

## Lone Working Policy & Procedure



<b>Reference:</b>	Version 1	<b>Author:</b>	Amy Griffiths & Sue Needham
<b>Scope:</b>	Loddon Homes Berry Brook Homes	<b>Approved by:</b>	Holly Messenger
<b>Legislation:</b>	Health & Safety at Work Act 1974	<b>Date of approval:</b>	November 2019
<b>Regulatory/ Governance:</b>	Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999	<b>Date of next review:</b>	November 2022
<b>Related Policies:</b>	HR policies WBC and LHC Health & Safety policy including risk assessments Unacceptable behaviour policy		

### 1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 This policy applies to Loddon Homes, Berry Brook Homes and Wokingham Housing Ltd which collectively will be referred to as the Local Housing Companies (the LHC)
- 1.2 The LHC is committed to maintaining the safety of its staff and recognises its responsibilities in regards to this.
- 1.3 An assessment of the risks of lone working will be undertaken by the LHC and controls put in place to eliminate or minimise these as far as is reasonably practicable.

### 2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all LHC staff members
- 2.2 This policy applies when any staff member leaves the office to visit:
  - a potential development site
  - a site under development
  - an occupied housing scheme
  - a resident of LHC in their home

### 3. Definitions

- 3.1 A staff member is any person who is employed by the LHC.
- 3.2 Lone workers are those who work by themselves away from the office without close or direct supervision or without the interaction of other workers. It does not include home working.

3.3 A risk assessment is a systematic process of evaluating the potential risks that may be involved in an activity or undertaking.

3.4 A designated point of contact is defined as a staff member who takes responsibility for ensuring that the lone worker makes contact with the wider team once their lone working is complete.

#### **4. Roles & responsibilities**

4.1 This policy applies to all staff employed by the LHC.

4.2 To assist in minimising the risk of lone working, staff members are required at all times to:

- keep their Outlook calendars up to date at all times.
- carry a charged mobile phone with them at all times.
- update their whereabouts on the office white board each time they leave the office on company business.
- Confirm that they have finished business if they are not returning to the office at the end of the working day.

4.3 All staff members are required to take responsibility for ensuring contact is made with any lone working staff members should they fail to return to the office when expected without prior warning.

#### **5. Procedure**

5.1 In addition to section 4 above, this procedure aims to minimise the risk of lone working for staff members and therefore should be adhered to at all times.<sup>1</sup>

5.2 Minimising the risk:

5.2.1 All time spent out of the office is detailed in staff members Outlook diaries. This includes predicted times that the staff member will return to the office

5.2.2 When a staff member leaves the office for a site visit or to lone work, their location is written on the office whiteboard along with their expected time of return.

5.2.3 All staff are aware of the importance of carrying their company mobile phone on their person and keeping it charged and switched on at all times when lone working.

5.2.4 If the staff member's company mobile phone is not functioning, the staff member should ensure that their line manager and their designated point of contact has an alternative phone number on which they can be reached.

5.2.5 If a staff member is starting or finishing their day away from the office, they will communicate that they have safely arrived/ left site to a designated point of contact.

5.2.6 The staff member undertaking the lone working must inform their colleague if they are expecting that colleague to be a designated point of contact.

5.2.7 If a staff member does not make contact with their point of contact as expected or does not return to the office at the designated time the following process should be followed:

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to Appendix 1 for further guidance

- 5.2.7.1 If the staff member conducting the lone working has either not returned from their site visit or has not made contact within 15 minutes of their expected departure time, their designated point of contact should attempt to contact them by phone three times over the course of the next 30 minutes.
- 5.2.7.2 If there remains no contact from the staff member after this time, their line manager or alternative senior team member should be informed.  
The senior staff member will attempt to contact the staff member twice by phone.
- 5.2.7.3 If still no contact has been established with the staff member, the senior team member will call the staff member's emergency contact listed on their personnel file.
- 5.2.7.4 If the staff member cannot be located then the Police should be informed.<sup>2</sup>

## **6. Equality & Diversity**

6.1 The LHC recognises the needs of a diverse population and always acts within the scope of its own Equality and Diversity Policy, the Human Rights Act 1998, and Equalities Act 2010. The LHC works closely with its partners to ensure it has a clear understanding of its resident community with clear regularly updated service user profiles. The LHC will record, analyse and monitor information on ethnicity, vulnerability and disability.

## **7. Confidentiality**

7.1 Under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Human Rights Act 1998, all personal and sensitive organisational information, however received, is treated as confidential. This includes:

- anything of a personal nature that is not a matter of public record about a resident, client, applicant, staff or board member
- sensitive organisational information.

7.2 The LHC's employees will ensure that they only involve other agencies and share information where there is a legal basis for processing the information.

## **8. Review**

8.1 This policy will be reviewed on a three yearly basis or more frequently in response to changes in legislation, regulatory guidance, good practice or changes in other relevant the LHC policies.

## **9. Performance**

9.1 Performance in relation to the delivery of the services and activities set out in

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<sup>2</sup> The following information may be required by the police in the event of a serious problem and should be readily available when required:

- Name, address and telephone number of the employee
- The registration number, make, model and colour of their vehicle
- The route the employee was travelling, if known
- The address of the business or property location visited.

this policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis through our established reporting mechanisms to associated boards.

## **10. Appendices**

### **Appendix 1: Guidance on staying safe**

#### **APPENDIX 1**

#### **GUIDANCE ON STAYING SAFE**

This guidance is aimed at staff members who have to lone work in order to minimise the risk.

#### **1. General**

- ✓ Ensure your appointments / whereabouts are known and are recorded before leaving the office by keeping schedules/diaries up-to-date, using wipe boards, transmitting e-mails etc.
  
- ✓ Check records to ascertain the type of client you are about to visit and decide what, if any, safety precautions may be required.

- ✓ Always carry necessary vehicle recovery documentation also a means of identification for production if needed.
- ✓ Carry a mobile phone, ensuring it is fully functional and batteries charged before departure.
- ✓ Carry a torch. Carry a personal attack alarm if considered necessary.
- ✓ Details of your vehicle should be available within the LHC (it may be required by the Police).
- ✓ If for any reason you are to be delayed, inform your Line Manager. Always inform your Line Manager / colleague of your return, or if going directly home, phone to confirm all is well.
- ✓ If any employee fails to return to the office or their home the person monitoring the trip must communicate the failure to management who will conduct appropriate action in accordance with the established 'Lost Contact' procedure. See 5.2.7.

## 2. **Driving**

- If driving, ensure your vehicle is road-worthy, regularly serviced and complies with current road legislation, i.e. taxed, insured, MOT.
- A portable first aid container is to be carried in vehicles used for business purposes.
- Do not use hands free mobile phones whilst driving, use the answer-phone facility where available. Only make calls when the vehicle is stopped and parked in such a manner so as not to cause problems for other road users.

## 3. **VISITS TO PROPERTIES**

- When arriving at the location try to park the vehicle as close to the property as possible; if after dark, park preferably in a well-lit area.
- Reverse the vehicle in to enable a fast departure to be made if needed.
- In darkness use a torch where appropriate to get to your final destination.
- After leaving the appointment at the property, quickly check your vehicle before entering. If dark use a torch to ensure that an intruder does not occupy it.

- If visiting an empty property (where there has been unauthorised access, client problems or any doubt about security / safety) – two persons must be present and communication made with the office before entering, communication is to be maintained until proven safe (i.e. quick inspection to ensure the property is unoccupied).
- If on arrival at site there are concerns about the visit, the employee should use his / her discretion and terminate the visit until a more appropriate course of action can be taken.

APPROVED