

Covid-19

Implications for GWT

Overarching GWT Risk Assessment Ver 1.0 (05/06/2020)

Government Advice

- Stay at home as much as possible
- Work from home if you can
- Limit contact with other people
- Keep your distance if you go out (2 metres apart where possible)
- Wash your hands regularly
- Do not leave home if you or anyone in your household has symptoms

Organisational obligations

1. Carry out a COVID-19 risk assessment
2. Develop cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures
3. Help people to work from home
4. Maintain 2m social distancing, where possible
5. Where people cannot be 2m apart, manage transmission risk

Introduction

This document sets out Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust's response to the risks associated with Covid-19 to its staff, volunteers and visitors, including contractors and temporary workers, as well as any members of the public who might be affected by the Trust's operations. It does not seek to provide detailed information about the virus which can be found on government and National Health Service websites. This risk assessment does not replace GWT's existing Health and Safety Management System which ensures, so far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of Trust staff and volunteers.

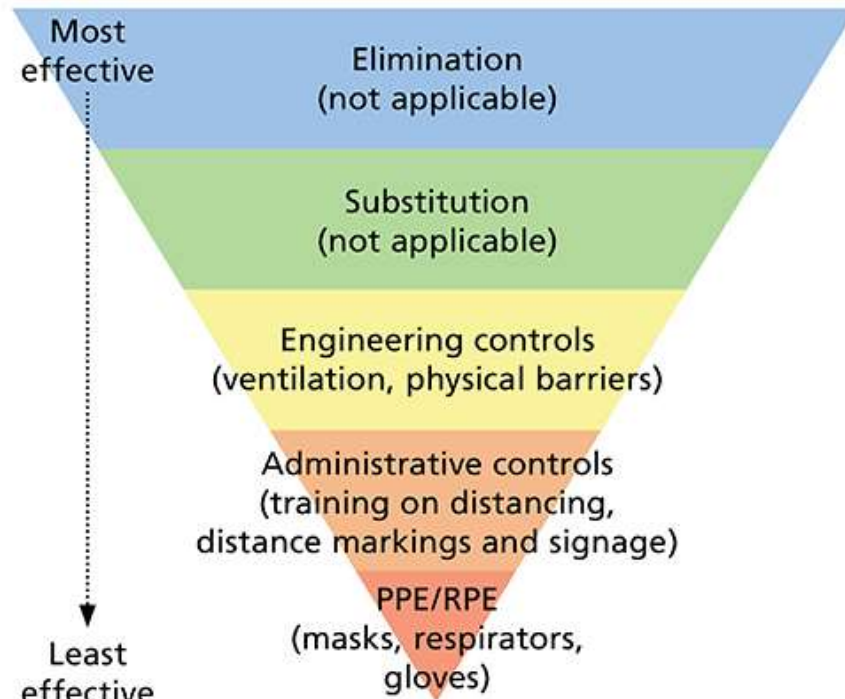
Covid-19 is a serious hazard; the virus is spread in minute water droplets expelled from the body through sneezing, coughing, talking and breathing. The virus can be transferred directly by inhalation or via the hands onto surfaces, then from surfaces to someone's face (normally by touch). It can survive on surfaces for a period after transfer (depending on such things as the surface type, its moisture content and temperature). If contracted, while many survive infection and make a full recovery, some suffer long-term debilitation and may even die from the disease.

Some people, including those aged 70 and over, those with specific chronic pre-existing conditions, and pregnant women, are clinically vulnerable. There is a further group of people who are defined, also on medical grounds, as clinically extremely vulnerable to coronavirus, that is people with specific serious health conditions. Others who may not be in these categories may share homes with those that are. In addition, the C-19 crisis has and will continue to affect people's mental health and wellbeing.

The assessment summarises the mitigation taken to reduce the risk, applying a hierarchy of control. Elimination is outside the control of GWT until a vaccination is available, substitution is not possible.

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Covid-19 Hierarchy of control



From <https://iosh.com/coronavirus/returning-safely/risk-assessments/>

Engineering controls

Engineering controls are strategies designed to protect workers from hazardous conditions by placing a barrier between the worker and the hazard or by removing a hazardous substance through air ventilation.

Mitigation is focussed on touchpoints and face-to-face contact. Workshops and offices will be reorganised to gradually allow more people to return to work within government guidelines whilst keeping staff apart, e.g. single occupancy satellite offices, fixed pairing and layout changes.

If an individual, or someone in their household, develops symptoms, they must follow Government guidelines and self-isolate. Staff and volunteers should inform their line manager as soon as possible.

Specific examples

No GWT vehicles will be shared except for a member of that person's own household. The preference is for staff either to use their own vehicle to travel to/ from work or a Trust vehicle, which is allocated to a single member of staff. If an individual member of staff can only use public transport for essential work travel that should be agreed with their line manager. Face coverings are now mandatory on public transport, so staff will be supported in acquiring one in advance of travel. If a vehicle does need to be used by another person, shared surfaces will be thoroughly cleaned before handover.

Toilets on nature reserves will be opened as soon as practicably possible once increased hygiene, cleaning protocols, PPE and risk assessments have been put in place.

The preference is for bird hides to be closed, but where they may remain open (e.g. because it is not reasonably practicable to close them or there is a significant vandalism risk) posters will be installed to

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provide hygiene and occupancy level advice. Hand sanitiser is flammable and can be easily removed and will not be supplied in bird hides.

Where payment is required to park in GWT car parks, alternative payment methods (from cash) will be made available and notices advertising this will be installed.

Administrative controls

Administrative controls are training, procedure, policy, or shift designs that lessen the threat of a hazard to an individual. Administrative controls typically change the behaviour of people rather than removing the actual hazard or providing personal protective equipment.

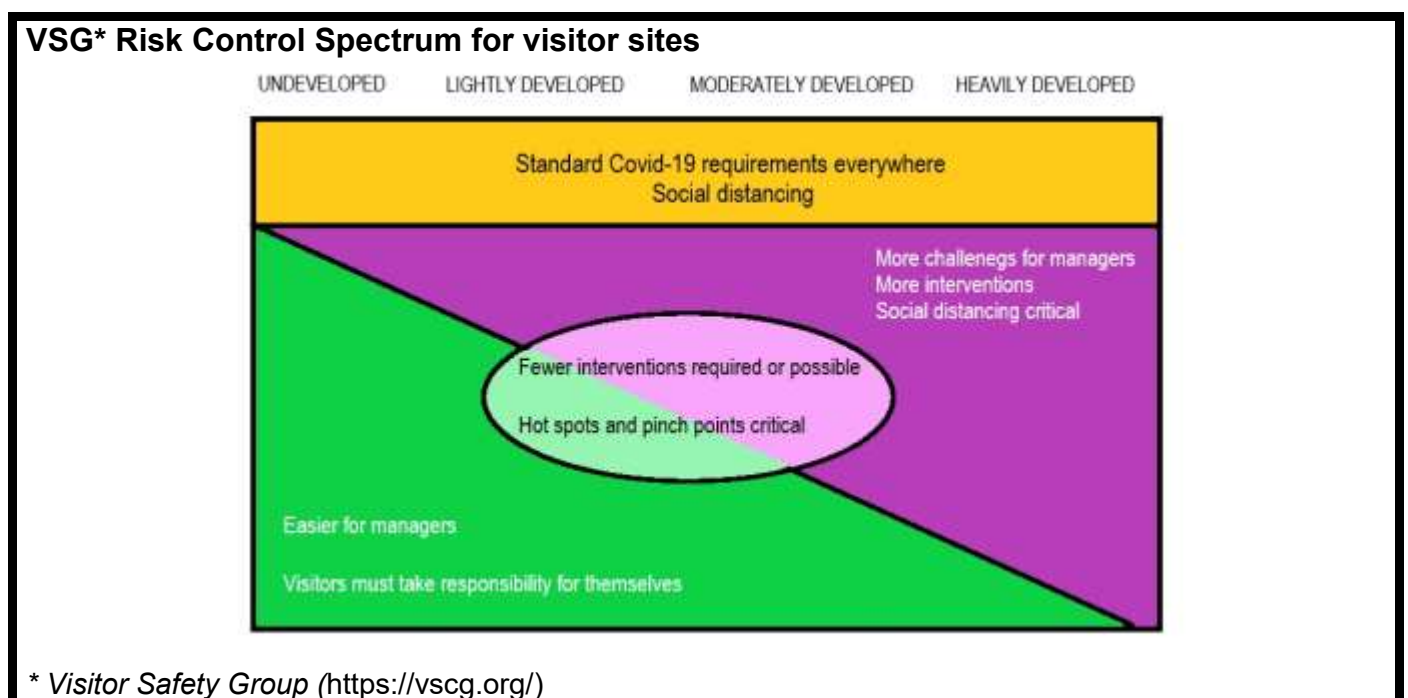
The main way to reduce risk to staff and volunteers is to keep numbers in any one area to a minimum. Work from home is preferable. If this is not reasonably practicable, then a limit will be set for the number of people in offices and workshops at any one time.

Specific examples

Information on handwashing will be provided and systems in place for cleaning touchpoints. Social distancing will be maintained within buildings. Signage will be installed in offices and on the busier nature reserves, to remind visitors to follow government social distancing advice.

Certain types of work, particularly livestock husbandry, may not be safely carried out by one person. Should social distancing not be able to be maintained, there will be an agreed system in place to limit the time and frequency spent on the task, ensure the area is well ventilated and ensure it is the same team if it has to be repeated.

Visitor Centres and cafés at Greystones and Crickley Hill remain closed until July in order to put in place the correct hygiene and social distancing measures. Face-to-face learning activities, volunteer groups and face-to-face meetings all remain cancelled until Government advice changes.



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Risk assessment

A Covid-19 specific risk assessment will be written for each re-started activity, whether that be opening toilets on a site, restarting a volunteering or engagement activity or staff returning to work in a GWT office. It will be the responsibility of the department head to ensure a risk assessment is completed in advance with assistance from members of the Health and Safety Board. The risk assessment will be based on the GWT Risk matrix below, and in accordance with Code of Practice (CoP) 12 Risk Assessment.

		Severity		
		Slight Harm	Harmful	Very Harmful
Likelihood of harm	Very unlikely	Trivial	Trivial	Slight
	Unlikely	Trivial	Slight	Moderate
	Likely	Slight	Moderate	Substantial
	Very Likely	Moderate	Substantial	Intolerable

Personal Protective Equipment

Personal protective equipment has been the subject of much debate politically and in the press and media. Following the risk control hierarchy, it is recognised as a last resort, the final protection an organisation relies upon to protect its workforce. Only where all previous controls (engineered and administrative) have proven insufficient to protect people, should it be considered and included in the written risk assessment or used as an additional safeguard.

For most people any potential infection from coronavirus will not be because of their work. If staff or volunteers do not normally wear a face mask, or any other PPE for work, then they do not need to because of coronavirus. There is currently no evidence that using face masks outside of a healthcare or clinical setting will protect people from coronavirus. Face coverings do not need to be worn in the GWT workplace, although GWT will support staff and volunteers if they choose to wear one. In some cases, such as the use of public transport, the UK Government has specified the use of face coverings as mandatory.

Disposable gloves could be a consideration for a task risk assessment, but only for activities such as catering and cleaning. There is no evidence that disposable gloves outside of a healthcare or clinical setting will protect people from coronavirus, and inappropriate use of PPE can actually raise the risk to an individual by introducing complacency.

Monitoring and Reporting

It is recognised that there will be reduced supervision and oversight of working practice as a direct result of implementing social distancing measures. Line managers will undertake increased contact with staff by telephone, request feedback from staff and ensure photographic and written records are maintained. Staff and where necessary; volunteers will continue to keep up to date and compliant with GWT Codes of Practice.

Decision Making

With the guidance changing on Covid-19 almost daily, this assessment will need to be regularly reviewed and updated. As a minimum this will be undertaken by senior staff at monthly meetings. Changes to working practice will be phased and communicated. A step-by-step approach will require consultation with staff and approval of a Head of Department or the Chief Executive.

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Further Information

GWT task risk assessments will be updated to incorporate Covid-19 requirements and staff and volunteers must use new Covid-19 risk assessments to formulate their on-the-day risk assessments. Covid-19 specific risk assessments will be reviewed on a regular basis in order to comply with the latest government advice.