



Date: Tuesday 3 March 2020

Advice Note

**Coronavirus (Covid 19) & YFC**

Current information from the Government concerning the Coronavirus: Covid 19 is all should carry on with "business as usual." The Prime Minister has also said that yesterday's meeting of the Cobra committee "agreed a plan so that if and when it starts to spread, as I'm afraid it looks likely it will, we are in a position to take the steps necessary to contain the spread of the disease as far as we can, and to protect the most vulnerable."

Today the government has published its [Coronavirus: action plan](#). The YFC community will need to take steps to play its part in containing the virus and reducing its transmission. If government advice changes from *business as usual* to something else the NFYFC will publish further information. We now should start thinking about what YFC can do in a situation where Covid 19 infection is widespread in the UK.

The NFYFC will produce advice for YFCs and county federations taken from information published by the government and other national expert agencies. As this is a developing situation, this advice is likely to change as the national picture changes.

1. **General advice** – everyone can help reduce the impact and spread of Covid 19.
  - 1.1. **How to avoid catching or spreading germs.** There are things you can do to help stop viruses like Covid 19 spreading.

DO	
✓	cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
✓	put used tissues in the bin immediately
✓	wash your hands with soap and water often – use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
✓	try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell

Don't	
✗	do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean

- 1.2. All YFC members, volunteers, staff and helpers should be alerted to government advice that those feeling unwell with the following symptoms should call 111 and take medical advice - **do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital**. And they should self-isolate for a period of 14 days.
- 1.3. The symptoms of Covid 19 are:
  - a cough
  - a high temperature
  - shortness of breath
- 1.4. Anyone who has recently returned (in the last 14 days) from somewhere with a higher risk of Covid 19 should find out what to do using the NHS 111 online coronavirus service <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19>
- 1.5. As of 3 March 2020, the places with a higher risk of Covid 19 are:
  - Cambodia
  - China

- Hong Kong
- Iran
- Italy – only northern Italy (anywhere north of Pisa, Florence and Rimini)
- Japan
- Laos
- Macau
- Malaysia
- Myanmar (Burma)
- Singapore
- South Korea
- Taiwan
- Tenerife – only the H10 Costa Adeje Palace Hotel
- Thailand
- Vietnam

1.5.1. If anyone has visited one of these countries in the last 14 days, find out what to do using the NHS 111 online coronavirus service.

1.6. For further detail, information is available from trusted sources such as [www.nhs.uk/](http://www.nhs.uk/) and [www.gov.uk/](http://www.gov.uk/) or if travelling check <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice> for information.

## 2. Young Farmers' Clubs – weekly meetings/activities

- 2.1. Information available as of 3 March 2020 indicates that the planned weekly activities can continue as usual.
- 2.2. Ask everyone on arrival to wash their hands and again before they leave – ensure soap and hand towels are available.
- 2.3. It should be expected that some people will avoid unnecessary travel and social contact.
- 2.4. YFC members, YFC volunteers, helpers attending a school/college/university or a place of work that is closed due to a close contact with a suspected infection should follow the instructions issued by the relevant institution, which may include self-isolation for 14 days. This includes staying away from the YFC Club meeting/activities until the self-isolation period of 14 days has passed or a medical test confirms no infection.

## 3. Young Farmers' Clubs, County Federations and Area Committees/Wales – events planned

- 3.1. Information available as of 3 March 2020 indicates that community or social events (this will include any YFC meetings/activities) that are planned can continue.
- 3.2. Ask everyone on arrival to wash their hands and again before they leave – ensure soap and hand towels are available.
- 3.3. It should be expected that some people will avoid unnecessary travel and social contact.
- 3.4. YFC members, YFC volunteers, helpers attending a school/college/university or a place of work that is closed due to a close contact with a suspected infection should follow the instructions issued by the relevant institution, which may include self-isolation for 14 days. This includes staying away from the YFC Club meeting/activities until the self-isolation period of 14 days has passed or a medical test confirms no infection.
- 3.5. Government's action plan does mention "population distancing strategies" (such as school closures, greater home working, reducing the number of large scale gatherings) as considerations for the future as measures to reduce the extent of the virus spread.
  - 3.5.1. This is not the case right now. It is one of the tools being considered to help contain a spread of the virus – be mindful that this may be put in place sometime in the future.
  - 3.5.2. This is a situation that will require YFC county-wide or Area/Wales-wide monitoring and should primarily focus on helping to avoid the virus travelling from one part of the county/area to another.
  - 3.5.3. Whilst the advice from government and the authorities at the present time is not to postpone/cancel events, it is recommended that YFCs, county federations and area committees/Wales now put together event management and decision-making teams in order to explore the ways in which the club/county federation/area committee/Wales could manage a future situation.



#### 4. **NFYFC events**

- 4.1. The NFYFC will also be monitoring the situation across England and Wales.
- 4.2. The decision making will require monitoring across the UK, specifically England and Wales with a focus on helping to avoid the virus to travel from one part of England/Wales to another part.

#### 5. **Should the Government introduce any *population distancing strategies*?**

- 5.1. From the information available today from government, the focus of population distancing strategies will be at large scale gatherings.
- 5.2. It is possible that large scale meetings/activities/shows may have to be suspended for a period of time.
- 5.3. Being prepared to manage this situation will make it easier should this advice be given to us all in the UK.
- 5.4. **Further advice will be published by the NFYFC.**

#### 5.5. **YFC Clubs**

- 5.5.1. At the moment, club activities continue - business as usual.

#### 5.6. **County Federations**

- 5.6.1. At the moment, county federation and Area/Wales activities continue - business as usual.
- 5.6.2. Be prepared for staff to work from home. The following checks will be useful, so that staff can easily switch to homeworking if the government announces this as an action for employers.
  - 5.6.2.1. Check laptop, PCs and YFC mobile telephones are ready and secure.
  - 5.6.2.2. Check if the landlines to the county office can be diverted to the YFC county mobile phone(s).
  - 5.6.2.3. Check that staff have access to internet and to the digital files/documents and services required to continue working away from the normal office base
  - 5.6.2.4. Check all required contact details can be available to staff if not working from the normal office base.
  - 5.6.2.5. Think about any one-off tasks that could easily be completed when away from the normal office base.
- 5.6.3. For County Staff Management Committees - Acas has issued new guidance on how to handle any impact of Covid 19 in the workplace. <https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus>
- 5.6.4. Think about the large scale events that the county has planned in March, April, May and possibly June 2020
  - 5.6.4.1. Think about what information will be useful, and could be collated now, to make the decision making easier should the authorities announce that large scale gatherings of people should not happen for a period of time.
  - 5.6.4.2. Be prepared to take advice from show societies, venues and the local authority.

#### 6. **Ongoing communication from the NFYFC**

- 6.1. The NFYFC will also be monitoring the situation across England and Wales and will publish further information and advice as the situation develops. This information will be emailed to each County Office for cascading to each YFC.