

Guidance note for sports facility owners and operators during Coronavirus (Covid-19)

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Sport for life

sportscotland
the national agency for sport

This guidance note sets out a range of recommended actions owners and operators of sports facilities follow to make their sports facility safe and to minimise the work to get it fit for sport when Scottish Government guidance confirms it is safe to do so.

‘Stay home, Protect the NHS, Save lives’

All owners and operators of sports facilities are advised not to put themselves or others at any risk and to consider these recommended actions in line with the current Scottish Government guidance. We also encourage you to actively consult and discuss the work, the tasks to be carried out and working practices with the relevant authorities and agencies and their advisers to ensure the works are essential and/or safe.

The following information is intended to support sports facility owners and operators by suggesting some principles and points to follow, generally and for specific sports facility types recognising that these do not apply in every circumstance.

Changing Pavilions/ Gyms/ Large sports buildings

1. All equipment is switched off and plugs removed from wall/floor sockets
2. All taps are checked and in the off position
3. All food waste and bins are emptied
4. All staff personal belongings are removed or securely stored
5. All lights are switched off
6. All local or portable heaters are switched off and plugs removed from sockets
7. All items of confidential nature must be secured and not left in view
8. All internal access doors must be closed but NOT locked (locked office doors slow down Fire Fighters)
9. All windows must be closed and secured and where appropriate take steps to protect against any vandalism
10. Utilities – depending on circumstances and the ability to decommission systems during lockdown, clubs may have to keep things ticking over to ensure Mechanical & Electrical services can remain operational on the return to sports activity. The responsible person should contact their maintenance firm for advice.

11. Decommission water services if possible.
12. Shut off and secure Gas services.
13. Ensure all safety systems and alarms are fully functioning.
14. Display a safety notice in windows or on exterior doors or notice boards with emergency contact and statement regarding security e.g.– “no valuables or cash held on premises.”
15. Secure any external equipment

All emergency contacts should be made aware of the current situation in the building with limited services available. Any requirement to visit should be done in line with [Government guidance to businesses on social distancing](#).

Notices & disclaimers – use of property/grounds at own risk:

Consider putting up a notice to inform people of your temporary closure.
Consider providing contact details for enquiries or in the event of an emergency.
If there's a chance people may try and use your external facilities, you might want to put up a sign requesting them not to and stating that any use of the grounds are at their own risk.

Emergency services & neighbours:

If appropriate, consider informing the emergency services community liaison officer or Neighbourhood Watch that your facilities will be empty so that they are aware.
Notify your immediate neighbours that your facilities will be closing for an unknown period.
If you have a security provider, ensure they are aware too.

Essential systems checks

If access to the facility can be achieved without breaching government guidance consideration should be given to running water services at least once a week should they not be decommissioned.

Hospitality facilities

1. Kitchens will need to be decommissioned i.e. fryers drained and deep cleaned. Gas appliances will need to be shut off and made safe, and fridges and freezers emptied, cleaned and shut off.
2. Cupboards should be emptied of perishable food to deter vermin.
3. Bar services will need to be decommissioned and regularly maintained over the shut down or organisations could face weeks with a very much reduced level of income on return and wait weeks for a technical service crew. Please refer to the [BBPA dispense system shutdown procedures](#)

Natural grass pitches

Maintenance of natural grass pitches should only be considered if it essential, safe and does not conflict with current [Government guidance to businesses on social distancing](#).

Let the grass grow, it can always be recovered for match play once it is safe.

Fine turf sports facilities

We recognise that grounds keeping staff will play a big part in carrying out essential maintenance tasks to minimise any work that will require to be undertaken when sport resumes. Again, the advice is that the maintenance of these types of facilities should only be considered if it essential, safe and does not conflict with current [Government guidance to businesses on social distancing](#).

For Cricket, Bowls and Golf, we suggest you refer to the specific SGB or the Institute of Groundsmanship ([IOG](#)) guidance for fine turf sports facilities.

Synthetic surfaces (pitches, courts, MUGAs)

Maintenance of synthetic surfaces should only be considered if it is essential, safe and does not conflict with current [Government guidance to businesses on social distancing](#).

Where possible, you should consider brushing the surface once a week to remove debris from the playing surface and surrounding area to minimise any work that will require to be undertaken when sport resumes.

Further guidance on getting your facility fit for sport will be available in due course.

Swimming pools

Please refer to the guidance below for advice and guidance on pool closure procedures.

[PWTAG guidance](#)

[The HSE also has guidance available on water services.](#)

Getting your facility fit for sport:

1. Make plans for your facilities re-opening so you can be all systems go when the time comes.
2. Hold regular conversations with your committee, staff, volunteers, members/ customers, suppliers, sponsors and funders about this.
3. Consider whether you need to change your Health and Safety Policies, normal and emergency operating procedures, cleaning and maintenance schedules, disaster recovery processes and agree the actions required to do this.
4. Prepare or update your business continuity plans accordingly.
5. sportscotland will be reviewing the ongoing situation and will develop advice and guidance for getting your facility fit for sport in due course.

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