

# Volunteers Advice for Lone Working

Your line manager will try to minimise the need for you to work alone. However, if you have to work alone the following guidance should be followed but be prepared to adapt this to meet specific circumstances. If in doubt discuss the matter with your line manager.

- Ensure you have an agreed buddy system in place.
- Take a means of communication with you and ensure that mobile phone coverage is adequate.
- If meeting a stranger or working alone inform someone of the details and/or check the credentials of the person you are meeting.
- Ensure that a first aid kit is accessible.
- If confronted by an aggressive person wherever possible try to leave the immediate area and seek assistance if required. If you can communicate with the individual talk slowly, calmly and gently. Tell them who you are and what you want them to do. Do not put yourself at risk.
- When working at remote locations such as visitor centres or out of hours ensure that doors are locked outside visiting times and especially when handling cash and do not open doors to strangers.
- Ensure you are aware of any local site (eg nature reserve) emergency procedures for lone working, including the use of the GPS Beacon when required.
- Do not use any high risk equipment, such as a chainsaw and chippers (check with your line manager before using any equipment).

## NWT buddy system

If you undertake lone working you should have an agreed and written buddy system with your line manager. If for any reason you experience difficulty or have an accident while working alone, your safety could be at risk – especially if there is a long delay before anyone realises that you haven't returned. A minor incident could develop into something more serious if it is not realised that you have failed to return and are not found quickly.

A 'buddy' system is a simple way of tracking your location and your expected return time and is normally operated in pairs. A buddy would normally be a partner or relative or friend who will have agreed to be your buddy and will have received instruction in the operation of the emergency system below.

When working alone, you must observe the following rules:

- Make sure your line manager knows who your buddy is and how to contact them.
- Ensure that your 'buddy' knows where you are going and your travel plans including expected time of return.
- Ensure that your 'buddy' has your mobile phone number and NWT emergency contact numbers (including weekends) for members of the NWT Senior Management Team.
- Let your 'buddy' know if you make changes to your plans or move sites.
- Contact your 'buddy' to advise of your safe return.
- Ensure that you have arranged for a temporary 'buddy' to act for you in the event that your regular 'buddy' is on leave or otherwise indisposed.

Non-return emergency system - Inform your buddy of the procedures below.

If you do not return or contact your buddy by the expected time they should take the following action:

- Telephone you on your mobile (ensure you mobile is fully charged). Continue to try to make contact at intervals for up to one hour.
- After one hour, they should contact your line manager or if unavailable, NWT HQ in office hours, or a member of the NWT Senior Management Team (SMT) out of office hours.

Line Manager Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Number: \_\_\_\_\_

