

Guidance for Community Transport

Last updated on 16 July

You can find our most up to date guidance at ctauk.org/covid19-guidance/

Latest Information

Supporting the Community Transport Sector: CTA's Next Steps

Like so many areas of society, coronavirus has caused significant upheaval in the way that community transport operates. At CTA, it's our job as the national membership body for the sector to provide timely and relevant advice and support to our members, both with and without a major pandemic to contend with. That's what we've aimed to do during this coronavirus pandemic and, as we start to gradually emerge from lock-down, it's as important as ever that we continue to provide you with the support you need to run your services safely, securely and sustainably.

Over the coming weeks, we'll be helping our members meet the challenges of emerging from lock-down. We'll be releasing detailed guidance, tool-kits and resources, as well as being there for you in our member advice-drop in calls and with our advice service, to help you operate in what will be a new and uncertain environment.

[You can read more about our plans to support the sector here.](#)

The latest guidance from the UK and devolved governments

In recent weeks, the UK Government and devolved administrations have updated their coronavirus guidance to ease certain aspects of the lock-down, and this easing is expected to continue in the coming weeks and months.

You can always find the most relevant and up to date guidance in the following places:

- [NHS: latest information and advice](#)
- UK Government: gov.uk/coronavirus
- Wales: gov.wales/coronavirus-covid19
- Scotland: gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/
- Northern Ireland: publichealth.hscni.net/news/covid-19-coronavirus

When planning your journeys, you can refer the information on this page which summarises some areas of the UK Government's guidance but please also read in full the relevant guidance for transport operators from the UK, Welsh and Scottish Governments and the Northern Ireland Executive. There are links to these documents below, as well as some other relevant information.

UK Government

- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): safer transport guidance for operators](#)
- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): safer travel guidance for passengers](#)

Scottish Government

- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): A guide for transport operators in Scotland to keep their staff and those using their services safe](#)
- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Advice on how to travel safely](#)

Welsh Government

- [Restarting public transport: guidance for operators](#)
- [Travelling safely during the coronavirus](#)

What does the current guidance mean for community transport?

Am I still only allowed to run essential services?

Guidance from the UK Government, Scottish Government and Northern Ireland Executive no longer states that public transport should only be used for essential journeys, as has been the case up until now. The Welsh Government however still states individuals should only travel for essential journeys.

Whilst people are still encouraged to limit their use of public transport, and it is still recommended that people should walk, cycle or drive wherever possible, this gives more scope for community transport providers in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland to gradually re-introduce more services that they wouldn't have previously been able to run. Please note that this does not apply to car schemes, as shared car journeys are still only allowed for essential travel.

The guidance below looks at our recommendations of what you need to consider when running any services in the near future.

Am I allowed to leave the house to operate/coordinate any services we're running?

According to the UK Government guidance, everyone that can work from home should still work from home. However, for most who work in the community transport sector, working from home is

not practical. If you can't work from home, you are therefore allowed to travel to your place of work to run your services.

Please note this is with the proviso that you do not have to self-isolate due to yourself or anyone in your household displaying symptoms of coronavirus or coming into contact with someone who has symptoms, or the virus itself. If anyone involved in running your services should be self-isolating due to these reasons, they should not be coming into work.

Any workplaces must follow social distancing guidance. [The UK Government has put together information on how to work safely during coronavirus, which you can find here.](#)

- [Workplace safety guidance from the Welsh Government can be found here.](#)
- [Workplace safety guidance from the Scottish Government can be found here.](#)
- [Workplace safety guidance from the Northern Ireland Executive can be found here.](#)

Running your services safely

New guidance on restarting your services

When running or restarting any services it is imperative that this is done with the safety of passengers, volunteers and employees in mind. This means following strict social distancing and hygiene protocols.

[CTA has worked with the TAS Partnership to provide detailed guidance on how to restart and sustain your services, which you can find here.](#)

This document covers the following topics:

- **Social distancing**
- **PPE and face coverings**
- **Putting together a comprehensive risk assessment**
- **Training**
- **Looking after staff, volunteers and passengers**
- **Your vehicles**
- **Car schemes**

Resources on Risk Assessments and Risk Management

With the support of CTA members from across the UK, CTA have produced community transport specific templates and resources relating to COVID-19 risk assessments which CTA members can download from ctauk.org/advice-resources/risk-assessment-and-management.

If you're not a CTA member, you can still download our 'How To' guide for risk assessments, as well as a COVID-19 specific risk assessment template below.

We're making these usually member only resources open access to help get services back up and running. If you're using these resources and aren't a CTA member, [you can find more information about CTA membership here](#).

- [Download our risk assessment 'how to' guide here](#)
- [Download our COVID-19 specific risk assessment template here](#).

New resource: supporting volunteers as services restart

As community transport providers begin to restart services, it's as important as ever to make sure that new and existing volunteers are working in the safest environment possible. This how to guide on supporting volunteers as services restart looks at the following topics:

- Retaining new volunteers who joined during lock-down
- Volunteer safety and training
- Supporting vulnerable volunteers
- Checklist for managing volunteers during COVID-19
- Other sources of guidance

As with the risk assessment guide above, we're making these usually member only resources are open access to help get services back up and running. If you're using these resources and aren't a CTA member, you can find more information about CTA membership here.

[Download this resource here](#).

Other useful information and guidance

Volunteers over 70

As well as considering the safety of passengers, it's also important to think about how organisations can protect volunteers who may be older or classed as vulnerable. We know that many invaluable volunteers have had to self-isolate or to shield throughout the lockdown as they are at a higher risk and that some of them are now starting to express an interest in returning to their previous roles. For many of the volunteers involved with community transport, there are as many benefits for them as there are for the passengers. This makes it extremely difficult for organisations who are legitimately concerned about safety when a volunteer is keen to return to driving.

When considering how you want to manage volunteers returning, you should be aware that there is a possibility of some individuals being classed as [clinically extremely vulnerable](#). This is the category which will have received a letter from their GP advising them to shield. The guidance if you are in this category is that *'you're strongly advised to stay at home as much as possible and keep visits outside*

to a minimum (for instance once per day).’ Please also see the specific guidance for [Northern Ireland](#), [Scotland](#) and [Wales](#). It would not currently be advisable for anyone in this group to return to a driving role. However, they may be able to offer support in other ways, such as telephone befriending.

For volunteers who are over 70, the current UK Government guidance defines them as [clinically vulnerable](#). *“This means that you are at higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. You are advised to stay at home as much as possible and, if you do go out, take particular care to minimise contact with others outside your household.”* Again, please also see specific guidance for [Northern Ireland](#), [Scotland](#) and [Wales](#).

As the guidance is not as prescriptive for this group, we have heard of some individuals feeling that they would be happy to return to volunteering despite being at a higher risk. If this is something which you are considering, we would advise extreme caution and to ensure that you complete a suitable and sufficient risk assessment.

It may not be helpful to create a blanket policy about whether to allow older volunteers to return or not. Instead, it may be more appropriate to consider each volunteer individually, the role they are volunteering for, and to create a specific risk assessment for each one. Although this process may be time consuming, it may help both you as an operator and the volunteer to feel more confident.

Where possible you should first consider offering volunteering roles which can be done from home. You could also consider offering roles where maintaining social distancing is easier, such as making deliveries.

Where social distancing is not possible you will need to carefully assess what control measures you can put in place and whether you are then left with an acceptable level of risk. It may be worth discussing this with your insurers to understand what cover you have in place regarding volunteers. NCVO have produced some guidance about [insurance for volunteers](#) and have also shared a useful webinar about Covid-19 and [managing risks](#).

Resources and funding programmes in response to coronavirus

We know that funding is a real concern for community transport providers at the moment, with many of their sources of income no longer being viable in the face of coronavirus, and many of their overheads still in place.

There are however, a number of different funding sources that are offering emergency funding to charities and organisations going through these sorts of difficulties.

This includes a recently announced £750m fund from the UK Government, of which £370 million will go to small local charities including those delivering food and essential medicines. [You can find more information here](#).

We've also put together a list of other potentially useful funds at ctauk.org/coronavirus-funding-and-resources/. Given the rapidly changing situation, there are new programmes emerging regularly so this is not an exhaustive list and we will be updating it with new information, so keep checking back.

Guidance on the UK Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

Since the introduction of the furlough scheme, many community transport operators, like many other businesses and organisations, have been left with no choice but to furlough some or all of their employees. Our recent report into the effect of coronavirus on community transport showed that 43% of CTA members said that they have, or may have to, furlough members of staff.

On 29 May, the UK Government's Chancellor announced a series of changes to the scheme, including workers being able to go back part-time from July.

- [You can find useful information on the 29 July changes to the furlough scheme here.](#)
- [You can find the UK Government's full guidance on the furlough scheme here.](#)
- On 22 May, Keith Arrowsmith, a senior solicitor and partner of Counterculture Partnership LLP joined our member advice drop-in to answer members' questions about the scheme. [You can find a recap of that session here.](#)

Previous guidance documents

Towards the start of lock-down CTA produced information on running essential journeys, delivering food, medicines and other goods. Whilst much of this is now superseded by the information above, there may be elements that are still useful to take a look at.

- [Running essential journeys \(March 2020\)](#)
- [Delivering food and medicines \(March 2020\)](#)

General information and guidance

General advice for understanding the symptoms

The following symptoms may develop in the 14 days after exposure to someone who has coronavirus:

- A cough
- A high temperature
- Shortness of breath

If you are worried about symptoms please call NHS 111 or go to [the NHS 111 coronavirus website](#). Do not go directly to your GP or other healthcare environment.

Taking precautions

- Wash your hands often, with soap (or soap substitutes) and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser. This is particularly important after taking public transport so make sure you remind your passengers of the need to do this.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin. You can download a ['Catch it, Bin it, Kill it' poster](#) for your workplace from the NHS.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in the home and work environment.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

What other advice is out there

As mentioned above, it's important to keep up to date with the latest advice using the links on the first page of this document.

NCVO have also produced advice and resources for voluntary organisations concerned about coronavirus including risk management processes and organisational planning:

- [NCVO: latest information and advice](#)

There is also specific advice and information from various other charities:

- [Diabetes UK has](#) provided an updated information page for people living with diabetes.
- [Asthma UK](#) has released a blog post with advice for people with asthma.
- [The British Heart Foundation](#) has published guidance for people with health problems.
- [The National Eczema Society](#) has offered advice on handwashing techniques for people with eczema and other skin conditions.
- [SignHealth](#) has created British Sign Language (BSL) videos to help deaf BSL users either working in charities or receiving support.
- [Carers UK](#) has produced recommendations for carers.
- [Full Fact](#) has generated a fact check page on covid-19 to help dispel any false information.

Further information

The CTA Advice Service

CTA Advice Service: The CTA team are currently working remotely, so to ensure you speak to the right person first time, please email advice@ctauk.org to receive a call back for advice and support. Our advice service operates 10-4pm Monday-Friday.

Advice Service Drop-in: due to the changing nature of the situation, our advice team will be holding a weekly online drop-in where members can join a video call to talk to the team and each other about the latest guidance and ask any questions. You can find a recap of the latest session, along with details of our next call on our main guidance page.
