

Lone Working Policy

Linked strategies	Live Safe Live Happy
Version	2.1
Date approved by	Board – December 2024
Policy level	1
Agreed by Union	N/A
Date effective	December 2024
Date of next review	December 2027
Policy Owner	Head of Property Services and Compliance



1 Policy Statement

- 1.1 In line with our duty of care as an employer, Greatwell Homes is committed to providing a safe environment for our staff. This policy confirms our approach to minimising the risk of harm for those staff who work alone.
- 1.2 This policy is supported by the 'Lone Working – Procedure' which provides operational processes and responsibilities for the management of lone working.
- 1.3 This policy sets out Greatwell Homes responsibilities to comply with the relevant legislation and associated regulatory guidance on lone working.
- 1.4 The following external regulations and legislation apply to this policy:
 - Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
 - The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy is applicable to all employees and other key stakeholders, including contractors, whose work activities include lone working.

3 Definitions

- 3.1 This Policy defines our responsibilities as an employer to promote the health, safety and wellbeing of employees who work alone. We recognise that the provision of effective management relating to lone working is key to meeting our legal and regulatory responsibilities.
- 3.2 A lone worker is an employee who spends an amount of their working time 'alone' such as:
 - working alone on premises regardless of contractors working on site.
 - working separately from others.
 - when work involves visiting customers in their own homes.
 - travelling to attend meetings/training.
 - home working.

4 Policy Principles

- 4.1 We take our responsibility for lone working very seriously and we will:
 - Promote good practice.
 - Ensure risk assessments are in place for each team/individual employee where lone working is applicable.

- Provide training for employees to recognise risk, raise conflict awareness and understand how to work safely when alone.
- Provide support to employees when dealing with conflict and aggression.
- Provide an effective incident/accident reporting system.
- Comply with all related health and safety legislation.
- Provide a lone working device and training on the operational use, where assessed as required for the employee and their role.
- Ensure adequate records and quality monitoring systems are in place to protect both employees and contractors working on our behalf who do lone work.

4.2 All Managers are required to:

- Ensure regular risk assessments are conducted with associated risks identified, evaluated, and managed and the appropriate information, instruction and training provided. Introducing, when necessary, appropriate protective and preventive measures.
- Attend appropriate Health and Safety training courses both online and face to face
- Ensure employees have read and signed they understand the Lone Working Policy and the associated procedures.
- Ensure that all accidents, incidents and near misses involving violence, aggression, verbal abuse and or threatening behaviour linked to lone working are reported, monitored, and reviewed in accordance with the Incident/Accident Reporting Guidelines and that support systems are in place. Relevant action will be taken against those customers who abuse and or threaten our staff.
- Ensure that relevant employees are aware of customers who present known risks through proactive partnerships and use of an effective alert system.
- Ensure up to date information regarding any risks that residents may display are shared, including with external partners/agencies.
- Ensure that maintain regular contact via a “checking in system” with your team.

4.3 All employees, irrespective of their role within the organisation, must:

- Co-operate to enable compliance with this policy and our legal and regulatory obligations.
- Use the lone worker safety system when lone working where appropriate e.g when visiting a customer alone
- If the lone working device is not working/available and you attend a customer’s home where there is no previous warning marker, ensure that the emergency code system is used with your buddy/team. The phrase to be used is ‘*can you ask George*’.
- Know what to do in an emergency situation.
- Make themselves aware of any potential risks associated with individual customers by checking for alerts before visiting alone.

- Report and identify to their line manager any dangers or potential dangers, hazards, and any concerns they might have in respect of working alone and related existing control measures.
- Be aware of the evacuation route for every location they visit.
- Be aware as far as is reasonably practicable of how to manage situations where they feel they are at risk or unsafe and recognise how their own actions/ behaviours could influence/trigger an aggressive response.
- Undertake all relevant training designed to reduce risk and meet the requirements of this policy.
- Share knowledge of any dangers or potential dangers with colleagues to help them stay safe.
- Record all incidents/accidents in accordance with the Incident Reporting Guidelines.
- Ensure they have a buddy system in place if their lone working device is not working.

5 Implications for customers and staff (data protection info sharing and confidentiality)

5.1 A data sharing agreement is in place with the service provider.

6 Performance Management

6.1 There are no KPI's/OPI's for lone working. The health and safety team produce monthly and quarterly reports to the Executive and Board which highlight information on:

- Any relevant accidents/incidents to lone working.
- Number of trained staff that have been allocated a lone working device.
- Quarterly meetings with relevant teams to ensure correct usage.
- Agenda point on the Health and Safety Steering Group for wider visibility and input into lone working across Greatwell Homes.

6.2 Failure to adhere to our Lone Working Policy and Procedures would be considered a matter of serious concern and subject to the Disciplinary Policy.

7 Responsibility and Decision Making

7.1 The table below illustrates the structure for responsibility and decision making in relation to this policy.

Person Responsible	Scope
Head of Property Services and Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall responsibility for ensuring that all activities are undertaken, and all performance measurements are met.
Health and Safety & Compliance Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Health and Safety competent person as nominated in the overarching Health & Safety Policy responsible for the strategic management of lone working.
All Managers with Line Manager Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for the day-today application and adherence to this policy. • Ensure that a safe working environment is provided to employees, including temporary (and agency) employees and volunteers. • Ensure No Lone Visits (NLV's) alerts are circulated to their teams. • Ensure that all accidents, incidents and near misses are reported in a timely fashion to the Health and Safety team. • Ensure all issues of violence, aggression, verbal abuse and or threatening behaviour are reported, monitored, and reviewed and that support systems are in place e.g., 1:1's, through the provision of an external counsellor, and ensure that UDC's (User Defined Codes) alerts are on Orchard so that other employees are aware of potential risks associated with particular individuals.
Lone Working Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When working alone staff must take responsibility for themselves by following the procedures for safe working. This policy must be read, understood, and adhered to by all employees who have been identified as lone workers. • To ensure prior to carrying out site visits NLV's are checked on the system, both for individual properties and blocks where applicable. • Report any defects or concerns with Lone working devices to the Facilities Co-ordinator. • If the lone working device is not working/available and a team member attends a customer's home where there is no previous warning marker, ensure that the emergency code system is used with the buddy/team. The phrase to be used is '<i>can you ask George</i>'.

Housing Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that NLV markers for individual properties and communal blocks are kept up to date within the agreed SharePoint area.
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8 Review

- 8.1 This Policy will be reviewed every three years or in line with changes in legislation, whichever is the sooner, updates or recommendations for changes will be presented to EMT.
- 8.2 The Health and Safety & Compliance Manager is responsible for the review of this policy.

Associated Policies	Associated Procedures
Health and Safety Policy	Lone Working Procedure
Disciplinary Policy	