

Latest guidance for U3As 29 June 2020

Introduction

When a Covid-19 update mailing is sent out, the U3A guidance will be included on the U3A national website. You will find it in the advice area behind your member login in the section "Running your U3A during Covid-19. This includes a Risk Check List for outdoor activities where geographically appropriate.

The different nations and islands in Great Britain, Northern Ireland and islands of Great Britain have different rules and guidance which is contained below. When traveling into another nation you must follow the guidance for that nation.

The news today 29.7.20 reported that Leicester faces a lockdown extension amid increasing cases of the virus. The city's Mayor Sir Peter Soulsby said the government has recommended current restrictions to remain in place for an extra fortnight.

It is clear therefore that we must remain alert and vigilant to these sudden regional variations during this period of transition out of strict lockdown and be prepared to extend or return to restrictions where and when required.

For your information the definition for clinically extremely vulnerable are at the bottom of the document.

When should you stay at home?

You should not leave your home to take part in U3A activity if government advice means that you should stay at home or if you or anyone in your household has symptoms of Coronavirus

If you or someone in your household or your support bubble is showing coronavirus symptoms, everyone in your support bubble should stay home. If you or a member of your support bubble is contacted as part of the test and trace programme, the individual contacted should stay at home. If that individual becomes symptomatic, everyone in the support bubble must then isolate. This is critical to staying safe and saving lives. It is advisable that any U3A group activities that are taking place at this time should keep a log of those participating for track and trace purposes should the need arise.

The government advice across the different legislative authorities is different for people who are:-

- part of the general public who are fit and well
- over 70 and those who are clinically vulnerable
- extremely clinically vulnerable.

England

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do-after-4-july>

1.1 Changes that come into effect on 4 July for the general public who are fit and well

The government recommends that you keep two metres away from people as a precaution or from 4 July, one metre plus when you can mitigate the risk by taking other precautions. These include:-

- Keep your distance from people outside your household
- Avoid being face-to-face with people if they are outside your household or support bubble
- Keeping your hands and face as clean as possible
- Keep indoor places well ventilated
- Avoid crowded spaces
- You should walk or cycle wherever possible. If you have to use public transport, you should try to avoid peak times.
- Wear face coverings on public transport and if you can, you should also wear a face covering in other enclosed public spaces where social distancing is limited and where you will come into contact with people you do not normally meet
- When entering and using business or public premises, follow the advice on site

The full list of precautions can be found in full here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-safe-outside-your-home/staying-safe-outside-your-home>

1.2 Outdoors

When you are meeting **outside** you can continue to meet in groups of up to **six people** from different households, following social distancing guidelines [see 1.1]

Government advice is that

- you should limit your interactions with people outside of your household or your support bubble (if applicable) as much as possible
- you should continue to follow strict social distancing guidelines
- you should take hygiene precautions by washing your hands as soon as you are home for at least 20 seconds, use hand sanitiser when you are out, use a tissue when sneezing and dispose of it safely and cough into the crook of your elbow
- you should only form a support bubble with one other household, should not change or add to your support bubble once formed, and must only form a support bubble with another household if you or they are in a single adult household
- you should access private gardens externally wherever possible – if you need to go through someone else's home to do so, avoid touching surfaces and loitering
- you should avoid using toilets in other people's home (outside of your support bubble) wherever possible and wipe down surfaces after every use
- you should wipe down any surfaces or door handles people from outside of your household or support bubble come into contact with if walking through your home

- you should avoid sharing plates and utensils with people outside of your household or your support bubble

The full guidance on meeting people outside of your household can be found here.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-people-from-outside-your-household#making-a-support-bubble-with-another-household>

1.3 Indoors

Whether you are in your home or another persons home or in any indoor area that is now allowed to open you are restricted to meeting with **one other household**.

It is therefore unlikely that a U3A interest group could meet indoors as a result of the “only two households” restriction.

Meetings of multiple households indoors is not permissible at this time because of the risk of creating greater chains of transmission.

1.4. People aged over 70 and those who are clinically vulnerable

When you are meeting outside you can continue to meet in groups of **up to six people** from different households, following social distancing guidelines [see 1.1]

You should be especially careful and be diligent about social distancing and hand hygiene.

1.5. People who are extremely clinically vulnerable (include list below)

On the government website it advises that the advice for people in this group will change from **6th July**.

People in this category can meet in a group of up to 6 people outdoors, including people from different households, while maintaining strict social distancing

Note there will be further changes for this group in August. The definition of clinically vulnerable is at the bottom of the page.

Scotland

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-framework-decision-making-scotlands-route-map-through-out-crisis-phase-2-update/>

The changes in Scotland to date have not yet enabled face to face U3A interest group activity to resume.

2.1 Changes that come into effect on 19 June for the general public who are fit and well and people who are clinically vulnerable

From 19 June you can meet people from **two different households outside** - but still in groups of no more than eight people. Physical distancing and appropriate hygiene will need to be maintained at all times however tennis groups can now play singles following social distance and hygiene advice.

People from up to three households have been able to meet outdoors in groups of up to eight people.

2.2 People who are extremely clinically vulnerable (shielding)

People in this category are still subject to shielding requirements but can go outdoors for a walk, wheel, run or cycle.

You can take part in non-contact outdoor activities such as golf and hiking . When doing so, you should:

- maintain strict physical distancing of at least 2 metres (3 steps) at all times, even if you live with the person you're out with
- choose times and areas that are quiet, if possible
- wash your hands for at least 20 seconds as soon as you get back home

You can meet **one other household** in a group of up to 8 people outside from 19 June

- you should continue to avoid shops, pharmacies and other situations where it would be difficult to stay 2 metres apart from other people.

2.3 People in Scotland will be allowed to meet up with two other households indoors from 10 July

Note; It is however unlikely that an interest group could meet indoors as a result of the “only two households” restriction

Meetings of multiple households indoors is not permissible at this time because of the risk of creating greater chains of transmission.

Wales

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus>

The changes in Wales to date have not yet enabled face to face U3A interest group activity to resume. You can meet an unlimited number of people from one other households outside in your local areas. Physical distancing and appropriate hygiene will need to be maintained. Meetings indoors are not permitted.

Current travel restrictions of staying within 5 miles of you home remain in force and will be reviewed on 6 July.

3.1 People in Wales who are shielding

People who are shielding due to age or health reasons may take part in unlimited outdoor exercise as long as you follow strict social distancing rules and hygiene practices. You may meet outside with people from another household but should not go into another person’s house or share food with them.

Northern Ireland

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-regulations-guidance-and-what-they-mean-you>

In Northern Ireland since Tuesday 23 June, you can recommence outdoor and indoor interest groups subject to strict social distancing requirements and a limit of participants as outlined below

4.1 Outdoors

When you are meeting outside you can continue to meet in groups of up to **ten** people from different households, following social distancing guidelines. This does not apply to people who are shielding

4.2 Indoors

Groups of up to **six** people in Northern Ireland can meet indoors from Tuesday, the executive has agreed. This does not apply to people who are shielding. If you decide to meet indoors you should do so as safely as possible and follow public health advice by:

- limiting the duration of visits
- ensuring good ventilation
- Maintaining good hand hygiene
- Practicing social distancing where possible

The use of face covering is also strongly advised.

4.3 People in Northern Ireland who are shielding

Anyone who is medically shielding is strongly advised to continue following the advice that remains in place for that group until the shielding period is paused on 31 July.

5. Risk assessment for all locations:

To make an assessment of whether you should undertake any activity our advice is that it is important to carry out a risk assessment as you would do for any U3A activity. In the case of resuming an outdoor U3A exercise activity there would be two elements to any risk assessment to be considered. It is strongly advised that you record any assessment before taking part in activity.

The first part of the risk assessment – identify what steps Group leaders propose taking to ensure the activity is covid secure? For Example: limiting numbers, taking masks and hand sanitisers, own refreshments, limiting time and duration of activities. This information should be shared with participants so that they can complete the next part of the risk assessment for themselves. The Second part of the risk assessment is for each potential participant to undertake a personal participation risk assessment considering the Covid-19 risks and hazards that taking part poses to the individual.

Our advice is that it is imperative that everyone completes a personal assessment of this nature and records it. This is however, a personal exercise and does not need to be shared with group leaders. It is sufficient to inform them that you have considered your personal situation and decided that you are safe to take part in the activity as arranged.

This is important because there are differing requirements for:

- people with different health conditions - clinically vulnerable, or clinically extremely vulnerable
- people of different ages • members living in a household where there is someone who is considered clinically vulnerable, or clinically extremely vulnerable and therefore has limitations on contact with others.

Our advice is that a personal participation risk assessment should take into consideration a person's physical health and any underlying issues, age and the health and circumstances of those they may be living with or isolating with in their household.

For your assistance in this matter and to enable you to make a thorough assessment of your own and the activity risks involved, please find attached a sample Risk Assessment Checklist which everyone should view and complete including the personal section before considering taking part. As previously stated, there is no requirement for you to share your personal risk assessment but that you have considered the factors for yourself and concluded that you can safely take part.

Clinically extremely vulnerable people may include..

1.Solid organ transplant recipients.

2.People with specific cancers:

People with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy

People with lung cancer who are undergoing radical radiotherapy

People with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment

People having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer

People having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors

People who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs

3.People with severe respiratory conditions including all cystic fibrosis, severe asthma and severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

4.People with rare diseases that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID), homozygous sickle cell).

5.People on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection.

6.Women who are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired.

7.Other people have also been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable, based on clinical judgement and an assessment of their needs. GPs and hospital clinicians have been provided with guidance to support these decisions.

For more information about who has been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable, please visit the NHS Digital website.
