

## **Organisational Risk Assessment for Covid-19**

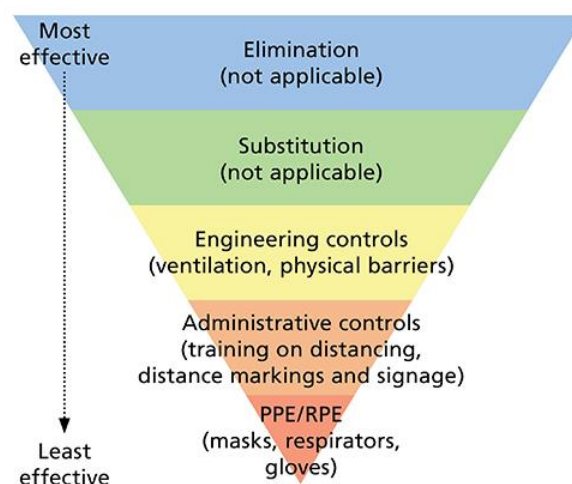
This document sets out Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust's response to the risks associated with Covid-19 to its staff, volunteers and visitors, including contractors and temporary workers, as well as any members of the public who might be affected by the Trust's operations. It does not seek to explain all 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, volunteers and others.

Covid-19 is a 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). If contracted, while many survive infection and make a full recovery, some suffer long-term debilitation and may even die from the disease. This is a serious hazard.

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 caused many people considerable stress.

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

Covid-19 hierarchy of control



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

### **Engineering controls**

Mitigation is focussed on touchpoints and face-to-face contact. Workshops and offices are being re-organised to gradually allow more people to return to work whilst keeping staff apart, eg single occupancy offices, perspex screen between desks, separate tool storage areas.

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.

Staff toilets are allocated each working day and cleaned before the start of the next working day. Toilets on nature reserves will reopen when necessary cleaning procedures are in place. Visitors are asked not to use bird hides due to their confined nature and the difficulty in maintaining hygiene standards. 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. If a vehicle does need to be used by another person, it should be cleaned before use. Car park charges have been suspended to reduce touchpoints for visitors and cash handling by staff; charging will only resume when appropriate procedures are in place.

### **Administrative controls**

The Trust's main way to reduce risk to staff and volunteers is to keep numbers in any one area to a minimum. Working from home is preferable. If this is not practical then there is a limit set for the number of people in offices and workshops at any one time. Information on handwashing is provided and systems are 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, 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.

Far Ings Visitor Centre and Gibraltar Point Café/Visitor Centre remain closed. Educational activities, Area Group meetings, volunteer groups and face-to-face committee/team/board type meetings all remain cancelled until Government advice changes.

### **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 other controls (engineered and administrative) are impractical but the decision has been made to carry out the task, should PPE be considered and included in the written risk assessment or used as an additional safeguard.

### **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/videoconference, request feedback from staff and ensure appropriate photographic and written records are maintained.

### **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 their 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.

### **Further Information**

Trust site, task and daily risk assessments are being updated to incorporate Covid-19 requirements. These will be reviewed on a regular basis in order to comply with the latest government advice.