

# Guidance notes for Cityparks Volunteers during the COVID-19 Pandemic

30<sup>th</sup> June 2020

As we are all aware the past few months have been a difficult time for many and we need all our volunteers and other members of the public to remain safe. Below are some guidance notes that will help us all follow the government recommendations, as well as some more specific guidance for Cityparks volunteer tasks.

The UK recently moved from Category 4 to Category 3 Alert level (Level 1 = no cases - Level 5 = Critical), which means that the COVID-19 epidemic is still in general circulation in the UK but that fatalities and infection rates are continuing to fall. Social distancing guidance also changed from 2 metres to 1 metre +, which should facilitate wider social and economic recovery, however the 2 metre rule still applies wherever possible.

Naturally these guidelines are subject to change so this document will be kept under constant review. In order to work on Council sites all volunteers must comply with these guidelines.

Group volunteer tasks are currently not permitted but we are hoping to resume these soon. A gradual reintroduction to group volunteering can take place once the national Alert Level is reduced from 3 to 2.

The group-related information provided in this document is to help groups and leaders prepare for when things move forward.

## General guidance notes for Volunteers

- Do not volunteer, stay at home and get a test if you are experiencing any of the following symptoms: a high temperature, a new continuous cough, a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste. If you are in any doubt do not volunteer. Further information can be found here: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>
- Do not volunteer if you are over 70 or you have a long-term health condition or weakened immune system, or you are pregnant. Comprehensive guidance on specific health conditions that may place you in the vulnerable or extremely vulnerable group can be found at section 9 of this document: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>
- Do not volunteer if someone other than you in your home is displaying symptoms of COVID 19, or they belong to a vulnerable or extremely vulnerable group.
- Follow Social Distancing guidelines at all times aiming for at least 2 metres between yourself and others. If you do have any concerns with the activity you are participating in and your ability to maintain social distancing, please remove yourself and seek further assistance from - [cityparks@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:cityparks@brighton-hove.gov.uk) or call 01273 292929
- Anyone who may be expected not to adhere to Social Distancing guidelines such as young children or people with learning differences/disabilities should not currently volunteer
- Wear any appropriate PPE such as gloves (rubber gloves under gardening gloves is safest) and ensure there are wipes, hand sanitiser or hand washing facilities available after removing gloves or before touching your face, after touching foreign objects and when the task is complete. You may choose to wear your own face mask. If you choose to wear a face mask please avoid touching it where possible
- All volunteer activities must take place outside. No congregating/loading/unloading in offices, workshops or other enclosed spaces

- No refreshments are to be shared on site, and volunteers should use anti-viral wipes, hand sanitizer or wash their hands after removing gloves in order to eat or drink
- Volunteers should make their own way to the work site, avoiding public transport where possible. Do not share vehicle with other volunteers to get to the work site, other than those in own household
- Do not share tools or other equipment, or if unavoidable ensure all items are cleaned thoroughly with anti-viral wipes before and after use. Ideally each volunteer should either bring their own tools/equipment or keep them for the duration of the task

### **Lone Working**

Lone working volunteer roles such as Looking, litter picking, seed collecting and path maintenance may be carried out by individuals providing they have attended the relevant training course or hold a Volunteer Leader qualification, or have received task specific instruction from the relevant CityParks employee. Please adhere to the relevant guidance notes above and ensure your Council contact (ranger etc) is aware of the activity.

### **Groups**

- Volunteer groups should be limited to no more than six people.
- There must be a trained Leader on site at all times, who must ensure all volunteers have signed in and understand any risks before commencing work
- There must be a qualified First Aider on site at all times, who is prepared to act in an emergency.
- Adhere to the relevant general guidance notes above and ensure your Council contact (ranger etc) is aware of the activity.

### **Notes for Volunteer Leaders**

- Please ensure the sign-in sheet is completed by all volunteers, which could also be useful regarding people's movements and potential contact history in the event of a localised COVID-19 outbreak
- Leaders will be expected to read, understand and sign the Council's generic COVID-19 Risk Assessment and/or guidance sheet and the more specific COVID-19 Volunteer Risk Assessment and/or guidance sheet before leading a group, and to broadcast this information to the group before commencing work.
- In the event of a serious injury any First Aid or life support should be prioritised over COVID-19 protocols. For minor injuries such as cuts the volunteer should be encouraged to apply a plaster/bandage themselves
- Volunteers may not disclose personal information such as age, pregnancy or whether they may be in a high-risk category but please ensure you make all attendees aware of the national guidelines

### **Insurance and Permissions**

Volunteers working on council land must have permission and an agreed work programme. Volunteers are only covered by council insurance if they are being overseen by a council officer or accredited volunteer leader, or in the case of lone volunteers, have completed a council training programme.

n.b. where a formal lease is in place it is the responsibility of the leaseholder to ensure that adequate health and safety and insurance are in place.