

BHS Lone Working Guidance Note

Our BHS volunteers receive training to help them stay safe when out working alone. We encourage all volunteers to work together where possible but recognise that some roles, most specifically Access and Welfare roles, may require volunteers to work alone.

Plan Ahead

Please ensure if you are going out to a Welfare Case or to talk to a Land Owner alone somebody knows where you are. Ensure a family member or friend knows where you are going and when you intend to be back. Where this is not possible call HQ when you arrive and when you leave. Plan your route before starting your journey and use tracking apps for smartphones if applicable.

Take a Buddy

Where possible always take a buddy with you. This may be another BHS volunteer or it could be another Welfare Officer, family member or friend, even the dog! This person should not interfere with your work or be party to confidential information but is there as a support and for backup should something go wrong.

Are You Contactable?

When you arrive check your signal. If you have no signal consider returning another day with a buddy or leaving a note rather than having a face-to-face discussion.

Be Aware of Your Surroundings

Take note of the area you are entering, what is the atmosphere like? Are there any potential signs of aggression (Trespassers will be prosecuted, Dogs will Bite etc)? Are you entering a Gypsy or Traveller site? If so and you have no experience with this demographic then leave and report back to HQ. Even if you do have experience, be careful and stay vigilant, if you don't feel safe at any time, leave. Let HQ know that this is a Traveller site so they can add it to the records for future reference.

Stay vigilant while you are visiting, cast your eyes around, shift position so you can maintain an open view and avoid being backed into a corner.

Trust Your Instincts

If you are feeling insecure, worried or threatened don't dismiss that as being nervous. Always trust your instincts and where you feel unsure leave.

Stay Safe

Ensure when you are visiting a new site you park your car in the direction you need to leave and go prepared; wear appropriate clothing and footwear and where appropriate, high viz. If you have been provided with BHS ID or cards keep those with you. In some cases it might be appropriate to wear BHS branded clothing, however in others this may put you in danger. If you are unsure call your mentor or Role Coordinator to ask their advice. Any contact information you leave must have HQ's information rather than your personal information, this is for your own safety.

Leave

No matter what is happening or what you have hoped to achieve with your visit, if you feel intimidated at any time, leave.