

Organisational Risk Assessment for Covid-19

This document sets out Dorset 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 explain all the ins and outs of the virus as this information is widely available elsewhere, nor replace existing policy and practice ensuring, so far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of Trust staff and volunteers.

Covid-19 is recognised as a serious hazard; the virus is spread in minute water droplets that are expelled from the body through sneezing, coughing, talking and breathing. The virus can be transferred directly by inhalation or via the hands, and from there to surfaces, then from surfaces to the 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). While many of those infected will survive and make a full recovery, in some cases it will lead to fatality. Others may survive, but suffer from long term health effects.

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.

This organisational assessment summarises the mitigation taken to reduce the risk, applying the standard hierarchy of control methodology used throughout all risk assessments processes. Inspection checklists and associated risk assessments will be completed and authorised prior to implementation, relating to each specific workplace/visitor centre. These site based assessments will be carried out by site managers, in liaison with the CE and Head of HR and H&S.

Elimination and substitution

Following the hierarchy of control methodology at figure 1, Elimination is outside the control of the Trust and indeed is not possible anywhere until a vaccination is available.

Likewise, substitution is not possible as a control measure. We cannot simply replace Covid-19 with a lesser hazard.

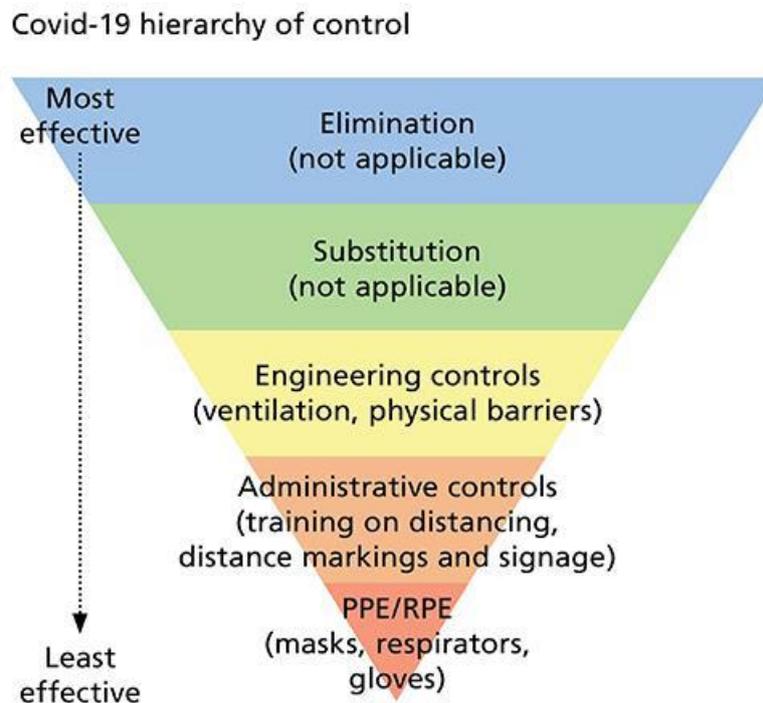


Figure 1. <https://iosh.com/resources-and-research/our-resources/communicable-diseases/coronavirus/returning-safely/risk-assessments/>

Engineering controls

Engineering control mechanisms are focussed on touchpoints and face-to-face contact. Workplaces and offices are being re-organised to allow staff to return to work whilst maintaining social distancing through the use of eg provision of handwashing/sanitising facilities, one way systems, low/single occupancy offices. Staff toilets within offices are allocated to teams during the working day and cleaned before the start of the next day. Vehicles are not shared; staff either use their own vehicle to travel to/from work (not public transport) or a Trust vehicle, which is allocated to a single member of staff.

Administrative controls

Our main way to reduce risk to our staff and volunteers is to keep numbers in any one area to a minimum. Work from home is considered the default, with office base working limited to only where essential due to practical constraints such as printing /post requirements. Where this is the case, a limit will be set for the number of people in specific offices and workshops at any one time. Information on handwashing is provided and systems in place for cleaning touchpoints. Social distancing is maintained within buildings. Signage has been put in place in offices and on the busier nature reserves, to remind visitors to keep their distance from each other and staff.

Certain types of work, notably 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.

All of our visitor centres currently remain closed. A skeleton staff is present at our Headquarters, providing a central response team for operational requirements. Educational activities, meetings, volunteer groups and face-to-face meetings all remain cancelled until Government advice changes.

Our warden teams are conducting essential work in activities such as livestock checks, site security and site patrols.

Personal Protective Equipment

Following the risk control hierarchy, PPE is recognised as a last resort, the final protection an organisation relies upon to protect its workforce. Supplies of PPE such as gloves and face masks are available for use by staff, to be used only where all previous controls (engineered and administrative) have proven insufficient in providing suitable protection. PPE in respect of certain tasks such as chainsaw work will of course still be required to be worn when carrying out such activity.

Monitoring and Reporting

It is recognised that there will be reduced supervision and oversight of working practices 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.

Decision Making

With the guidance changing on Covid-19 on a regular basis, this assessment will be regularly reviewed and updated. This will be undertaken by the DWT response team. Changes to working practice will be phased and communicated to all staff, as well as through our regular e-bulletins to members and volunteers.

Further Information

Any requests for further information should be directed to enquiries@dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J Davies".

J Davies MBE (Chair)

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "BM Bleese".

BM Bleese (Chief Executive)

June 2020