COVID-Safe Guidelines for Work Parties
Date of Issue: July 2020

The aim of this guidance is to lay out measures to ensure volunteers undertaking practical work parties are able to do so safely and in line with current government guidance.

We will need to work very differently than we have in the past. We will need to adopt new and different working practices which leaders will need to ensure are followed. It is recognised the way in which each group operates and the type of work they undertake varies from group to group and therefore there will not be a common approach adoptable across all groups.

However, social distancing and good hygiene continue to be central themes in providing a COVID-safe work environment. The attached risk assessment provides detailed guidance on the measures to be put in place to achieve this.

The summary below highlights the key considerations and measures to be applied across all groups' activities to maintain a COVID-safe work parties.

- This guidance, and a risk assessment will be communicated to all volunteers prior to commencing work parties
- All volunteers will be briefed on the measures in place to provide a safe working environment
- The COVID 19 Work Party Risk Assessment should inform the Task Specific Risk Assessment that would normally be produced for a work party. Measures identified in both risk assessments are designed to enable a safe working environment for everyone and should therefore be followed closely.
- All volunteers should complete the COVID 19 Wellbeing Questionnaire to aid the planning of safe work parties
- All volunteers should be given the opportunity to discuss concerns or specific needs with their Group Leader
- If working on the land of, or under the authority or direction of a third party, the third party should also be supplied with this guidance, and a copy of the risk assessment, so the planned work may be approved by the third party prior to work beginning
- Work parties should allow for social distancing and maintain a high standard of hygiene
- Groups sizes must be kept to a minimum
- All volunteers should have access to appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- All tools and equipment should be clean, adequately maintained and safe to use
- Particular care should be taken in the planning of tasks that have the potential for close proximity working e.g. unloading, loading and distribution of tools
- Adequate first aid equipment should be provided in line with the Task Specific Risk Assessment

PPE provided for work parties by the Chiltern Society
- Face coverings (washable) for close proximity work
- Disinfectant spray and cloths for cleaning tools
- Infection packs (surgical gloves, mask and sanitiser) for first aid kits
- Bin bags for disposing of waste
- Hazard/barrier tape and signs to mark out work areas, highlighting the need to socially distance

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Health Monitoring

In order to ensure the Chiltern Society is doing all it can to protect the health of staff and volunteers, and reduce the spread of the virus in the wider community, all staff and volunteers should complete the attached Covid-19 Wellbeing Questionnaire prior to resuming work. This will enable us to be confident it is safe for all those working and will help us support individuals with any specific needs.

Generic Activity Risk Assessment: Work Party COVID 19

ACTIVITY:		RISK LEVEL	Slight harm	Harmful	Very harmful
		Unlikely	Trivial	Slight	Moderate
Work Party COVID 19		Likely	Slight	Moderate	Substantial
		Very Likely	Moderate	Substantial	Intolerable

Hazard	Who's at Risk	Precautions	Risk Level	Implementation
Site Visits - communication - briefing	Volunteers	• Site visits to plan work should be carried out individually following lone working procedures • If meeting a third-party contact to discuss work social distancing and hygiene procedures should be maintained • All planning of work parties should be conducted remotely wherever possible to reduce face to face contact	**Moderate**	Group Leader
Travel to and from work parties	Volunteers	• All transport to and from work parties should be in personal vehicles, by foot or bike • Public transport should be avoided, wearing a face mask at all times where the use of public transport is unavoidable • There should be no car sharing with people outside of your household • Everyone should wash their hands using hand sanitiser on arrival at the work site at the beginning, and end, of the day	**Moderate**	Individual volunteers
Loading/Unloading Tools, equipment and materials	Volunteers	• The number of people loading and unloading tools should be kept to a minimum and, if possible, designated to the same specific people • Good manual handling technique should always be observed • If two people are required to undertake a task then extra care should be taken to ensure social distance is maintained • Work gloves should be worn at all times	**Moderate**	Work Party/Team Leaders/Sub-team Leaders/Quartermaster

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| Interaction with other volunteers | Volunteers | Volunteers should be allocated to sub-work teams to limit numbers working together Sub-work teams must be kept to a maximum of 6 volunteers Start times of Sub-work teams should be staggered to limit group size meeting at the start of the day Keep the same volunteers in sub-work teams to limit the number of different interactions 2m social distancing must be maintained All volunteers and staff to be briefed on COVID-safe working measures prior to starting work Good hygiene protocols should be promoted and observed – regular handwashing using hand sanitiser, cough into elbow and dispose of tissues appropriately All volunteers are to complete the COVID-19 Wellbeing Questionnaire to support the planning of safe work parties If anyone is suffering symptoms of COVID-19 whilst at a work party they should notify the Leader and leave to self-isolate at home A 'dynamic risk assessment' should be undertaken during all work parties so that if conditions change during the workday, and it is no longer safe to proceed, work should be halted immediately. Anyone who has symptoms, or has been in recent contact with anyone with symptoms, should not attend work parties Work gloves should be worn at all times Where possible tools should be issued to individuals to bring to each work party | **Moderate** | Individual volunteers, Work Party/Team/Sub-team Leaders |

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Working in confined spaces/close proximity with others (under 2m) - narrow footpaths - gate/waymarker installation - handling materials	Volunteers	• Work should be planned to avoid the need for work in confined spaces or in close proximity. • A 'dynamic risk assessment' should be conducted during the course of the working day to ensure that measures and procedures can be modified quickly or the task stopped to avoid close proximity working. • The number of people required to undertake a task should be minimised • Volunteers should rotate working on a task to maintain social distancing • If there is a risk of close proximity work taking place then time should be as short as possible and be no longer than 15 minutes and face coverings should be worn • Face to face work should be avoided. Workers should be side by side or back to back. • Tasks should be carried out by a single worker wherever it is safe to do so and in line with good manual handling technique and lone working procedures	**Moderate**	Work Party/Team/Sub-team Leaders, individual volunteers
Shared tools and equipment - brushcutters - materials for gates, fencing, way marker posts	Volunteers	• Work gloves should be worn at all times • The need to share tools and equipment should be limited as much as possible • If possible, all tools and equipment should not be handled for at least 72 hours after use • If tools and equipment need to be shared between different users within 72 hours then they should be cleaned using antibacterial spray prior to next use	**Moderate**	Work Party/Team/Sub-team Leaders
First Aid Provision	Volunteers, Staff	• All trained first aiders are to be supplied with up to date guidance for First Responders • First aiders should indicate to their Group Leader if they are comfortable undertaking a first aid role in light of this, or updated, guidance • Infection kits should be provided in first aid kits to include, hand sanitiser, surgical gloves and mask	**Moderate**	Group Leaders

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Welfare - refreshments	Volunteers, Staff	• No communal refreshments are to be provided • Volunteers should bring personal refreshments if required • All items of waste should be taken home and disposed of appropriately • Hand washing using hand sanitiser should be undertaken before and after refreshment breaks	**Moderate**	Group Leaders
Interaction with public	Volunteers, Staff	• Warning signs to be used to indicate that work is being undertaken • Signs should be modified with temporary signage to highlight the need for appropriate social distancing • Red and white hazard tape should be used if a work area needs to be temporarily cordoned-off to enable work to be undertaken at a safe distance. • High visibility tabards to be worn by volunteers • Consider nominating volunteers to monitor and manage passers-by if appropriate • If it is not possible to maintain social distancing with members of the public then work should stop until it is safe to proceed	**Moderate**	Work Party/Team/Sub-team Leaders
Vulnerable People (as defined by Government Guidance) - increased risk of becoming seriously ill if contract the virus	'Vulnerable' volunteers	• Everyone attending work parties should be vigilant and ensure they maintain strict social distancing and hygiene measures • 2m social distancing to be maintained by all volunteers at all times • All volunteers should complete the COVID-19 Wellbeing Questionnaire to highlight any concerns, specific needs or if they are either Clinically Vulnerable or Clinically Extremely Vulnerable • If Volunteers are within the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable category they should not be involved in work parties at this time • Group Leaders are to give the opportunity for volunteers to discuss the measures in place and any concerns or specific needs they may have • Particular care should be afforded to planning the work environment to enable any volunteers who are 'Vulnerable' are able to work in a confident and safe manner	**Moderate**	Group Leaders

Campaigning • Conserving • Promoting

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		• If Vulnerable volunteers are not confident with the measures in place they should discuss this with their Group Leader and not attend until they are confident they can do so safely • Group Leaders should consult with any volunteers who are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable and the CS H&S Officer prior to resuming activities to ensure appropriate tasks are assigned that limits their contact with others.		
Assessment Date: 3rd July 2020			**Review Date:** 6th August 2020	
Assessment carried out by: Gavin Johnson / Tom Beeston				