



FOR A HAPPIER,
HEALTHIER SCOTLAND

Paths for All advisory note for community path groups Planning for working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19)

9 July, 2020

Here at Paths for All, we continue to monitor the guidance given by the Scottish Government throughout the Coronavirus pandemic and recognise that some of the recent restrictions have been further relaxed. With that in mind, we have amended our guidance to help community path groups plan for a future return to work. The overriding premise must always be to keep you, your volunteers and members of the public **safe at all times**. If that cannot be achieved, then do not undertake the work.

Advice for Phase 3 (from 10th July 2020 and subject to on-going Scottish Government guidance)

- Continue to consider whether the work is essential or if there is a significant benefit in undertaking the planned activity
 - *For example, in some circumstances, cut grass verges or passing places will enable people to move off the path, allowing others to pass more easily and maintain physical distancing. It may therefore be considered as a significant benefit on narrower and / or overgrown paths*
- Where work is deemed essential, because user safety is a critical issue, then consideration must be given as to how this work can be done safely and quickly; including whether there are others that could undertake this work on your behalf such as the Local Authority or private contractor.
- Avoid any complex tasks, or large-scale work.
- Consider carrying out more minor tasks individually such as light cutting back of vegetation (i.e. with secateurs), smaller litter picks (using litter pickers and gloves), simple gate maintenance, cleaning interpretation or waymarking signage and maybe even some wildlife or habitat monitoring.

- Choose tasks and sections of path where physical distancing, between individual path volunteers and members of the public, can be easily maintained.
- Do not share tools or materials.
- As more people return to work, our paths may become less busy on weekdays and within normal working hours. Weekends are likely to remain busy and should be avoided.
- If you have path construction works planned during the restricted period, and are concerned that funding timescales could be missed, contact your funder to discuss delaying the work timetable and agree a formal extension to the grant award.

Now is a good time to be making plans and discussing potential work.

The sort of planning that can be discussed now, so that you are ready when the circumstances are right, might include:

- Start discussing and planning for potential tasks within Phase 3 and beyond
- Discuss priority routes and make a plan of work
- Discuss duration of the tasks and location of work
- Discuss the number of volunteers that could be involved based on guidance
- Discuss travel arrangements to the site and on-site facilities i.e. access to toilets
- Reinforce and plan for safe working practice, both before and during any work period. Everyone must:
 - Always maintain physical distancing (at least 2 metres); when working together and with anyone who they may meet on the path.
 - Maintain good hygiene procedures, for example not touching their face and regularly cleaning hands with a waterless, hand sanitiser (min 70% alcohol content).
 - Provide and wear their own gloves or other PPE. If PPE has been provided, then ensure it has been sterilised before issue and then not shared with anyone else.
 - Avoid situations where people need to directly pass things to each other, such as tools or materials.
 - Ensure all hand tools and other equipment are properly cleaned and sanitised at the end of each workday. An additional precaution is to not touch, or otherwise re-use, any tools or equipment for a minimum of 72 hours.

For further advice, information and support contact: communitypaths@pathsforall.org.uk

Useful links

<https://www.pathsforall.org.uk/news/news-post/our-response-to-covid-19>

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/first-aid-and-medicals/first-aid-certificate-coronavirus.htm>

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-phase-3-staying-safe-and-protecting-others/pages/staying-safe/>