

The River Thame Conservation Trust recognises there are inherent dangers in lone working and aims to reduce the associated risks within all of its activities.

The aim of this Code of Practice is to ensure that when lone working is unavoidable, it is conducted as safely as possible and to ensure there is always someone who knows where you are working and has emergency contact information for you. In order to achieve this River Thame Conservation Trust recommends using the buddy system outlined in this document.

**Lone workers** are those who work by themselves and without a close or direct supervision. Examples of lone working can include:

- Visiting isolated locations alone, where assistance is not readily available
- Visiting a location where you feel vulnerable
- Visiting locations alone outside of office hours
- When on site, working separately from and some distance away from colleagues.
- Working in an area where mobile telephone reception is poor or non-existent.
- Staying at over-night accommodation.

Lone working should be avoided where possible as it greatly increases the risk of injury and incident.

**Some tasks should never be undertaken alone:**

- Use of heavy machinery or tools (i.e chainsaw, maul hammer).
- Working alone at night.
- Entering a river where the water level is higher than wellie boot height.

**Before starting any task please consider:**

- Are you capable of completing the task without assistance?
- Are you fully aware of the hazards involved and the risk that you may be exposed to?
- Do you know what you should do in an emergency?
- Are you aware of safe routes for withdrawing from a site of situation?
- Have you informed another person of your whereabouts, you planned time of return, and the action to be taken if you do not return through the River Thame Conservation Trust buddy system?

**Employees and volunteer who are working alone should:**

- Always carry a fully charged mobile phone and appropriate personal protective equipment (i.e. suitable outdoor clothing, first aid kit, fresh water, map).
- Ensure you have received appropriate training for the task to be carried out and that you fully understand the nature of the work you are to carry out, including potential hazards and precautions to be taken.
- Know your limitations and do not undertake unnecessary tasks. If you do not feel fit to carry out the task, do not do it.
- Identify yourself and the capacity in which you represent the River Thame Conservation Trust to land owners if you are working on private land.
- Avoid inflaming situations that arise, use your best judgement and apply common sense. Do not provoke violence.

- In the case of serious criminal damage or other serious offences please call for assistance by the police and inform your assigned buddy. When calling the police dial 999 and explain the situation. Try and avoid involvement until the police arrive. Observe the situation from a safe distance taking notes, photographs etc. When direct action is necessary, where possible ensure that an impartial witness to events is present. This is likely to reduce the risk of assault and will provide you with a stronger case if allegations are subsequently filed against you.
- Never confront someone with a firearm.

### Lone Working Reporting System – The Buddy System

1. Before leaving home make sure you have all the information you'll need about the site you are visiting and who you are visiting, and all the appropriate equipment you'll need. Designate a 'buddy' and inform him/ her of your intentions and leave her/ him with contact numbers, name and address or location information. Ensure they know what time you will be expected to return so that they can raise the alarm if don't return by the allotted time.
2. When you arrive at a site check to see you have a working mobile phone with signal. If signal is good report into your buddy that you have arrived. If signal is poor think about locating a nearby phone box or moving to a place with signal to report in.
3. If a situation arises withdraw from the site. As a lone worker you are more at risk to incident and injury. Inform your buddy of the situation, and if necessary inform the police. No task is more important than your safety. Avoid confrontation and walk to a more public place where you can raise the alarm if necessary.
4. Once the task is completed, call your 'buddy' on leaving the site. If your 'buddy' is unavailable for any reason, leave a message with a second contact with strict instructions to pass it on.

### Emergency procedure for buddies if lone worker fails to report in:

- 30 minutes after the lone worker was due to report in, call on the given number every 5 - 10 minutes (using mobile, office, and home contact numbers). For lone workers known to be travelling, attempts should be made to contact the destination to check for news of traffic delays. Continue to attempt contacting the lone worker.
- After a further 30 minutes have elapsed the 'buddy' must plan a search, plus continue to attempt contacting the lone worker.
- After one hour a physical search must commence. If contact cannot be established within two hours of the elapsed report time the police must be contacted.

**For more information, please contact the River Thame Conservation Trust:**

[enquiries@riverthame.org](mailto:enquiries@riverthame.org), 07460 275627

## Volunteer Starter Pack

### Lone Working Buddy Form

A lone worker should complete this form, giving a copy to their buddy and keeping a copy themselves before every lone working occasion. The information provided will ensure your buddy can implement the emergency procedures. You may have more than one buddy, in this case please give a complete form to each buddy.

Your buddy will ideally be a colleague, family member or friend that you have regular contact with. Please ensure you 'buddy' is familiar with the emergency procedure.

**In the event of failure to report in by the specified time, follow the procedures on the proceeding sheet.**

#### Lone Worker

<b>Name of Lone Worker:</b>		
<b>Contact Address:</b>		
<b>Contact Phone numbers:</b>	<b>Mobile: Work:</b>	<b>Home: Other:</b>

#### Buddy

<b>Name of Buddy:</b>		
<b>Contact Address:</b>		
<b>Contact Phone numbers:</b>	<b>Mobile: Work:</b>	<b>Home: Other:</b>

<b>Dates of lone working</b>
<b>Area(s) of lone working (details, and grid reference if possible)</b>
<b>Travel/vehicle details (i.e. car registration, make and colour)</b>
<b>Known risks to inform emergency services if emergency procedures are implemented</b>
<b>Report in time</b>

For more information, please contact the River Thame Conservation Trust:  
[enquiries@riverthame.org](mailto:enquiries@riverthame.org), 07460 275627