



Vital Village Lone Working Policy

1. Introduction

- Vital Village is committed to protecting staff, volunteers, participants and visitors from risks of lone working at the Vital Village Hub.

2. Policy Objectives

- To ensure the safety and protection of everyone in our community, this policy covers:
 - Prevent and address risks associated with lone working.
 - Promote a culture of safety, respect, and inclusivity.
 - Guide clear and effective procedures for reporting and managing lone working concerns.
 - Reporting and training.

3. Scope and Definitions

- The policy applies to all individuals involved in Vital Village, including staff, volunteers, participants, and visitors.
- Everyone should have an awareness and understanding of lone working risks that could impact how they operate. All organisations using the Vital Village facilities should consider their own policies, including specific lone working policies, as appropriate.
- In this policy:
 - Volunteers: Individuals who offer their time and services to support Vital Village.
 - Employees: Those individuals formally employed by Vital Village.
 - Visitors: Community members that visit Vital Village's Community Hub either to attend a specific event or just for casual use of the space.

This policy does not cover lone travel as there is only one Vital Village Hub.

4. General Rules

Vital Village must have the details of any lone worker's mobile telephone number, home contact number and emergency contact. A record of daily movements should be recorded in a shared calendar. A personal alarm will be provided if requested.

5. Responsibilities

Having one person working alone in Vital Village Hub is undesirable but as it is not practical to always ensure that two people are present then the emphasis of this policy is to reduce risk. When there is more than one person in the premises, there is still need for vigilance.

Before entering the building:

- Ensure that the premises look as you would expect them to do – no signs of damage or occupancy and no signs of doors or windows forced or unlocked when you expect them to be locked
- If you have concerns do not enter but contact your line manager, a member of the Board of Vital Village or ask a second person to enter the building with you. Do not enter alone.

On entering the building:

- Ensure that the building and contents are as you would expect them – If you have any concerns leave the premises and contact your manager or member of the Board of Vital Village.

Whilst working alone in the building:

- Work as near as possible to the telephone, ideally keeping your mobile telephone on your person at all times.
- If appropriate or the Hub is closed, ensure that the front door is locked and that the security door and emergency fire exit doors are closed. Ensure you can still exit through any emergency fire exit doors.
- Do not open doors unless you know or have checked the identity of any visitor.
- When talking to anybody you do not know on the phone, do not tell them you are alone in the building.
- If you hear the fire alarm, apart from the regular test, exit the building in the usual way and contact your manager. If there will be a fire alarm and there is scheduled to be only one person in the building they will be warned in advance.
- If anybody appears in the Vital Village Hub that you do not know, remain calm and non-threatening – ask who they are and who they are looking for, explain that the person they are looking for is not present and escort them from the premises. Then contact your manager, member of the Board of Vital Village or emergency contact.
- Always trust your instincts – if you do not feel comfortable about letting a person in the building, then ask them to return at a time when you will not be alone.
- If you make an appointment with somebody for the first time or with somebody who you are not comfortable being with then arrange for

somebody else to be in the Vital Village Hub, or in the meeting with you, at the time of the appointment.

On leaving the building:

- Ensure all doors are shut and lock the front door, setting the alarm as relevant.

If an incident takes place

- If an incident occurs where there is a breach of your personal safety, you should complete an incident report including the date, time, location and description of the incident including names and contact details of any witnesses if known. This should be given to your line manager or member of the Board of Vital Village. This should be done no matter how minor the incident as the policies stated here may need to be reviewed.

6. Review and Compliance

To check our working conditions, and ensure our safe working practices are being followed, the Director will:

- Carry out inspections and spot checks.

- Investigate any incidents absences that occur.

Compliance with the policy is mandatory, and non-compliance is addressed through the Vital Village disciplinary policy

7. Conclusion

Vital Village's Lone Working policy reflects our commitment to a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all. It is a vital component of our broader mission to foster holistic well-being and sustainable living within the community.

Never put yourself at risk – trust your instincts.