

Risk Assessment: Lone Volunteering

A “Lone Worker” is defined as a volunteer for Redbourn Community Group (RCG) who is carrying out their role in isolation from other volunteers, including trustees and / or the Office Manager. Car and minibus drivers, couriers have separate role profiles, with additional guidance and risk assessments. Friendly Talkers and Walkers also have specific guidance with Dos and Don’ts.

This policy and risk assessment is focused primarily on those Lone Workers who are administrators, whether office based or working from home, street contacts, or those who embark on roles for clients such as deliverers, collectors of items like medical prescriptions, undertake shopping, and participate in activities at communal events, even though volunteers may not be entirely alone for the whole period. These actions may include collecting donations, putting up the gazebo, taking photos, litter picking on behalf of RCG without being part of a group activity, running a stall and conversing with the public about the work of the charity, involving an ambassadorial role.

RCG will ensure as far as is practicable that Lone Workers are protected from risks to their health and safety.

As volunteers you are expected to conduct yourself safely whilst carrying out your role, and to be able to complete your duties without harm to yourself. You should report any incidents within 24 hours using the Accident and Incident Report form and should also raise any Health and Safety concerns during your volunteering that may cause a risk to yours or other’s health and safety by contacting the RCG Office.

Applicable to all Lone Workers
Health & Safety directives place an obligation on the RCG that it must expect you
• to conduct yourself safely while making journeys and transporting items • to be aware of visibility issues when travelling to or from visits in bad weather or after dark
Health and Safety directives do not require the following, but nevertheless place upon RCG an obligation to bring these points to your attention.
• You should consider carrying a personal alarm (which can be made available on request from the RCG Office if you do not have one). • When journeys are made after dark, you are expected to take appropriate precautions, such as consider wearing high-visibility attire and carrying a small torch (these are available from RCG Office). • You should try to keep to well-lit areas (and populated areas in the case of litter pickers) where possible, and, if there is no footpath, walk facing on-coming traffic, try not take short cuts down poorly lit roads unless necessary; if using a vehicle, avoid parking in deserted locations and park facing the direction in which you need to leave. Litter pickers should wear high visibility attire at all times and not attempt to pick litter when there is no footpath or non-vehicle space. • You should have a charged mobile phone with you. • When in communication with a client you should be aware of any signs of aggression or indication that they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol – if in doubt you should apologise, make an excuse and remove yourself asap from the situation, and report to the RCG Office.

- Volunteers will be signposted to sources of support in the event of encountering a stressful situation.
- If you or your client's health and/or safety is at severe risk call 999. You should then report to the RCG Office as soon as possible and complete the Accident and Incident form.
- Health and Safety directives also require the RCG to enable you to complete your duties without harm to yourself and for this purpose, we recommend that you keep someone at home (or a neighbour if you live alone) informed of your whereabouts so that they will know if you do not return home at the expected time.
- You should wear suitable footwear.
- You should be trained in manual handling techniques where required for the role and not attempt anything that is beyond your capability.
- You should be familiar with all RCG policies especially Safeguarding Policy and follow up accordingly.

Specific to office-based volunteers, contracted and self-employed staff

Health and Safety directives place an obligation on RCG to expect you to

- conduct yourself safely while on the premises
- do not to attempt to do anything using equipment with which you are unfamiliar, and/or is beyond your capability and to request training if asked to undertake such work
- call for assistance in dealing with day-to-day problems (e.g. with heating, electrics, plumbing, leaks, doors, windows or alarms)
- call for assistance in event of any medical emergency or exposure to threatening language or behaviour

Health & Safety directives require the RCG to enable you to complete your duties without harm to yourself, and for this purpose, we recommend:

- that you are fully briefed on all Safety and Fire regulations relevant to the building, including Fire Assembly points, where the personal safety alarms and torches are, First Aid kit, who to contact in an emergency, phone contacts, key safe codes building alarm keys, CCTV systems including resetting and deactivating systems
- that someone should be aware when you have completed your volunteering time safely if you are in the office alone - this will be important if you have any medical conditions which could prevent you leaving on time, so if you live alone you might wish to consider coming to an arrangement with a friend or neighbour to let them know when you leave the office
- that you lock the office door at all times, and do not let another person into the building until you know who they are and feel comfortable that you are not putting yourself in a compromised situation

This policy and risk assessment will be subject to review at intervals of two years, approved and adopted by all Trustees May 2023.

Redbourn Community Group
Village Hall, High Street, Redbourn. AL3 7LW
01582 794550

www.redbourncg.org
info@redbourncg.org

