

BRIMINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Dealing with abusive and threatening behaviour – Appendix 2 to Lone Working Policy

Stay Calm and Professional

The first step in managing a difficult situation is to remain calm. It's natural to feel upset or angry when faced with abuse, but responding in kind can escalate the situation. Take a deep breath and maintain a professional demeanour.

Listen Actively

Often, people become abusive out of frustration or because they feel unheard. Allow the person to express their concerns fully before you respond. Listening can sometimes defuse the situation, showing you are taking them seriously.

Set Boundaries

It's important to set boundaries clearly and assertively. If a person becomes abusive, calmly explain that you are willing to help, but only if the conversation remains respectful. Phrases like, "I understand you're upset, but I need us to communicate respectfully to resolve this," can be effective.

Use De-escalation Techniques

De-escalation techniques are crucial in these scenarios. These can include:

- **Empathising:** Acknowledge the person's feelings without agreeing with their conduct. E.g., "I can see why that would be frustrating for you."
- **Offering Solutions:** Shift the focus from the problem to the solutions. Ask how they would like the issue resolved and suggest alternatives if appropriate.

Know When to Walk Away

There will be situations where resolution isn't possible. If a person continues to be abusive despite your best efforts, it may be necessary to end the interaction. This could mean dialling 999.

Follow Up

Let your designated point of contact eg the Parish Clerk know that there has been an incident