

LONE WORKING POLICY

Version 1.00. Approved and adopted by Council
on 9 September 2025
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Next review – July 2026.

1. Introduction:

The following policy and procedure have been written to minimise risks to staff working alone, either in their fixed base or in a remote or isolated location. Under the Health & Safety Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 it is the duty of Ruskington Parish Council to assess risks to lone workers/volunteers and take steps to avoid or control risk where necessary.

Employees of the Council have a Duty of Care to take precautions, as far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure that they, or third parties who may be affected by their work, remain safe.

2. Lone Working / Lone Workers:

These are people who work by themselves without close or direct supervision:

(a). At a fixed base (office or other):

- Only one person working on the premises
- Working separately from others
- Working outside of normal hours

(b). Away from their fixed base:

- Staff member who is required to travel alone to and from a fixed base to another base or to attend meetings etc.

3. Potential Risks to Lone Workers:

- Open access and unlocked doors – accessible to the public, contractors etc.
- Being taken ill whilst at work
- Lack of training regarding Health & Safety procedures
- Hazards in the workplace
- Remote areas
- Parking arrangements: poorly lit and isolated areas
- Opening and closing workplace and venues for meetings

4. Assessing the Risk:

(a). Before drawing up and recording the assessment of risk, it must be established:

- Whether the work must be done by a lone worker

- What arrangements will be in place to ensure an individual is not exposed to unnecessary and unacceptable risk?

(b). When recording an assessment of risk, the following must be taking into consideration:

- Environment – location, security, access/egress
- Context – nature of the task
- History – have there been any accidents/incidents in the past

All available information must be considered and updated when necessary. If there is reason for doubt about the safety of a lone worker, the task must cease, and alternative arrangements must be made

5. Safety Guidelines:

(a). For staff working in a fixed base:

- Familiarise the layout of the building including fire exits and escape routes;
- Keep doors locked that allow direct access to the building/office in which you are working;
- Do not open the door to unexpected visitors. In the case of contractors ask for identification. If still unsure check with the contractor's employer/head office;
- Have emergency contact numbers readily available. Park as near to the building as possible;
- A risk assessmentⁱ to be put in place to assess potential risks.

(b). For staff working away from their fixed base:

- Staff must inform the Clerkⁱⁱ, (or in their absence, work colleagues) of the following:
 - Where they will be working;
 - Duration of working activity;
 - Estimated time of arrival/departure to/from working area;
 - The locations of any additional venues they intend to visit during the period of work;
 - Keep work calendars up to date and shared with Line-manager
- The names and details of any third parties they intend to contact during the period of work.
- In addition, employees must: Ensure they have in their possession a fully charged, Council-issued, mobile phone (or other communication device) complete with effective GPS device or other agreed SOS, or safety software installed;
- Avoid meetings in isolated places or be accompanied by a work colleague or supervisor.
- For carrying out chainsaw work as a lone worker, please see Appendix A. The Caretaker will complete their own risk assessment in conjunction with the Clerk.

6. Responsibility:

(a). Employee's Responsibility & Personal Safety:

- Must take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work;
- To maintain a regular line of communication with members of the Council;
- Must seek authority with the Clerk before leaving the fixed-base or deviating from scheduled tasks. Must report to the Clerk the accident/incident to allow immediate isolation of the hazard, for a full investigation to take place and, if necessary, for additional safety procedures/policies to be implemented.

(b). Employer's Responsibility:

- To take reasonable care for the health & safety of staff by identifying and assessing potential risks.
- To maintain regular communication with staff to identify and minimise risk(s);
- To establish and maintain a signing in and out system;
- To ensure staff receive all relevant training and information pertinent to their duties;
- To equip staff with a mobile phone (or other form of communication) to ensure a system of maintaining contact.

7. Exemptions:

Employees and / or Volunteers are exempt from working alone in certain situations:

- Young persons under instruction in a fixed base (example work experience, helping with Council tasks etc);
- If after conducting Risk Assessments the activities cannot be controlled to a safe level.

8. Policy Review:

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Council to ensure that it is relevant to working practice.

Appendix A: Lone Working with Chainsaws.

The qualified chainsaw Caretaker when carrying out chainsaw work as a lone worker, will follow procedures set out by the Forestry Industry Safety Record (FISA)ⁱⁱⁱ.

- Alongside the standard risk assessment for the tree work, an emergency planning assessment for the task will also be completed by the Caretaker^{iv} undertaking the work, shared with the Clerk, and stored securely. (Please see the FISA Risk Assessment at Appendix A). Blank copies are available, on request from, the Clerk or Environment Caretaker.
- Essential, site-specific information, as shown below, will be recorded on a whiteboard and will be kept with the Caretaker at the site of the chainsaw work. In the event of an accident or emergency, this information is to be used by the Caretaker, or another person at the scene.

Caretaker/s	e.g. Name of Caretaker/s
Site location address	e.g. Sleaford Road Cemetery Sleaford Road Ruskington NG34 9BS
Grid Reference (What3Words)	https://what3words.com/products/what3words-app
Designated meeting place	e.g. Cemetery lychgate
Access point	e.g. Via the lychgate on Sleaford Road
Access type	e.g. Pedestrian, mobility scooter, and machinery there is no vehicular access into the cemetery. There is a layby for parking at the entrance to the cemetery.
Nearest hospital	Lincoln County Hospital (A&E) department
Line-manager contact	e.g. Name of Clerk to RPC 01526 834484 / mobile phone for WhatsApp messaging clerk@ruskington.pc.org.uk
Operator's contact	e.g. Work mobile number for phone call and WhatsApp messaging.

- The risk assessment and site-specific information must be shared with the Clerk.
- Before starting any chainsaw work, the Caretaker must give the relevant details to the Clerk.

- ## Appendix A: Blank Forest Industry Risk Assessment:

IMPORTANT - IF ANY SIGNIFICANT CHANGES OCCUR AS THE WORK PROGRESSES, ALL WORK MUST CEASE AND FURTHER RISK ASSESSMENT BE UNDERTAKEN

iv The Caretaker undertaking any chainsaw work will hold a current and valid qualification in tree and chain saw work, plus the Forestry First Aid (+F) training.

^v It is the responsibility of the Caretaker to ensure the first aid kit is “in date” before commencing work. If it out of date, the Clerk or RFO must be informed. The Council has a responsibility to provide the relevant first aid kit.

^{vi} It is the responsibility of the Caretaker to ensure that the forestry first aid kit is “in date” before commencing work. If it out of date, the Clerk or RFO must be informed. The Council has a responsibility to provide the relevant first aid kit.

^{vii} The Accident Book is stored securely in the locked Clerk’s cupboard to ensure compliance with Council’s privacy policy and the latest GDPR legislation. In case of accident and emergency it may be necessary to share personal details such as name, age, address and details of injury with the emergency services.

I confirm that I have read and understood this lone working policy, and that I will abide by all measures and directions contained herein. Please note: If you do not understand any part of this policy please speak to the Clerk of Council.

Name	Signature	Date