

Group Volunteering in Parks Protocol

(during COVID-19 restrictions, coming into effect from 29th 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 human instinct to move close to people to interact. When concentrating on a task this often happens automatically and will result in raising the 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.

Most Common COVID-19 Symptoms [\(from NHS website\)](#)

- **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

Self-Isolation [\(from NHS website\)](#)

- If you have [COVID-19 symptoms](#), you must not leave your home for at least 10 days
- Anyone you live with should not leave your home for 10 days
- You must also self-isolate if you return to the UK from a [country with a high COVID-19 risk](#)

Planning your sessions

- Use your usual [Risk Assessments](#) alongside the [COVID-19 specific Risk Assessment](#) to keep you and your group safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please consider the type of activity you are doing in line with the additional pressure BCC Parks staff are currently under, if possible minimising the need for waste collection.
- **Who can attend?**
 - Maximum of **6 people** per group, including the H&S trained 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 run entirely independent of each other
 - You will need at least one H&S trained leader within each group of 6
 - Anyone (under 16s to be accompanied by a responsible adult) including those in the vulnerable (or extremely vulnerable from 31st March) or over 70 category. Anyone in these categories should take extra care to maintain social distancing and not be responsible for handing out tools or collecting/cleaning equipment
- **Who should not attend?**
 - Anyone in the [extremely vulnerable category](#) who has not yet been vaccinated.
- **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 sign ups, or Eventbrite if you are able
 - Ask for emergency contact details at point of sign up
 - 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 should be self-isolating, they must not attend
- **Have all equipment and tools ready**

- Tools should be freshly disinfected if handled within the last 72hrs, especially on handles / main contact areas
- Put tools in a box or similar 72hrs in advance so they can be picked up without touching others
- If possible, regular volunteers should be given a set of tools to keep

During Sessions – social distancing (2m) to be maintained at all times

- **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 without being disinfected
 - Assign gardening gloves to individuals that they keep and don't return
 - After the session, leave all communal tools for 72hours if possible. Disinfect thoroughly if not
- **H&S trained leader responsibilities**
 - Supervise and maintain group 2m social distancing, alongside the normal H&S leader responsibilities.
 - H&S leader 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 H&S briefing and tools talk at the start of the session. Remind volunteers of social distancing to protect each other, as well as the task plan.
 - Point out to the group if any volunteers are from the same household and therefore able to work together, or are in the vulnerable category. Extra care to be taken by all volunteers to maintain social distancing from these individuals.
- **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 should be self-isolating. If they are, politely ask them to leave the session and return home
 - Have your attendee list 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**
 - First aiders to be aware of the information 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. Bring your own water, sanitise hands before and after drinking
 - If volunteers bring their own refreshments, remind them to wash or sanitise hands before and after

Recommended PPE 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
- Hand sanitiser – recommend volunteers to bring their own, or get in touch if you need some

If you come down with symptoms after taking part in a session please [book a Covid19 test](#) and let your group leader know the outcome. If the outcome is positive, follow the [NHS Test and Trace process](#).

If you have any questions or concerns about volunteering or PPE, please get in touch with Ella Hogg, Volunteer Coordinator, Parks and Green Spaces (ella.hogg@bristol.gov.uk)