

Meet Information Pack

Please read this document thoroughly before attending a Rucksack Club meet, which has been organised in line with BMC and Government guidelines. It contains information on how a meet will be organised and all the considerations that must be taken in order to minimise the risk of COVID-19 transmission and ultimately protect both club members and the general public.

Club day meets and the 'Rule of six'

From the 29th March Club day meets of up to 30 people will be allowed to resume. Also, from this date, the 'Rule of six' comes back into effect. Although the information below is good practice for a meet of any size, it has been designed to meet the BMC requirements for the resumption of larger organised meets. 'Rule of six' informal meets are allowed as per the government guidance however these are not official Rucksack Club meets and it is up to the individuals involved to ensure that the relevant precautions are taken to minimise the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

Steps to take before the activity

Group Size

- The Club has decided to impose a maximum group size of 20 people for an organised meet under these guidelines. Although the BMC guidance allows for up to 30 people the Club considers 20 a more appropriate maximum to start with although this will be kept under review with the final number on any meet decided by the co-ordinator. This number includes any volunteers and leaders in the group. Reasons for a maximum of 20 include:
 - the greater the number of people in a group the greater the risk of transmission, therefore it is advisable to reduce the numbers in any group for the safety of everyone
 - we encourage you to seriously consider smaller group sizes in order to reduce the impact upon the environment (especially parking) and bearing in mind the activity type and location.
- Whatever the number in the group, particular care must be taken at the start and end points, at pinch points (such as the base of crags, gates & stiles) and at rest breaks to maintain social distancing - split the group into smaller sub-groups (of up to 6) if possible.

Communicate measures

Please take note of the information below:

- Numbers will be limited to a maximum of 20 [it may be less a determined by the meet co-ordinator] by the requirement for participants to pre-book their place.
- You are required to confirm to the meet organiser via email ahead of the meet that you have read and accept the club's Covid-19 guidelines (Meet Information Pack and Risk Review) and also to confirm the best contact number for contact tracing purposes.
- Make sure you have the contact details of the meet organiser before the meet
- You should not attend the meet if:
 - you, or someone in your household, has symptoms of COVID-19
 - you have contravened the government Covid regulations at any time over the 14 days prior to the meet
 - you are in quarantine.
- You must read the information below about social distancing and hygiene measures before attending the meet.
- You must bring your own face covering / mask and personal alcohol sanitiser with you on the meet.
- You must bring your own food and drink as sharing food is not permissible.
- You must not car share [unless from the same household/bubble] to attend a meet.

Symptom Check

- Please remember to follow the NHS self-isolation guidelines if you or someone in your household has COVID-19 symptoms. The main symptoms of COVID-19 are a high temperature, a new continuous cough, and a loss or change to your sense of taste and/or smell. If you have symptoms, or someone in your household has symptoms, you must not attend the meet.

Venue Selection

- Being aware of, and trying to avoid, popular areas at peak times is crucial in order to retain access to the places we love and to limit the spread of COVID-19. To make social distancing easier avoid busy areas and narrow footpaths and ensure you are aware of any localised COVID-19 restrictions.

The Rucksack Club

- Consider your travel options – with restrictions to car sharing will there be sufficient car parking at the venue for you to park, or will public transport options be more suitable? Can you walk or cycle to the meet venue?
- Remain flexible and be prepared to change plans at short notice if required.
- Walk and climb well within your limits. In order to minimise the risk of an incident taking place, and the need to call on the emergency services, we recommend avoiding riskier outings such as remote locations and strenuous walks/climbs.
- Check access to facilities such as car parks, toilets, cafes, tea shops and pubs at the start and along the route. Many of these facilities may still be closed, opening different hours, or may close at short notice due to local restrictions.

Steps to take during the activity

Travel and transport

- You must follow best practice for travel to and from the activity including minimising the use of public transport. Currently car sharing is not allowed unless you live in the same household/support bubble. See advice on the government website for further information.
- For those committed to using public transport, wearing a face covering is a requirement and hand sanitiser must be used at the start and end of the journey.
- Staying local will often be a good option and if walking we recommend circular routes which can be easily accessed by foot.
- Please always check the latest government guidelines on travel and transport for the complete route of your journey.

Social Distancing

- You must follow the latest government guidelines on social distancing.
- As a general guide, aim to stay 2m apart from people outside of your household, where this is not possible, maintain a distance of 1m+.
- Distances of less than 2m should only be used for a brief time, such as passing the belayer at the top of a climb.
- At any time that you are less than 2m from another person you should turn your faces away from each other, if safe to do so.
- If the 2m distance is expected to be breached it is advisable to wear a face covering.

Hygiene measures

- As a group try to avoid touching gates and path furniture where possible – walking poles and elbows can open many gates!
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitiser (min 70% alcohol content) before and after consuming food and drink, and after touching path furniture.
- Use hand sanitiser before and after every climb.
- Do not share food or drink or equipment with anyone from another household.

Equipment

- Whenever practicable ensure that your equipment is used by your household only and that you know its usage, exposure to potential contamination, and employ a cleaning and disinfection regime.
- If it is believed that equipment has been exposed to a source of Coronavirus contamination, please check the manufacturer's website for guidance as to how to clean and disinfect the equipment.
- **Walking equipment**
 - We recommend that walking equipment such as maps, walking poles, dog leads, group shelters, bothy bags and compasses are not shared outside of households.
- **Climbing equipment**
 - If sharing climbing equipment, such as ropes or when leading and seconding, with people outside of your household we recommend quarantining the equipment for a minimum of 72 hours after use. It is also worth taking more equipment than normal to give yourself the option of using equipment that has not been touched by others.

Climbing Partnerships

- As far as practical climb with members of your household.
- If climbing with someone outside of your household then aim to climb in pairs on single pitch and keep the same pairs throughout.
- If climbing in a three and/or on multi-pitch where social distancing is not possible – we recommend wearing a face covering.
- In order to minimise the risk of an incident taking place, and the need to call on the emergency services, we recommend keeping climbing objectives well within your limits and avoiding riskier outings such as remote locations.

Incidents

- As with standard good practice we strongly encourage you to carry a first aid kit (which contains PPE), fully charged mobile phone, food and drink, and a map and compass.
- Be aware that first aid advice has been updated to mitigate the risk of transmitting COVID-19. The current CPR guidance is available from the Resuscitation Council UK <https://www.resus.org.uk/watch>

Behave responsibly

- Being aware of and trying to avoid popular areas at peak times is crucial. With unprecedented numbers leading to crowded parking in many popular beauty spots and crags, the potential for bad parking to obstruct roads and entrances has been high and if we don't take responsibility for this ourselves, we may see access losses.
- Avoid very popular areas: seek out less frequented venues, be flexible and have backup plans to avoid overcrowding.
- Check the BMC Regional Access Database: avoid crags with known nesting birds or access issues.
- Where possible, stay local. Staying local will reduce the load on National Parks and rural communities whilst they are sensitive to increased visitor numbers.
- Be sensitive to your impact on rural communities and landowners: give houses, farm buildings, vehicles and people a wide berth. Help foster good relationships with local communities for the future. Inconsiderate actions will be damaging for all of us.
- Be aware that some car parks or informal parking areas may not be open.
- Check if it's feasible to access your planned destination before setting off.
- Be self-reliant, both when climbing and walking and during any travel.

Steps to take after the activity

Hygiene

- Remember to wash your hands thoroughly on returning home, or at the first opportunity, and to clean and/or quarantine any equipment

Contact tracing reminder - IMPORTANT

- Remember that if you have any COVID-19 symptoms, or become symptomatic, after the activity that it is essential for you to get a COVID-19 test. If this test is positive then you must report this to the NHS Test & Trace service. Please also inform the meet organiser so that contact tracing information from the meet can be shared.