



Volunteering in Parks: Covid-19 Guidance

Due to the Covid-19 outbreak a number of additional steps need to be considered before carrying out a volunteering event in a park or greenspace.

Please note, this guidance is based on the published best practice and in line with the regulatory framework in London at the time of publishing. Given the frequency of regulatory changes please check local regulations and restrictions before undertaking any activity. If you are unsure please contact us on groups@habitatsandheritage.org.uk for further guidance.

General Guidance on Volunteering

You can volunteer if:

- you're well
- nobody in your household has coronavirus symptoms
- you, or any member of your household, are not classed as clinically extremely vulnerable

If a volunteer is over 70 or clinically vulnerable, they must work in a separate area away from other people and a risk assessment should take into consideration their vulnerability

Managing the risk of COVID-19 is achieved by not giving the virus opportunity for spreading, therefore the following two principles should be considered at all times:

- 1. Maintaining social distancing of 2m between all persons. Where this is not possible then other measures should be taken to reduce the risk of transmission**
- 2. Avoiding shared equipment where possible and cleaning any shared equipment and surfaces where this is unavoidable**

Risk of infection increases as duration increases whilst two or more people are within 2 meters. For instance, someone passing you on a footpath within 2 meters is very low risk, whereas two people working closely together for many minutes increases the risk. Actions should be proportionate to the level of risk



Guidance for Group Leaders

If a volunteer shows symptoms:

- If anyone turns up to volunteer and shows signs of symptoms of coronavirus, they must be sent home immediately, preferably not using public transport. This should be recorded and a discussion had as to whether there has been a risk of passing the virus on to others
- If they have just arrived onto site, not touched anything, and remained 2m away from others then no further action is required. If, however they develop the symptoms later in the day or have touched items shared by others, and/or have been near others, then action must be taken. This requires a careful response which will include a clean down of all relevant surfaces and may include self-isolation of everyone who was near the person. Having a complete register of attendees with contact details is more important than ever.

First Aid & Emergencies:

- Providing emergency first aid takes precedence over COVID-19 safety actions. For first aid guidance follow the [HSE advice](#).
- If first aid is required, then 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 a first-aiders priority.

Before the event:

- It is still forbidden for groups of more than six people from different households to meet up, so consider capping attendance to your event at a maximum of 6 (or splitting larger groups up into smaller groups working under another nominated group leader in a different geographic area)
- Complete a risk assessment including documenting the steps and procedures you are undertaking to mitigate against Covid-19
- Pre-event communications with volunteers must include a clear message that they must not attend if they or any member of their household have symptoms of the virus or has been tested positive. They should not attend if they, or any member of their household is classed as clinically extremely vulnerable
- Consider the location for your event, especially how likely volunteers will be to use public transport to get there. Sites with no parking and those that are only accessible by public transport and/or where most participants do not/cannot



drive should be reconsidered. The use of public transport must be discouraged in all promotion and pre-event communications

- Ask participants to bring their own hand-sanitiser

During the event:

- Ensure you have an up to date register of who is taking part, including contact details
- Undertake a safety briefing informing all participants of the guidance and new procedures in place
- Allocate specific equipment to participants and request they do not swap during the day. Sharing equipment should be avoided unless necessary. All handled equipment must be cleaned before allocation, when it is moved between persons and at the end of the day. A wipe down with disinfectant will suffice

After the event:

- Keep details of participants and contact numbers safe and secure. Ask participants to get in contact should they start showing symptoms of Covid-19 or themselves or a member of their household tests positive and be prepared to inform others who took part in the event.

Disclaimer

- These safety precautions are for your guidance only, circumstances can differ depending on the situation. It will be the responsibility of the co-ordinator to ensure all possible safety measures are taken by the group
- Volunteers are not working for, or on behalf of Habitats & Heritage and/or any local authority. These parties will not be held responsible for any loss, damage or inconvenience caused because of the actions and omissions of volunteers or this guidance

Reviewed 1/11/2020