



CROCKENHILL VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (CVHMC) HALL LONE WORKING POLICY

INTRODUCTION:

The term lone working is used to define any working practices that involve an employee or volunteers undertaking duties not in the presence of, or easily accessible to others during any or all of their working hours.

Whilst this policy is drawn up to assist the village hall in addressing the safety of its employees, it is also relevant to the safety of trustees, councillors and other managers and users of the building, whether employed, volunteers or in a private capacity.

The main issues surrounding lone working relate to health and safety.

Examples of lone working involving village halls typically include:

- Working at the premises when no one else is present (e.g. cleaning, caretaking, building maintenance or management, office work).
- Being the last person to leave the premises after other users have departed.
- Providing services to the public from the village hall (e.g. bookings administrator).
- Travel as part of work for the village hall (e.g. banking, collecting equipment, attending training).

GENERAL POLICY:

The Trustees will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that employees who work alone or unsupervised for regular significant periods of time appreciate the health and safety risks involved with working alone.

Hazards which lone workers may encounter include:

- Accidents or emergencies arising out of the work e.g. when performing tasks at height, using ladders, lifting equipment, spillage of cleaning fluids etc.
- Sudden illness.
- The possibility of abuse, threats or assaults by one or more visitors to the hall when no-one else is present.
- Becoming concerned about the presence or behaviour of one or more person(s) outside the hall when leaving the hall at night.
- Feeling of isolation that might require extra support.

MANAGING THE RISKS OF LONE WORKING:

CVHMC has a health and safety policy which covers guidance on safe working and employees are encouraged to speak to Trustees about any specific concerns or queries.

Employees should, as far as possible avoid working at height (e.g. using a stool or step ladder) without another person present on the premises and holding the bottom of the ladder.



Staff working alone should:

- Ensure that a friend or family member knows where they are working at any given time.
- Ensure that they have access to a telephone to call for help if needed.
- Ensure they have the telephone numbers of 5 people who can be contacted in case of emergency (e.g. trustees, family, friends).
- Ensure that doors and windows are secure to prevent unauthorised access.
- Ensure that keys are secure and not accessible to members of the public
- Ensure that they have a safe means or route of escape from any part of the building they are working in.
- Call a trustee or work colleague, or if not available the emergency services if they are anxious about their safety.
- Report any incidents to the Trustees as soon as practical after the event.
- Ensure that all windows and doors are locked when leaving the building.
- Ensure that all electrical equipment used and not required is turned off when leaving.
- Ensure that a Trustee or colleague knows when they are likely to be working alone on the premises including start and end time.

PROVIDING SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC IN THE COMMUNITY:

If work is needed with individuals and groups in the community, these must be carried out at the village hall or another public building. Visits should not be made to an individual's home.

Staff working with children, young people, families and other vulnerable groups should ensure that they maintain professional boundaries at all times to prevent possible allegations of misconduct. Any concerns should be raised with the Trustees at any time if urgent.

At all times staff must ensure that their safety is not compromised. If in doubt, an employee should not enter a potentially dangerous situation, but if they are already in one, they should make an excuse and leave. All such incidents must be reported to the Trustees as soon as possible.

SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION:

Employees should be able to raise concerns and talk over difficult situations with the Trustees and supervisors, both in appraisal meetings and or on a more informal basis. The Trustees will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff understand and follow policies and procedures.
- Organising induction and other training.
- Listening to concerns.
- Identifying and assessing risks.
- Informing and liaising with the Parish Council and with the Police in regard to any threats or incidents of abuse or violence or similar issues (e.g. drug taking on the premises) which might recur or have wider significance in the community.

GUIDELINES FOR KEEPING SAFE:

The chance of being a victim of violent crime is low – violent crimes are comparatively rare and account for a very



small part of recorded crime. The best way to cut the risk of attack is to take sensible precautions. Most people already do this as part of their everyday lives.

- Be aware of your environment.
- Notice what is going on, who is around, exits etc.
- Trust your intuition and pick up on warning signals that all is not well.
- Do not go into an enclosed area without checking who is there and how to get out again.

LOOK CONFIDENT

- Avoid looking lost or vulnerable.
- If you feel threatened make your way to the nearest place with lots of people and phone the police.
- Walk in the middle of the pavement facing on-coming traffic.
- If you think you are being followed cross over the street.

TRY TO BLEND IN WITH SURROUNDINGS

- Dress appropriately and don't wear conspicuous jewellery.
- Wear clothing and shoes that allow you to make a getaway.
- Carry bags close to you and keep keys in your pocket.

DON'T TAKE UNECESSARY RISKS

- Plan ahead and anticipate contingencies
- Allow plenty of time, running late often makes us take chances.
- Avoid dark, lonely areas.
- Park so that you can make an easy getaway.
- Don't draw attention to yourself.
- Ask for back-up.

TELL COLLEAGUES, FRIENDS AND FAMILY OF YOUR PLANS

- Let people know where you are going and when you are likely to arrive.
- Inform people of any changes in plans.
- Keep your mobile on, it could be used to trace you.

Policy Statements are reviewed annually at the AGM as a formality. Last reviewed and Approved April 2023.