



Barrowby Parish Council

Email: clerk@barrowbyparishcouncil.gov.uk

Address: Reading Room, Church Street, Barrowby, NG32 1BX

Website: <https://barrowby.parish.lincolnshire.gov.uk>

Lone Working Policy

Document control

- **Owner:** Staffing Committee
- **Responsible officer:** Clerk / Proper Officer
- **Adopted:** 11.05.2026 (Minute ref: 8e [26/008])
- **Version:** 2026.1
- **Review:** Annually or earlier if legislation/guidance changes
- **Next review due:** January-March 2027 at Staffing for formal adoption at Parish Council
May 2027

1. Purpose

Barrowby Parish Council (“the Council”) recognises that some roles require employees to work alone at times (e.g., opening/closing, site checks, cleaning, grounds maintenance). This policy sets out how the Council will **identify and control risks** so lone working is carried out safely.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Council employees and any contractors/agency workers carrying out Council work where they may work alone, including:

- Pavilion / Reading Room cleaning, opening/closing and checks
- Burial ground and grounds maintenance
- Play areas, Village Green, paths/verge checks
- Allotment / site inspections
- Call-outs and out-of-hours tasks

3. Definition

A **lone worker** is someone who works by themselves without close or direct supervision. This includes:

- working alone in Council buildings
- working alone outdoors/on sites
- working out of hours
- working where there is limited public presence or support

4. Legal and good practice framework

The Council will manage lone working risks through suitable risk assessment and control measures, including training, supervision/monitoring, keeping in touch and responding to incidents, in line with HSE guidance. The Council will meet its duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 The Council / Staffing Committee

- Ensure lone working risks are assessed and controlled
- Provide adequate resources (equipment, training, communication arrangements)
- Review incidents/near misses and ensure lessons learned are implemented

5.2 Clerk / Proper Officer (or nominated manager)

- Ensure task risk assessments are in place and reviewed
- Agree lone working plans and check-in arrangements
- Keep a register/log of lone working and emergency contacts
- Ensure employees are competent for tasks and have appropriate PPE/equipment
- Investigate incidents/near misses and update risk assessments

5.3 Employees / lone workers

- Follow this policy and relevant risk assessments/safe systems of work
- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and others
- Use agreed check-in procedures and report hazards, near misses, incidents promptly
- Stop work and seek support if conditions become unsafe (dynamic risk assessment)
- Will receive appropriate instruction on this policy and the risk assessment for their tasks.

6. Risk assessment and planning

6.1 Risk assessment is required before lone working

Before a task is done alone, the Council must consider whether it is safe for one person. Lone working must be **planned and risk assessed**, including foreseeable emergencies (illness, accident, fire, equipment failure, aggression, severe weather).

6.2 Dynamic risk assessment

Lone workers must continually assess conditions on site. If risk increases (e.g., poor lighting, aggressive behaviour, unsafe weather, equipment fault), the worker must **stop**, withdraw to safety, and contact the nominated person.

7. Lone working risk levels and minimum controls

7.1 Risk categories (set per task)

Use the categories below to set check-in frequency and controls:

Low risk (example): routine cleaning in a secure building during normal hours

Minimum controls:

- planned task and location known
- start/end check-in
- phone carried and charged

Medium risk (example): outdoor checks in daylight; closing up alone; minor maintenance

Minimum controls:

- start check-in + end check-in
- one mid-task check-in if >60 minutes
- clear “stop and withdraw” expectation if public conflict occurs

High risk (example): work at height, power tools, confined/isolated areas, late-night call-outs, dealing with known aggressive individuals, tasks requiring lifting beyond safe limits, hazardous substances

Minimum controls:

- **lone working normally not permitted** unless a specific risk assessment explicitly authorises it with enhanced controls (e.g., buddy system, two-person working, additional supervision, or specialist equipment)

7.2 Tasks that must not be done alone (unless specifically risk-assessed and authorised)

The following should normally be **two-person tasks**:

- work at height (ladders/roof access) beyond short, low-risk tasks
- chainsaw use, heavy machinery, or high-risk power tools
- confined spaces
- tasks involving significant violence risk or known conflict
- lifting/moving heavy items where assistance is required
- any task where first aid or rescue would likely be required quickly

8. Keeping in touch: mandatory check-in system

8.1 Standard check-in requirements

The Council requires lone workers and the nominated contact person to follow an agreed check-in plan for each lone working task/shift. HSE expects employers to keep in touch and respond to incidents.

Minimum requirements:

- **Start check-in:** confirm location, task, expected finish time
- **End check-in:** confirm safe completion and departure
- **Additional check-ins:** as per the risk level (section 7)

8.2 Missed check-in escalation (mandatory)

If a worker misses a check-in, the nominated contact will follow this escalation:

1. **Call immediately** (phone). If no answer, send text.
2. **After 10 minutes:** call again; attempt alternative number.
3. **After 20 minutes:** if still no contact, attend site if safe to do so **or** arrange for a second person to attend.
4. **If there is any reason to suspect immediate danger/injury:** call **999** without delay and provide the location.

(Use the Lone Working Log in Appendix B to record actions.)

9. Violence, aggression and personal safety

Lone working can make workers more vulnerable to abuse, threats or assault because support is not nearby.

Controls:

- Avoid lone working where conflict is likely; arrange two-person working for higher-risk situations
- Do not meet members of the public alone in isolated locations (use a Council building during normal hours where possible)
- Keep exits clear; position yourself so you can leave
- If behaviour becomes aggressive: **end the interaction, withdraw, and report**
- Report all threats/abuse (even if “only verbal”) as incidents

10. Health, wellbeing and infectious illness

- Employees must not work alone if unwell in a way that could put themselves or others at risk.
- If an employee has an infectious illness and is unfit for work, they should follow the Sickness Absence Policy.
- The Council will follow current public health advice rather than historic “self-isolation rules” (which are no longer a legal requirement).

11. Equipment, training and competence

The Council will ensure lone workers have:

- training/instruction appropriate to the task and equipment used
- appropriate PPE and safe tools

- a charged mobile phone (and/or lone worker device where provided)
- knowledge of emergency arrangements and site information (access points, addresses, what3words if used)

Lone workers must not use equipment they are not trained/authorised to use.

12. First aid and emergencies

- Lone workers must know how to summon help and provide their exact location.
- A basic first aid kit should be available where appropriate.
- Any accident/near miss must be reported to the Clerk as soon as possible and recorded.

13. Use of companions (e.g., family member accompanying caretaker)

Where the risk assessment identifies that accompaniment improves safety, the Council may approve a named companion **for presence only** (not to carry out work).

Conditions:

- must be approved in advance (and recorded)
- must follow safety instructions and remain in safe areas
- must not undertake Council tasks, use equipment, or access confidential information
- arrangements may be withdrawn if not followed or if no longer appropriate

14. Incident reporting and review

All lone working incidents and near misses must be reported to the Clerk **within 24 hours** (or sooner if serious), including:

- accidents/injuries
- threats/abuse/aggression
- missed check-ins
- equipment failures
- unsafe conditions requiring work to stop

The Council will review incidents and update risk assessments and procedures as needed.

15. Data protection (monitoring/technology)

If any lone worker monitoring is used (e.g., check-in logs, device alerts), it will be:

- used only for safety purposes,
- limited to what is necessary, and
- stored securely with restricted access and retained only as long as needed.

16. Non-compliance

Failure to follow this policy and safe systems of work may be treated as a health and safety matter and could lead to management action under the appropriate procedure.

17. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure compliance with current legislation and best practice.

Appendix A: One-page Lone Working Procedure (Staff Quick Guide)

Barrowby Parish Council — Lone Working Procedure

Before you start

1. **Check the task is approved for lone working**
 - If it feels unsafe or is a “two-person” task, **don’t start** — contact the Clerk/manager.
2. **Plan the job**
 - Know the exact location, access/exit points, and expected finish time.
 - Take your charged phone and any required PPE/tools.
3. **Start check-in (mandatory)**

Tell the nominated contact:

 - where you are (exact location)
 - what you are doing
 - when you expect to finish
 - when you will next check in (if required)

While you are working

4. **Keep to the check-in plan**
 - Low risk: start + end check-in
 - Medium risk: start + end + mid-check if >60 minutes
 - High risk: usually **not permitted** alone unless specifically authorised
5. **If conditions change — stop and withdraw**

If you encounter aggression, unsafe weather, poor lighting, equipment faults, or anything that increases risk:

 - **stop**, move to a safe place, and contact your nominated person.

If you feel threatened

6. **Leave immediately**
 - End the interaction, withdraw, and report to the Clerk/manager.
 - If in immediate danger, call **999**.

When you finish

7. **End check-in (mandatory)**

Confirm you are safe, the task is complete, and you are leaving site.

If you can’t check in

8. **If you know you will miss a check-in**

Call/text your nominated contact **before** the check-in time.

Report incidents

9. Report accidents, near misses, threats/abuse, or missed check-ins to the Clerk **within 24 hours**.

Appendix B — Dynamic risk assessment (on-the-spot checklist)

Use this quick check before and during lone work:

- Am I trained/competent for this task?
- Is it daylight / adequate lighting?
- Is the area isolated or high public contact?
- Any signs of antisocial behaviour or conflict risk?
- Weather/ground conditions safe?
- Tools/equipment safe and suitable?
- Do I have phone signal and battery?
- Can I get help quickly if needed?

If “no” to any critical item: stop and contact your manager.

Appendix C — Lone Working Log (template)

- Date:
- Worker:
- Location:
- Task:
- Risk level: Low / Medium / High
- Start check-in time:
- Mid check-in time (if required):
- End check-in time:
- Any issues/incidents/near misses:
- Manager review/action: