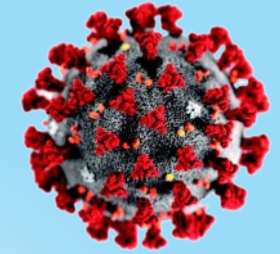




# Covid-19 Managing the Risk



## Activities based in Hired Premises

**R**ISK management is the process of identifying an undesirable event and, depending upon the probability of the event occurring and the severity of the consequences, identifying actions to (a) reduce the likelihood of the event occurring [mitigating actions] and (b) identifying actions to address the consequences of the event occurring [contingent actions].

In our case, the undesirable event is the tracing of a case of Covid-19 back to a member participating in a U3A activity. The probability is low. The consequences are severe.

Our U3A offers some 50+ activities that are based in premises. Many of the activities have shared characteristics such as (a) use of personal/shared equipment and materials, (b) use of chairs arranged in various configurations and (c) activity which may

be considered aerobic in nature.

This document identifies the various characteristics shared across activities and provides a 'picking list' from which the group leader of any activity can select the set appropriate to his/her activity. That group leader then has a list of the risk mitigating actions that group members should be taking.

Given that many of the actions involve cleaning surfaces, take care with your choice of household cleaning products. The Scouts & Guides committee has specifically asked that any fabric element of chairs is not cleaned by U3A group members.

At the end of this document, I have put some Government Covid-19 advice on decontaminating in a non-healthcare setting.

**DERRICK FEWINGS,  
7th November 2020**

# Evolving Laws and Guidelines

**T**HE pages below identify areas of risk and the actions required to minimize the threat to the wellbeing of attendees participating in premises-based activities. That of course assumes that the U3A is offering such activities.

We cannot offer activities in premises without due consideration of the laws and guidelines put in place by the Government. These laws and guidelines may mean that we simply cannot offer activities or else may mean we have to recognise some limitations. Instances to date are the 'Rule of 6', the three-tier system and lockdowns. Particularly regarding tiers and lockdowns, we could find ourselves entering and exiting periods of extra constraints on a regular basis.

Our U3A does not act in isolation. We are part of a national organisation and face the same issues as hundreds of other U3As. It is to our advantage that the U3A National Office invests in interpreting the Government's laws and

guidelines and regularly publishing Covid-19 advice on U3A activities.

The link below will take you to the current U3A National Office statement as to how laws and guidelines impact upon our ability to provide activities.

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/covid-19-advice-on-u3a-activities>

## 1. PREMISES

RISK	RISK MITIGATING ACTIONS	WHO?
1.1 Premises do not meet 'Covid Secure' criteria.	<p>Attain 'Covid Secure' status by undertaking a risk assessment and documenting actions to be undertaken by self and hirers.            (For guidance, see the ACRE information sheet on re-opening village and community halls. This document contains links to relevant Government websites)            Ask for certification that premises are 'Covid Secure'.            Ask for copy of risk assessment and catalogued actions on involved parties.</p>	<p>Premises owners             U3A            U3A</p>
1.2 Transfer of virus through water droplets, due to close proximity in corridors	<p>Label routes to minimize congestion.             Follow designated routes (entry/exit etc).            Arrive &amp; depart in an orderly manner.            Be observant and wait until corridor clears.</p>	<p>Premises provider             Attendees            Attendees            Attendees</p>
1.3 Transfer of virus through touching a contaminated surface	<p>Cleanse surfaces at start of day.             State cleansing of surfaces is a condition of booking.            Put up posters, reminding attendees to be vigilant.            Provide hand sanitizer at point of entry and exit.            Deny access to premises' crockery and cutlery.            Ensure access to soap and hot water.            Ensure proprietary cleansing products are available.             At end of session, wipe surfaces (chairs, doors, windows, tables,...) with a proprietary cleansing product.</p>	<p>Premises provider             Premises provider            Premises provider            Premises provider            Premises provider            Group leader             Attendees</p>

1.4	Transfer of virus through poor ventilation	<p>Ensure windows and doors can be opened.</p> <p>Encourage hirers to open as many windows and doors as is practicable (booking forms, signs, ...)</p> <p>Weather permitting, open windows and doors at the start of session</p> <p>Close windows and doors at the end of the session.</p>	<p>Premises provider</p> <p>Premises provider</p> <p>Group leader</p>
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## 2. PERSONAL HYGIENE

### RISK

Transfer of virus through touching a contaminated surface

### RISK MITIGATING ACTIONS

Pay attention to personal hygiene. On entry to and exit from premises, use the hand sanitizer provided.

Throughout the session, use hand sanitizer or else wash hands regularly with soap and water.

Minimise touching of surfaces.

Bring own refreshments.

Do not share refreshments or personal crockery/cutlery.

### WHO?

Attendees

Attendees

Attendees

Attendees

## 3. SOCIAL DISTANCING

### RISK

Transfer of virus through failure to maintain social distancing during activity

### RISK MITIGATING ACTIONS

Establish capacity for room, ensuring compliance guidelines

Declare capacity of room as part of conditions of booking. If the floor covering allows, mark floor, to guide attendees to spots complying with social distancing guidelines

Manage attendance to stay within stated room capacity.

Put potential attendees on a rota. Split session etc

### WHO?

Premises provider

Premises provider

Premises provider

Group leader

Be prepared to turn attendees away if capacity would be breached.	Group leader
Be disciplined in complying with social distancing throughout the session.	Attendees
Remind others of their obligation to comply with social distancing.	Attendees
Wearing a face mask is mandatory if the nature of the activity means 2-metre social distancing is impractical and the 1+ metre rule has been adopted (eg. card games) In any event, consider reducing the risk of passing on Covid-19 by wearing a face mask as standard practice; irrespective of the social distancing.	Attendees

## 4. SEATING

RISK	RISK MITIGATING ACTIONS	WHO?
Transfer of virus through failure to maintain social distancing during activity	Reduce chairs in room to stated capacity.	Premises provider
<b>4.1 SEATED IN ROWS</b>		
Transfer of virus through failure to maintain social distancing during activity	Mark floor, to guide attendees to spots complying with social distancing guidelines. (Spacing 2 metres) If provided, place chairs on marked spots.	Premises provider Attendees
<b>4.2 SEATED FACE-TO-FACE</b>		
Transfer of virus through failure to maintain social distance during activity	If practical, place chairs 2 metres apart. If 2 metres is impracticable, place chairs 1+ metre apart and wear a face mask. If 1+ metres is impracticable, abandon activity.	Attendees Attendees Group leader

### 4.3 SEATED AROUND PERIMETER OF ROOM

Transfer of virus through failure to maintain social distancing during activity

Occupy chairs 2 metres apart.  
If there are intervening chairs, turn them to face the wall.

Attendees

## 5. EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

### RISK

Transfer of virus through touching a contaminated item

### RISK MITIGATING ACTIONS

If sharing is unavoidable, clean that equipment regularly with appropriate proprietary cleaning product.

If sharing is avoidable:

Asking attendees to bring their own equipment/materials [e.g. table tennis bat]. Ensuring individuals have own text books and copy of reference material. [e.g. languages]

Distributing any handouts in advance, via email, so attendees print and carry their own copy. [e.g. languages]

Avoiding handing in work. Submit work to group leader or tutor via email. [e.g. languages]

If doing so would not unduly spoil enjoyment of the activity, consider wearing gloves.

Consider whether portable items can be cleaned between sessions, away from the hired hall.

If so, ensure someone takes the item(s) home for a thorough clean.

### WHO?

Attendees

Attendees

Group leader

## 6. EXERCISE

### RISK

Transfer of virus as movement brings individuals too close

### RISK MITIGATING ACTIONS

If the nature of the exercise is such that, even starting further apart, members could move into another participant's space, increase the initial social distance as necessary to avoid this.

Consider reducing the speed and intensity of the exercises

### WHO?

Attendees

Tutor

## 7. PHYSICAL CONTACT (Implying breach of social distancing guidance)

### RISK

Transfer of virus through physical contact and/or breaching of social distancing guidance

### RISK MITIGATING ACTIONS

For those part of the activity where physical contact is an integral and unavoidable element of the activity, limit attendance to pairs who form a 'social bubble'; typically individuals from the same household.  
[e.g. dancing a waltz.]

If the activity is to remain open to a wider audience, constrain the activity in a way that limits contact or breaching of social distancing rules. [ e.g. table tennis and badminton, drop doubles matches and play only singles matches.]

### WHO?

Group leader

Group leader

## 8. SINGING

### RISK

Transfer of virus through water droplets, due to close proximity of participants

### RISK MITIGATING ACTIONS

If singing is core to the activity, suspend the activity until Govt guidelines permit group singing.  
[e.g. choir and Musical Theatre.]

If singing is a discretionary element of the activity, exclude it. (e.g. drama, guitars, ukulele.)

### WHO?

Group leader

Members



## 9. SOCIAL EVENT (Horizons, Sunday Social, Wine Appreciation)

### RISK

Transfer of virus through failure to maintain social distance during activity

### RISK MITIGATING ACTIONS

The very nature of these social events makes it unlikely that 2 metre social distancing would be adhered to. Equally, attendees are unlikely to be willing to wear a face mask for the duration of the event, to legitimise adoption of 1+ metre social distancing. These events should therefore not be held until social distancing constraints are lifted.

### WHO?

Management

## 10. NON-COMPLIANCE WITH PLAN

### RISK

Transfer of virus due to lack of commitment to executing identified risk mitigating actions

### RISK MITIGATING ACTIONS

Remind members of good practice at the start of each session. Where appropriate, have a checklist of tasks and record compliance.

### WHO?

Group leader



# **Government Test and Trace Scheme**

The actions above are all mitigating actions, designed to reduce the risk that a case of Covid-19 is traced to a U3A activity. If, despite our best endeavours, an actual or potential case is traced to a U3A activity, our contingent action (to address the consequences) is to pass details of attendees of the given session to an agent of the Govt Test & Trace scheme. This requires that every group leader keeps a register of the attendees of every session. That register must contain the name and contact telephone number of each attendee and must be retained for at least 21 days.

# Govt Covid-19 advice on 'decontaminating' in a non-healthcare setting

Extract from [www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare settings](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings)

## Cleaning and disinfection

Regular cleaning plays a vital role in limiting the transmission of COVID-19.

Reducing clutter and removing difficult to clean items can make cleaning easier. Increase the frequency of cleaning, using standard cleaning products such as detergents and bleach, paying attention to all surfaces but especially ones that are touched frequently, such as door handles, light switches, work surfaces, remote controls and electronic devices.

As a minimum, frequently touched surfaces should be wiped down twice a day, and one of these should be at the beginning or the end of the working day. Cleaning should be more frequent depending on the number of people using the space, whether they are entering and exiting the setting and access to handwashing and hand-sanitising facilities should be encouraged. Cleaning of frequently touched surfaces is particularly important in bathrooms and communal kitchens. When cleaning surfaces, it is not necessary to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) or clothing over and above what would usually be used.

## Cleaning and disinfection (Public areas where a symptomatic person has passed through)

Public areas where a symptomatic person has passed through and spent minimal time but which are not visibly contaminated with body fluids, such as corridors, can be cleaned thoroughly as normal.

All surfaces that the symptomatic person has come into contact with should be cleaned and disinfected, including all potentially contaminated and frequently touched areas such as bathrooms, door handles, telephones, grab rails in corridors and stairwells.

Use disposable cloths or paper roll and disposable mop heads, to clean all hard surfaces, floors, chairs, door handles and sanitary fittings – think one site, one wipe, in one direction.

Use a household detergent followed by disinfection (1000 ppm av.cl.). Follow manufacturer's instructions for dilution, application and contact times for all detergents and disinfectants."

## GUIDELINES FROM NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

FOR some activities, there is a national association to which clubs may be affiliated. One example is Table Tennis England. We are not affiliated to any such associations. However, these associations may offer useful advice and guidance regarding Covid-19.

For instance, Table Tennis England advises limiting games to singles and gives advice on how to clean the surface of a

table tennis table without damaging the surface.

If you are aware there is a national association for your activity, it would be worthwhile checking what advice is offered. If your activity makes use of a tutor, that tutor may also be able to advise on activity-specific actions that minimize the threat to the wellbeing of attendees.

*A few links are given below:*

### **Table Tennis**

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/>

### **Walking**

<https://www.ramblers.org.uk/volunteer-zone/coronavirus.aspx>

### **Yoga**

<https://www.bwy.org.uk/covid-19/>

### **Badminton**

<https://www.badmintonengland.co.uk/play/information-regarding-the-coronavirus/>

### **Ballroom Dancing**

<https://www.istd.org/coronavirus-guidance/>