

ORGANISATIONAL RISK ASSESSMENT

EXPOSURE TO AND CONTRACTION OF COVID-19

The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales (and its subsidiaries) are fully committed to the health, safety and general comfort of our staff, volunteers and visitors, including contractors and temporary workers, as well as any members of the public who might come into contact with our operations. We are committed to playing our part in managing the current situation. This risk assessment has been created in order to protect those people after the initial 'Lock-Down' phase. We understand that people have concerns and the Trust will not expect any staff or volunteers to undertake activities that put them at unreasonable risk, or that causes them stress or anxiety as a result of C-19.

What is the hazard?

C-19 is a novel strain of Coronavirus first identified in humans in Wuhan City, China in January 2020. It rapidly spread and developed into a worldwide pandemic. The illness affects the lungs and airways. Common symptoms of coronavirus are a cough, a high temperature and shortness of breath. It should be regarded as a very serious hazard.

Who is at risk?

C-19 can make anyone seriously ill, but for some vulnerable groups of people, the risk is higher and some may die from the disease.

Clinically vulnerable people include those aged 70 and over, those with specific chronic pre-existing conditions, and pregnant women. A further group of people with specific serious health conditions, are defined as clinically extremely vulnerable to coronavirus on medical grounds. Others who may not be in these categories may share homes with those that are. In addition, the C-19 crisis has caused many people considerable mental stress.

There is currently no specific treatment for C-19 and a vaccine is unlikely to be readily available before 2021.

How is it spread?

The disease is spread mainly from person-to-person, usually via close contact. That could be via physical contact, like shaking hands with a contaminated person or touching contaminated surfaces. Simply being near an infected person who coughs, sneezes, or talks can expose you to their infected respiratory droplets.

It can survive on surfaces for a period after transfer (depending on such things as the surface type, its moisture content and temperature.)

Importantly some people, including children and young adults, may be capable of spreading it to others even though they don't have any symptoms.

Statutory control measures to limit transmission

WTSWW are closely following the Welsh government advice and guidelines on social distancing and contamination control for individuals, and employers. We expect everyone to follow these guidelines.

Social Distancing - stay 2 metres away from people outside of your household.

Handwashing and respiratory hygiene - wash hands more often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitiser. Especially when in contact with surfaces / equipment touched by visitors or other team members, when you blow your nose, sneeze or cough, eat or handle food. Washing of hands should also take place prior to work commencing, before leaving site and on arrival home.

Reporting a self-isolation - Individuals with symptoms that may be due to coronavirus and their household members **MUST** stay at home. Staff and volunteers should inform their line manager as soon as possible

Engineering controls

Mitigation is focused on 'touch-points', pinch points (where people could congregate in confined spaces) and face-to-face contact. Offices, workshops and shared spaces will be re-organised to gradually allow more people to return to work whilst keeping staff apart, if they cannot continue to work from home.

Offices: single occupancy, assigned workstations, Perspex screen between desks, back-to-back or side-to-side working.

Travel: Vehicles should not be shared; staff either use their own vehicle to travel to/from work (not public transport) or a Trust vehicle. Active transport is encouraged and facilitated.

Activity risk assessments will consider not sharing tools and separate tool storage areas and allocation of personnel activity related PPE.

Administrative Controls

Working from home remains the preferred option. In the few cases where working from home is not possible, measures are in place to ensure compliance with the 2m social distancing guidelines. Mitigation includes; limiting the number of people each person has contact with by using a rota system or partnering and facilitating more flexible working arrangements. Additional cleaning regimes are in place for shared facilities, including vehicles.

The visitor centres at Teifi Marshes, CBMWC, Parc Slip and Lockley Lodge remain closed, as do Skomer and Skokholm islands. Toilets on nature reserves will only reopen when necessary cleaning procedures and staff are in place.

Educational activities, local group meetings and volunteer work parties remain cancelled until Government advice changes. Staff, stakeholder and board meetings are held by video-conference.

Personal Protective Equipment

The use of face-coverings and gloves (PPE) to protect against C-19 infection continues to be debated. It is however, widely recognised as a last resort, the final protection an organisation relies upon to protect its workforce. Only where all other controls are impractical should PPE be considered and included in the written risk assessment. The use of PPE does not guarantee that an activity can proceed.

Monitoring and Reporting

Reduced supervision and oversight of working practice will be a direct result of implementing social distancing measures, an increase in lone-working and the furloughing of staff. Line managers will stay in contact with staff by telephone/videoconference, request feedback and monitor staff well-being.

Decision Making

Welsh Government updates the national position every three weeks. However, guidance from stakeholder groups is received almost daily as Covid-19 restrictions are slowly lifted. This assessment and our activity and site specific Risk Assessments will need regular updates. Updates will be discussed and agreed at the monthly H&S Working Group meeting. Updates will also be considered by the senior management team as required with input from conservation staff.

Communications

Public information will be updated on the WTSWW website. When higher-profile sites re-open the messaging needs to be clear (what facilities will be available to visitors?) The approach will be for a phased re-opening with only essential messaging in recognition of local sensitivities and a desire to avoid a surge in visitor numbers post 'lock-down'. Staff will continue to update volunteer groups locally.