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LONE WORKING POLICY

DEDDINGTON WINDMILL COMMUNITY CENTRE

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Lone Worker Policy for the Windmill Community Centre

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to set out the approach of the Windmill Management Committee (the Committee) regarding any lone working associated with the Windmill Community Centre (WCC).

A lone worker may be defined as any employee or volunteer who is required to work alone or with minimal supervision. The lone worker may work during or outside normal working hours. In line with the Centre founding deed, the Windmill Management Committee is composed entirely of volunteers with only a small number of employees to whom this definition may apply.

The committee has chosen to set out its requirements with respect to any individual who may, for any reason, be expected to work alone in the WCC, irrespective of their employment status. The Windmill Management Committee will ensure the policy is communicated to employees, volunteers, contractors and hirers. The policy will be reviewed annually.

Employees

The WCC employs a small number of staff to ensure the standards of the centre are maintained. This currently consists of part-time Cleaners and a Bookings Secretary. The Windmill Management Committee will ensure employees are made aware of the lone working policy and provide training as needed.

We expect our staff to follow these principles:

- Take reasonable care of themselves and those affected by their work;
- Follow instructions provided by the WCC on lone working;
- Raise any concerns they have about lone-working with their line manager;
- Inform their line manager of any accident, incidence of violence or aggression while working alone;
- Be aware of colleagues working alone and alert colleagues to any periods when there is no communication.

Contractors and Self-Employed Workers

From time to time the committee may ask contractors or self-employed individuals to undertake work relating to the Centre. Examples of this may include (but are not limited to) the services of qualified professionals such as electricians or plumbers, window cleaners and/or other maintenance workers.

Wherever possible such workers should not work alone. Where lone working is unavoidable (for example, to permit the delivery of a service by a self-employed individual) then as a minimum the following provisions must be adhered to:

- i. All contractors and/or self-employed workers will be responsible for carrying out an appropriate risk assessment prior to undertaking any work. They must also ensure that any subsequent lone work is carried out by an appropriately qualified/trained person using safe systems of delivery. It is the responsibility of the contractor and/or self-employed person to ensure that any tools or materials used in the course of the work are well maintained, fit for purpose and used only in



accordance with any relevant and applicable safe handling guidance.

- ii. Safe delivery systems must include, where applicable, the provision by the contractor/self-employed worker of any necessary protective clothing, eye protection and/or safety footwear.
- iii. Contractors and/or self-employed workers are responsible for ensuring that there is a system in place to enable lone workers to urgently make contact should they unexpectedly require help, for example by mobile phone. Equally, contractors and/or self-employed workers should ensure that a third party is aware of their lone working presence at the Hall so that if they fail to make contact or return to base/home when expected then their absence can be promptly investigated.

Commercial firms may, in addition to the above, need to comply with specific additional legislative requirements. Nothing in this policy should be read as in any way mitigating the need for any such compliance.

Volunteers

The Committee members of the WCC are all volunteers and as a rule are not expected to undertake any lone activity in the Centre. However, there may be occasions where one person carrying out a task alone may be risk assessed as being a practical and low risk approach. For example, briefly visiting the Centre to programme the heating would normally only require the input of one person, providing that person was fully able and competent to undertake the role.

In such circumstances, the approach taken should prioritise the safety of the lone volunteer. No volunteer should ever be asked (or agree) to undertake any lone role that s/he feels would be in any way detrimental to his/her health or wellbeing or which they do not believe themselves to be fully competent or equipped to undertake.

Any decision by a volunteer not to undertake a lone role, on any grounds, will be fully respected and supported by the committee.

Individual volunteers visiting the Centre alone must ensure that there is a system in place to enable them to urgently make contact should they unexpectedly require help. Individual volunteers must also ensure that a third party is aware of their lone presence at the Centre so that if they fail to make contact or return home at an expected time then their absence can be promptly investigated.

Irrespective of whether they are alone or part of a group, all volunteers are expected to ensure that whilst visiting/using the Centre they take all necessary precautions to ensure their own safety and that of others. Where appropriate this will include undertaking risk assessments and acting in accordance with this and any other applicable WCC policies.

Visitors/hirers

It is not envisaged that any visitor/hirer will be required to undertake any 'work' regarding the ongoing maintenance or usage of the Centre. Any such faults or problems should be reported to a member of the committee who will arrange for the situation to be addressed.

Bookings for use of the Centre by solo users are rare, but where they occur the hirer will be expected to ensure that they have a system in place to urgently obtain outside help, should the need arise. Lone hirers



will also be expected to ensure that a third party is aware of their lone presence at the Hall so that if they fail to make contact or return to base/home when expected then their absence can be promptly investigated.

Irrespective of whether they are alone or part of a group all visitors/hirers are expected to ensure that whilst visiting/using the WCC take all necessary precautions to ensure their own safety and that of others. Where appropriate this will include undertaking risk assessments and acting in accordance with the WCC terms and conditions of usage and its associated policies including, where applicable, the Children and Vulnerable Adults Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Ways in which risks of lone working can be reduced

Employees, volunteers and contractors can reduce the risks of lone working by:

- Keeping the front door locked when working alone;
- Keeping a mobile phone with you at all times with emergency contacts;
- Letting family members and other colleagues know when you are going to work alone;
- Agreeing a code word with emergency contact if lone worker needs assistance.

Risk assessment

The WCC will complete a lone working risk assessment for employees, volunteers and contractors who may work alone. This should include being aware of the following risks:

- Sudden illness;
- Using substances hazardous to health e.g. cleaning products;
- Faulty equipment;
- Slips and falls;
- Abuse from members of the public;
- Working early in the morning or late at night.

Reporting incidents

Any reports of incidents or perceived risks while lone working should be recorded reviewed and acted on:

- A brief note of the time, date and nature of the incident;
- A note of the circumstances that might have contributed to the incident;
- What measures could be introduced to prevent this in the future;

The Windmill Management Committee will act as required, and review any incidents at bi-monthly meetings.

Further advice and guidance

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) have extensive advice and guidance on lone working:

Health and Safety Executive (2020) *Protecting lone workers: How to manage the risks of working alone*

Work resources on the HSE website <https://www.hse.gov.uk/lone-working/>