



Return to Cricket

Guidance for Outdoor Cricket Activity during Enhanced Local Areas Restrictions

Updated 12/03/21

Introduction

Following the Scottish Government announcement on 9th March, key changes are permitted for outdoor sport and exercise coming into effect on Friday 12th March.

These measures are a mixture of national and regional in scope and will be in place for mainland Scotland and should be read in conjunction with the latest [sportscotland Return to Sport and Physical Activity guidelines](#).

- The Local Areas can be found [HERE](#).
- Information on the Local Protection Levels can be found [HERE](#)

The key changes for cricket activity concerns adults (18+) youth (12 & Over) and juniors (Under 12).

- 1 Outdoor sport & group exercise – 12 and over**
Up to 15 people can take part in outdoor non-contact sport or exercise (training or intra-club competition). This number includes coaches.
- 2 Outdoor sport & group exercise – Under 12**
Up to 30 juniors can take part in outdoor non-contact sport or exercise (training or intra-club competition). This number includes coaches.
- 3 Travel restrictions**
People should stay as close to home as possible, in line with current travel restrictions, however some flexibility will be given to under 18s allowing parents to drive under 18's outside their local area for their regular organised group activity. Adults **must** stay within their own local area.

Scottish Government guidance on travel and transport can be found [HERE](#)

Guidance for Clubs on Return to Use of Cricket Grounds

There is no obligation for clubs to reopen their facilities from 12th March and clubs should only do so when they are ready and when they can do so safely, following public health guidance.

Clubs should be aware that this is subject to change if there is a worsening of the COVID-19 situation and/or Government advice changes. Please visit the Cricket Scotland website regularly for updates.

This guide covers:

- 1 What has changed and what clubs can re-open?
- 2 What work will need to be done to prepare facilities?
- 3 How to operate your facility safely including:
 - Establishing a booking system to avoid crowding and allow contact tracing
 - Maintaining safe access and movement around site
 - Setting some ground rules and ensuring compliance
 - A reminder of the precautions that still need to be taken
- 4 Guidance for individuals.
- 5 Guidance for coaches.

1 What Can Clubs Re-open and When?

The club COVID Officer should be involved in all decisions regarding the opening of facilities and club training plans.

As of 12th March, clubs in Scotland are able to:

- Reopen their outfielders for outdoor sport activity that complies with the Government guidance and maintains physical distancing
- Reopen their cricket nets in a way that maintains physical distancing - if a club has a two-bay net they can reopen both of these bays taking into consideration appropriate space for players to be able to physically distance
- Closed signs should be displayed when facilities are not open (including where a club does not wish to or is not ready to reopen) to deter use by general public particularly where there is open access
- Club buildings including changing rooms and bar) and any other communal areas are to remain closed. Toilet facilities can be opened if the venue wishes, but this is subject to increased hygiene routines being put in place and in line with [Health Protection Scotland guidelines](#). Particular care should be taken by those using them and those cleaning them. Where they are open, venues must ensure soap and water is provided.

In all cases, where there are multiple bubbles operating at the same venue (ie two groups of 15 adults training at opposite sides of the pitch), these must be risk assessed to ensure there can be no mixing of participants before, during or after the activity. Specific mitigations could include staggered start times, limiting car parking or controlling access / egress points.

2 Getting Your Facility Ready

In summary, clubs must ensure:

- Properly maintained facilities
- We continue to recommend a booking system for net and other outdoor space or other means to manage access and demand. For clubs that are part of a larger sports facility, we recommend engaging with the other sports if they are also using a booking procedure
- The capability to advise individuals when booking to check for symptoms of COVID-19 and in turn to advise individuals when booking that in line with current Government guidance if they are symptomatic, living in a household with a possible COVID-19 infection or if they are classified as extremely vulnerable on health grounds, they should remain at home and follow Government guidance
- A sanitation procedure between use/booking
- Appropriate documented risk assessments completed to ensure physical distancing, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- Updated signage and access points
- Clubs are advised to contact their insurance provider to establish if their policies are up to date in regard to COVID-19

Cricket Scotland have produced on a set of downloadable resources to support clubs with the above which include:

- Template risk assessments,
- Template member letters
- Template signage

For full details visit [HERE](#)

3 How to Operate Your Facility Safely

The following section details guidance on the safe operating of your facility.

3.1 Access to the facility

- A representative of the club should act as COVID Monitor and be present during opening times. This can be for example, the coach or club captain, however they must be in contact with the Club COVID Officer prior to their training session to agree appropriate health & safety procedures. We also advise them to complete the **sportscotland** online COVID Officer training module [HERE](#)
- This COVID Monitor should carry out regular checks to ensure the facilities are safe to use.
- Clubs should provide access where possible through a separate entrance and exit, operating a one-way system. If these entrances are gated, they should be opened fully so that users do not touch the gates or locks.
- This also applies to the net area, where possible leave the area fully accessible to minimise touch points. If this is unavoidable a cleaning station should be provided and posters displayed to encourage cleaning down of touch points.

- Clubs should ensure usual access to first aid and emergency equipment is maintained (in some cases this may require limited access to the clubhouse).
- Guidance on delivering first aid during the COVID-19 pandemic is available on the St John Ambulance website [HERE](#).
- As clubhouses will still be closed (other than for access to toilets) for general use and no changing facilities are available, clubs should make participants aware of this when booking. These facilities are to remain closed in order to reduce social interaction to help reduce the transmission of COVID-19.
- Participants should be encouraged to use home toilet facilities before attending and to wash their hands-on arrival back home.
- Hand sanitiser with an alcohol content of at least 60% should be made readily available at entrance/exit points and the net area.
- Where this is not possible due to lack of supply, participants will need to be informed in order to arrange their own hand washing procedures whether it be washing their hands before leaving the house (and when they return home) or taking hand sanitiser with them.
- Signage is a great way to reinforce the messages in this document and will help users understand why access is still limited at this phase and how the controls in place are protecting them and others.
- You must allow sufficient time for maintenance of your facility in your operating/booking schedule – consult with your grounds manager to ensure you allocate sufficient times for maintenance in good weather.
- Cricket Scotland will provide downloadable signage, including access control and example operating rules.

3.2 Taking Bookings

To operate the facility safely and minimise the risk of spreading COVID-19, a controlled booking system should be put in place.

- Bookings will enable the club to control the number of people accessing the facility and reduce the likelihood of gatherings which are not permitted under Government guidelines
- A well-managed booking system will also enable contact tracing if there is a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection of a user

This does not require specific software; you could use a shared calendar app e.g. Time Tree or keep paper records.

One person must be responsible for collecting booking requests, allocating time slots, keeping records of which slots have been allocated to which users, and communicating the allocation to users.

Clubs should decide on their opening and closing times, the length of their available time slots and which areas of the outfield and nets are safe to use. Consider change-over time, clean-down time of nets and how to keep a record of bookings for contact tracing.

For example, a paper or electronic record covering hourly time slots from 10am until 4pm for single-lane use, 50 minutes net practice followed by 10 minutes clean-down/change-over time ahead of the next participants.

Clubs must also:

- Maintain an accurate written record and contact information of who has attended to support contact tracing in the case of a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection
- Continue to comply with all safeguarding guidance
- Ensure they have all the appropriate and up-to-date insurance
- Continue to comply with data protection law including not sharing personal details of participants with others without having a legal basis for doing so (e.g. avoid making booking management system 'live' with personal details for all to see). [For further information see here.](#)

3.3 Establishing and Communicating Operating Rules

Operating rules will need to vary by venue to fit with site-specific restrictions and risk assessments, but should include the following as a minimum:

- Do not attend if you or anyone in your household displays symptoms or your household is currently in isolation (full details at the beginning of this document)
- Personal hygiene measures should be carried out at home before and after use of the facility.
- Bring your own hand sanitiser where possible. If this isn't possible wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after visiting the club
- Travel together as a household
- Avoid public transport
- Try not to arrive too early, aim to arrive at the start of your slot to help with social distancing
- Bring your own playing/training equipment including balls
- Bring your own filled drinking bottles
- Avoid touching as much as possible whilst on club premises and use cleaning stations whenever available
- Do not overstay your allocated time slot, you should be clear of the area by the time the next users arrive. Do not stay to socialise
- If bowling machines are used, please ensure they are cleaned thoroughly between uses with dry-cleaning products and that all balls used are cleaned with disinfectant This is the responsibility of the bowling machine operator
- Do not leave private property behind
- No spitting
- No saliva or sweat should come into contact with the ball at any time
- As always, the health and safety of participants is paramount - please ensure those using the nets minimise the risk of injury (wear helmets, pads etc).
- As well as response times being delayed this is vital to encourage all users to report any infection of their household following use of the facility to allow effective contact tracing and to limit the spread of the virus

These rules should be clearly communicated to each person making a booking, on club social media channels and through signage at access points to grounds and close to net facilities. Signage should be laminated to improve durability and updated and replaced as required.

3.4 Cricket Equipment

Cricket Scotland recommends players use their own equipment where possible. Where possible, limit the sharing of equipment. If you are sharing equipment, including balls, you should wash your hands thoroughly before and after use.

No saliva or sweat should come into contact with the ball at any time.

3.5 Preparing the Nets

Because of the timing of the most recent COVID-19 lockdown from December until early March, many clubs have not conducted the pre-season work that normally takes place. This includes the preparation of nets. The safe and effective installation of netting is typically a task for two or three people. This is not work that is suitable for lone working and so a careful set-up plan is required that is compatible with the requirements of social distancing.

For the netting:

- If you have not already lowered or installed your netting this should be done in a safe manner. This includes safe working at height as many nets are over three metres tall.
- Clubs should check whether or not they need to comply with the [Work at Height Regulations \(2005\) here](#).
- Carry out a health and safety risk assessment before starting any work and take steps to minimise any risks identified. If the fitting of nets cannot be carried out safely, then they should not be fitted
- The safe use of mobile access (scaffold) towers (built and used by a competent person in accordance with all applicable health and safety regulations) is preferable to ladders
- Where it is necessary to use ladders, use step ladders of a suitable height. If standard ladders are required use a suitably sized member of your household to stabilise them at the base (using another person who is not from the same household will breach social distancing guidelines)
- Avoid the use of damaged or wooden ladders
- Check that the netting does not have holes – repair if necessary
- Check that the netting is secured to the framework and tensioned correctly to prevent injuries to occupants within the net or adjacent nets
- Erect batting screens and sight screens according to installer’s guidelines for safe use
- On non-turf practice surface:
- Check that your carpets and bases are in a safe condition – look for rucks and tears in the carpet that could cause dangerous ball bounce or a trip hazard to users. Repair if necessary
- Sweep up debris and remove before play
- Carry out maintenance to the carpet and base in accordance with the supplier’s manual for your net surface
- Check run-ups are safe, particularly if these are on grass
- Consider signage or markings in the nets halfway down for appropriate separation between batters and bowlers

3.6 Outfields

Cricket grounds should have been following the advice published by Cricket Scotland during lockdown which advised routine cutting of the outfield and square at higher than normal cut heights (lengths of grass).

Now is the time to start reducing those cut heights to allow better use of the outfield. The cut height can start to be brought down from the Phase 1 lockdown recommendation of 20-25mm to normal outfield cut heights which typically range between 15mm and 20mm. This

- Seek confirmation from the club that it has reopened and make a booking
- Check for symptoms of COVID-19. In line with current Government guidance, if you are symptomatic, living in a household with a possible COVID-19 infection or if you are classified as extremely vulnerable on health grounds, you should remain at home
- Avoid public transport if at all possible

Cricket Scotland has provided detailed guidance on the preparation and administration of outdoor facilities for clubs, and guidelines for participation for individuals. The situation is evolving constantly, and we will continue to update our guidance as more information becomes available.

Please regularly check these sites and the updated Cricket Scotland guidance as this policy position is likely to change over time and could also become more regionalised and localised as time progresses.

If you have any further questions, [please contact Cricket Scotland here](#).

5 Guidance for Coaching

These guidelines currently apply to Scotland only and have been produced by sportscotland on 11th March 2021 in line with the Scottish Government guidance on public spaces, outdoor activity and exercise.

The purpose of these guidelines is to assist coaches in creating as safe an environment as possible for players returning to play during the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions.

Whilst all coaches and players will be extremely keen to start playing it is imperative that coaches set an example and follow these guidelines to ensure that the risk of infection/transmission of the virus is minimised

These guidelines cannot cover every eventuality and coaches must conduct a risk assessment, ensuring appropriate measures are put in place to keep participants and coaches safe.

5.1 Coaching Under 12's

- Children can take part in outdoor contact and non-contact organised sport including training, group exercise and competition within their usual club or facility environment. This does not include inter club competition.
- A children's outdoor sporting 'field of play bubble' at Level 4 can consist of up to 30 people including coaches and officials at any one time.
- Where there are multiple bubbles operating at the same venue these must be risk assessed to ensure there can be no mixing of participants before, during or after the activity. Specific mitigations could include staggered start times, limiting car parking or controlling access / egress points.

5.2 Coaching Young People and Adults (aged 12 years or over)

- Young People and adults can take part in non-contact organised sport including training, group exercise, aerobics, fitness classes and competition within their usual club or facility environment.

- An outdoor sporting ‘field of play bubble’ for young people and adults at Level 4 can consist of up to 15 people, including coaches, at any one time. Physical distancing should always be maintained.
- Where there are multiple bubbles operating at the same venue these must be risk assessed to ensure there can be no mixing of participants before, during or after the activity. Specific mitigations could include staggered start times, limiting car parking or controlling access / egress points.

5.3 Delivering Coaching Sessions

Before a Session

- Avoid excessive travel to different venues, cycle or drive where possible and avoid public transport if you can
- Coach to conduct a full risk assessment of the venue in advance of the coaching session
- Coach to ensure they have access to hand sanitiser/alcohol wipes/washing up liquid.
- Establish an appropriate drop off and safe waiting area for parents
- Coach to ensure all surfaces are clean and equipment is washed with soapy water and dried completely prior to use – with electronic bowling machine cleaned with suitable dry-cleaning products
- Coaching sessions should be booked and paid for in advance by bank transfer or contactless card payment – no cash transactions
- Coach to explain the safety guidelines of what is expected pre, during and post session including what the player is expected to do to maintain compliance with social distancing guidelines and all other health and safety guidelines

During the Session (outdoor only)

- Maintain a minimum of two metres to meet social distancing requirements including during observed sessions (no handshakes)
- Ensure all health and safety and emergency first aid guidelines are followed.
- Players must provide their own equipment if possible, and this must be kept in a zipped bag when not in use
- Coach is responsible for collecting all of their own equipment/kit – do not share equipment if possible
- Player is responsible for collecting all their own equipment/kit – do not share equipment if possible
- Player is responsible for ensuring they have their own refreshments and/or food
- Schedule sessions at least 10 minutes apart to avoid or limit any crossover of players
- Avoid high intensity physical exercise where possible
- If it is a bowling session, player to use their own balls or coach to use plastic balls which have been washed/dried prior to the session – batters to knock or kick ball back to the bowler and not throw it as usual – the batter should not handle the balls
- Coach to ensure they have appropriate hand coverings (mitt or gloves) when handling the ball during any skill sessions including when feeding the bowling machine. Where bowling machines are used please ensure they are cleaned thoroughly between uses with dry cleaning products and that all balls used are cleaned with disinfectant. This is the responsibility of the bowling machine operator.

After the Session

- Players and coaches to wash/sanitise their hands before and after the session
- Video may be recorded during the session but should not be analysed at the time with the players. This may be sent to the player after the session with coaching notes
- Players leaving a session must maintain a distance of two metres from other players or coaches as they leave the session

Remember: No saliva or sweat should come into contact with the ball at any time.

6 Further Information

Further advice is available at the [Scottish Govt](#) and [sportscotland](#) websites. You must regularly check these sites and updated Cricket Scotland guidance as this policy position is likely to change over time and could also become more regionalised and localised.

This guidance for outdoor sports facilities applies to non-contact cricket training and competition for **registered Cricket Scotland clubs and groups**. It should be read in conjunction with the latest Scottish Government guidance and the sportscotland guidance on [Getting your Facilities Fit for Sport](#)

This document refers to current Scottish Government guidance and is subject to change in response to the current COVID-19 Alert Level, community prevalence of COVID-19 and/or to reflect additional or updated Scottish Government guidance.

This guidance is not a 'one size fits all' approach as we appreciate indoor venues and facilities vary across Scotland and as such individual cricket clubs and groups should risk assess appropriately to ensure these procedures can be implemented.

Clubs and groups also need to make sure that they and their members are made aware and can adapt to changes in guidance at short notice. Information on Scottish Governments approach to managing COVID-19 is available at Scottish Government: [Coronavirus in Scotland](#).