

Good Evening,

I hope that this email finds you in good health and that are continuing to follow all of the Emergency Measures on your Noticeboards and the web site.

It is important that we keep all members updated with the latest guidelines given to us by the National Allotment Society, this is the latest update.

Protect yourself and your family

We are all living through a crisis, the likes of which the country has not experienced since war time. The community spirit that exists on allotment sites is more important now than ever before. Please remember to look out for one another during these very difficult times and take all the steps you can to reduce the risk of contagion from the Covid-19 virus when you visit the plot.

Covid -19 - The virus that causes COVID 19 is mainly transmitted through droplets generated when an infected person coughs, sneezes or speaks. The droplets are too heavy to hang in the air and they quickly fall and contaminate floors and surfaces.

Smaller airborne particles can remain in the air for some time. You can be infected by breathing in the virus if you are within close proximity of a person who has Covid-19- hence the 2m social distancing requirement, or by touching a contaminated surface and then touching your eyes, nose or mouth before washing your hands.

You can still work my allotment during the Covid19 lockdown. Allotments are a great way of both getting exercise and obtaining food during this crisis.

You can visit the allotment with members of your household, however the NAS is suggesting that you consider going alone to the plot, why? Plot-holders must decide for themselves but they are looking at the bigger picture and are concerned about the risk of sites being shut – as they have been in Ireland and France, if some plot-holders are happy to visit alone or stay away for a few weeks that reduces this risk.

Government Ministers have suggested that an hour's walk is reasonable and asked us all to limit time spent outside the home. Again you must decide for yourselves what is a reasonable amount of time to spend doing the jobs that need doing for that day and then to return home.

To ensure your family's and everyone else's safety at the plot –

- Do not attend the plot if you have coronavirus symptoms or a family member is self-isolating.
- Use hand sanitiser (should be 60% alcohol content) before entering the site and opening any gate locks.
- Hand sanitise for at least 20 seconds after closing the lock, dry your hands as this is the most effective part of hand sanitisation as it removes a layer of dead skin scales on which virus and bacteria could sit.
- DO NOT touch your face after using anything that has been touched by other people - use an elbow to work push taps for example.
- Hand sanitise again for 20 seconds, before opening and closing the lock to leave the site.
- Use hand sanitiser after closing the lock.
- Wash hands when you get home.
- DO NOT gather together for a chat even if you are 2 metres apart.
- Observe "Social Distancing" with each other 2-3 metres preferably more.
- If you take your children to the plot, ensure that they stay within its confines and do not run around on communal paths and spaces.
- Do not share tools
- Do not wash your hands in water troughs

Can you drive to your allotment? The NAS do not have an overall answer to this question. Police forces are clamping down on non-essential travel. Some have said that a short drive to the plot is permitted if there is no other choice

whilst others are still enforcing the prohibition on driving to exercise. Walk to the plot if at all possible and do not take public transport.

If you have hens or other livestock to care for at the plot, animal welfare considerations mean that this would be seen as essential travel even if further movement restrictions are put in place.

The toilet at Decoy has been closed.

It is essential that no un-authorised people are allowed onto the plots for the duration of this emergency, if you do wish to bring someone to assist with work on the plot, please ensure that that this is notified either to Secretary or Site Manager. Careful consideration should be given to introducing anyone over 70, those with underlying illness or pregnant women.

The Shop - The on-line ordering / payment system is working well and until getting stock becomes a problem we will do our best to keep it open for on-line orders.

Bonfires and BBQs – During this crisis Environmental Health Departments across the UK have asked that people consider their neighbours and not burn anything during the covid-19 emergency. Many sites are surrounded by houses where vulnerable people may be getting their only bit of fresh air through an open window. This consideration also applies to BBQs.

Plot inspections and allocations have been postponed until they can be done safely and within government guidelines

It is likely that a percentage of plot-holders will be unable to visit their plots, if anyone would like to become a buddy to one of these members or if there are members at home who would appreciate a buddy to cut their grass paths or perhaps do a bit of weeding, untended plots could at least be kept in some sort of order.

Any plot-holder who is self-isolating because a household member is ill with coronavirus should not be visiting the site at all.

Click on the link to read about [self isolating](#)

Click on the link to read about [social distancing](#)

Government advice about the Coronavirus is updated on a regular basis at this link.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

For NHS information and advice [CLICK HERE](#)

The local authorities are watching what people are doing. Be under no illusion, they will take action if they see members in groups. Compliance with all restrictions on the noticeboards is **essential**. There must be no gathering on the fields whatsoever. We all have to play our part and keep our distance. Steve Garlick and I have spoken several times this week from a distance of around 4 – 5 metres, shout at one another it will be worth it!

A slogan has been suggested by an Allotment Association – “Dig for Recovery rather than Victory”. The NAS are there to assist the membership, we are doing all we can to ensure members receive consistent advice by lobbying Central Government on issues that require further clarification.

Stay Safe – Let’s all dig for Recovery rather than for Victory!

Tim Callard (Chairman)