

BACKGROUND - The hazard SARS-CoV-2 is a respiratory virus that can invade a host via the respiratory route or via hand to eye, mouth, nose contact, causing the disease COVID-19. People who appear healthy may be carrying and shedding the virus, which can be passed on either directly or indirectly to others. This means we need to imagine that anyone could be carrying the virus.

The routes of transmission (how the hazard can cause harm – the risks) -

- Direct contact to face – eyes, nose from droplets or aerosols spraying from an infected person onto another person who is in close contact.
- Contamination via droplets from sneezing and coughing landing on surfaces and then transferring via hands on to eyes and nose and mouth.
- Other means of secretions getting on to surfaces could be from infected people touching their eyes, nose and mouth and then touching surfaces with contaminated hands.
- Contaminated hands of infected people can transfer the virus directly to others (e.g. handshakes) or on to hand contact surfaces which can be picked up by other people's hands and transferred to their eyes, nose or mouth
- Possible transmission from faeces to hands and then directly or indirectly to the body via hands and hand contact surface transfer.

GOVERNMENT ADVICE –

'Community centres, village halls, and other multi-use community facilities support a wide range of local activity. Their communal nature also makes them places that are vulnerable to the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

'Managers of community facilities will have discretion over when they consider it safe to open for any activity permitted by legislation and may decide to remain closed if they are not able to safely follow the advice in the relevant guidance, to make the space COVID-19 secure.

'Many community facilities are also workplaces and those responsible for the premises should therefore be aware of their responsibilities as employers. The government is clear that no one is obliged to work in an unsafe workplace.

'Organisations also have a duty of care to volunteers to ensure as far as reasonably practicable they are not exposed to risks to their health and safety and are afforded the same level of protection as employees and the self-employed. See government information on coronavirus volunteering and how to help safely. Volunteers and other individuals who are shielding should continue to follow the government's advice on shielding.'

Conference and events guidelines developed by the Meetings Industry Association can be found on the MIA website via the following links:

- To the full guidance page: <https://www.mia-uk.org/Safety-Resources>

- Direct to the Guidance document:
https://www.miauk.org/write/MediaUploads/mia_Roadmap_to_reopening_and_operating_safely.pdf
- To the Meetings Industry Association home page: <https://www.mia-uk.org>
- To the full guidance page: <https://www.mia-uk.org/Safety-Resources>
- Direct to the Guidance document:
https://www.miauk.org/write/MediaUploads/mia_Roadmap_to_reopening_and_operating_safely.pdf
- To the Meetings Industry Association home page: <https://www.mia-uk.org>

NB. These and the following measures should be considered alongside local public health and safety requirements and legislation.

RGF-Gaunts

Covid 19 Policy Papers.

7Aug20.

POLICY PAPER 1. In line with UK Govt dictates –

CONFERENCES AND EVENTS -

'Exhibition or conference centres must remain closed for events such as exhibitions or conferences, other than for those who work for the business or organisation who run the venue.'

Live performances, including drama, comedy and music, are not permitted to take place in front of a live audience.

From 4 July, we must limit our social interactions to two households (our support bubble counts as one household) in any location, or, if outdoors, potentially up to six people from different households.

'The size and circumstance of the premises will determine the maximum number of people that can be accommodated while also facilitating social distancing. In defining the number of people that can reasonably follow 2 metres distancing (or 1 metre with risk mitigation - facemasks), the total floorspace as well as likely pinch points and busy areas should be taken into account (e.g. entrances, exits) and where possible alternative or one-way routes introduced.

'It is against the law for gatherings of more than 30 people to take place in private homes (including gardens and other outdoor spaces). However, premises or locations which are COVID-19 Secure will be able to hold more than 30 people, subject to their own capacity limits. It is important for people to maintain social distancing and good hand hygiene when visiting using community facilities.'

RGF-Gaunts will remain 'closed' until these restrictions are lifted, possibly for October.

POLICY PAPER 2. *Once RGF-Gaunts is able to reopen safely, within the guidelines-*
In line with UK Govt dictates, (see references) –

The Trustees have a legal responsibility to protect members of staff and visitors from risk to their health and safety. Risk Assessments have been undertaken for each individual premises, and for work activities, assessed with the relevant Government COVID-19 Secure Guidelines. Measures have been taken that fit appropriately with the operational needs of RGF-Gaunts as well as relevant legal requirements. See *Risk Assessments*.

The opening up of the national economy is being supported by NHS Test and Trace. RGF-Gaunts will assist this service by keeping a temporary record of our visitors for 21 days, in a way that is manageable and would assist NHS Test and Trace with requests for that data if needed. RGF should also keep a temporary record of our staff shift patterns for 21 days, similarly .

RGF Risk Assessments have been written in conjunction with staff and colleagues. Members of staff who can work from home should continue to do so. The Trustees should decide, in consultation with members of staff, whether it is viable for them to continue working from home. Where it is decided that members of staff should come into work is reflected in their Risk Assessment and in actions taken to manage the risks of transmission in line with Government guidance.

A Government poster with the main guidelines communicates to members of staff and visitors that we have Risk Assessed our various premises and taken appropriate steps to minimise the risk of COVID-19 in individual workplaces, is displayed in the black & white corridor and at the Tea Station.

The Key Principles are:

- In every workplace, the frequency of handwashing and surface cleaning must be increased.
- RGF has made every reasonable effort to ensure members of staff and visitors can work safely.
- RGF has made every reasonable effort to enable working from home is a first option.
- Where working from home is not possible, members of staff and visitors will make every reasonable effort to comply with the social distancing guidelines set out by the Government (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable).
- Where the social distancing guidelines cannot be maintained, RGF has taken all mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of CV19 transmission between members of staff and visitors.
- If members of staff and visitors must work face-to-face for a sustained period with more than a small group of fixed partners, RGF will need to assess whether the activity can safely go ahead.
- Members of staff and visitors will use back-to-back or side-to-side working, rather than face-to-face, whenever possible.
- The number of people each member of staff and visitor has contact with will be reduced by using 'fixed teams and partnering' so each person works with only a few others.
- RGF Risk Assessments have given particular regard to whether members of staff and visitors are especially vulnerable to COVID-19.

- No one will be forced to work in an unsafe work environment.
- Any ongoing revisions will consider new or altered security implications and risks which may need mitigation.

Visitor Safety -

This Policy Paper, as to additional measures in place regarding COVID-19, will be made available to Course Leaders in a pre-stay communication.

Additionally, a paper '**Advice to Guests during CV19**', (see below), provides information and reassurance, to be distributed to guests via their Course Leader, includes,

- Frequency of bedroom cleaning, generally at the end of a guest's stay,
- Local walks/attractions that are open for use under social distancing rules,
- Guidance in case a guest shows COVID-19 symptoms,
- Helpful contacts and telephone numbers.

Our plans regarding visitor safety will be consistently reminded to members of staff and visitors.

Members of Staff will:

- Keep contact with guests to a minimum, adhering to current social distancing guidelines.
- Where contact is inevitable (e.g. if checking passports/IDs is part of guest check in), members of staff will wear facemasks and maintain a safe social distance.
- Reception areas - If social distancing cannot be maintained, members of staff and visitors should further increase the frequency of hand washing and surface cleaning, keep the activity time involved as short as possible.
- To protect members of staff and visitors, we have posted signs and notices communicating explanations of social distancing rules and additional hygiene measures in place.
- The extra measures that are being taken are made clear in a pre-stay paper, (see below).
- Reception desks should be organised so that members of staff and visitors can be the at the recommended distance away from guests as much as possible.
- Signage and floor markings will be used to act as visible reminders of social distancing requirements outside toilets and in the Welcome Room.
- When guests sign documents and use the chip and pin machine, reception staff should step back to keep their distance.
- Any pens or machines that are used should be disinfected before the next guest's use, and members of staff and visitors should sanitise their hands.
- Members of Staff will not be able to help guests with their luggage.
- Make sure that guests have access to appropriate guidance in the event that they develop COVID-19 symptoms – see below.

Accommodation -

Government guidance states that private rooms in indoor accommodation with en-suite showering facilities, or one designated shower facility per guest room, will be able to reopen.

RGF-Gaunts has 30 single-use bedrooms and bath/shower rooms available.

Guest Information Folders, in wipeable laminated folders, found in every bedroom, request guests recognise the importance of the local community and to respect social distancing, and encourage them to maintain the cleanliness of the property during their stay and to practice good hygiene in all contacts and activities, inside and outside. Guests are asked to air their rooms during their stay, and prior to departure, to leave the windows open.

Outdoor accommodation – RGF campsite - is allowed to reopen, sharing shower & toilet facilities, as long as they are operated in the approved manner.

Guests can travel any distance to get to the countryside.

Guests can stay overnight away from your home with your own household or support bubble, or with members of one other household.

To stay safe, you should:

- Pitch your tent/van well away from others
- Take hygiene precautions when you are outside
- Keep at least 2 metres apart from anyone outside your household or support bubble where possible, or at least one metre with precautions such as wearing a facemask
- Queue sensibly for the Camping Showers & Loos – Social Distance
- Leave gates as you find them
- Do not disrupt the local wildlife
- Take hand sanitiser with you
- Take all your litter home
- Wash your hands as soon as you are back indoors.

Hygiene -

Good hygiene is vital to the reduction of transmission.

All members of staff and visitors should wash their hands when arriving at work, as well as before handling or eating food, or after blowing noses, coughing or sneezing, or going to the toilet.

All handwashing is to be in line with Government guidelines regarding method and length of washing.

Hand sanitiser is provided at every Exit Door, in every Toilet and Bathroom, and on all Reception and Office Desks.

A general commitment to hygiene should be regularly communicated to staff, including transmission threats outside the workplace, infection and quarantine guidelines, and actions to reduce risk of infection in the home.

Please NB -

- Heightened cleaning and disinfection to disinfect all frequently touched areas in staff areas such as tables, chairs, counters tills, card machines, etc.
- Stagger timings for staff break areas/canteens, so that groups of staff have slots to come for their meals to reduce gathering.
- In office/admin areas, many people could be sharing the phone, keyboard, mouse, and the desk. If these items are shared, they should be cleaned using your usual cleaning products before being used, and cleaning products should be made available for this purpose.
- Ensure that the social distancing rule applies at lunch and smoking/vaping breaks.
- Wash items in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest water setting and dry items completely.

Waste disposal -

- There are Litter Bins in every room to encourage members of staff and visitors to dispose of their own waste, such as takeaway containers or wrappers.
- Waste of any kind will be placed in a plastic bag, tied and removed to an external bin.
- We have advised our waste contractor of the changes in our procedures, and as to varied frequency of collections.
- Hazardous waste is to be disposed of only according to government or council guidelines.

Kitchen & Catering Staff, and all Members of Staff, and Visitors -

- An Operational Food & Beverage Plan has been developed to ensure the safety of members of staff and visitors.
- In the Kitchen, continue to use your regular cleaning regime as usual, and at the end of the shift you may want to go over all hand touch surfaces one more time before closing.
- Only One Person is allowed in the chilled storage area and Dry Store at a time.
- The dishwasher/sanitiser is to be used to clean and dry used crockery and cutlery, as usual .
- Ensure that staff use sanitiser between serving guests.
- As much as possible, members of staff should adhere to social distancing guidelines and be instructed as to what measures are in place if social distancing cannot be maintained. Refer to Government guidelines regarding distancing in kitchens.
- A detailed plan and Flow Diagram of Gaunts House Ground Floor and Kitchen has been developed as part of our overall Risk Assessment, and communicated to all staff, showing one-way routes, (see below).

RGF-Gaunts Flow Diagram -

Shows routes to be taken by members of staff and visitors inside and outside Gaunts House, the Stables, and the Theatre, and one-way routes, and the steps in the journeys where Controls are needed, (see below).

Gives us a clear idea of where the potential issues may arise, particularly in relation to social distancing.

Control Points include: Disinfection, Ventilation, (fresh air), Hand hygiene, Signage about Social distancing, First Aid, and Smoking and vaping.

Housekeeping -

A potential risk when cleaning is accidentally transporting the virus from one part of Gaunts to another, for instance via a cleaning cloth. And there is a risk of contamination/transmission of the virus following hand contact on surfaces in bedrooms, and on linen and towels.

Cleaners should wash their hands frequently, or use hand sanitiser.

- Review the frequency of the cycle of cleaning and in-room services to take into account different lengths of stay. Generally, bedrooms will be cleaned at the end of a guest's stay.
- The frequency of cleaning, requirement for the guest to vacate the room and any other relevant criteria is to be communicated appropriately, including in pre-arrival communications.
- Room cleaning will be undertaken in the absence of the guest, unless it is difficult for the guest to leave the room (e.g. due to mobility constraints), whereupon social distancing shall be observed in the presence of the guest.
- Wear the appropriate protective clothing, gloves, apron and mask where appropriate, which should be changed between cleans.
- Ensure the rooms are ventilated whilst cleaning.
- Clean using general cleaning products, or hot soapy water.
- Disinfect using appropriate products and ensuring it is left on the surface for the required time to kill the virus.
- Hard contact surfaces should be disinfected. Make a check list of all the touch points, which could include:
 - Light switches
 - Taps
 - Flush handles and toilet seats
 - Door handles – inside and out
 - Bedside tables
 - Wardrobe doors
 - Kettle handles and lids
 - Electric Heaters.
- **Bedding & Linen:** Use gloves to remove dirty linen carefully directly into bags, (if it has not been stripped by guests). Linen should not be shaken in case viruses are dispersed through the air. Ensure Linen is removed from the room prior to cleaning. Clean pillow and mattress protectors should be used for each changeover.
- Put on clean gloves before putting clean linen onto beds. The same applies to towels, bathmats, tea towels and any other removable linen items.

- Towels and linens should be washed in accordance with washing instructions.
- Wash hands fully after the removal of protective clothing. Hand sanitiser can be used.

Toilets -

Toilets for members of staff and guests are to be kept open, and carefully managed to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

- Signs and posters will build awareness of good handwashing technique, the need to increase handwashing frequency, and avoidance of touching your face, and to cough or sneeze into a tissue which is to be binned safely, (or into your arm if a tissue is not available).
- Social distancing marks will be put in areas where queues normally form, and the adoption of a limited entry approach, one in, one out, (whilst avoiding the creation of bottlenecks).
- Hand sanitiser will be available on entry to toilets, and suitable handwashing facilities including running water, liquid soap and suitable options for drying - paper towels and hand driers.
- Toilets will be kept well ventilated, windows open and doors fixed open when appropriate.
- A visible cleaning schedule will keep that up to date.
- Frequent rubbish collections will be made.

Training -

Information and training talks have been given to members of staff to ensure they understand the new risks, including details on social distancing requirements, routes of transmission and the importance of hand washing and surface disinfection at key times.

All staff have been instructed about not coming to work if they have a high temperature, new continuous cough or the loss of taste or smell. They will stay at home for seven days (or for as long as prevailing guidance dictates).

Suspected COVID cases and guest self-isolation -

Guests should follow government guidance on dealing with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection.

If a guest presents themselves with symptoms of COVID-19, or is asymptomatic and declares the need to self-isolate, they should be advised to self-isolate, according to current Government guidance.

If a guest is displaying signs of the Covid-19 virus while at Gaunts, they should inform the person on duty, and immediately self-isolate in one of the 'hutches', where they are to minimise any risk of transmission; and request a test.

If they are confirmed to have Covid-19, they should return home if they reasonably can. They should use private transport, but only drive themselves if they can do so safely.

If a guest cannot reasonably return home, (for example because they are not well enough to travel, or do not have the means to arrange transport), their circumstances should be discussed with an appropriate health care professional and, if necessary, the local authority.

Once the guest has returned to their main residence, they should continue to follow the government guidance on self-isolation, household isolation and social distancing.

And this will apply to all guests that may have come into contact with them.

If the guest shows acute symptoms, has breathing difficulties, or their life is at potential risk, the Person on Duty will seek medical help immediately.

Cleaning the premises after a suspected contamination -

Whether an infection is confirmed or suspected, there is specific guidance that should be followed which includes how to deal with bedrooms safely. A link to this government guidance is found *here* (see *UK Hospitality Re-opening Guidelines*). Trustees and Staff should be aware that guidance can change, and they should regularly check the government sites whether a case arises or not.

Trustees and Staff will make a plan for such an eventuality before it happens, and make sure we have the cleaning products we need.

Staff will need to be informed and trained on new procedures.

Bedrooms where there has been a suspected infection -

Where there has been a confirmed or suspected infection, follow the latest Government advice which can be found *here* (see *UK Hospitality Re-opening Guidelines*). This will reduce the risk to members of staff and visitors and means that soft furnishings which can't be disinfected easily will be made safe.

Public Areas -

In the event, we will need to clean and disinfect all high frequency touch points in the public areas as per our risk assessment and new operating procedures. Hard surfaces, grab-rails in corridors and stairwells, and door handles will need to be disinfected.

Dispose of any cloths, mop heads etc. by double bagging and keeping secure for 72 hours before disposing in the general rubbish.

After an infected guest has left, follow these directions:

- Using a disposable cloth, first clean hard surfaces with warm soapy water. Then disinfect these surfaces with the disinfecting/sanitising products we normally use.
- Pay particular attention to frequently touched areas and surfaces.
- Steam clean soft furnishings and mattresses *only if you can guarantee that the steam cleaner actually emits steam when it leaves the machine.*
- Don't shake laundry. Bag up in double bags and leave securely before washing.

- After cleaning, dispose of single-use protective clothing, cloths and mop heads and any other waste in the room by double-bagging, and then store securely for 72 hours then throw away in the regular rubbish after cleaning is finished.
- After cleaning and bagging up waste, wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, and dry with a paper towel. Dispose of paper towel appropriately.
- Wash hands and disinfect any surfaces that may have been contaminated by the bags after taking them to the secure place.