

Grafham Climbing Club

Covid-19 protocols and guidelines

These COVID-19 Protocols have been adapted from a variety of agency sources including the British Mountaineering Council (BMC), the UK Government, the Association of British Climbing Walls and Jagged Globe.

They are aligned with the UK Government's current best-practice guidelines on the prevention of spreading infection (POSI).

These protocols are not a complete solution to the risks of COVID-19 and all participants recognise that no risk can be eliminated entirely. All members recognise that risks still exist and accept them, taking responsibility for their own actions and involvement.

Background

1. Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly identified coronavirus, first notified to the World Health Organisation early in 2020.
2. Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Some will develop a serious and potentially fatal illness. Those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, cancer and some UK ethnic minorities are at greater risk.
3. There is currently no known cure or effective immunisation for the virus.
4. POSI is best achieved by assuming that everyone, potentially, has COVID-19 or is carrying the infection.

Main symptoms

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

1. High temperature – people feel hot to touch on chests or backs.
2. New, continuous cough – this means coughing, a lot, for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes within 24 hours.
3. Loss or change to the sense of smell or taste – this means people infected will notice that they cannot smell or taste, or things smell and taste differently.

Most people with coronavirus have at least one of these symptoms but, be aware, some people can be carriers and have no symptoms (that is; they are asymptomatic).



Ways of reducing infection

1. Wash and clean hands regularly.
2. Socially distance from people, keeping 2-metres away from others wherever possible.
3. Establish social bubbles and keep them as small as possible. Once established, resist and deter new people from entering into the social bubble.
4. Do not enter other people's social bubbles.
5. Wear a face covering if social distancing is not possible or if it may be compromised (for example, on aircraft & on public transport).
6. Where possible, meet outdoors.
7. Do not share drinks, food or sunscreen.
8. Isolate immediately if any symptoms occur

GCC's approach to managing COVID-19 risks

All members recognise that by leaving home and travelling to undertake activities with people we may have not met before, the risk of infection is greater than it would be if we stayed at home and did not take part in climbing or related activities.

Climbing both at the wall and on outdoor trips, will require a pragmatic and mutually agreed approach between you and other members, with whom you may share activities. Some of the usual climbing objectives may not be feasible. The dynamic nature of climbing may mean ideal COVID-19 normal practice cannot be maintained, and from time-to-time the recommended minimum social distance between people may need to be suspended, especially to ensure the ordinary principles of safety are not breached.

To reduce the risks identified above, the following practices will be in place during climbing sessions at the Grafham Water Centre:

Building, facilities and equipment

1. During all climbing sessions a qualified club member will be present to ensure the following guidelines are adhered to.
2. Each session will be limited to 10 climbers maximum. Registration in advance is mandatory via the clubs website or Facebook group.
3. All participants must travel independently or within family bubbles, avoiding public transport if possible.
4. Doors will open at 7pm on Wednesday evenings and close at 9:30pm.



5. The main entrance will be used for entering the building, the back door of the hall for exiting.
6. No changing facilities will be available.
7. Toilets will be available, 1 person at a time. Please wash your hands thoroughly and do not wear climbing shoes in the toilets.
8. Attendees must bring their own personal equipment including hand sanitiser, rock shoes, harnesses and belay devices. No equipment will be available for hire.
9. Payment must be made using contactless card only, no cash. (A card machine is available and takes Visa, Mastercard and American Express)

Climbing

10. Maintain a 2 metre distance between other climbers at all times.
11. A maximum of 6 people can be involved at climbing at any one time (3 on the wall and 3 belaying)
12. When climbing or belaying, remain in the marked boxes.
13. Do not climb on a route directly next to another climber.
14. Once both members of a pair have climbed a route, take a break to allow others to climb.
15. Sanitise before and after each climb.
16. No lead climbing (a risk reduction measure that will be reviewed weekly)

Outdoor trips

In addition, the following practices will be in place for outdoor trips:

17. Attendees must bring their own food, water, sun cream, clothing and helmets for a full day in the hills. No equipment will be available for hire.
18. Remember shops and facilities may not be open in the locations we are climbing.
19. We will chose a location that is likely to be quieter and therefore will have a lower impact on the local environment
20. Groups will be limited to 6 max in line with government guidelines however we may take more than 1 group to a trip.



Agreement

I agree I will not attend a climbing club activity if I have now or have had within the last 14 days any of the following:

1. A high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature).
2. A new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual).
3. A loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you have noticed that you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.
4. Contact with someone in your household with symptoms of COVID-19 or someone in your household in isolation because of COVID-19.
5. Been in close contact with anyone else who is or has been symptomatic of COVID-19.

In addition:

6. I agree that I will not travel to attend a club session or club trip if I should be self-isolating, in accordance with national guidelines, or if I am displaying, or have displayed symptoms of COVID-19 within 14 days before the start of an activity.
7. I agree that travel and participation in club activities may increase the risk of exposure to infection with the virus relative to not taking part/ staying at home.
8. I agree to inform Grafham Climbing Club committee members should I develop any symptoms consistent with COVID-19 before, during and within 14 days of the end of a club activity?
9. I agree that the club committee may pass on my contact details to relevant government agencies as and when required under the current track and trace system.

Name:

Signed (on behalf of a parent if under 18):

Date: