



## Coronavirus (COVID-19) Volunteering Procedures and Guidance

With the continuing Coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis we must remain vigilant. **Each one of us has a duty to be alert to, and be fully aware of, the risks and play our part in following procedures to manage transmission and keep ourselves and others safe.** This document aims to help our volunteers understand the Trusts new procedures and the impact this will have on volunteering.

### What is our responsibility?

The Trust is responsible for its staff and volunteer's health, safety and welfare. This is covered in the **Volunteer Handbook** (page 21):

'Yorkshire Wildlife Trust has both a legal and a moral obligation to provide and maintain working conditions, equipment and procedures which are safe and will not adversely affect the health of our staff and volunteers. We must also provide the information, training and supervision required to achieve this.'

As an organisation, we therefore have a responsibility to ensure that we restart volunteering safely. We are therefore using a step-by-step approach, and bringing certain activities back at different times. The Volunteer Support Team will keep you fully informed of this, so please check your most recent communications from them to see what volunteering will restart and when.

**Please be aware:** Volunteer Managers will only commence volunteering once it is confirmed you have understood all the new procedures, they have all the appropriate PPE and resources needed, and they feel they can manage the risk appropriately. Please be mindful of this and understanding if there are some delays for specific roles and/or volunteering at certain reserves.

### What is your responsibility as a YWT volunteer?

Each one of us has a duty to be alert to, and be fully aware of, the risks of Coronavirus (COVID-19). We must all play our part in following procedures to manage transmission and keep ourselves and others safe, including you, our volunteers. Again, this is clearly outlined in the **Volunteer Handbook** (page 22):

'By law, everyone is responsible for looking after their own safety, that of their colleagues, and anyone else that their activities may effect. You must follow any health & safety guidance you are given, either verbally or in writing, and ask for clarification of anything that you are unsure about'

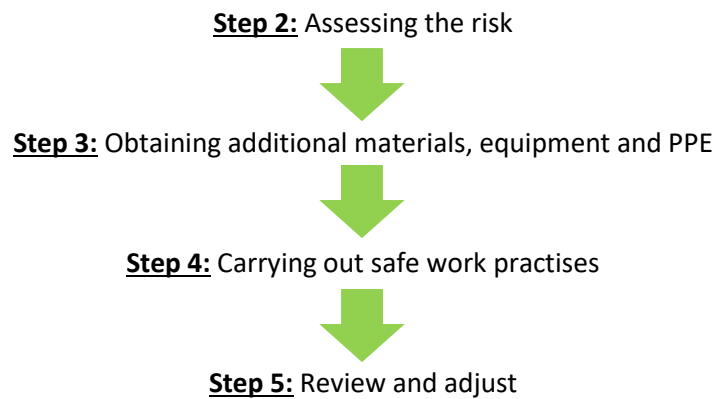
We have developed a number of resources (including this guidance document) that will help guide you through the new procedures to help get you back to volunteering with us safely.

## Procedures

There are 5 steps that you must go through in order to commence/continue volunteering during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis:

### **Step 1:** Learning and training





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COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered Coronavirus. This new virus and disease were unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. Since then the virus has been implicated in the death of hundreds of thousands of people worldwide and WHO have declared it a global pandemic. Until a vaccine is found, we are all part of stopping the transmission of the virus to protect our most vulnerable and high-risk members of society.

Below is a list of documents and training you must read, understand and/or complete before you commence/continue volunteering:

- Make sure you are aware of [current Government Guidance](#)
- Any Task Day Leaders must attend a briefing/view a recorded briefing on Safe Working during Coronavirus (COVID-19) when asked to do so
- Have read the YWT **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Cleaning and Sanitising Guidance**
- All First Aiders to be fully familiar with administering first aid taking Coronavirus (COVID-19) into account. Detailed guidance can be found [here](#) and how to administer CPR safely - [here](#).
- Have read the YWT **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Over-arching Risk Assessment**

***To confirm you have understood information provided to you, as well as your responsibilities in applying it, you will be required to complete and sign a Checklist and Statement.***

If you have any concerns about any of the information provided you should raise them with your Volunteer Manager before restarting volunteering.

### **Step 2: Assessing risk**

**Risks to individuals:** Before returning to volunteering, you must first decide if this is right for you and your individual circumstances. Although the Trust aims to make volunteering as safe as possible for you to return to, it will still inevitably increase the potential of you contracting the disease or passing it on to those who are close to you. Special consideration should be given if you or any of your household/anyone you see regularly falls into the vulnerable categories:

- People at high risk (clinically extremely vulnerable); includes anyone whose had an organ transplant, receiving any type of cancer treatment, people with serious lung conditions, heart conditions or who are pregnant.

- People at moderate risk (clinically vulnerable); includes anyone over the age of 70, with moderate lung conditions (like asthma), diabetes, or with kidney, heart and liver diseases.

The full list of those who are particularly vulnerable to the disease can be found [here](#).

If you have any concerns or wish to discuss the risks further please do so, we will support you however we can to make a decision which is right for you. You can either contact your Volunteer Manager directly or the Volunteer Support Team - [volunteering@ywt.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@ywt.org.uk)

**New ways of working:** If you decide you do wish to return to volunteering, you must become familiar with the new procedures and ways of working that have had to be put in place to reduce the risk of transmission.

The mandatory **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Over-Arching Risk Assessment** has been developed which you should make sure you are familiar with this before returning. This is the 'lens' through which the appropriate **Site** or **Task Risk Assessment** must be viewed and will help to support and guide safe working practises.

Your Volunteer Manager will use this 'lens' to consider the impact of Coronavirus on the site or proposed task and will make adjustments accordingly to ensure the additional risk is properly and sufficiently mitigated for. This may mean the task is carried out differently than you are used to, so please make sure you listen closely to any instructions before volunteering and/or briefings given at the start of the task.

There may be some tasks deemed non-essential where the risk cannot be adequately mitigated for using the control measures outlined in the risk assessment. In these cases these tasks will be paused. Although this will be very frustrating, we need to understand that in these difficult times we need to adopt a different way of working, and remind ourselves that everyone around the UK (and further) is in a similar position. Safety is ALWAYS the priority. If you have any concerns please raise them with your Volunteer Manager.

### **Step 3: Materials, Equipment and PPE**

The new ways of working may require additional materials, equipment and PPE to ensure that you can carry out the task safely. Your Volunteer Manager will ensure these are in place before you begin volunteering. You should not carry out any task until you have the appropriate PPE, equipment or materials.

Your Volunteer Manager will (where necessary for the task):

- Ensure you have your own dedicated pair gloves – these will be provided to you and you will be asked to label and look after them. Please note if you lose these gloves you may be asked to replace them. Your Volunteer Manager will of course replace any that get damaged or worn.
- Provide hand washing facilities (soap and water) – this is the first and foremost defence against the spread of the virus as per the Cleaning and Sanitising Guidance.

**Remember:** As a control method on its own PPE is insufficient, the least-effective risk-control method and must therefore always be used in conjunction with other control measures (like social distancing).

What Volunteer Managers will not provide but feel free to bring your own:

- Face masks – we will not be asking you to complete any volunteering that requires you to be closer than 2 metres to another person. In addition, there is conflicting evidence currently on the effectiveness of facemasks outside of a clinical setting (hospital staff and those in caring roles).
- Your own sanitiser – staff will have their own supplies available which you can be used if required as backup. However, we expect hand washing to be used first and foremost as it is the most effective method for reducing transmission, which as above, will be supplied as required.

**Shared resources:** You should avoid sharing resources wherever this is possible – this includes all tools, equipment, and PPE. **PPE may only be shared in very specific, exceptional circumstances – see accompanying Cleaning and Sanitising Guidance.**

If you do have to use shared equipment, personal-use only gloves should be worn as a priority to help reduce transmission of the virus, but the **cleaning and sanitising guidance** should be followed. The Volunteer Manager will oversee this and ensure you have the correct materials and PPE, but you should be aware and support where they require you to do so.

#### **Step 4: Carrying out Safe Working Practises**

Whatever your volunteer role in the Trust, you must be familiar with, and understand how to apply the control measures in the **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Over-arching Risk Assessment** (as applied to a site you are visiting or a task you are working on). If you are leading a task (e.g. you are a trained Task Day Leader), along with the relevant Task and Site Risk Assessments, you must have a copy with you to refer to during the health and safety briefing and to refer to at any point during the delivery of the task.

#### **Important reminders:**

- Control measures are to be applied all times - which includes breaks.
- You must keep assessing the risk – and if you feel uncomfortable and/or can no longer adhere to the control measures to mitigate risk, stop the task.
- If you have any concerns, issues, or require support please talk to your Volunteer Manager.

#### **Step 5: Review and Adjust**

Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the impacts it is having on society, our organisation and us as individuals is completely new and unprecedented. As such, this is a working document and the information, guidance and procedures will continue to evolve as the situation changes and we learn more about the new ways of working.

The Leadership Teams will continue to pro-actively review the situation to ensure that current guidance and procedures are appropriate and are being followed. Additionally the Health and Safety Working Group will oversee and advise as necessary. If you have any concerns, issues, or suggestions please speak to your Volunteer Manager in the first instance, or the Volunteer Support Team if you feel it is more appropriate. They are there to support you and will feedback any unresolved issues to the appropriate person or team.

**We look forward to welcoming you back to volunteering!**