



# Brixham Town Council LONE WORKING POLICY

## 1. Policy Statement

1.1. Where the conditions of service delivery or its associated tasks require staff to work alone, both the individual staff member and managers have a duty to assess and reduce the risks which lone working presents.

## 2. Purpose

2.1. This policy is designed to alert staff to the risks presented by lone working, to identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation, and to describe procedures which will minimise such risks.

## 3. Scope

3.1. This policy applies to all staff who may be working alone, at any time, in any of the situations described in the definition below.

## 4. Context

4.1. Within the overall policy relating to safer working practices, support for lone workers is an essential part, and the same principles apply, particularly:

- 4.1.1. a commitment to supporting staff and managers both in establishing and maintaining safe working practices
- 4.1.2. recognising and reducing risk
- 4.1.3. a commitment to the provision of appropriate support for staff
- 4.1.4. a clear understanding of responsibilities
- 4.1.5. the priority placed on the safety of the individual over property
- 4.1.6. a commitment to providing appropriate training for staff
- 4.1.7. Equipment such as mobile phones, personal alarms and torches will be made available as appropriate.

## 5. Definition

5.1. Within this document, 'lone working' refers to situations where staff in the course of their duties may be the only staff member present in the office. They will be physically isolated from colleagues, and without access to immediate assistance.

## **6. Mandatory Procedures**

### **6.1. Security of buildings**

- 6.1.1. Appropriate steps should be taken to control access to the building, and that emergency exits are accessible.
- 6.1.2. Alarm systems must be tested regularly.
- 6.1.3. Staff working alone must ensure they are familiar with the exits and alarms.
- 6.1.4. There must be access to a telephone and first aid equipment for staff working alone. A first aid kit is located Town Council office and the Town Council vehicle.
- 6.1.5. If there is any indication that a building has been broken into, a staff member must not enter alone, but must wait for back-up.

### **6.2. Personal safety**

- 6.2.1. Staff must not assume that having a mobile phone and a back-up plan is sufficient safeguard in itself. The first priority is to plan for a reduction of risk.
- 6.2.2. Staff should take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety, as they would in any other circumstances. *(See Appendix 1)*
- 6.2.3. Before working alone, an assessment of the risks involved and measures to mitigate risk should be identified in conjunction with the line manager
- 6.2.4. Staff must inform their line manager or other identified person when they will be working alone, giving details of their location and following an agreed plan.
- 6.2.5. If a member of staff does not report in as expected, an agreed plan should be put into operation, initially to check on the situation and then to respond as appropriate.
- 6.2.6. Arrangements for contacts and response should be tailored to the needs and nature of the team. Issues to take into account include:
  - 6.2.6.1. staffing levels and availability
  - 6.2.6.2. staff working regularly in the community
  - 6.2.6.3. the identified risks
  - 6.2.6.4. measures in place to reduce those risks
- 6.2.7. Where staff work alone for extended periods and/or on a regular basis, managers must make provision for regular contact, to monitor and to counter the effects of working in isolation.

### **6.3. Assessment of risk**

- 6.3.1. In drawing up and recording an assessment of risk the following issues should be considered, as appropriate to the circumstances:
  - 6.3.1.1. the environment – location, security, access
  - 6.3.1.2. the context – nature of the task, use of equipment, machinery and chemicals
  - 6.3.1.3. history – any previous incidents in similar situations
  - 6.3.1.4. any other special circumstances
- 6.3.2. All available information should be taken into account and checked or updated as necessary.
- 6.3.3. Where there is any reasonable doubt about the safety of a lone worker in a given situation, consideration should be given to sending a second person or making other arrangements.

6.3.4. While resource implications cannot be ignored, safety must be the prime concern. For further guidance see *Appendix 2*, and the appropriate assessment template – *Appendix 3* for establishments.

#### **6.4. Planning**

6.4.1. Staff should be fully briefed in relation to risk as well as the task itself.

6.4.2. Communication, checking-in and fallback arrangements must be in place.

6.4.3. The line manager is responsible for agreeing and facilitating these arrangements, which should be tailored to the individual.

#### **6.5. Reporting**

6.5.1. Should an incident occur, the reporting and de-briefing should follow

6.5.2. The identified person should be debriefed in the first instance; if this is not the staff member's line manager, that manager should be informed as soon as practicable.

6.5.3. Record of incidents to be maintained by Brixham Town Council and regularly reviewed by the Evaluation Committee.

#### **6.6. Support following an incident**

6.6.1. The support available should be available to all that may have been affected by the incident.

### **7. Monitoring and Review**

7.1. The ongoing implementation of the Lone Working Policy will be monitored through the supervision process.

7.2. Any member of staff with a concern regarding these issues should ensure that it is discussed with their supervisor or with the whole team, as appropriate.

7.3. The policy will be reviewed as part of the regular cycle of reviews, unless changing circumstances require an earlier review.

### **8. Appendix 1**

#### **8.1. Personal Safety**

8.1.1. It is not wise to rely on alarm systems or breakaway techniques to get you out of trouble – there are a number of things you can do to avoid trouble in the first place. The employer has a responsibility to ensure the health, safety and welfare of staff, but employees also have a duty to take reasonable care themselves.

8.1.2. This is not about raising anxiety levels, but about recognising potential dangers and taking positive steps to reduce risk, for yourself and for service users in your care.

8.1.3. Make yourself aware of the risk assessments relating to your role.

#### **8.2. Be aware of the environment**

8.2.1. Know what measures are in place where you work: check out alarm systems and procedures, exits and entrances, and the location of the first aid supplies.

8.2.2. Make sure that your mobile phone is in good working order.

8.2.3. If a potentially violent situation occurs, be aware of what might be used as a weapon against you, and of possible escape routes.

- 8.2.4. Try to maintain a comfortable level of heating and lighting in the building.
- 8.2.5. Ensure all machinery, equipment and vehicle are maintained in a good working order at all times.

### **8.3. Be aware of yourself**

- 8.3.1. Think about your body language. What messages are you giving?
- 8.3.2. Think about your tone of voice and choice of words.
- 8.3.3. Think about what you are wearing. Is it suitable? What signals does it send out?
- 8.3.4. Be aware of your own triggers – the things that make you angry or upset.

### **8.4. Be aware of other people**

- 8.4.1. Take note of their non-verbal signals.
- 8.4.2. Be aware of their triggers.
- 8.4.3. Don't crowd people – allow them space.
- 8.4.4. Listen to them, and show them you are listening.

## **9. Appendix 2**

### **9.1. Assessment of risk**

#### **9.1.1. The environment, building and the community**

- 9.1.1.1. It is the responsibility of the line manager to assess the risks presented by the buildings (access, lay-out, furnishings, lighting), community (location and public contact) and to take appropriate action.
- 9.1.1.2. Alarm and tracking systems must be accessible, and tested regularly.
- 9.1.1.3. All staff must be familiar with the tracking alarms, and have clear instructions on how to respond to them.

### **9.2. Sharing Information**

- 9.2.1. Information should be shared with regard to issues of confidentiality and data protection.

### **9.3. Planning**

- 9.3.1. Ensure there are agreed contacts in case of an emergency.
- 9.3.2. Take into consideration the situation and previous events which have caused problems.

## 10. Appendix 3 – Risk Assessment for Town Lengthsman

Significant Hazard	Risk posed	H/M/L	Precautions to be taken [controls]	H/M/L	Comments/ future actions
Live Traffic	Lengthsman being hit by vehicle.	H	<p>Lengthsman not to work on the live carriageway.</p> <p>Lengthsman to wear high visibility clothing at all times.</p> <p>Lengthsman not to work outside daylight hours.</p> <p>Lengthsman to work facing the oncoming traffic</p> <p>When working within 1.2m of the adjacent carriageway, Lengthsman to face oncoming traffic.</p> <p>When walking between locations continue to wear high visibility clothing and follow the rules for pedestrians in The Highway Code</p>	<p>L</p> <p>L</p> <p>L</p> <p>L</p> <p>L</p> <p>L</p>	<p>Monitoring.</p> <p>Near-miss reporting</p>

<b>Significant Hazard</b>	<b>Risk posed</b>	<b>H/M/L</b>	<b>Precautions to be taken [controls]</b>	<b>H/M/L</b>	<b>Comments/ future actions</b>
Lone working	Inability to summon assistance	M	<p>Lengthsman to carry a mobile phone at all times. The mobile phone will give access to specialist lone working system.</p> <p>Lengthsman to advise clerk or relative at start and return of working day.</p>	L  L	All Town Council staff to be trained on what to do in the event the emergency button is pressed.
Manual handling	Back injury, injury to feet and other strains and sprains	M	<p>No items heavier than HSE guidelines to handled. See Figure 1 below.</p> <p>Heavier items such as Notice Boards to be installed by two or more people.</p>	L	Lengthsman and line manager to liaise with volunteers or councillors for assistance when required.
Adverse weather	Road Traffic Incident due to poor visibility/ conditions	M	Lengthsman to cease activity if weather is too adverse and unsafe to continue.	L	Flexible working arrangements.

<b>Significant Hazard</b>	<b>Risk posed</b>	<b>H/M/L</b>	<b>Precautions to be taken [controls]</b>	<b>H/M/L</b>	<b>Comments/ future actions</b>
Use of hand or powered tools	Personal injury	M	<p>Lengthsman to regularly maintain tools and equipment</p> <p>Lengthsman to inspect tools before use.</p> <p>Lengthsman not use powered equipment unless competent and with correct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).</p>	<p>L</p> <p>L</p> <p>L</p>	<p>Chain saws not expected to be used.</p> <p>No mains equipment. Petrol or battery operated only.</p>
Cuts/Injury picking up broken glass or tins	Personal injury	M	Lengthsman to use litter picker and wear stab proof gloves.	L	Clerk to arrange and provide PPE.
Digging or excavation work (ie Erecting Notice Boards)	Electrocution	H	Checks should be made to ensure no cables or underground apparatus in the vicinity of the works to be carried out. If in any doubt, no works should be carried out.	L	Job description.

<b>Significant Hazard</b>	<b>Risk posed</b>	<b>H/M/L</b>	<b>Precautions to be taken [controls]</b>	<b>H/M/L</b>	<b>Comments/ future actions</b>
Cuts or risk of infection picking up syringes or needles	Person injury or infection Hepatitis or HIV from drug users discarded syringes	H	Syringes or needles must not be picked up and immediately reported to Torbay Council and TOR2.	L	Job description.
Attack by member of the public	Personal Injury	M	Lengthsman to carry a mobile phone at all times. The mobile phone will give access to specialist lone working system.	L	All Town Council staff to be trained on what to do in the event the emergency button is pressed.
Use of vehicle on Town Council Duties	Road Traffic Incident	M	Driving License, vehicle maintenance and Business insurance.	L	Clerk to check driving license and ensure cover for insurance business use
Slipping/Tripping	Personal injury	M	Lengthsman to wear safety footwear.	L	Clerk to arrange and provide PPE
Falls from height	Personal injury	H	All work to be at ground level. No work at height to be carried out.	L	



# Template – Establishment risk assessment

## WORK ACTIVITY RISK ASSESSMENT

## Appendix 4

Task being undertaken:- Lone Working Risk Assessment - Establishments

Occupations:- All Staff

Date of assessment:-

Review date:-

Activity	Potential Hazards	Degree of Risk			Existing Control Measures	Additional Action Required/Comment	Degree of Risk		
		With Existing Control Measures	L'hood	Severity			Total	With Additional Control Measures	L'hood
<i>Guidance for development of RA in blue text.</i>	<i>Specific and real hazards that are reasonably foreseeable</i>	<i>Score likelihood and severity – significance of specific risks will vary between, locations etc. Score on most probable basis not worst-case scenario.</i>			<i>Example control measures that may already be in place. Choose those applicable, add others as necessary and localise.</i>	<i>Where risk (total) remains intolerably high consider what further control measures are required and specify.</i>	<i>Re-score based on imposition of further control measures. Controls may influence likelihood (reduce) and/or severity (mitigate).</i>		
		L'hood	Severity	Total			L'hood	Severity	Total
Working in office/premises alone	Fire:- Burns Smoke inhalation Trapped in building				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire detection system</li> <li>• Fire alarm call points</li> <li>• Fire action: safety notices/information</li> <li>• Extinguishers</li> <li>• Fire doors kept shut</li> <li>• Training for staff;</li> <li>• Fire exits kept clear</li> <li>• Planned inspections</li> <li>• Hazard reporting and correction</li> <li>• Adequate cleaning/ waste disposal</li> <li>• Electrical safety inc PAT testing</li> </ul>				
	Intruder:- Attack Verbal abuse				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Controlled access to building On-site security</li> <li>• Challenging unknown visitors where safe or reporting/</li> </ul>				

	Theft of property Arson				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• requesting assistance</li> <li>• Access to phone</li> <li>• Keep valuables locked up</li> <li>• Fire precautions</li> <li>• Post incident support</li> </ul>				
Illness/ accident	injury/ No immediate access to medication or assistance				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alert team members if able</li> <li>• Access to phone</li> <li>• Take medication as directed or as needed</li> <li>• Planned inspections of workplace</li> <li>• Avoid high risk activities (e.g. working at height)</li> <li>• Reporting faults and repair process</li> <li>• Provision of first aid box</li> <li>• Trained first aider</li> <li>• Electrical safety</li> <li>• Post incident support</li> </ul>				
Working with public or service users	Assault  Verbal abuse  Threats				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflict awareness training</li> <li>• Avoid conflict – use non-threatening body language</li> <li>• Withdraw politely from situations which become inflamed</li> <li>• Staff briefings and sharing information</li> <li>• Awareness of risks</li> </ul>				

Assessor's details			
Name:-	Job title:-	Signature and date:-	
Manager's acceptance			

Manager's name:-	Job title:-	Signature and date:-
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## Key to assessment matrix

<b>Likelihood (L'hood)</b>
1. Very unlikely (5 years or more)
2. Unlikely (1-5 years)
3. Likely (6-12 months)
4. Very likely (1-6 months)
5. Certain (more than 1 per month)

<b>Severity</b>
1. Very minor injury (minor cuts/grazes. Very limited property damage/loss)
2. More serious injury <3 days off work/incapacity (sprains, more serious cuts, bruising. Injury needing medical attention. Slight property damage/loss.
3. RIDDOR reportable (to HSE) injury/sickness (except fatality). More than 3 days off work. Significant property damage/loss.
4. RIDDOR reportable (to HSE) injury/sickness affecting more than one person (excluding fatality). Major property damage/loss.
5. Single or multiple staff fatality. Catastrophic property damage/loss.

## Risk Ranking

1- 5	Low Risk
6-15	Medium Risk
16-25	High Risk

		Severity→				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	1	2	3	4	5	
2	2	4	6	8	10	
3	3	6	9	12	15	
4	4	8	12	16	20	
5	5	10	15	20	25	

↑Likelihood

## Review History

Reviewed May 2012, July 2013, March 2016