

Hatfield Peverel Parish Council – Lone Working Policy (2026)

1. Introduction

Hatfield Peverel Parish Council is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all employees, contractors, volunteers, and charity staff. This Lone Working Policy outlines the Council's approach to managing the risks associated with lone working, in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Lone Working Guidance (2024).

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all lone working activities are identified, assessed, and managed appropriately, and that all individuals working alone are supported and protected from avoidable risk.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, volunteers, and charity staff working on behalf of Hatfield Peverel Parish Council, including those employed by the Council in its role as sole trustee of the Village Hall charity.

4. Definition of Lone Working

Lone working refers to situations where individuals work by themselves without close or direct supervision. This includes working alone in the Parish Council office, from home, in the community, or at the Village Hall.

5. Staffing Context

The Council employs a range of part-time staff with varying working patterns:

- Two part-time officers work in the Parish Council office at set hours. These staff typically overlap, minimising lone working.
- One part-time officer works from home.
- Four part-time waste clearance staff work flexible hours, often alone, and are equipped with mobile phones and PPE.

As sole trustee of the Village Hall charity, the Council also oversees:

- One part-time caretaker working on-site, often alone.
- One part-time worker who splits time between home and the Village Hall.
- One part-time bookings officer working from home.

6. Responsibilities

Council: Ensure appropriate lone working policies and procedures are in place and reviewed regularly.

Parish Clerk: Implement this policy, conduct and review risk assessments, and ensure staff are trained and supported.

Employees/Contractors/Volunteers: Follow procedures, report concerns, and take reasonable care of their own safety.

7. Risk Assessment Requirements

All lone working roles must be assessed for risk. Specific risk assessments will be conducted for:

- Waste clearance activities (including manual handling, environmental hazards and public interaction).
- Village Hall duties (including maintenance and working at height).

Risk assessments will be reviewed annually or when significant changes occur.

8. Lone Working Procedures

- Office-based staff: Lone working is minimal due to set hours and overlapping shifts. Staff must ensure doors are secure and maintain phone access.
- Home-based staff: Must ensure a safe working environment and remain contactable during working hours.
- Waste-clearance staff: Must carry mobile phones and PPE at all times. They are expected to conduct dynamic risk assessments before commencing work.
- Village Hall staff: Must follow site-specific safety procedures, including safe locking/unlocking, reporting hazards, and avoiding high-risk tasks when alone.

9. Communication Expectations

A formal check-in system is not required. Instead:

- All lone workers must be reasonably contactable during working hours.
- Staff should notify the Clerk or designated contact of any changes to expected work patterns.

- Failure to respond to contact attempts within a reasonable timeframe may trigger an escalation procedure.
- In emergencies, staff must contact emergency services and notify the Council as soon as safe to do so.

10. Personal Safety Measures

Lone workers should:

- Be aware of their surroundings.
- Avoid unnecessary risks.
- Trust their instincts and leave situations where they feel unsafe.
- Carry a charged mobile phone at all times.

11. Equipment & PPE

All lone workers will be provided with appropriate equipment and PPE as identified in risk assessments. This includes mobile phones, high-visibility clothing, gloves and other safety gear. Equipment will be maintained and replaced as needed.

12. Incident Reporting & Emergency Procedures

All incidents, near misses, or safety concerns must be reported to the Parish Clerk as soon as possible. In an emergency, individuals should contact emergency services immediately and inform the Council once safe.

13. Training & Support

All lone workers will receive training on this policy, risk awareness, emergency procedures, and personal safety. Support will be provided to any individual affected by a lone working incident.

14. Monitoring & Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or following any significant incident, staffing change, or legislative update. Feedback from staff will be considered in future revisions.