**LONE WORKING POLICY**

**Purpose**

Westmorland Red Squirrels is committed to providing a safe working environment as far as is reasonably practical. This document explains how Westmorland Red Squirrels seeks to protect its volunteers from the risks of working alone.

Working alone is not in itself against the law and it will often be safe to do so. However, the law requires organisations to consider carefully and then deal with any health and safety risks for people working alone.

**Policy**

* All volunteers will be made aware of this policy. Anyone who works alone or might work alone will receive information and appropriate training on hazards and risks involved.
* Area Coordinators will coordinate risk assessments for lone workers using the template shown in Annex 1, regularly re-assess risks and report any changes to the Secretary;

• Anyone working alone will be advised to carry a communication link to their home base or other contact, normally a mobile phone; they should also carry a whistle in case of being out of signal;

**Aims of the policy**

The aim of the policy is to:

• Increase awareness of safety issues relating working alone;

• Ensure that the risks of working alone are regularly assessed and that systems are put in place to minimise the risk as far as is practical;

• Ensure that appropriate training is available so that volunteers recognise risk and have access to practical safety advice;

• Encourage reporting and recording of incidents relating to lone working and reduce lone working related incidents and injuries.

**Risk assessment**

Anyone working on behalf of Westmorland Red Squirrels must carry out risk assessments and take steps to eliminate or reduce the risk as far as possible.

**Procedure**

Everyone working alone must take relevant and sensible precautionary measures. If a volunteer feels that they are putting themselves at risk through lone working, they should discuss the situation with their area coordinator. In discussion with the area coordinator measures must be agreed to eliminate or reduce hazards.

**Risks of lone working**

Risk assessments for lone workers should include:

• Site-specific risk assessment.

• Reporting and recording arrangements.

• Communication and traceability.

• Personal safety and security.

Following risk assessment, consideration should be given to required action including identifying a designated ‘buddy’ or family member and leaving information on:

* Name.
* Destination and route details.
* Expected time of arrival on site(s).
* Vehicle make and registration.
* Contact telephone number.
* Expected return time.

**Date of next Review:** August 2025