

BGA GUIDANCE – COVID19 AND GLIDING OPERATIONS



Gliding

The sport of gliding of course takes place outdoors. With care and within limits, gliding can be compatible with social distancing and other COVID19 mitigating requirements. This BGA guidance supports solo and dual/instructional flying, including introductory flights.

It must be noted that Government public health requirements and implementation dates may differ between England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. BGA will endeavour to identify any relevant differences between countries which are directly relevant to operations at gliding sites. Other differences, such as quarantine and local restrictions are not included here and should be carefully considered by individuals and clubs in areas where they apply. The following guidance is relevant everywhere.

COVID19 considerations

- Glider pilots are for the most part in good health (being fit for flight puts a person at the higher than average of the medical fitness spectrum) **but** some are in a risk category (eg; age, associated medical issues, etc.)
- The infection status of members at the same site will certainly not be identical, or even known. In addition, remember that someone with the disease can infect others even before showing any signs of the disease.
- The importance of avoiding a further wave of infections

COVID19 mitigation

The following BGA guidance, which supports a COVID-safe risk assessed and risk managed approach to restarting gliding operations, is based on [published official guidance from DfT](#), and all must be alert to any forthcoming new or revised information which may call for new or different actions. Members should also keep each other honest in the interest of the wider community.

Members responsibilities

1. Members who are vulnerable or extremely vulnerable (if in doubt, please seek advice from a GP) should follow the [relevant guidance](#). This may mean that they cannot visit a gliding club.
2. Members who [have COVID19 symptoms must stay at home and follow NHS guidance](#).
3. Members who:
 - have been diagnosed with COVID19 at any time during the past 14 days, or
 - have had symptoms of COVID19 at any time in the past 7 days, or
 - have been in close contact with someone who has COVID19 (less than 1m for more than 15 mins or direct physical contact) in the past 14 days, or
 - are required to be quarantinedmust stay away from the club and follow the current NHS guidance.
4. Members must comply with social distancing requirements. Ideally, people should maintain 2m distance from each other. Where that is not possible and is permitted under national public health guidance, they should maintain 1m distance with a nose and mouth covering (known as a face covering).
5. Members are responsible for their own compliance with Govt 'local lockdown' requirements, including restrictions on travel into and out of these areas.

Club responsibilities

6. Members may be feeling anxious about visiting the site whilst at the same time having a sense of duty. It should be made clear to all members that there is no obligation of attendance or participation.

7. Assess risks, mitigating actions, and required compliance, eg:

SIGNAGE reminding people re:

- *HANDS*. Regularly clean hands.
- *FACE*. Use face coverings when inside or dual flying (if safe to do so).
- *SPACE*. People should maintain 2m distance from each other. Where that is not possible and is permitted under national public health guidance, they should maintain 1m distance with a face covering. People must avoid gathering at the club in groups of more than six.

ACCESS to:

- Hand washing or disinfecting facilities, open or pedal operated bins, and toilet facilities.
- Disposable gloves where required, eg for using shared equipment.
- Arrangements for frequent cleaning of equipment and surfaces that are touched regularly, using standard cleaning products (see note below regarding aircraft cockpit cleaning).

CLUBHOUSE and briefing facility instructions:

- How to maintain social distancing in the building.
- Limitations on the number of people using the facility at any one time.
- Opening hours.
- Use of catering and bar facilities.

DUAL FLYING guidance:

Easily understood and practical guidance on how to limit exposure when operating two-seat gliders, including;

- Reasonably minimise the number of student pilots each instructor flies with
- Minimise the flight time to that reasonably required to complete the flight aims
- Cockpit cleaning pre and post flight (see guidance below)
- Avoid close (less than 2m, or 1m with face coverings) face to face dialogue during ground briefings
- Use face coverings in flight (if it is safe and practical to do so, noting passengers must use a face covering).
- Avoid the need for close assistance when strapping in and exiting the cockpit.
- Consider supervision and care implications under COVID19 measures.

END OF FLYING DAY guidance:

- Clean shared facilities.
- Everyone should wash their hands for 20 seconds before departing.

TRACKING AND TRACING:

- Support contact tracing by knowing who is at the club, when, and how to contact them.
- If the clubhouse is open to the public (rather than members only), use the Govt sponsored QR code track and trace system <https://www.gov.uk/create-coronavirus-qr-poster>

Face coverings.

When face coverings are being worn:

- In all cases, face coverings (or any other protective equipment) must not interfere with the operation of the aircraft.
- Pilots need to consider the likelihood of spectacles or sunglasses steaming up.
- Two-seat flying will require a pre-launch communication check between both pilots.
- Consider that in general people may not be heard as clearly as they otherwise would.

Cockpit cleaning

In addition to regular cleaning of wing tips and other touched surfaces, prior to another pilot occupying the cockpit it needs to be cleaned using an antiseptic wipe or solution that cannot damage the aircraft materials.

Particular attention should be paid to:

- Canopy opening handles, the control handles and stick, the instrument panel buttons and knobs
- Microphone gooseneck, microphone head and grille. It may be helpful to install a food-type clingfilm on the head of the microphone that should be replaced each time the pilot changes.
- Seat harness buckles and pull-down straps.

To minimise the amount of cleaning required during the day, it will be helpful to limit the sharing of aircraft equipment, such as parachutes. Where the equipment is to be used by another person, it should be cleaned as described above ([see BGA published guidance re cleaning parachute harnesses](#)). Headsets should ideally be personally owned and used. If not, they should be carefully cleaned as described above.

Guidance summary

Before going to the club	<p>Members who are vulnerable or extremely vulnerable or have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any COVID19 symptoms, or • been diagnosed with COVID19 at any time during the past 14 days, or • had symptoms of COVID19 at any time in past 8 days, or • been in close contact with someone who has COVID19 (less than 1m for more than 15 mins or direct physical contact) in the past 14 days, • or are required to be quarantined <p>must stay away from the club and follow the current NHS guidance. Members are responsible for their compliance with Govt 'local lockdown' requirements, including travel restrictions.</p>
General	<p>Supportive and consistent messaging and direction is needed, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HANDS. Regularly clean hands. • FACE. Use face coverings when inside and when dual flying (if safe to do so). • SPACE. Maintain 2m distance from each other. Where that is not possible and is permitted under national public health guidance, maintain 1m distance with a face covering. • Avoid gathering in groups of more than six.
Dual/instructional flying (where permitted by national public health guidance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise numbers of students per instructor • Maintain social distancing during briefings • Minimise the time spent airborne to that required to complete the training • Use face coverings unless unsafe to do so.
Introductory flights & visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider supervision and care implications under COVID19 measures • Maintain a list of visitors for contact tracing purposes • Passengers must use face covering.

Other Guidance.

The BGA publishes supporting guidance for clubs and members, including this document, on its members website at <https://members.gliding.co.uk/covid19-restrictions-support-exemptions-and-restarting-gliding-information/>