

21st March 2020

## COVID19 - GUIDANCE FOR BGA MEMBER CLUBS (Issue 02)

The BGA recognises the challenges facing the UK population from COVID19 and continues to encourage all BGA member clubs to follow the latest [Government guidance](#). Safety of all people is the BGA's priority.

The BGA expects that clubs will make their own decisions in relation to ongoing operational, social and administrative matters.

In light of yesterday's revision of Government guidance which now includes the instruction to close pubs, nightclubs, restaurants and many other venues including indoor leisure and sports facilities after Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March, it becomes a fine and very sensitive judgement whether gliding operations should continue.

Gliding is, after all, an activity which brings people together and although the activity is largely outside and is in parts "isolated", working close to others is almost always required to deliver the activity. Any club considering even a restricted operation would need to establish strong policies and implement strict procedures to mitigate the new risks. In particular, it is important to consider not only the modes of transmission of the virus as they occur in use of gliders, tugs, airfield vehicles and equipment, facilities, *on or off the airfield*, but also the people to whom the virus might be transmitted. Transmission can be airborne, by direct person to person contact, or indirectly eg via aircraft controls.

- It is strongly recommended that as soon as practically possible, all club committees decide how they will align with [Government guidance](#), including re social mixing and, should the club decide to continue to operate even with restrictions, that the policies and procedures are clearly communicated to their members. It would be prudent to consider in advance that government guidance might bring in further restrictions at short notice.
- Operation of *any* aeroplanes, gliders and equipment including for example winches and vehicles by more than one person, whether or not at the same time, presents a risk of transmission of the virus.
- Public perception of what *appears* to be business as normal for gliding clubs whilst other local activities and businesses are being required to cease or severely restrict their operations should be carefully considered during clubs' decision making.
- Where restricted flying operations are in place, suitable mitigations should be established under the club CFI to maintain a safe operation, including pilot authorisations for the planned activity. This may mean that some club pilots cannot fly. CFI's and others can refer to [BGA requirements and guidance](#) including [Managing Flying Risk](#). A routine field retrieval may become extremely difficult to facilitate and result in a risk of transmission of the virus.

Providing ongoing engagement and interest for all club members and encouragement for renewed memberships, which will become vital once the pandemic situation improves, will require ongoing effective leadership by the club committee. The BGA is actively pursuing and developing online activities for access by large groups of pilots to help to maintain engagement with gliding over the months ahead.

If club officials need more information, please do get in touch through the normal channels. Please note that up to date news is published at <https://members.gliding.co.uk/news-notice/> and repeated where appropriate on BGA social media.

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