

BHS Lone Working Guidance Note

Lone workers face the same hazards at work as anyone else, but there is a greater risk of these hazards causing harm as they may not have anyone to help or support them if things go wrong. All BHS employees and volunteers receive guidance and support to help them stay safe when working alone. We encourage employees and volunteers to work together where possible but recognise that some roles, may require employees or volunteers to work alone.

Responsibility of Lone workers

All employees and volunteers have a duty to take care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions at work. They must co-operate with employers and co-workers to help everyone meet their legal requirements. They must inform employers in case of occupational health, incident/accident/near miss, physical and mental stress and for any other reason that constitutes risks for them as lone workers.

Plan Ahead

Please ensure that you made a close contact with someone who knows where you are going, and when you are intended to be back. If you were unable to keep someone in touch of you, please inform Head Office about time of working, place, nature of working and approximate finishing time. Plan your route before starting your journey and use tracking apps on smartphones if applicable.

Transport

Please refer to the BHS Motor Policy as guidance on vehicle suitability, fitness and other requirements before considering travelling. Perhaps consider taking a first aid kit in the car. Drive professionally and consciously to reduce the risk of accident/car breakdown. Consider alternative ways of travelling, consider using public transport or short walk where it is possible.

Take a Buddy

Depending on the nature of the task, it may be possible to take a buddy with you. This could be another BHS staff member or volunteer or perhaps a family member or friend, even the dog! This person should not interfere with your work or be part of confidential information but is there as a support in case something goes wrong.

Are You reachable?

When you arrive at destination, check your mobile 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.

What3Words

You can download What3Words app to your mobile phone for free. This clever app can help others (including emergency services) locate you if necessary. It will provide a precise grid reference to your location, irrespective of whether you are in a rural field, mountain or busy urban street anywhere in the world.

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)? If yes to any of these and you have no experience dealing with or feel uncomfortable within any setting, then leave and report back to Head Office. Even if you do have experience, be careful and stay vigilant, if you don't feel safe at any time, leave.

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, close to the exit, in a lit area, keeping valuables in the car out of sight and go prepared; wear appropriate clothing and footwear and where appropriate, high viz. If you have been provided with BHS ID, keep this with you. In some cases, it might be appropriate to wear BHS branded clothing, however in others this may put you at greater risk. If you are unsure call your mentor or Role Coordinator to ask their advice. Any contact information you disclose must be Head Office 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.

For further information and guidance on lone working please refer to the Lone Working including Travelling Abroad Policy which can be viewed in Volunteer resources or within <https://thebhs.monday.com/boards/2539002182>. A general Lone Working Risk Assessment is also available to view in Volunteer resources or [../Risk%20Assessment/All%20other%20Risk%20Assessments/Risk%20Assessments%202022/Lone%20Workers%20Risk%20Assessment%202022.doc](https://thebhs.monday.com/boards/2539002182/files/2022/10/2022-10-20/Lone%20Workers%20Risk%20Assessment%202022.doc). Specific lone worker training is also available within BHS Wise which is mandatory for all lone workers.