

DATCHET PARISH COUNCIL



Lone Working Policy

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Version 1	

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1. Purpose

This policy sets out Datchet Parish Council's approach to managing the health, safety, and wellbeing of staff and councillors who may work alone, particularly within the parish office or during site visits. It ensures compliance with health and safety legislation and promotes safe working practices.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all council employees, contractors, and councillors who undertake lone working activities, including:

- Working alone in the parish office and cemetery
- Conducting site visits (e.g., cemetery, recreation ground)
- Attending meetings or inspections without a colleague present

3. Office Hours and Lone Working Context

The parish office is open to the public on: **Monday, Wednesday, and Friday – 9:00am to 3:00pm**

Outside these hours, lone working may occur for administrative tasks, preparation for meetings, or urgent matters. Staff must follow the procedures outlined below when working alone.

4. Risk Management

- A Lone Working Risk Assessment must be completed annually and reviewed after any incident.
- Staff must ensure the office is locked securely when working alone.
- Mobile phones must be kept charged and accessible during lone working.
- Staff should notify the Clerk, Chair, Vice Chair or Staffing Committee Chair when working alone outside normal hours.
- No high-risk tasks (e.g., ladder use, heavy lifting) should be undertaken alone.

5. Office Security and Threat Response

- The parish office must be locked at all times when occupied by a lone worker.
- If a staff member experiences or anticipates intimidating, aggressive, or threatening behaviour, they are authorised to:
 - Lock the office immediately
 - Refuse entry to any individual until support is available
 - Contact emergency services if there is an immediate risk



- All such incidents must be reported to the Clerk, Chair, Vice Chair or Staffing Committee Chair within 24 hours.
- A written record will be maintained and reviewed at the next appropriate council meeting.

6. Procedures for Lone Working

- Emergency contact: A list of emergency contacts must be available in the office and on staff phones.
- Visitors: Staff should not admit unannounced visitors when working alone unless pre-authorised.

7. Responsibilities

- Clerk: Responsible for implementing this policy and ensuring staff are aware of procedures.
- Chair, Vice Chair or Staffing Committee Chair: Support oversight of lone working arrangements and incident review.
- Employees: Must follow procedures and report any concerns or incidents promptly.

8. Incident Reporting

- Any incident, near miss, or concern must be reported to the Clerk within 24 hours.
- A written record will be kept and reviewed at the next staffing or HR committee meeting or full council, as appropriate.

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years or sooner if required by changes in legislation or council procedures.