



## RETURN TO OUTDOOR PRACTICE OR NETS IN WALES

19 JUNE 2020

### SUMMARY GUIDANCE FOR WALES

The purpose of these guidelines is to offer practical guidance to players and clubs on the steps they should take to remain safe whilst undertaking exercise in an outdoor cricket club environment.

These guidelines were originally produced by ECB in line with the UK Government guidance on public spaces, outdoor activity and exercise published on 11 May 2020. Supporting guidance published on 13 May 2020 and updated on 1 June by UK government can be found [here](#).

Welsh Government advice and guidance in relation to a phased return to sport, recreation and leisure was published on 15 June and can be found [here](#) and The First Minister of Wales issued a statement on the further changes to Welsh regulations on 19 June, effective from [Monday 22 June](#).

Activity in England should be consistent with the UK Government guidance regarding [health, social distancing and hygiene](#).

Activity in Wales should be consistent with guidance on leaving the home to exercise and take part in sport which can be found [here](#).

ECB & Cricket Wales maintain the position that all **recreational cricket remains suspended until further notice**, with the sole exception of the use of outdoor cricket facilities (nets and pitches) for the purpose of undertaking exercise, as set out in the detailed guidance document and only in line with existing travel and social distancing regulations and hygiene protocols.

Our primary and ongoing goal is to protect the health of everyone in and around the game.

The adjusted lockdown restrictions provide an opportunity for the use of outdoor cricket facilities (nets and pitches) for the purpose of undertaking exercise.

### In summary, in Wales:

1. You can exercise outdoors on your own, with members of your household and/or with one other household while keeping two metres apart at all times.
2. Social distancing of at least two metres must be maintained at all times (unless all participants are members of the same household).
3. Coaching is permitted, but only if the above rules (one coach + one household) are observed and maintained at all times.
4. Nets should be used on an 'every other' basis, leaving one net / lane free between bays.
5. Clubhouses can be reopened in a limited way for operational reasons (e.g. for access to first aid equipment) or for toilet access (see below) but all communal areas including bar, changing rooms etc are to remain closed for general use.
6. Toilet facilities can be opened if the venue wishes, but particular care should be taken by those using them and those cleaning them. Where they are open, venues must ensure soap and water is provided.
7. There must be no indoor activity at all.
8. We recommend using your own equipment if possible. If equipment is being shared, please follow UK Government's guidance on the [sharing of equipment](#). (currently no specific Welsh guidance)
9. No saliva or sweat should come into contact with the ball at any time.
10. Wash hands at home before and after using the outdoor facilities. Bring your own hand sanitiser where possible.

**ECB and Cricket Wales are clear that outdoor facilities should only reopen if those responsible for them are ready to do so and they can do so safely, following public health guidance: no club should reopen, or feel forced to reopen their outdoor facilities if they feel unable to meet the requirements.**

For clubs, you will need to have the following in place:

- Properly maintained facilities.
- A booking system for outdoor space or other means to manage access and demand.
- The capability to advise individuals when booking to check for symptoms of COVID-19 and in turn to advise individuals when booking that - in line with current Government guidance - if they are symptomatic, living in a household with a possible COVID-19 infection or if they are classified as extremely vulnerable on health grounds, they should remain at home and follow Government guidance.
- A sanitation procedure between use/bookings.
- A representative of the club on site during the hours that the outdoor facilities are open for use.
- Closed signs should be displayed when facilities are not open (including where a club does not wish to or is not ready to reopen) to deter use by general public particularly where there is open access.
- Updated signage and access points.

For individuals, you will need to:

- Seek confirmation from the club that it has reopened and make a booking.
- Check for symptoms of COVID-19. In line with current [Government guidance](#), if you are symptomatic, living in a household with a possible COVID-19 infection or if you are classified as extremely vulnerable on health grounds, you should remain at home and follow Government guidance.
- Avoid public transport if at all possible.

ECB has provided detailed guidance on the preparation and administration of outdoor facilities for clubs, and guidelines for participation for individuals. The situation is evolving constantly, and we will continue to update our guidance as more information becomes available.

Further advice is available [here](#) and [here](#). Please regularly check these sites and the updated ECB and Cricket Wales guidance, as policies may change over time and could also become more regionalised and localised as time progresses.

If you have any further questions, please contact ECB [here](#) or Cricket Wales at [here](#) or via your Area Manager.



## DETAILED GUIDANCE FOR CLUBS ON RETURN TO USE OF CRICKET GROUNDS

19 June 2020

These guidelines were originally produced by ECB in line with the UK Government guidance on public spaces, outdoor activity and exercise published on 11 May 2020, which can be read [here](#). Supporting guidance published on 13 May 2020 can be found [here](#).

This has been updated in line with Welsh Government advice and guidance in relation to a phased return to sport, recreation and leisure, published on 15 June, and can be found [here](#) - and the statement issued by the Welsh Government on the lifting of restrictions on outdoor activity, which can be found [here](#).

ECB also released an associated FAQs to this guidance on 22 May, which can be found [here](#).

There is no obligation for clubs to reopen their facilities and clubs should only do so when they are ready and when they can do so safely, following public health guidance. Clubs should be aware that this is subject to change if there is a worsening of the COVID-19 situation and/or Government advice changes. Please visit the [ECB website](#) and [www.cricketwales.org.uk](http://www.cricketwales.org.uk) regularly for updates.

This guide covers:

- What has changed and what clubs can now reopen.
- A reminder of the precautions that still need to be taken – including social distancing.
- What work will need to be done to prepare facilities.
- How to operate your facility safely – including:
  - Establishing a booking system to avoid crowding and allow contact tracing.
  - Maintaining safe access and movement around site.
  - Setting some ground rules and ensuring compliance.

## WHAT CAN CLUBS REOPEN AND WHEN?

In Wales, since 1 June 2020, members of up to 2 households have been permitted to mix and exercise together.

Please note the following:

- Guidance relates to participation in sport outdoors only.
- Social distancing measures (staying two metres away from people outside your household) still apply.
- The change does not permit the reopening of pavilions for changing, social or hospitality purposes.
- This change does not permit participation in team sports within or between clubs. ECB recommended the suspension of recreational cricket on 18 March 2020 and with the sole exception of the specific and controlled use of outdoor cricket facilities outlined in this guidance that remains the case.

From 22nd June 2020, cricket clubs in Wales are able to:

- Reopen their outfield for outdoor sport activity that complies with the Government guidance and maintains social distancing.
- Reopen their cricket nets in a way that maintains social distancing on an 'every other net' basis – so if a club has a two-bay net they can reopen one of those bays, if they have a three-bay net, they can reopen bays one and three and so on.

We ask clubs to please note

- A representative of the club should be on site at all times while outdoor facilities are open for use.
- When outdoor nets and outfield are closed and there is general open access, closed signage should be clear and visible to inform the general public that the facilities are not available for use.

Club buildings (including changing rooms and bar) and any other communal areas are to remain closed. At this stage keeping these areas closed will reduce social interaction to help reduce the transmission of COVID-19.

### We still need to take precautions

At this time, in Wales, the use of outdoor facilities is only permitted for people from the same household, for individuals using the facilities alone, or for people from a maximum of two different households total, who are maintaining recommended social distancing measures. It is important to remember that the following advice still applies and it is key to remind any participants, those operating the nets and those maintaining the grounds of these rules:

- Anyone displaying symptoms of COVID-19 (temperature above 37.8 °C, a persistent cough, breathing problems or other symptoms identified by the Government – note that the release of a new Government symptom-checking app

is anticipated shortly) must stay at home and self-isolate in accordance with the Government guidance [here](#).

- All members of the same household must do the same even if they do not display symptoms.
- Guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable from coronavirus (COVID-19) can be found [here](#).
- Social distancing is key to minimising transmission of COVID-19, maintaining a distance of two metres between people still applies if individuals are not from the same household. Welsh Government policy can be found [here](#).

## GETTING YOUR FACILITY READY

### Outfields

Cricket grounds should have been following the advice published by the Grounds Management Association in collaboration with ECB during lockdown which advised routine cutting of the outfield and square at higher than normal cut heights (lengths of grass).

If this has not already been done, now is the time to start reducing those cut heights to allow better use of the outfield. The cut height can start to be brought down from the Phase 1 lockdown recommendation of 20-25mm to normal outfield cut heights which typically range between 15mm and 20mm. This should be done gradually reducing cut height by no more than 2mm per cut. This will help to reduce the amount of grass clipping sitting on the top of the outfield.

At many grounds it will not have been possible to maintain a cut height of 20-25mm because of the availability of people to cut the grass. Where grass is longer it is really important to bring the cut heights down gradually, taking no more than one-third of the leaf length with each cut. Where possible grass clippings should be collected following longer cuts of the grass or if necessary dispersed by hand tools to prevent large accumulations affecting users or killing the grass.

For more information on maintaining outfields, including why applying fertiliser will help – see The Grounds Management Association [website](#).

### Equipment

ECB recommends you use your own equipment where possible. UK Government [guidance](#) also states that where possible, limit the sharing of equipment.

If you are sharing equipment, including balls, you should wash your hands thoroughly before and after use.

No saliva or sweat should come into contact with the ball at any time.

### Nets

Because of the timing of the initial COVID-19 lockdown from late March onwards, some clubs may not have conducted the pre-season work that normally takes place. This includes the preparation of nets. The safe and effective installation of netting is typically a task for two or three people. This is not work that is suitable for lone working and so a careful set-up plan is required that is compatible with the requirements of social distancing.

For the netting:

- If you have not already lowered or installed your netting this should be done in a safe manner. This includes safe working at height as many nets are over three metres tall.
- Clubs should check whether or not they need to comply with the Work at Height Regulations (2005) [here](#).
- Carry out a health and safety risk assessment before starting any work and take steps to minimise any risks identified. If the fitting of nets cannot be carried out safely, then they should not be fitted.
- The safe use of mobile access (scaffold) towers (built and used by a competent person in accordance with all applicable health and safety regulations) is preferable to ladders.
- Where it is necessary to use ladders, use step ladders of a suitable height. If standard ladders are required use a suitably sized member of your household to stabilise them at the base (using another person who is not from the same household will breach social distancing guidelines).
- Avoid the use of damaged or wooden ladders.
- Check that the netting does not have holes – repair if necessary.
- Check that the netting is secured to the framework and tensioned correctly to prevent injuries to occupants within the net or adjacent nets.
- Erect batting screens and sight screens according to installers' guidelines for safe use.

On the non-turf practice surface:

- Check that your carpets and bases are in a safe condition – look for rucks and tears in the carpet that could cause dangerous ball bounce or a trip hazard to users. Repair if necessary.
- Sweep up debris and remove before play.
- Carry out maintenance to the carpet and base in accordance with the supplier's manual for your net surface.
- Check run-ups are safe, particularly if these are on grass.

## OPERATING THE FACILITY SAFELY

### Taking Bookings

To operate the facility safely and minimise the risk of spreading COVID-19, a controlled booking system will need to be put in place.

- Bookings will enable the club to control the number of people accessing the facility and reduce the likelihood of gatherings which are not permitted under Government guidelines.
- A well-managed booking system will also enable contact tracing if there is a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection of a user.

This does not require specific software, you could use a shared calendar app e.g. Time Tree, or keep paper records.

One person must be responsible for collecting booking requests, allocating time slots, keeping records of which slots have been allocated to which users, and communicating the allocation to users.

Clubs should decide on their opening and closing times, the length of their available time slots and which areas of the outfield and nets are safe to use. Consider change-over time, clean-down time of nets and how to keep a record of bookings for contact tracing.

For example, a paper or electronic record covering hourly time slots from 10am until 4pm for single-lane use, 50 minutes net practice followed by 10 minutes clean-down/change-over time ahead of the next participants.

Clubs must also:

- Maintain an accurate written record and contact information of who has attended to support contact tracing in the case of a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection.
- Continue to comply with all [safeguarding guidance](#).
- Ensure they have all the appropriate and up-to-date insurance.
- Continue to comply with data protection law including not sharing personal details of participants with others without having a legal basis for doing so (e.g. avoid making booking management system 'live' with personal details for all to see). For further information see [here](#).

### Access to the facility

A representative of the club should be present during opening times to monitor the operation with a copy of the booking sheet in order to resolve any booking issues that could result in social distancing guidelines being ignored.

This person should carry out a daily/per session check that the facilities are safe to use.

Clubs should provide access where possible through a separate entrance and exit, operating a one-way system. If these entrances are gated, they should be opened fully so that users do not touch the gates or locks.

This also applies to the net area, where possible leave the area fully accessible to minimise touch points. If this is unavoidable a cleaning station should be provided and posters displayed to encourage cleaning down of touch points.

Clubs should ensure usual access to first aid and emergency equipment is maintained (in some cases this may require limited access to the clubhouse).

Guidance on delivering first aid during the COVID-19 pandemic is available on the St John Ambulance [website](#).

As clubhouses will still be closed for general use and no changing facilities are available, clubs should make participants aware of this when booking. These facilities are to remain closed in order to reduce social interaction to help reduce the transmission of COVID-19.

Toilet facilities can be opened if the venue wishes, but particular care should be taken by those using them and those cleaning them. Where they are open, ensure soap and water is provided.

Participants should be encouraged to use toilet facilities before attending and to wash their hands on arrival home.

Hand sanitiser with an alcohol content of at least 60% should be made readily available at entrance/exit points and the net area.

Where this is not possible due to lack of supply, participants will need to be informed in order to arrange their own hand washing procedures whether it be washing their hands before leaving the house (and when they return home) or taking hand sanitiser with them.

For a printable guide on washing hands see [here](#).

For a printable guide on using hand gel see [here](#).

Signage is a great way to reinforce the messages in this document and will help users understand why access is still limited at this phase and how the controls in place are protecting them and others.

For advice on reducing the risk of infection when outside your home see [here](#).

You must allow sufficient time for maintenance of your facility in your operating/booking schedule – consult with your grounds manager to ensure you allocate sufficient times for maintenance in good weather.

ECB will provide downloadable signage, including access control and example operating rules.

### **Establishing and Communicating Operating Rules**

Operating rules will need to vary by venue to fit with site-specific restrictions but should include the following as a minimum:

- Do not attend if you or anyone in your household displays symptoms or your household is currently in isolation (full details at the beginning of this document).
- Personal hygiene measures should be carried out at home before and after use of the facility.
- Bring your own hand sanitiser where possible. If this isn't possible wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after visiting the club.
- Travel together as a household.
- Avoid public transport.
- Try not to arrive too early, aim to arrive at the start of your slot to help with social distancing.
- Bring your own playing/training equipment including balls.
- Bring your own filled drinking bottles.
- Avoid touching as much as possible whilst on club premises and use cleaning stations whenever available.
- Do not overstay your allocated time slot, you should be clear of the area by the time the next users arrive. Do not stay to socialise.
- If bowling machines are used, please ensure they are cleaned thoroughly between uses with dry cleaning products and that all balls used are cleaned with disinfectant. This is the responsibility of the bowling machine operator.
- Do not leave private property behind.
- No spitting.
- No saliva or sweat should come into contact with the ball at any time.
- As always, the health and safety of participants is paramount - please ensure those using the nets minimise the risk of injury (wear helmets, pads etc). As well as response times being delayed this is vital to avoid any additional stress on the NHS.
- Encourage all users to report any infection of their household following use of the facility to allow effective contact tracing and to limit the spread of the virus.

These rules should be clearly communicated to each person making a booking, on club social media channels and through signage at access points to grounds and close to net facilities. Signage should be laminated to improve durability and updated and replaced as required.

### **NEXT STEPS**

1. Review your operating plan after day one and week one and revise if necessary – your facility operation must be fit for purpose and safe for those operating, maintaining and using the site.
2. Act on any incidence of infection prior to or after use of the facility and conduct appropriate contact tracing in line with Government methods.
3. Be prepared to close your facility in the event of:
4. An incidence of COVID-19 infection of a user.
5. A change in Government guidance/regulation.
6. Constantly review <https://gov.wales/coronavirus> Please also regularly review news updates on the [ECB website](#). This guidance will be updated and is likely to change in response to Government policy and other best practice guidance.

## GUIDANCE FOR ONE-TO-ONE COACHING

These guidelines were produced in line with the UK Government guidance on public spaces, outdoor activity and exercise published on 11 May 2020, which can be read here and have been updated to reflect regulations in Wales, effective from 22 June 2020.

- The purpose of these guidelines is to assist coaches in creating as safe an environment as possible for players returning to play during the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions.
- Whilst all coaches and players will be extremely keen to start playing it is imperative that coaches set an example and follow these guidelines to ensure that the risk of infection/transmission of the virus is minimised.
- These guidelines cannot cover every eventuality and coaches must conduct a risk assessment, ensuring appropriate measures are put in place to keep participants and coaches safe.
- Playing and coaching cricket in itself carries some degree of risk and whilst being mindful of the guidelines regarding COVID-19, coaches should not lose sight of the normal safety rules relating to playing and coaching cricket which continue to apply and must be complied with (DBS, safeguarding, First Aid etc).
- Coaches should make themselves aware of and abide by, all guidelines set out by the Government, the venue and ECB regarding use of facilities.
- It is the coach's responsibility to ensure that they coach players in a safe environment and follow relevant guidelines.
- Coaching is only permitted in accordance with the rules on [social distancing regulations](#).
- Only sessions with one coach + one other household are allowed – no group sessions involving more than 2 households total (nb 1 coach = 1 household) are permitted.
- Alongside these guidelines, coaches may also wish to read the information published by Sport England, and specifically their Q&A section.

Coaches should remember the following key principles:

- 1. Follow all COVID-19 guidelines established by the UK Government.**
- 2. Follow all COVID-19 guidelines established by the venue.**
- 3. Follow all COVID-19 guidelines established by ECB.**

## BEFORE A SESSION

- Coaches and participants should avoid excessive travel to different venues. Participants should either cycle or drive where possible, avoid public transport if you can and observe local travel restrictions and [guidelines](#).
- Coach to conduct a full risk assessment of the venue in advance of the coaching session.
- Coach to ensure they have access to hand sanitiser/alcohol wipes/washing up liquid.
- Establish a quarantined waiting area for parents.
- Coach to ensure all surfaces are clean and equipment is washed with soapy water and dried completely prior to use – with electronic bowling machine cleaned with suitable dry cleaning products.
- Coaching sessions should be booked and paid for in advance by bank transfer or contactless card payment – no cash transactions.
- Coach to explain the safety guidelines of what is expected pre, during and post session including what the player is expected to do to maintain compliance with social distancing guidelines and all other health and safety guidelines.
- Only sessions with one coach + one other household are allowed – no group sessions involving more than 2 households total (nb 1 coach = 1 household) are permitted.

## DURING THE SESSION – Outdoors only

- Maintain a minimum of two metres apart to meet social distancing requirements including during observed sessions (no handshakes).
- Ensure all health and safety and emergency first aid guidelines are followed.
- Players should provide their own equipment if possible, and this must be kept in a zipped bag when not in use.
- Coach is responsible for collecting all of their own equipment/kit – do not share equipment if possible.
- Player is responsible for collecting all their own equipment/kit – do not share equipment if possible.
- Player is responsible for ensuring they have their own refreshments and/or food.
- Schedule sessions at least 10 minutes apart to avoid or limit any crossover of players.
- Avoid high intensity physical exercise where possible.
- If it is a bowling session, player to use their own balls or coach to use plastic balls which have been washed/dried prior to the session – batters to knock or kick ball back to the bowler and not throw it as usual – the batter should not handle the balls.
- Coach to ensure they have appropriate hand coverings (mitt or gloves) when handling the ball during any skill sessions including when feeding the bowling machine. Where bowling machines are used please ensure they are cleaned thoroughly between uses with dry cleaning products and that all balls used are cleaned with disinfectant. This is the responsibility of the bowling machine operator.

## AFTER THE SESSION

- Players and coaches to wash/sanitise their hands before and after the session.
- Video may be recorded during the session but should not be analysed at the time with the players. This may be sent to the player after the session with coaching notes.
- Players leaving a session must maintain a distance of two metres from other players or coaches as they leave the session.

**Remember: No saliva or sweat should come into contact with the ball at any time.**

## FURTHER INFORMATION

Further advice is available at [here](#) and [here](#) websites. You must regularly check these sites and updated ECB guidance as this policy position is likely to change over time and could also become more regionalised and localised as time progresses.

If you have any further questions, please contact ECB's [here](#) or Cricket Wales [here](#).