Selsey Community Forum
Lone Working Policy

Policy Statement

The aim of this Policy is to set out the arrangements Selsey Community Forum will use to identify, assess and manage the risks associated with lone working and to support the health, safety and welfare of staff and volunteers who may be required to work alone. Selsey Community Forum will take reasonably practicable steps to protect lone workers from risks arising from their work and will provide appropriate information, instruction, training, supervision and emergency arrangements where required.

The Charity will assess the risks associated with lone working and will take appropriate steps to eliminate or reduce those risks so far as is reasonably practicable. 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 employees, workers, volunteers and others undertaking activities on behalf of Selsey Community Forum who may work alone or without close or direct supervision.

Definition

A lone worker is someone who works by themselves without close or direct supervision or where assistance is not immediately available. Lone working may be regular or occasional and does not necessarily mean that the individual is physically alone for the whole of their working day.

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

- Staff and volunteers must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions, and must follow any agreed lone-working arrangements, risk assessments and safety procedures.
- 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
- Failure to follow agreed safety procedures may increase risk and should be reported and addressed promptly. Where an employee unreasonably fails to follow a reasonable and lawful safety instruction, the matter may be considered under the Disciplinary Policy. Concerns involving volunteers will be managed in accordance with the applicable volunteer arrangements. 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

Staff and volunteers must report lone-working concerns, incidents, accidents or near misses as soon as reasonably practicable to their manager, Project Lead or another appropriate nominated person. Where there is an immediate risk to safety, the individual should prioritise moving to a place of safety and contacting the emergency services where necessary. Appropriate records will be maintained of reported incidents and near misses. The Operations Lead or other nominated person will consider any learning and whether risk assessments, control measures or working arrangements need to be reviewed.

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 likelihood and potential severity of harm;
- The limiting of the risk
- Control or management of the risk

Lone-working risks must be appropriately assessed before the activity takes place. Depending on the nature and level of risk, this may be addressed through an existing general risk assessment, a specific lone-working risk assessment or, where necessary, an individual Vulnerability Management Plan. Where the risks cannot be adequately controlled, the activity must not be undertaken alone.

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
- Any health, disability, pregnancy or other individual circumstances that may affect the person's ability to work alone safely
- Sudden personal illness, medical conditions or personal emergencies
- Building conditions
- Access to communication and emergency assistance
- travel, parking and safe access/exit
- risks of violence, aggression or intimidation
- any individual circumstances that may materially affect the person's ability to work alone safely

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

Where a staff member or volunteer reasonably believes that they are in immediate danger, they should prioritise their personal safety, leave or move to a place of safety where possible, and contact the emergency services where necessary. Their manager, Project Lead or other nominated contact should be informed as soon as reasonably practicable. 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 avoid holding work-related meetings with service users, members of the public or other third parties in their own home unless this has been specifically authorised and appropriately risk assessed.
- 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, evaluating, and managing risks 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
- ensuring appropriate resources, communication arrangements and escalation procedures are available where required

Operations Lead responsibilities:

- Ensuring that staff are aware of the guidance and procedure
- Ensuring staff have access to appropriate training, as necessary
- Ensuring that relevant changes in legislation, HSE guidance or organisational arrangements are considered and that appropriate advice is obtained where necessary.
- 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 responsibilities:

- Communicating this document to all staff and volunteers they manage and support
- Ensure that appropriate lone-working risk assessments are completed and that any required control measures or Vulnerability Management Plan are implemented and shared 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
- Follow the agreed escalation procedure where a lone worker fails to make an expected contact or cannot be reached.

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
- Follow agreed check-in, communication and emergency arrangements
- Stop work and seek advice where they reasonably believe the activity cannot be carried out safely

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
  - ✓ Sufficient information about the appointment or location to enable appropriate welfare and emergency arrangements to be maintained. Personal information should be limited to what is reasonably necessary for this purpose
- 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 designated 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

Emergency and Escalation Arrangements

Appropriate emergency and escalation arrangements will be determined having regard to the level of risk associated with the lone-working activity. Where a lone worker fails to make an expected contact or cannot be reached, the manager, Project Lead or designated person should follow the agreed escalation procedure. Depending on the circumstances and level of concern, this may include further attempts to make contact, contacting an emergency contact or colleague, checking the individual's last known location or contacting the emergency services where there is a reasonable concern for their safety.

Staff and volunteers must be given appropriate information about what to do in the event of an accident, illness, fire, security incident or other emergency.

Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of lone-working arrangements will be monitored through feedback, review of risk assessments, incidents and near misses, and any concerns raised by staff or volunteers.

This Policy and associated lone-working arrangements will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where there is a significant incident, material change in working practices, identified change in risk, or relevant change in legislation or HSE guidance.

Version Control

Version Number	Date of Update	Amendments
1.0	October 2025	Annual Review
2.0	October 2026	Reviewed and updated in line with current HSE guidance