



Club Guidance on restarting boating activity and managing Covid-19

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Version Control

Scope	Guidance to RYA Affiliated Clubs considering restarting boating activity
Version	1.1
Document name	Restarting boating and Covid-19
Author	RDO Manager; Sailability Manager
Authorisation	Director of Sport Development
Authorisation date	12 May 2020
Review date	15 May 2020
Updates	<p>Updated 14th May Overall: added or revised content in line with DCMS guidance issued on 13th May; responding to feedback from clubs and individuals; minor changes to order of options</p> <p>Sections updated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Take it step by stepConsiderations and controls<ul style="list-style-type: none">GeneralReducing the risk of virus transmissionFacilitiesActivitiesOn the water safetyBar and catering <p>New section: useful links</p>

Introduction

The Covid-19 outbreak continues to be a rapidly evolving situation that presents a number of complex challenges and decisions for all service-based organisations. The information within this document is designed to aid your decision making process, not replace it. All decisions should be made by the organisation's leadership, using this information as assistance, but taking into account all of the unique considerations in which you operate. In doing this, the club should use risk assessment tools and processes to make the most effective decisions.

The health and safety of a club's members, volunteers and staff should be the number one priority at all times. All necessary measures should be taken to be Covid-secure and reduce the risk of infection from Covid-19 to members, volunteers, staff and visitors in accordance with current Government guidance. Likewise, in these times of increased strain on UK emergency services, a club will need to ensure that the risk of an incident leading to support from emergency services is minimised.

The effective control of Covid-19 relies on people taking individual and collective responsibility. It is the club's role to facilitate safe activity from their premises in line with Government guidance and to remind their members of their individual responsibility so they can make informed choices.

The RYA is mindful that Home Country Governments may issue their own phased plans and measures. Additionally, as we have seen to date, local authorities, harbour authorities, landlords or marinas may also interpret guidance differently. We will carefully review any industry specific guidance that impacts on boating activities, such as advice for the sport and hospitality sectors, as well as paying particular attention to any guidance for specific sections of our community.

The RYA will continually review all the advice we provide as we learn from clubs and other organisations throughout this process. By sharing best practice and learning from mistakes we will find ways to adapt and strengthen boating.

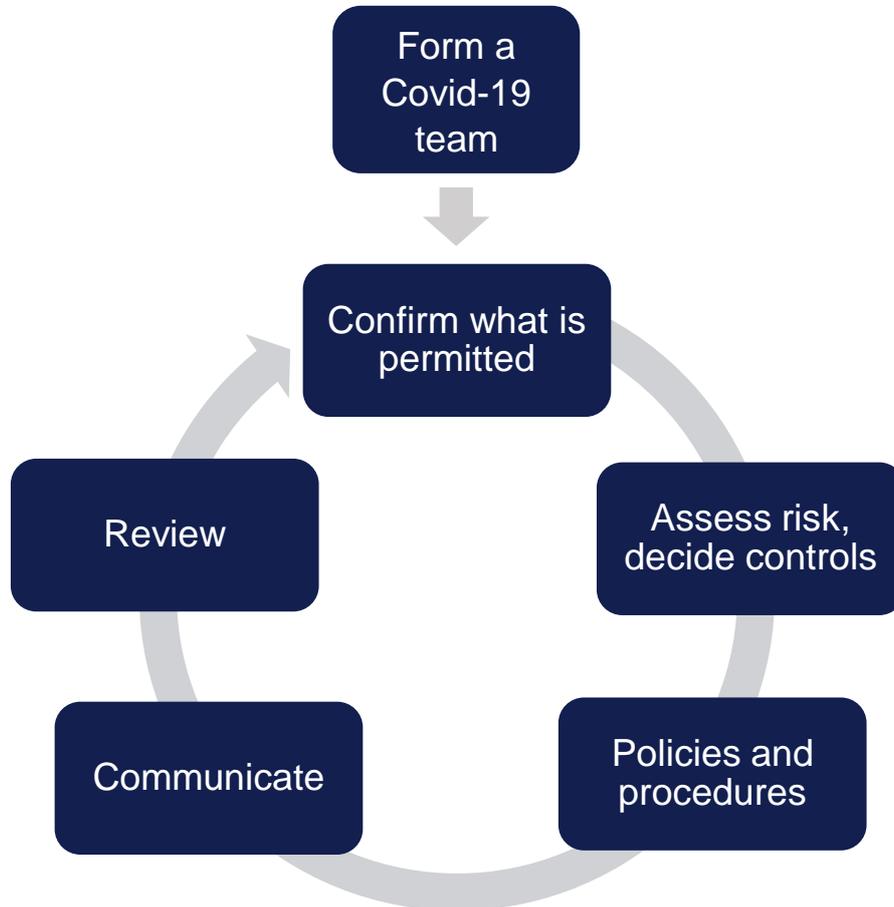
RYA Guiding Principles

These are the RYA's guiding principles that will underpin all guidance across the boating community. We would encourage decision makers to use these principles to inform their own decisions during the Covid-19 period.

1. We will always follow Government advice
 - The COVID-19 preventative measures are vital to protecting health and wellbeing and to minimising pressure on frontline services. We all have a role to play by following the Government guidelines.
2. We will, as a boating community, take a **considerate** and **conservative** approach
 - **Considerate:** be mindful of the potential impact that you could have on other water users and local communities. Do not place unnecessary extra strain on the RNLi and emergency services
 - **Conservative:** help to minimise risk by taking an extra conservative approach to your boating.

Take it step by step

This process will support your club with reviewing the range of activities (ashore and afloat) offered and the management of your facility. It is clear governments have a roadmap and there will be phases to coming out of lockdown and lifting restrictions will happen step by step, allowing new activity along the way.



Form a Covid-19 team

- Create a Covid-19 task group and consider the appointment of a Covid-19 officer to co-ordinate this group
- Who is going to make decisions related to activities, operations, implementing Covid-19 guidelines?
- Who do you need to include to help the decision making process?

Confirm what is permitted within any regulations

- Check the latest Government guidelines and advice ([England](#), [Scotland](#), [Wales](#), [Northern Ireland](#))
- Consult with local authorities, harbour authorities, landlords and insurers
- Reflect on what activity may be appropriate within given guidelines
- Think ahead to future options as well as reflecting on what is currently possible

Assess risk, decide controls

- Review the options on how you might alter club operating procedures to support activity in accordance with the RYA principles outlined above.
- Look out for what is being recommended for other sectors – for example: workplaces, schools, hospitality
- Follow the Health and Safety guides to risk assessments ([HSE](#), [HSENI](#)):
 - What are the new hazards?
 - Who is at risk and how?
 - What is the level of risk and what controls can you put in place to reduce this?
 - Record your findings
 - Review regularly

See table below for examples of considerations and controls you may wish to implement

Policies and procedures

- Create clear policies that identify how the club will operate under new Covid-19 restrictions
- Review existing policies and ensure amended policies are based on what is working
- Ensure amended policies are tested before finalising

Communicate

- Communicate your plan clearly and on multiple channels, provide updates as necessary, seek feedback, listen and respond
- Emphasise the importance of the actions you are taking and the impact you know it will have on members, staff and volunteers
- Use signage to provide a briefing as people arrive at the club as well as around the club and the club grounds
- Consider the need for a 'Covid-19' statement that encourages people to stay safe, recognise the risks, and asks people to follow the club's new policies or procedures
- Let members, volunteers and staff know how the club will handle situations when rules and guidelines are not followed

Review

- Ensure that all policies are reviewed regularly (at least weekly) and particularly in light of changes to government guidance, lessons learned and any other examples of best practice elsewhere

The table that follows outlines the areas of club activity or facilities that may need consideration and some of the options and controls for clubs.

Considerations and controls

Areas	Controls
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate and encourage social distancing at all times – don't require anything that breaks this guidance • Encourage everyone to be conservative and considerate in their actions around the club • Inform and train volunteers and staff on Covid-19, the symptoms, how it spreads and what people can do to stay safe • Decide how you will manage a contact or suspected contact with Covid-19 • Decide how you will handle situations where club rules and guidance in relation to Covid-19 are not followed • Decide how activities can be inclusive and people who need support to be active are considered • Put in place a process to review the potential unintended consequences of any changes to your operating guidelines • Encourage members and participants to bring their own equipment (with reminders about requirements for both safety and hygiene) • Club owned wet weather gear, wetsuits or personal flotation devices should be cleaned and dried before and after use Follow this external link for further advice¹ • If you think any equipment has been exposed to virus, clean thoroughly and do not re-use for 72 hours²
Reducing the risk of virus transmission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insist anyone who is unwell with the symptoms of Covid-19 to avoid attending the club • Insist anyone who has contact with a family or household member who is unwell with the symptoms of Covid-19 to avoid attending the club for a minimum of 14 days • Encourage everyone to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ wash their hands after touching common surfaces– and always after coughing, sneezing and before and after arriving and leaving the club ○ to cover their mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing, and avoid touching their face, nose and eyes

¹ The external link is to a US organisation. The cleaning advice is valid, but the reference to shared garments is not consistent with current Sport England and DCMS advice, as of May14th.

² The risk of infection following contamination decreases over time. It is not clear when there is no risk, but studies of other viruses in the same family suggest that in most instances, the risk is likely to be reduced significantly after 72 hours. Source: [Cleaning in Non-healthcare Settings](#). Gov.uk. Accessed May 2020

Areas	Controls
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ keep your distance and avoid being face to face with people outside your household ○ use face coverings in enclosed spaces where social distancing isn't possible and where there is contact between people who don't normally meet – this does not replace social distancing ● Encourage people not to share water bottles or food, and discourage use of water fountains or shared filling stations ● Identify surfaces and shared equipment (including vessels) that are likely to be frequently touched and consider whether usage is appropriate ● Provide adequate facilities for members, volunteers and staff to wash or sanitise their hands ● Review the location of these facilities in relation to the surfaces or equipment that is likely to be used or touched by different users ● Provide products for members, volunteers and staff to clean their work areas before and after use ● Review the cleaning schedule and protocol so that all common surfaces and touch points can be cleaned and disinfected more frequently, using your usual cleaning products ● If shared equipment can't be cleaned consider withholding for 72 hours ● Keep club house and other areas (if open) well ventilated
Facilities - including club grounds, buildings, indoor facilities and changing rooms / toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Re-check latest 'Guidance for providers of outdoor facilities on the phased return of sport and recreation' at least weekly to see what indoor facilities can open. ● Close indoor facilities, apart from toilets and through-ways ● Close the club house or parts of it where social distancing or cleanliness cannot be controlled ● Liaise with other users of your site or facility to agree a common way of working to meet the government guidelines together ● Preview likely flow of people around the club (indoor and outside) and identify where 2 metre distancing is not possible and come up with alternatives ● Decide on signage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ good social distancing practice - one way systems, 2 metre markings, entry and exit routes, closing off some areas ○ good hygiene practice

Areas	Controls
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit capacity to ensure social distancing can be maintained • Limit access to changing rooms and toilets or restrict use of some facilities to ensure people can stay 2 metres apart • Limit access to shared lockers, or have a cleaning schedule that is realistic for their use • Replace hand dryers with paper towels in handwashing facilities • Increase ventilation wherever possible
Launching and mooring facilities, services and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide how social distancing can be maintained when loading / unloading, launching / recovering, and when waiting on pontoons or slipways • Assess whether social distancing can be maintained in club vessels as they ferry people to and from moorings • Have a plan for maintenance and fuelling options of vessels used to ferry people to and from moorings • Identify the equipment needed for any vessel or crew involved in launching or mooring facilities / services, including: face coverings; additional lines; boarding ladder; grab holds • Assess how to minimise the number of people needed to maintain services • Re-design the launching or mooring service so it can be carried out by members of the same household
Pontoons and slipways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review likely flow of people in rigging, launching and berthing areas • Identify where 2 metre distancing is not possible • Put in place signposting: one way systems; 2 metre markings; entry and exit routes; closing off some areas • Zone rigging, final preparation, launching and cleaning / rinsing areas • Limit assistance with berthing, trolleys, launching / recovery to household groups
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the range of activity (ashore and afloat) at the club and whether it can fit with the current Government guidelines to decide which can proceed, and which need to remain on hold. • Re-check the current advice of the emergency services and any local authorities / landlords responsible for the boating area • Map activities to the steps the Governments are considering: e.g. restarting school, expanding household groups or 'bubbles', opening some hospitality and leisure facilities

Areas	Controls
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only allow activities where individuals or households can participate by themselves while maintaining social distancing – avoid large groups • Do not organise events or competitions at this time • Limit coaching to 1:1 sessions • Assess the level of safety cover, support and supervision required for a considerate and conservative approach • When racing is considered a viable activity, consider adapting Sailing Instructions to make applying social distancing advice easier – see guidance from RYA Racing Department when available • When considering RYA Training Centre activity review the Restarting RYA Training guidelines document • When reviewing activities consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the likelihood of contact between members of different households ○ the needs of people who may have been asked to pay particular attention to social distancing ○ the numbers of people likely to be involved ○ to what extent the activity is outdoors or inside ○ the amount of travel participants will have to undertake to get to the club ○ the extent to which shared equipment will be used • If activities are re-designed check the new ways of working are realistic, safe, minimize impact on the emergency services, are considerate and conservative • Schedule activities for groups at different times of the day or week and staggering the start and end times of activity • Create a system so members can book time at the club or on the water (like you would book a golf tee time) • Introduce or update sign out / sign in procedures • Ask members to arrive dressed for the activity • Put in place a communication system for all participants (return to shore, hailing support, dealing with incidents, end of session) Explore alternative formats for activities that may make it easier to implement social distancing advice for staff, volunteers and participants
On the water safety	Preparing safety boats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the access to safety boats and storage / mooring options

Areas	Controls
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review maintenance and fuelling options • Identify the equipment needed to ease launch, recovery and rescue of people, including: face coverings; additional lines; kedg anchor; boarding ladder; heaving lines / throw bags; life buoys <p>Safety boat launch and recovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current launch and recovery methods to minimise risk of transmission of virus (consider using winches / vehicles to reduce people involved, long lines with 2 metre marks) • Minimise number of households involved in launch and recovery <p>Safety boat crew</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess your craft, location, and other safety boats afloat • Asses the safety boat manning levels (see G16 RYA Safety Boat Handbook for more details) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Balance the risk posed by potential transmission of the virus from your current operating procedures vs the risk posed by a potentially lower level of operability with different manning levels ○ Balance the number of vessels afloat with manning levels • Recruit safety cover from single households • Recruit experienced crew who are operating well within their competence and capabilities • Face coverings may protect others where social distancing isn't possible – wash your hands before putting them on and taking them off (they do not replace social distancing) • Use fixed teams for safety cover • Avoid face to face contact in the rib as much as possible • Hold briefings outside or in large, well ventilated areas with physical distancing guidelines in place • Update safety crew on latest procedures and techniques • Re-enforce briefings with key information online • Debrief online or using social media <p>Safety boat techniques</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain hailing distance unless physical support is required

Areas	Controls
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose techniques in line with RYA Safety Boat Handbook that minimise physical contact – for example mast tip / use of centreboard, scoop method • Where possible tow astern rather than alongside • If recovering a person to a safety boat consider methods to minimise physical and face to face contact: grab handles; using the engine as a step, deflate the sponson (ribs only) or using a hypo hoist / jason’s cradle or ladder system <p>On the water participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be conservative – stay within the limits of your ability • Factors to consider when deciding to go afloat include: forecast, temperature, wind speed, direction, sea state, tide, visibility, participants’ competence; safety crew competence; and types of craft involved • Use righting lines, long painters and mast head floats • Restrict your sailing area activities to make it easier for shore support and safety cover afloat • Allocate different sailing areas to different activities to make it easier for shore support and safety cover • If used, consider reducing maximum wind limits for different sailing areas • Remind members about the importance of having a plan, letting someone know what you are doing, and being in communication – use RYA SafeTrx, mobile phones, UHF or VHF radios • Sailors, coaches and instructors to stay in their own boats and maintain social distancing afloat
Bar and Catering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bars and restaurants remain closed until further notice • Take away services can be offered but hot or cold food must be consumed off the premises, outside the building • Assess when it is appropriate to open bar and catering facilities in line with Government guidance and legislation • Plan for how staff and volunteers can stay safe • Brief and train staff and volunteers on how to stay safe • Implement contactless payment and paperless ordering • Review likely flow of people around the bar, food serving and seating areas and identify where 2 metre distancing is not possible • Introduce signage: one way systems, 2 metre markings, entry and exit routes, closing off some areas

Areas	Controls
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a take away only service
Responding to a potential Covid-19 exposure at your club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow public health advice – new phases may include advice about contact tracing • Make sure everyone’s contact numbers and emergency contact details are up to date • Anyone who displays or develops symptoms of Covid-19 should be sent home

Appendices

Tool: Activities – Planning for the future

Use this matrix to record what is possible at your club as social distancing measures change following your review. Add/remove activities / areas that are relevant for your club.

Government Guidelines	Stay home, save lives – only leave home if it is essential	Stay alert, control the virus, save lives – unlimited exercise outside (England)	Phased return for Primary schools Non-essential retail	Places of worship Leisure facilities Hospitality	Restrictions lifted
Date	01/03/20 – 13/05/20	13/05/20 – 31/05/20	31/05/20 –30/06/20 (estimated)	01/07/20 -	
Activity / Area					
Limited opening for members	(Yes/No/Possibly)	(Yes/No/Possibly)	(Yes/No/Possibly)	(Yes/No/Possibly)	(Yes/No/Possibly)
Restricted sailing					
General sailing					
Simple racing					
Club racing					
Formal training					
Club house fully open					
Indoor sessions / events					
Open events					
Larger national events					

Tool: Clarifying controls

Use this tool whilst reviewing the considerations and controls within the table to list the likely controls required within each phase of the roadmap

Area	Controls currently in place	Extra Controls Required	Review point
General	e.g. Club house closed, staff training, member communication	e.g. extra signage, policies & procedures	e.g. 15/05/20
Reducing the risk of the virus			
Facilities			
Launching and mooring			
Pontoon and slipway			
Activities			
On the water safety			
Bar and catering			
Responding to a potential Covid-19 exposure at your club			
(insert area relevant to club)			
(insert area relevant to club)			
(insert area relevant to club)			
(insert area relevant to club)			

Tool: Covid-19 Secure Club Opening check-list

Action	Check	Date	Comment
Do you have an individual or team who are responsible for reviewing and implementing your policies and procedures?			
Are you aware of all relevant, current Government guidance, statutory requirements and checked with your insurers?			
Have you carried out a satisfactory risk assessment for any proposed activities?			
Have you taken appropriate steps to mitigate against the risk of infection amongst staff, volunteers and members?			
Have you taken appropriate actions to mitigate against the risk of requiring the emergency services?			
Are you confident you can offer an appropriately 'Covid secure' environment for your members?			
Do you know how you will manage a contact or suspected contact with Covid-19?			
Do you know how you will handle situations where club rules and guidance in relation to Covid-19 are not followed?			
Have you effectively communicated any new operating procedures with your members, staff and volunteers?			
Do you have a plan to review all of the above weekly?			

Useful links

Governments

England

[Coronavirus in England and the UK Government](#)

[Guidance on the phased return of sport and recreation](#)

[Guidance for the public on the phased return of outdoor sport and recreation](#)

[Guidance for personal trainers and coaches on the phased return of sport and recreation](#)

[Guidance for providers of outdoor facilities on the phased return of sport and recreation](#)

[Elite sport returns to training guidance: step one](#)

[Coronavirus: guidance for health professionals and other organisations](#)

Scotland

[Coronavirus in Scotland](#)

Wales

[Coronavirus in Wales](#)

[Leaving home to exercise in Wales](#)

RYA

[Coronavirus hub](#)

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[RYA Cymru Wales](#)

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[RYA Northern Ireland](#)