**Group Volunteering Protocol for Social Distancing**(during Covid-19 restrictions, correct as of 18th March 2021)

If you’re not happy about leading a group, there is no pressure. Please put your own safety first. This is our guidance to support those who are able and wish to run sessions. It does not imply any expectation for you to do so.

**Important note**: It is a natural human instinct to move close to people to talk and interact. When concentrating on a task this often happens automatically without conscious awareness and will result in the raising of risk of coronavirus transmission. For this reason the supervisory role is of particularly high importance when volunteering at this time and should be prioritised over other tasks.

**Main Symptoms** ([from NHS website](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__www.nhs.uk_conditions_coronavirus-2Dcovid-2D19_&d=DwMD-g&c=1vnCWTgU_iH2bgveKnHUZ8hJXVq2EkkiN8FwZDwwznM&r=ft35dnW4sZvbBrQhFqxjq8tPQm_YLtOA8t2Bb8_nRos&m=dVOJIli-XwsIcbu1pUnQciuHc1CUHEzbxci2ZVk5xb4&s=vw8rvf_iZp4_6ooXuhGawPIhA8FmbG16CucP4N0T6_Y&e=))

* **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
* **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
* **loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Most people with coronavirus have at least 1 of these symptoms.

**What to do if you have symptoms** ([from NHS website](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__www.nhs.uk_conditions_coronavirus-2Dcovid-2D19_&d=DwMD-g&c=1vnCWTgU_iH2bgveKnHUZ8hJXVq2EkkiN8FwZDwwznM&r=ft35dnW4sZvbBrQhFqxjq8tPQm_YLtOA8t2Bb8_nRos&m=dVOJIli-XwsIcbu1pUnQciuHc1CUHEzbxci2ZVk5xb4&s=vw8rvf_iZp4_6ooXuhGawPIhA8FmbG16CucP4N0T6_Y&e=))

**If you have any of the main symptoms of coronavirus:**

1. Get a test to check if you have coronavirus as soon as possible.
2. Stay at home and do not have visitors until you get your test result – only leave your home to have a test.

Anyone you live with, and anyone in your support bubble, must also stay at home until you get your result.

**Planning your sessions**

* **Use your usual** [**Risk Assessments**](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/32831/Health%20and%20Safety%20forms.pdf/637ae291-44ad-4d73-9cbb-19d0cebf78e1) **alongside the Covid-19 specific Risk Assessment** to keep you and your group safe during the Covid19 pandemic. Please consider the type of activity you are doing in line with the additional pressure B&NES Parks staff are currently under, if possible minimising the need for waste collection.
* **Who can attend?**
  + Anyone not in the extremely vulnerable category.
  + Anyone in the vulnerable or over 70 category should take extra care to maintain social distancing, work in a distinct area away from others and not be responsible for handing out tools or collecting equipment in
  + Groups must be limited to a maximum of 6 people including the activity leader
  + If the site is large and not busy, more than one group can be organised to run at the same time, but they must be independent of each other
  + You will need at least one designated session leader within each group of 6
* **Test and Trace**
  + Activity organisers must sign in all attendees and keep contact details for 21days in case needed by NHS Test and Trace
  + If someone in the group tests positive for Covid19 the activity organiser must contact NHS Test and Trace to let them know, and to provide details of those who attended a session with that person. Test and Trace will then contact other members of the group so the activity organiser does not need to do this. **The identity of the person who tested positive must not be shared with other members of the group.** Of course, the person who tested positive is welcome to tell anyone they choose.
* **Publicity and sign ups**
  + When publicising your session, give clear info of the need to sign up in advance to limit numbers
  + Consider changing your usual session times to avoid busy periods (e.g. working in a park at midday on a Saturday may be too busy)
  + Use email / phone sign ups, or Eventbrite if you are able, in order to manage numbers
  + Ask for contact details and emergency contact details at point of sign up. **Details are needed for potential Test & Trace purposes so if they are not given then the person cannot take part.**
  + Find out at point of sign up if people are from the same household and can therefore work together
  + Make clear if they are showing coronavirus symptoms or are within the self-isolation category they must not attend
  + Children should not attend without a responsible adult.
* **Have all equipment and tools ready**
  + Tools should be freshly disinfected if handled within the last 72hrs, especially on handles / main contact areas.
  + Have tools ready in a box or similar at least 72hrs in advance so that individual tools can be picked up without touching others
  + If possible, regular volunteers should be given a set of tools to keep during this period

**During Sessions**

* **Tools**
  + Tools to be used by each volunteer should be identified at the start of the session
  + Tools should not be shared during a session
  + Assign gardening gloves to each individual that they keep, re-use, and don’t return
  + After the session, leave all communal tools for 72hours if possible. Disinfect thoroughly if not
* **Session leader responsibilities**
  + The session leader’s role is to supervise and maintain social distancing, alongside the normal H&S leader responsibilities. Although the social distancing is reduced to “one metre plus” where necessary from 4th July, we encourage groups to all stay 2m apart whenever possible. If not able to stay 2m apart then people need to ensure they don’t face each other and/or they have a face covering on, and are still 1m apart.
  + Sessions leader’s focus will be on making sure everyone is working safely, in line with the guidance. They should not be as involved in the task as usual as the first priority is ensuring safety
  + Give a thorough Health & Safety briefing and tool talk at the start of the session to remind volunteers of social distancing and measures in place to protect each other, as well as the session plan. Highlight to the group if any volunteers are from the same household and therefore able to work together.
* **Engaging with the public**
  + People may approach the group – be ready to politely remind them to maintain at least 2m distance
  + Consider having a Hi-Viz jacket for the designated leader to encourage members of the public with questions to only approach you
* **Signing in and out**
  + Ask volunteers if they are showing symptoms or within the self-isolation category. If they are, politely ask them to leave the session and return home
  + Have your attendee list (from email/Eventbrite sign ups) written out in advance or viewable on your phone
  + If using paper, sign people in yourself to avoid sharing pens
  + Ask volunteers to let you know when they are leaving so you can sign them out yourself
* **Accidents and first aid**
  + Advice below taken from the HSE website (18.03.21) - <https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/first-aid-and-medicals/first-aid-certificate-coronavirus.htm>:

**Guidance for first aiders**

Try to assist at a safe distance from the casualty as much as you can and minimise the time you share a breathing zone.

If they are capable, tell them to do things for you, but treating the casualty properly should be your first concern. Remember the 3P model – preserve life, prevent worsening, promote recovery.

**Preserve life: CPR**

* Call 999 immediately – tell the call handler if the patient has any COVID-19 symptoms
* Ask for help. If a portable defibrillator is available, ask for it
* Before starting CPR, to minimise transmission risk, use a cloth or towel to cover the patient's mouth and nose, while still permitting breathing to restart following successful resuscitation
* If available, use:
  + a fluid-repellent surgical mask
  + disposable gloves
  + eye protection
  + apron or other suitable covering

Only deliver CPR by chest compressions and use a defibrillator (if available) – **don't** do rescue breaths (for CPR in paediatric settings see specific [guidance from the Resuscitation Council UK](https://www.resus.org.uk/covid-19-resources/covid-19-resources-general-public/resuscitation-council-uk-statement-covid-19))

**Prevent worsening, promote recovery: all other injuries or illnesses**

* If you suspect a serious illness or injury, call 999 immediately – tell the call handler if the patient has any COVID-19 symptoms
* If giving first aid to someone, you should use the recommended equipment listed above if it is available
* You should minimise the time you share a breathing zone with the casualty and direct them to do things for you where possible

**After delivering any first aid**

* Ensure you safely discard disposable items and clean reusable ones thoroughly
* Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitiser as soon as possible
  + First aiders to be aware of the information on CPR from the Resuscitation Council (UK). <https://www.resus.org.uk/media/statements/resuscitation-council-uk-statements-on-covid-19-coronavirus-cpr-and-resuscitation/covid-community/>
* **Refreshments**
  + Please do not provide refreshments.
  + Recommend others not to bring food unless essential. If someone needs a bottle of water or snack they must bring their own, and use hand sanitiser before and after consuming it.

**Recommended Care Equipment List**

* Fully charged mobile phone in case of emergencies
* 1 set of gardening gloves per person – please take care when taking gloves off not to touch the outer parts (pull off inside out) or your face. Volunteers should wash their own gloves, or leave for 72 hours, and sanitise their hands as soon as gloves removed
* Hand sanitiser – recommend volunteers to bring their own

If you come down with symptoms after taking part in a session please [book a Covid19 test](https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test) and let your group leader know the outcome. If the outcome is positive, follow the [NHS Test and Trace process](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/nhs-test-and-trace-if-youre-contacted-after-testing-positive-for-coronavirus/).

**If you have any questions or concerns about volunteering or PPE, please get in touch with Jeremy Dymond, Community Development Officer, Parks and Green Spaces (**[**jeremy\_dymond@bathnes.gov.uk**](mailto:jeremy_dymond@bathnes.gov.uk)**)**