

**The Old Library**  
**Lone Working Policy and Procedures**

The Chair is: Helen Verity

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This policy was signed off by the Trustees on: 07/01/2026

The policy will be reviewed on: 07/01/2027

Signature of Chair: 

## **1. Introduction**

Lone workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision. This includes volunteers working by themselves in The Old Library, both during and outside opening hours.

So far as reasonably practicable The Old Library will ensure that volunteers, who are required to work alone or unsupervised for significant periods of time, are protected from risks to their health and safety. The term “so far as reasonably practicable”, means that the likelihood of a person being harmed and the severity of possible injury, will be weighed up against the cost and practicalities of minimising risks.

Due to the nature of the work carried out by The Old Library it is possible that volunteers are exposed to the dangers of lone working. Hence, it is essential that all volunteers are aware of the dangers.

The Old Library will ensure lone workers:

- Have full knowledge of the risks to which they are being exposed
- Know what to do if something goes wrong
- Have appropriate support and supervision

As the employer, The Old Library has the main responsibility for protecting the health and safety of lone workers, but lone workers must help the employer to fulfil this duty by:

- Taking reasonable care to look after their own health and safety
- Safeguarding the health and safety of other people affected by their work
- Co-operating with their employer’s health and safety procedures.

The following guidelines will outline the risks identified for lone workers and the control measures put in place to minimise these risks. Control measures may involve training, instruction, back up, supervision and protective equipment.

## **2. Procedures for volunteers working during opening hours**

- a. The rota for volunteers will schedule at least two volunteers working throughout the hours that the Old Library is open to the public, but unforeseen circumstances could occur resulting in one person being on their own for short periods of time, such as when opening the Old Library. To ensure their safety, the following procedures should be followed:

- If alone, the volunteer should remain on the ground floor of the building, where they have sight of anybody entering the building.
- The doors should not be opened to the public until a second volunteer has arrived.
- If unforeseen circumstances arise that would lead to one person being on their own for more than a short period of time, the remaining volunteer should contact the Volunteer Co-ordinator, or a Trustee to see whether additional help could be provided promptly. If this is not possible, the remaining volunteer should close the building, apologising to any members of the public present.
- Staff must disclose any medical condition, which might increase the risk to their personal safety if they work alone. In this case the Volunteer Coordinator will put in place procedures or precautions to ensure that these risks are minimised.
- If a member of staff is concerned about their personal safety in any way, they must report this to the Volunteer Co-ordinator, so that appropriate action can be taken. If staff feel they are in immediate danger, they should call the police.
- Staff should report all incidents/ accidents to the Volunteer Co-ordinator at the first opportunity, so appropriate action can be taken, and future risks can be assessed and minimised.

b. In the event of violent behaviour or threats of violence being made to any member of staff the following procedure must be followed:

- Details should be entered in the accident/ incident book and reported immediately to the Volunteer Co-ordinator
- If the incident is linked to a service user or a volunteer this should also be recorded in the incident/ accident book

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- The Volunteer Co-ordinator will inform the Board of Trustees and will then investigate any incidents of violence or threats of violence to staff and volunteers with their support.
- Any further control measures identified by the investigation will be introduced, after consultation with staff

### **3. Hazard categories**

Risk assessments and risk categories are determined by the Volunteer Co-ordinator, together with the actions to be taken.

#### **a) High risk activities – Category 1**

**No person should work alone where there is a serious health or hazard risk.**

**Examples include:**

- Working at height
- One to one meetings with anyone who is believed to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or is known to have a history of aggressive behaviour
- Volunteers would not normally be allowed to work on Category 1 activities unless adequate and immediate supervision is provided.

#### **b) Medium risk activities – Category 2**

**The dangers would not be so immediate, but it would still be desirable for a second person to be present where reasonably practicable, to take emergency action, such as:**

- Work involving manual handling likely to cause injury
- Taking rubbish out after darkness
- Cash handling
- Opening the premises for booked small group activities, supervising those activities and closing the building at their conclusion.
- Volunteers would not normally be allowed to work on Category 2 activities unless adequate and immediate supervision is available, or they have the appropriate skills and experience for the situation.

#### **c) Low risk activities – Category 3**

**Where there is no hazard involved in the activity, it is not necessary for a second person to be present in the building.**

- **The public should not be admitted.**

- **The door should be kept locked, but the fire exits are unbolted.**
- **Logging in and out should be recorded in the book at the front desk.**
- **A responsible adult should be informed that you are in the building and also informed when you leave the building.**

**Category 3 activities include:**

- Reading
- Writing
- Working at a computer terminal
- Using a room for general purposes
- Cataloguing and stock management activities