



## **Safe Working Practice Guidelines**

**Market House**  
14 Market Street  
Lerwick

A charitable company limited by guarantee registered in Scotland No. 165677  
Registered Office Market House, 14 Market Street, Lerwick, Shetland ZE1 0JP  
Company Secretary Catherine Hughson  
Recognised by the Inland Revenue as a Scottish Charity - No. SCO 17286

# Voluntary Action Shetland

## **SAFE WORKING PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR STAFF WHEN MEETING CLIENTS**

- Always meet in a pre-arranged, approved location, know the building and where the nearest occupied area is. If at all concerned, the first meeting should take place in reception area at Market House.
- When a member of VAS staff meets a client alone in a building, the staff member must inform another person of the time and place of meeting and make contact with the person immediately after the meeting to confirm the meeting ended safely. If no contact is made, the person will attempt to make contact. If unable to make contact the person will have a contact number and inform the contact of the situation. The contact person will usually be a manager who will take responsibility and investigate as a matter of urgency. It is the responsibility of each staff member to inform another person when meeting clients out with Market House and to make that person aware of the procedure to follow in the event of an incident.
- Staff should also follow the principles in bullet point 2 when attending evening/weekend meetings or delivering training out with Market House or outside office hours.
- Make sure there is always someone else nearby in Market House when meeting clients.
- Staff should make sure the seating arrangement allows their access to the door.
- Staff may carry a personal alarm. Personal alarms are available on request.
- If there are any concerns about the way things are developing, staff are to try and defuse the situation, e.g. by changing the subject. Be aware of changes in mood, body language and behaviour.
- Staff, whether working with a young person or adult, should attempt to de-escalate situations in a non-confrontational manner but in the event that a staff member feels at risk they should immediately withdraw from the situation and seek support.
- Staff should maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times.

VAS Related Policies: Induction Procedure, Health and Safety Policy, Risk Assessment