

Walford Parish Council

WCSS lone working policy

Policy statement

WCSS believes that lone workers/volunteers should not be at more risk than those who work alongside others. We understand that lone workers are those who work without close or direct supervision or company for substantial periods of time. In this context we understand our duty of care as an employer to assess any risk to lone workers and take steps to avoid or control those risks where necessary.

We recognise that staff / volunteers working alone are at a greater risk of injury through aggression or violence from service users, those surrounding them or from the general public. We also realise that lone staff need to rely on their own judgement and initiative and may therefore be at greater risk of making mistakes or errors.

Training is particularly important for lone workers / volunteers and is critical in avoiding adverse reactions in difficult situations. In particular, lone workers need to be deemed competent to work alone and be sufficiently aware of the risks and appropriate precautions.

Supervision

Procedures are in place to monitor lone workers/volunteers by means of regular debrief sessions before and after each task. Volunteers are required (as stated in their handbook) to carry a mobile phone with them on each task and ensure they have the coordinators contact number stored in that phone for the purpose of keeping contact with the Coordinator if required.

The Coordinator is in regular contact with the WCSS managers, via phone and email. There is a dedicated mobile phone and lap top for the Coordinators sole use. Regular progress meetings take place where performance and actions are reviewed and discussed. Any issues regarding any aspect of the role are discussed as they arise and the WCSS managers discuss and deal with them in a timely manner.

Security

By means of our generic risk assessment, volunteers are aware of any associated risk with any given task. Volunteers are instructed to always ensure their own safety before the safety of others. All predictable risks are identified and eliminated or minimised by the Coordinator as laid out by the generic risk assessment. In addition to the generic risk assessment, the Coordinator will assess each task individually and brief the Volunteer prior to any undertaking of tasks.

The Coordinator logs all details of home visits and tasks along with details of the Service Users.

Volunteers / staff are advised to follow the usual emergency procedures should they feel their personal safety is at immediate risk from violence, threats or a hazard.

Cars used for volunteering or work related task, should always be parked in a well lit, public place in order to avoid risk of theft from vehicle or person. All tasks to be completed in daylight hours wherever possible.

Any incident should be recorded at the earliest time after it has taken place and details passed to the Coordinator or the Scheme managers.

Training

All volunteers / staff are provided with a handbook in order to carry out their role. All volunteers are talked through their duties with the Coordinator on recruitment, as part of an induction process. Staff and Volunteers are all provide with a copy of this document in order to maximise their own safety.

Document control

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