

Ellisfield Parish Council Lone Worker Volunteer Policy

Adopted October 2023

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1. INTRODUCTION

Volunteers working alone are often at increased risk of harm from the normal hazards associated with their work or activities. They are also at an increased risk should they suffer an injury, particularly if they become incapacitated or otherwise unable to summon assistance themselves.

Volunteers are required to work alone for significant periods of time, volunteering for activities related to the Parish Council.

This policy applies to volunteers carrying out work for the Parish Council, and for the purposes of this policy, loneworking is defined as anyone who works in isolation for any period without close or direct contact with another individual or supervisor.

There is no specific law dealing with lone working, but the Parish Council has a general duty to its volunteers under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and a specific duty to carry out risk assessments under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

a. SCOPE

The Parish Council recognises its responsibility to it for managing the risks associated with lone working. By implementing this policy, the Parish Council ensures that the risks associated with lone working are controlled and minimised.

The Lone Working Policy applies to volunteer carrying out work for the Parish Council without close or direct supervision, in an isolated work area or who is working out of hours.

The Volunteer will have access to the land 7 days a week. When volunteering on the land a member of family or similar must be notified.

b. PURPOSE

The Parish Council recognises that when its volunteers need to work alone, it seeks to ensure the health and safety of the individuals.

This document:

- Raises awareness of the safety issues relating to lone working and volunteering.
- Identifies and assesses potential risks to an individual working alone.
- Explains the importance of reasonable and practicable precautions to minimise potential risk.

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- 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.

c. DEFINITION

'Lone worker' refers to a person who works by themselves without work colleagues either during or outside normal working hours.

d. RESPONSIBILITIES

All parish council individuals have a responsibility for the health and safety of colleagues and volunteers. The key responsibilities are as follows:

The Parish Council shall:

- Ensure that all lone working activities are formally risk assessed (this should identify the risk to lone workers; any control measures necessary to minimise those risks; and emergency procedures)
- Make clear to volunteers' arrangements for lone working and explain the details of what can or cannot be done while working alone.
- Inform lone workers of the hazards and understand the necessary control measures that need to be put in place and allow them the opportunity to contribute to the risk assessment.
- The Volunteer will nominate a point of contact when they are working on the land.
- Ensure all volunteers and Councilor's are aware of this lone working policy and the Parish Council will provide appropriate levels of advice and training on lone working.
- A first aid kit shall be provided to the Volunteer.

All Volunteers shall:

- Take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their work.
- Follow any instruction given by the Parish Council.
- Raise with the Parish Council any concerns they have in relation to lone working.
- Inform the Parish Council at the earliest opportunity in the event of an accident, incident of violence or aggression whilst working alone.
- PPE shall be always worn whilst volunteering.

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e. RISK ASSESSMENT

The Clerk shall complete (or ensure the completion of) a Risk Assessment and update it as appropriate.

The risk assessment should be reviewed by the lone worker. Please refer to the document issued.

f. HEALTH AND WELLBEING

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 the Clerk. This can then jointly plan to mitigate any potential risks caused by a change in circumstances. This information will be treated on a strict 'need to know' basis with your confidentiality of the utmost importance.

g. REPORTING INCIDENTS

Any incidents or perceived risks encountered while lone working or volunteering 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 any details of violent behaviour. An Incident report form must also be completed. This might be particularly important for more serious incidents of work-related violence; and in either instance, details of any 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 encourage the Parish Council to review its 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 named contact, or Councillor or family to let them know (or ask someone to do so on your behalf).
- Notify the Parish Council if your plans change because you feel unwell or if you have a domestic emergency when working alone.

Signed:

Date:

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