of their induction
- Must follow the personal safety working arrangements
- Must report personal safety related incidents, and near misses to their Project Lead

Monitoring and Review

The ongoing implementation of the Lone Working Policy will be monitored through feedback from staff and volunteers to their manager. Any member of staff or volunteer with a concern regarding these issues should ensure that they discuss this in the first instance with their manager.

This policy is applicable to all the activities in which Selsey Community Forum is or becomes involved; it is to be reviewed and updated as necessary at least annually.

Reviewed and Approved by Trustees: November 2025

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Mike Nicholls, Chair, Selsey Community Forum