## Activity: Practical Outdoor Work

### Government Advice

The risk of the coronavirus being passed on to others outdoors is considered to be low as long as people maintain social distancing. As of 19th December 2020, Wales is in Level 4 Lockdown and therefore organised outdoor groups of a maximum of 6 people can only take place for essential tasks, detailed in the document below, and ONLY if social distance can be maintained and appropriate hygiene measures are in place.

Line managers and task leaders will need to take account of the Forest Industry Safety Accord (FISA) guidelines “[Working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19) in forestry](https://ukfisa.com/Safety/Safety-Library/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19-in-forestry)” as well as Welsh Government advice as it is released, including the guidance for [Construction and Outdoor Work](https://gov.wales/construction-and-outdoor-work-coronavirus-workplace-guidance-html). Line managers and task leaders must also draw on the Welsh Government’s [Creating Safer Public Places Guidance](https://gov.wales/creating-safer-public-places-coronavirus), even though it focuses on the design principles for safer urban centres and green spaces rather than open countryside. Welsh GOVT recognise that some of the advice is more relevant for urban areas and that different approaches may sometimes be required when managing access to land in the countryside.

Steps that will usually be needed:

* Consider who is needed on site, for example, support staff should work from home if at all possible.
* Planning for the **minimum number of people** needed to be on site to operate safely and effectively, for example, workers deemed necessary to carry out physical works, supervise work, or conduct work in order to operate safely. A maximum number of 6 including staff and volunteers only.
* Monitoring the wellbeing of people who are working from home and helping them stay connected to those operating in an outdoor environment, especially if the majority of their colleagues are on-site.
* Keeping in touch with off-site workers on their working arrangements including their welfare, mental and physical health and personal security.
* Providing equipment for people to work from home safely and effectively, for example, remote access to work systems.
* Gain acceptance of all attending the work task of the On the Day Risk Assessment. The actual signatories can be added via email before or after the work task, or by the leader signing for all attendees, or by thoroughly cleaning clipboards and pens between use to ensure cross contamination is kept to a minimum. Signatories or agreement MUST be sought to ensure compliance. This will also serve as a record of attendees each day for Track and Trace purposes.

This Risk Assessment was updated 21/12**/**2020 and may change if Government advice changes. The risk level matrix is based on the latest Government advice relating to Covid-19, whereby everybody must:

* Stay at home as much as possible
* Work from home if possible
* Limit contact with other people
* Keep their distance if they do go out (2 metres apart where possible)
* Wash hands regularly

**Risks from practical work**

* **Equipment:** Pool equipment that can be cleaned and disinfected between uses
* **Activity:** Some work with other staff or volunteers - 2m rule easy to enforce except in an emergency
* **Location:** remote field work with limited or no interaction with members of the public
* **Travel:** Own dedicated vehicle- no passengers. Fill up in petrol stations where good hygiene is practiced

| **Task hazard –** potential for harm to persons and/or property | **Who’s at risk** | **Precautions –** to reduce risk levels | **Person responsible – for ensuring precautions are taken** |
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| **Severe viral infection** in staff or volunteers from contracting Covid-19 on (or travelling to) GWT work or in public from contracting Covid-19 | Vols, staff, members of the public | * Social distancing of 2m to be followed at all times * Staff must avoid coming into close contact with the public, and always adhere to social distancing advice * If speaking to members of the public, staff should inform them that they are adhering to government social distancing guidelines and take care to diffuse any potential confrontational behaviour, if necessary, by walking away * Staff should only come into work if they are well, have not been advised to stay at home by the government or a health practitioner and no one in their household is self-isolating * Anyone who develops COVID-19 symptoms should [follow government guidance](https://gov.wales/self-isolation-stay-home-guidance-households-possible-coronavirus) and self-isolate. * Staff who are vulnerable as well as individuals whom they live with, should be supported as they follow the recommendations set out in guidance on social distancing and shielding * If lone working, the GWT Lone Working Procedure must be followed and a Buddy nominated. * Good hygiene and particularly increased hand washing / hand sanitising is a key factor in preventing the spread of COVID-19. * Hands should be washed with soap and running water for 20 seconds or more or use an (80% ethanol or equivalent) alcohol-based hand sanitiser before eating, drinking and smoking, after driving, after leaving an enclosed space and when they arrive home or at a place of work. * Also where possible sanitise hands on entering and exiting a site as well as regularly throughout the day - consider cutting tasks to a shorter duration to allow return to office or workshop sites to use toilets and proper hand washing facilities. Also ensure hand sanitiser is available at each task. * Staff must avoid touching their face until after they have cleaned/ sanitised their hands. * Staff must not share enclosed spaces such as inside a washroom, the cabs of vehicles, or kitchen areas. * Equipment and surfaces will need to be cleaned more often to reduce the possibility of infection - these include ‘touchpoints’ such as gate latches or top rails on stiles which the public may touch, as well as GWT tools and equipment which need cleaning after every use. Regular, all-purpose detergents combined with (or followed by) a disinfectant are sufficient, using disposable cloths or paper roll to wipe. * Avoid sharing of equipment or tools and find ways to minimise or eliminate this e.g. through taking duplicate equipment to site marked with coloured tape or similar to clearly differentiate. All individuals are to wear their own gloves which are kept for their own personal use and wash hands or use sanitiser at the earliest opportunity. * If access to workshops is required in order to gather tools for a task, ensure that only one member of staff is in the space at one time as social distancing cannot be maintained in them. Try to ensure that only that one individual accesses the workshop for that day and allow 72 hours between another user accessing it. If that is not possible, clean ‘touchpoints’ after use (such as door handles or push plates, padlocks etc.) and any other surfaces which have been touched | **All staff** |
| **Events** | Vols, staff, members of the public | * No public events are to take place as of 19th December during the Level 4 Lockdown. * Refer to the [Engagement Activities inc Volunteering Risk Assessment](https://gwentwildlife.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/GwentWildlifeTrust/EecI8VLApxZFsLQ1Vj9sSugBxoaFXvslN-bBvi5x35j5yQ?e=CldDjd) and [Guidance for Returning to Engagement](https://gwentwildlife.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/GwentWildlifeTrust/EXo0ZEGLNnVApl9qJv7tIa0BMndpbXzWobUBC-vspDoJCQ?e=X0y0AS) for more detail on delivering engagement activities. | **Line Manager & Event/Task Leader** |
| **Risk Assessing activities** | Staff, members of the public and volunteers | * Risk assess all activities for its likelihood for employees/participants contracting/passing on infection and only undertake low risk activities. If unsure, check with your line manager. | **Task Leader** |
| **Volunteering** | Staff and Volunteers | * Only essential tasks and external work parties may take place, whilst numbers are set at a maximum of 6 people outdoors, (the total of six includes staff numbers) the planned activity and site will limit possible numbers. Permitted essential activities include: safety work e.g. removal of fallen trees, animal welfare e.g. animal checks, and contractually funded work. * Social distancing and good hygiene measures must be adhered to at all times. Face coverings, when risk assessments deem it necessary outdoors. The face mask must include 3 layers as per World Health Organisation advice, should be worn if working in close proximity to a colleague and the (minimum 2m) for prolonged periods. * Risk assessments must include this information and be agreed * Refer to the [Engagement Activities inc Volunteering Risk Assessment](https://gwentwildlife.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/GwentWildlifeTrust/EecI8VLApxZFsLQ1Vj9sSugBxoaFXvslN-bBvi5x35j5yQ?e=CldDjd) and [Guidance for Returning to Engagement](https://gwentwildlife.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/GwentWildlifeTrust/EbhYZZiNjCFMvgJEM2xTNZYBaRxstSaZlCmADVKhdeqMMw?e=gn87mL) for more detail on delivering engagement activities. | **Line Manager & Task Leader** |
| **Riddor** | Staff and volunteers | This is the HSE guidance for when an employer should notify the HSE about Covid-19:   * Where an unintended incident at work leads to possible or actual exposure to coronavirus. To be reported as a dangerous occurrence;   Or   * Where a worker is diagnosed as having COVID-19 and there is reasonable evidence that it was caused by exposure at work. This must be reported as a case of disease. | **Task Leader with Line Manager** |
| **PPE** | Staff and volunteers | * Do not share PPE. * Wear disposable gloves where appropriate, or own work gloves which are not shared with other individuals. * Face masks, the face mask must include 3 layers as per World Health Organisation advice, should be worn if working in close proximity to a colleague (minimum 2m) for prolonged periods, even when outdoors, however this scenario should be avoided if possible. | **Task Leader** |
| **Publicly accessible areas** | Staff, vols and the public | * Communal public spaces on GWT properties/land holdings such as toilets, e.g. Pentwyn Farm, Magor Marsh, ERC office space and other accessible areas should remain closed to the public. | **Line Manager and task leader** |
| **Personal attack** from antagonistic behaviour from members of the public in isolated locations where there is a possibility of over-stretched emergency services as a result of Covid-19 | Vols and staff | * Staff must follow the Lone Working Policy when lone working | **Task leader** |
| **Lacerations**, **severe injury** or **death** resulting from undertaking high-risk activities with the possibility of over-stretched emergency services as a result of Covid-19 | Staff, volunteers | * All activities must abide by the site and task risk assessments, as well as an On the Day Risk Assessment. * No chainsaws, brush cutters and similarly restricted equipment to be used when lone working. Please refer to the risk assessments for individual equipment for more details. * Accompanying staff or an accompanying volunteer must have an up to date first aid certificate * All staff must abide by the Lone Work Policy if on site alone, nominating a buddy | **Individual and their line manager** |

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| **PPE required** |
| **Hand washing equipment or an alcohol-based hand sanitiser,**  **Covid hi-viz bib for the task leader.**  **3 layer face mask** |
| **Other info** |
| All outdoor staff to sign a copy of this RA to accept the changes during the Covid-19 crisis. |

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