



Lone Working Volunteer Policy



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1. Statement of Policy

It is rare that volunteers at Belfast Hills Partnership (BHP) carry out duties by themselves. Working alone carries additional risks due to incapacitating injury or personal attack therefore, on the occasion that a volunteer is working alone, the following policy outlines the necessary measures in place to minimise risks and keep them safe.

2. Implementation

Volunteers must consider if the task has to be carried out alone. This should be done in consultation with a BHP member of staff. In particular all new or one-off lone working tasks must be considered in consultation with BHP staff.

Once a decision has been made that the task will be carried out alone, volunteers MUST:

- **Always inform a family member or friend that they are carrying out a task alone.** The family member or friend (buddie) must be informed of: where you are working, what you are doing, when to expect you back, your mobile phone number and what to do if you don't appear.
 - **NB.** If you do not have anyone suitable to inform contact the BHP office during office hours for lone working support.
- **Take a charged mobile phone.** The phone must be switched on and include numbers for the Volunteer Officer, BHP Office, PSNI and Emergency Services.
- **Take a supply kit,** including first aid kit and GPS if possible, in case of becoming lost or incapacitated when in the Hills.
- **Be aware of the weather in the Hills** and dress and act accordingly, always take layers and water.
- Always park in the direction of the quickest exit and avoid the need for reversing if possible.
- Avoid becoming involved in confrontational situations.
- Do not deal with a member of the public who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs or is displaying threatening behaviour.
- Abandon a situation if you feel your own health and safety is at risk.
- Be aware of livestock in fields and do not approach them or dogs.
- **Return to the agreed location at the agreed time** – if you are going to be late or are headed elsewhere after the task, inform your designated buddie.

- If you experience any cases of violence, aggression or incidents resulting in injury or near misses these must be documented with the Volunteer Officer.

In the instance where the BHP office is acting as your buddie:

If the office has not heard from you half an hour after given return time:

- They will phone the mobile number or home number of the volunteer.

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- They will phone the mobile number or home number of the volunteer.
- If there is still no contact, the Volunteer Officer will phone your emergency contact.
- If there is still no contact from the volunteer and the emergency contact, or if the emergency contact deems it necessary, BHP staff and will proceed to search the area in which the volunteer is carrying out lone-work.

If the office, and/or your emergency contact, has not heard from or found you after two hours, or if it is dark or compromising weather:

- If there is still no contact from the volunteer and they are not found, and if their emergency contact deems it necessary, the police will be informed and the volunteer details and lone working site information will be given to assist in a search for the volunteer.
- Use your mobile phone to assist being found.

Volunteers under the age of 18 years old must never carry out lone-working volunteering.

Reviewed by: __Lizzy Pinkerton Date: __08/9/2020__

Approved by: __BHP Board_____ Date: __4.2.21__

Reviewed by: Aodhan O'Kane 27/09/2023

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