



horsescotland
enable develop excel
the national organisation for all
equestrian sports and activity in Scotland

COVID-19: Phase One Guidance

INTRODUCTION

On 28 May 2020 the Scottish Government announced a move to Phase 1 of their Route Map out of the lockdown restrictions which were implemented as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This phase includes a limited extension to physical exercise which will allow some sporting activities to be undertaken outdoors, providing all activity is consistent with current Scottish Government guidance on health, physical distancing and hygiene.

Our equestrian community has been given a very welcome opportunity to benefit from the relaxed restrictions. We urge everyone involved in the sport to be respectful of the guidelines. This will help us ensure that we can advance to a fully phased reintroduction of the sport as we all know and love it, when the time is right.

The Scottish Government continues to monitor the situation closely and has not ruled out the reintroduction of restrictions, which could see activity suspended once again if public health measures dictate, or if the guidelines are not followed. It is therefore important that the equestrian community take the necessary steps outlined in this document prior to re-starting any activity and adhere to the guidelines, which could be subject to update or change at any time.

There may be a variance in guidelines and procedures throughout the UK, and it is therefore important that riding schools, livery yards, outdoor facilities, coaches, and participants in Scotland follow the guidance outlined by **horsescotland** and the Scottish Government.

Whilst Phase 1 sees an extension to physical exercise, the pandemic will continue – so it is important that all operational procedures continue to reinforce and maintain the base guidelines to reduce virus transmission. Our guidance for riding schools, livery yards, outdoor facilities, coaches and participants are detailed below.

IMPORTANT: Do not leave your home to undertake exercise or outdoor activity if Scottish Government advice means you should stay at home because you or someone you live with has or has had symptoms of COVID-19, or you are in the most vulnerable category and have been advised to shield from the coronavirus.

GUIDANCE FOR YARDS / RIDING SCHOOLS

The following procedures set out the basis on how yards and riding schools can open for exercise activity and provide a safe environment for participants as outlined by the Scottish Government's Phase 1 relaxation of restrictions. Please check the [horsescotland](http://horsescotland.org/covid-19support) website regularly for updates. www.horsescotland.org/covid-19support

All activity needs to be consistent with current guidance on health, physical distancing and hygiene – yards/riding schools should also make sure they can adapt to changes in guidance at short notice. If your yard/riding school cannot adhere to the guidelines, you should not re-start activities.

This section includes advice on:

- General Guidelines
- Staff and Volunteers
- Guidance for Yards and Riding Schools
- Guidance for Coaches / Coaching
- Guidance for other Equine Professionals
- Guidance for Riders / Carriage Drivers
- Bookings and Payment
- Health, Safety & Hygiene
- Equipment
- Communication

General Guidelines

- Travel restrictions outlined by the Scottish Government should always be adhered to by members. You should only travel within your local area, which is broadly 5 miles from your home.
www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others/pages/meeting-others-outdoors/
- Physical distancing rules outlined by the Scottish Government should always be adhered to.
www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-covid-19-physical-distancing
- Members who are in the highest risk (shielding) group outlined by the Government should stay away from the club/venue
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/covid-shielding/pages/highest-risk-classification/>
- Members with colds or any symptoms of COVID-19 should not be allowed on the premises of the yard or riding school
- Appropriate management processes must be in place to oversee and maintain the implementation of measures outlined in this guidance. Venues are advised to take time to ensure they reopen safely

- Yards/ridings schools and coaches should check that their insurance cover is valid and in place before any activity takes place.
- Only outdoor riding and carriage activity is allowed during Phase 1.

Staff and Volunteers

- Yards and riding schools must ensure that relevant workplace guidance is followed for contractors and staff/volunteers and ensure existing health and safety advice is maintained and aligned. This should be detailed in a documented risk assessment.
- Competitions
 - The initial focus during this phase should be on facilitating recreational and social play, and letting participants practice and exercise.
 - At the present time no competitions or shows should take place.

Guidance for Yards and Riding Schools

- All indoor facilities must remain closed to the public including toilets, café's, retail outlets and indoor arenas.
- Riding schools may re-open for sessions with members of the same household, or one other person (individual sessions).
- Participants must accept all protocols adopted by the venue provider and satisfy themselves that these are appropriate.
- Risk assessments should be carried out and documented by yards/riding schools and coaches for all activities and facilities. Consider safety first, particularly minimising the risk of infection/transmission. Appropriate measures must be put in place to ensure participants, staff and volunteers are protected. Sample risk assessments are available for coaches from your National Body, including BHS. www.bhs.org.uk/advice-and-information/coronavirus-covid-19/risk-assessment
- Yards and riding schools are permitted to carry out routine maintenance and duties to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of horses, but the primary consideration must be to ensure the safety of participants, staff and volunteers.
- No spectating should take place but where a parent is supervising a child or vulnerable adult, this will be allowed if physical distancing measures are followed.
- Limits on the number of participants allowed on yards should be considered to ensure appropriate physical distancing can always be maintained, particularly in arenas and stables.
- Yards and riding school operators must ensure that relevant workplace guidance is followed for contractors and staff and ensure existing health and safety advice is maintained and aligned. This should be detailed in the risk assessment.

Guidance for Coaches / Coaching

One on one coaching is permitted if it is outdoors, physical distancing can be maintained, and is with members of your household and/or members of 1 other household.

Coaches, yards and riding schools should ensure the following guidance is followed:

- People who are shielding should not attend activities. People who are symptomatic should self-isolate for 7 days: household members for 14 days as per info on NHS guidance. No one who is self-isolating should attend an outdoor sports activity.
- At all times coaches and participants should adhere to the Scottish Government's physical distancing guidelines of staying at least 2m away from others.
- Travel should be local and in line with Scottish Government guidelines. Avoid peak travel times where possible.
- Coaching risk assessments must be carried out and documented at all sites. Consider safety first, particularly minimising the risk of infection/transmission. Appropriate physical distancing and hygiene measures must be put in place to ensure participants, staff and volunteers are always protected. Sample risk assessments should be available for coaches from your National Body, including BHS.

www.bhs.org.uk/advice-and-information/coronavirus-covid-19/risk-assessment

- Where third party premises are utilised, prior agreement should be sought from the facility owner. Please follow the guidance for venues-outdoors.
- Appropriate insurance policies should be in place for all coached activities and checked for validity with the relevant insurance provider before undertaking work with clients.
- Coaches should not deliver training to more than 1 household at any one time or provide training to more than 1 household per day.
- When participating in coached sessions, where possible, avoid touching surfaces and sharing equipment and touching your mouth and face.
- Coaches should plan appropriately the session in advance, be aware of responsibilities, be clear on expectations with participants and build in a review period to reflect on effectiveness and safety of the session.
- Cleaning, hand, and respiratory hygiene are core measures and provision should be made for these. Clear guidance and plans are needed for cleaning of equipment and waste disposal. Note that toilets and other washing facilities will not be available. Detailed guidance is available at;

www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/web-resources-container/covid-19-guidance-for-non-healthcare-settings/

www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/hand-hygiene/

- Personal equipment should not be shared, and measures must be put in place to reduce the risk of contamination.
- Communication with participants is important and should be planned for:
 - Coaches should ensure they have an approach to activity that is feasible to deliver safely.
 - Participants should know what to do before, during and after attending their coached session.
- Workforce. Yards and riding schools must ensure that relevant workplace guidance is followed for contractors and staff and that existing health and safety advice is maintained and aligned. This should be detailed in the risk assessment.

Full information can be found here:

www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others/pages/exercise/

Guidance for other Equine Professionals

- Other equine professionals can attend your horse.
- Risk assessments should be carried out and documented for all activities and facilities. Consider safety first, particularly minimising the risk of infection/transmission. Appropriate measures must be put in place to ensure participants, staff and volunteers are protected - sample risk assessments should be available for Professionals from your National Body, including BETA.
- Where third party premises are utilised, prior agreement should be sought from the facility owner.
- Travel should be local and in line with Scottish Government guidelines. Avoid peak travel times where possible.
- Any professional support network member that is in any doubt should seek clarification from their insurance provider or registered body.
- Venue operators must ensure that relevant workplace guidance is followed for contractors and staff and ensure existing health and safety advice is maintained and aligned. This should be detailed in the risk assessment.

Guidance for Riders/ Carriage Drivers

- You can use/hire outdoor riding or driving facilities alone, or with another household, where two households come together it is up to a maximum of eight people at any one time. Additionally, members of a household should only meet with one other household per day.

You must accept all protocols adopted by the venue provider and satisfy yourself that these are appropriate including all health, safety and hygiene guidelines. Further guidance on hand hygiene is available at; www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/hand-hygiene/

People who are showing signs of Covid-19 or shielding should not visit venues or undertake activities. People who are symptomatic should self-isolate for 7 days; household members for 14 days as per info on NHS guidance. No one who is self-isolating should attend an outdoor sports facility/activity.

- You can ride or carriage drive as often as you wish outdoors.
- You can do this alone, or with another household, where two household come together it is up to a maximum of eight people at any one time but should be in line with Scottish Government physical distancing regulations, namely participants remaining at least 2m apart. Additionally, members of a household should only meet with one other household per day.
- You can travel locally to exercise your horse – Scottish Governments recommendation is broadly 5 miles.
- Please give the usual consideration to other users of the countryside and the environment – please tidy up after yourself and remove droppings wherever possible.
- Riding or travelling on public roads during peak travel times should be avoided if possible.
- Assessments of all activities and facilities should be carried out in advance of participating in the activity to consider safety first, particularly minimising the risk of infection/transmission.
- Ensure to participate within your ability and do not take unnecessary risks. Emergency services are currently stretched and may take longer than normal to attend incidents.
- For further specific Carriage Driving advice please refer to British Carriage Driving.

www.britishcarriagedriving.co.uk/news/2020/25_bef_statement_21_may.htm

IMPORTANT: Do not leave your home to undertake exercise or outdoor activity if Scottish Government advice means you should stay at home because you or someone you live with has or has had symptoms of COVID-19, or you are in the most vulnerable category and have been advised to shield from the coronavirus.

Bookings and Payment

- Online bookings should be taken if possible. If not, alternative measures should be put in place including phone bookings.

- Given the fluidity of the situation, bookings may be subject to late changes. Yards / Riding Schools should endeavour to give individuals as much notification to changes as is possible.
- Where possible and in line with Data Protection regulations, a register of users should be kept in case there is a need to track and trace.
- Consider introducing buffer periods between riding sessions to stagger start times so that participants do not all arrive/leave at the same time.
- Where possible use online or contactless payment options and avoid handling cash.

Health, Safety & Hygiene

- Cleaning of equipment, hand and respiratory hygiene are core measures to be implemented and provision should be made for these.
- www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/web-resources-container/covid-19-guidance-for-non-healthcare-settings/
www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/hand-hygiene/
- Clear guidance and plans are needed for cleaning of facilities and equipment, and waste disposal. For instance, common touchpoint surfaces (gates, door handles, handrails etc) should where possible be left open but if not possible, regular cleaning with disposable gloves should be undertaken.
- Only one person should be in a stable at any one time.
- Participants should stay within their skill level and comfort zone, avoiding unnecessary risk of injury.
- Hand hygiene is essential and participants should ensure they have disinfected their hands with anti-bacterial agents before and after undertaking activity.
- Content of all used onsite bins should be safely disposed of and wash stations/equipment/buckets etc cleaned down at the end of each set of activity.

Equipment

- Participants should where possible use their own equipment to avoid contact and the risk of cross infection.
- If using venue equipment or sharing equipment / carriages, then effective processes must be in place to ensure all equipment is sterilised before the next use.
- Yards and Riding Schools should, where possible, remove equipment including benches, poles and any other objects that are not essential for participation purposes.
- Cleaning measures, including provision of disposable gloves, antiviral wipes / spray and paper towels should be implemented on site and disposed of in on-site bins after use.

- For specific carriage cleaning advice please refer to British Carriage Driving www.britishcarriagedriving.co.uk/news/2020/25_bef_statement_21_may.htm

Communication with Members/Customers

- Yards and riding schools should communicate clearly and regularly with users and participants setting out what they are doing to manage risk, and what advice they are giving to individuals before, during and after visits to the venue/activity.
- Make them aware in advance of measures you are putting in place at your venue, and guidelines they are asked to follow.
- Ideally yards/riding schools should publish an action plan detailing their plans to re-open safely.
- Communicate clearly opening times and how people can safely access a facility, if relevant, for example through a booking or queuing system.
- It is more important than ever to consider inclusive guidance for people who need support to be active and clubs/operators should consider this as part of their work to encourage people to return.
- Ensure signage on guidelines for participating safely and promoting hygiene measures are clearly displayed and up to date.
- Booking reminders should contain reminders re steps participants will be required to follow.