

ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA CASE STUDY

OVERVIEW:

The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea Council is a large employer with over **2,000 employees**, and is responsible for a wide variety of roles, from social workers and office-based staff to public health, park rangers and housing teams. Prioritising the safety and wellbeing of so many people across a vast range of departments in a clear and consistent manner can be a challenge. The corporate health & safety team has taken a very active role across the council providing positive support to each department, as well as creating streamlined processes for accessing help and standardised procurement agreements to ensure departments achieve value for money when purchasing health and safety solutions.

THE CHALLENGE:

The council employs a large number of people across multiple departments who must work alone or out of earshot of others, posing risk to those individuals. Risk assessments identified a need to implement a lone worker service to protect these groups.

Following a review of lone worker device usage, it became clear that the council was using multiple providers with varying levels of service and cost because there was no central, preferred provider. The health and safety team recognised that a lack of product knowledge and inconsistent processes posed a potential obstacle to employees getting the best protection and support they deserved.

In addition, the results of departmental risk assessments showed that one key team in need of lone worker devices was the housing repairs team, comprising c. 200 employees. This team is responsible for repairs across the council's housing stock and until this point, was not adequately protected.

The health & safety team identified barriers to adoption of lone working devices within the council:

No standard supplier or pricing, so managers weren't confident about purchasing devices

Misconception among some teams that devices were being used to "check up" on workers

No standard process for obtaining and returning devices, and for monitoring their use

Low awareness that lone worker solutions were available and supported by the council



Risk assessment processes highlighted a number of potential risks for those working alone:

- Lack of back up / support in the event of an on-site accident
- Lack of back up / support in the event of a road accident while travelling for work
- Potential for aggression from residents when visiting people in their homes

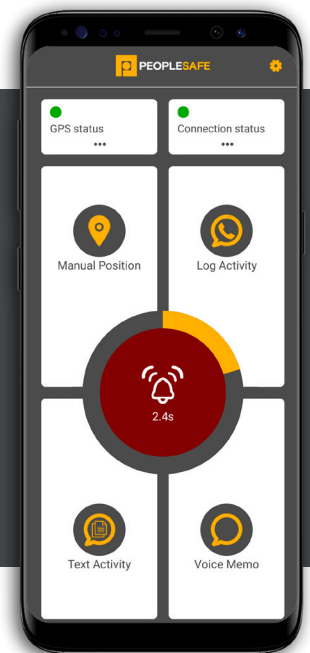
In all instances, implementing a lone worker service provides important protection for vulnerable members of staff working alone and access to 24/7 emergency support.

THE SOLUTION:

A formal tender process was conducted to select a supplier that could meet the needs of their varied workforce. The selected supplier was Peoplesafe (formerly Skyguard).

A central contract has simplified the process for obtaining lone worker devices right across the council, allowing managers to procure devices for their teams with confidence.

The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea chose a **mix of smartphone applications and the MySOS device fitted with roaming SIMs to account for areas with poor phone signal**. This was perfect for the needs of its employees because it provides maximum coverage in the event of an emergency. The device itself is discreet, and able to attach to a lanyard, keyring or belt holster for a wearable solution. Choosing a device that was small and a service that provided flexibility for users was important to ensure it catered to the varied needs of individual users and the disparate risks they face.



Training was imperative to improve usage. Peoplesafe's hands-on approach to training was very appealing. Having training delivered by an independent, specialist party was a beneficial approach. Peoplesafe's experts could clearly explain the service, its features and how to use the chosen solutions, so that employees knew how to access support in the event of an incident. Using external trainers also helped the council to shift mindsets from "checking up" to "keeping me safe".

Ensuring that employees feel safe is the primary concern. In addition to training, Peoplesafe offered to show employees around the Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC), so they could see first-hand how calls would be dealt with.

BENEFITS OF PEOPLESAFE'S SOLUTION:



End-to-end solution, managed entirely in-house



Dedicated customer success team



Training programme, tailored to customer needs



Bypassing 999 for priority access to the police where needed



Two-way communication functionality on the device, enabling Peoplesafe to listen in to a situation and take appropriate action, e.g. helping to diffuse an aggressor



What3Words built in so that the user can be located to a 3m² area, to help get support to a user quickly

TESTIMONIAL:



As a health and safety team, we know how important it is to provide the right tools to keep our employees safe. When it comes to supporting an uptake in lone worker devices, two key actions were necessary: firstly, putting the right processes in place to make it easy for managers to obtain devices and for staff to use them; secondly supporting cultural change to reinforce the safety benefits of carrying devices to encourage adoption. Peoplesafe's support in both of these areas has been invaluable.

Having Peoplesafe deliver the training made a big difference, reinforcing the benefits of the technology to the teams that use it. They're really easy to work with too - our contact there is very responsive to new requests for devices and their support in establishing a straightforward onboarding and returns process makes life easier for everyone. All in all, it's a relationship that works really well for us and the employees we're responsible for protecting.



Ian Kimmett, Head of Corporate Health & Safety, Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea Council

To find out how Peoplesafe might be able to help keep your employees safe, get in touch.

peoplesafe.co.uk/contact-us