

## Covid Secure Risk Assessment – Investigating Coasts

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### Introduction

The Centre runs 2-hour Investigating Coasts sessions for up to 1 school bubble at a time, as per guidelines from the UK government and our licence from the landowner. These sessions are booked in advance and contact details including email and phone number of the school are required and can be used for the purposes of Test and Trace if necessary. Details of Covid-safety precautions for each session are available prior to booking.

The Warden meets the participants at a prearranged time outside the Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre and the whole session takes place in the outdoor environment. All sessions are tide dependant.

Schools are asked not to attend if anyone in their group is displaying symptoms of Covid-19 and the Centre will issue a full refund.

The Centre has licences from both the National Trust and Charmouth Parish Council to conduct sessions and has public liability insurance cover of £5 million.

Social distancing will take place throughout the event and the Wardens have the right to end the session if they feel that this is not being adhered to. A distance of 2m between the wardens, volunteers and participants will be maintained, but this distance can be reduced to 1m+ for short periods as the risk of infection is considered to be lower in an outdoor environment. The Wardens and volunteers will carry a face covering and can wear this during the session if requested to.

The Investigating Coasts session involves a large proportion of group work. Group sizes will be kept small, and will work as 'mini bubbles' for the duration of the session. Equipment will be shared only within these mini bubbles. Hand sanitisation when sharing equipment will be encouraged. Wardens and Volunteers will not touch any equipment used by the school and vice versa. After the session, all equipment will be quarantined and thoroughly cleaned ready for the next use.

## **Covid-19**

- The novel Corona virus is a potentially fatal viral illness which can be transmitted from person to person as well as to and from inanimate objects.
- The Department of Health estimates that between 25 -50% of cases are asymptomatic so individuals may be unaware that they are contagious.
- On average, it takes 5 days before people display symptoms, during which time they are contagious (presymptomatic transmission).
- The virus can survive on surfaces for several days.
- The virus spreads more easily in indoor environments.
- There are many unknowns about this virus, but there is growing evidence that it can cause severe symptoms and may leave a significant number of sufferers with long term physical and/or neurological damage.
- The vaccination programme should reduce the symptoms, but does not negate the need for caution.

### **Risks**

Infection can occur at every point of contact between Wardens and participants. This can be through airborne particles and or contact with infected surfaces or objects.

### **Vulnerable groups**

Older people are more likely to have severe symptoms (necessitating hospital admission) and to have a significantly higher mortality rate from the virus than the rest of the population. The over 70s are termed clinically vulnerable and the risks rise significantly in over 80s and 90s. Men are more at risk than women and BAME people are particularly vulnerable. Those with certain medical conditions including diabetes, heart, liver or kidney disease, those who are more than 20% overweight, any illness (or treatment) which affects immune system function are especially at risk. Vulnerable people include those shielding others.

## **Groups of people at risk**

### **Staff**

- The Centre employs three full-time wardens who are fully trained, first aid at work qualified and are DBS checked.
- All Wardens are under 45 and there is a lower mortality rate for this age group compared with older individuals.

### **Volunteers**

- The Centre has around 80 volunteers, but only around 15 are volunteering with schools during the pandemic
- The average age of our volunteers puts many at a significantly higher risk of mortality as the over 70s are termed clinically vulnerable
- The volunteer roles will be interacting with participants from 1 school bubble at a time, and working outdoors

### **School Bubbles**

- Although generally seen to be lowest at risk, children have not, to date, been offered vaccinations against Covid-19.
- They will be travelling from different parts of the country with varying levels of infection.
- They will have varying levels of respect for the virus and social distancing measures.
- The shared facilities at the public toilets in Charmouth could be a major concern for virus transmission.
- Participants will be a range of ages, to include both students and teachers.