



BARROW UPON SOAR GOOD NEIGHBOUR SCHEME

Lone Worker & Personal Safety Guidance

G002

1. Purpose of This Guidance

Thank you for volunteering with BGNS. Many volunteers work alone, so your **safety and wellbeing**, and that of the member you are supporting, are very important to us.

This guidance explains simple steps to help you:

- Stay safe while volunteering alone
- Recognise and reduce risks
- Know what to do if something goes wrong

BGNS is a voluntary service and **does not replace statutory services**.

If you have urgent concerns about someone's safety or possible abuse, contact the **Police or Adult Social Care immediately**. You can call the BGNS telephone coordinator number (**07771 625 591**) if you are unsure what to do.

2. What Is Lone Working?

Lone working means volunteering - working with a member - without someone else nearby who could help if there is a problem or accident. Lone working is common in BGNS roles.

All volunteers must:

- Take reasonable care of their own safety and others
- Carry a **switched-on, fully charged mobile phone**
- Report incidents or concerns to the Telephone Coordinator or Steering Group.

3. The Buddy System

Always have a **buddy** (a friend, family member, or the Telephone Coordinator).

Tell your buddy:

- Where you are going
- Who you are meeting

- What you are doing (briefly)
- When you expect to return

Contact your buddy when you finish. If delayed, let them know.

You may agree a **trigger word** with your buddy to signal that you need help if you cannot speak freely.

4. Key Safety Reminders

Before you go:

- Make sure you understand the task
- Do not accept tasks beyond your ability
- Share concerns with the Telephone Coordinator

While volunteering:

- Stay alert and aware of your surroundings
- Keep exits clear and accessible
- Leave immediately if you feel unsafe
- Dial **999** if you or the member is in immediate danger

5. Falls and Accidents

Most importantly, remember that you are not a stand in for a trained emergency care worker.

- **Do not lift** a member who has fallen
- Make them comfortable and call **999**
- Report accidents or serious incidents to the Telephone Coordinator as soon as possible

Only help someone move or stand if:

- They ask for help, and
- You are confident you can help safely

If unsure, say **no**.

6. Visiting Members at Home

Always:

- Wear and show your ID badge

- Wait to be invited in
- Be polite and respectful
- Familiarise yourself with exits

Do not:

- Enter if the member is not there and an unknown person invites you in
- Block exits or stand too close

If you feel uncomfortable, **leave**.

If animals make you uneasy, politely ask for them to be secured.

7. Aggression or Abuse

If a member becomes verbally or physically aggressive:

- Stay calm
- Do not argue or respond aggressively
- Leave as soon as you safely can
- Contact the Police if needed
- Report the incident to BGNS telephone coordinator.

Medication can change personality: if a member seeks an inappropriate discussion you should not enter into a dialogue. Report it to the telephone coordinator or WhatsApp group.

Seek support if you have had a distressing experience.

8. Travelling Safely

By car: (Also see G004)

- Plan your route
- Carry a phone, torch, warm clothing and enough fuel
- If threatened, stay in the car, keep doors locked and drive away if possible
- Call **999** if you feel in danger

If you break down:

- Stop in a safe place
- Exit by the passenger side on fast roads if possible
- Wear high-visibility clothing

- Tell recovery services if a vulnerable adult is with you

By public transport:

- Plan your journey in advance
- Stay in well-lit, busy areas
- Sit near the driver on buses
- Move seats if someone makes you uncomfortable

9. Dogs, Animals and Tasks

- Tell the Telephone Coordinator about allergies. You will never be expected to endanger your good health.
- Do not enter a member's home if an animal behaves aggressively
- Only walk dogs if you are confident and understand their behaviour
- Keep dogs on a lead and be prepared to pick up their mess

For gardening, DIY or household tasks:

- Use suitable protective equipment
- Only lift what you can manage safely
- Be cautious with tools, ladders, machinery and chemicals

10. Final Points

All volunteers must:

- Maintain confidentiality
- Look after their own health and safety
- Carry emergency contact details
- Report concerns or incidents promptly

If in doubt at any time, **stop and ask for advice**. Your safety always comes first.