



**RYA Scotland Guidance for boating in the context of COVID-19 measures  
Level 3 (some Islands\*) and Level 4 ‘Stay at home’ mainland Scotland, Western Isles &  
Skye\*\*)  
March 2021**

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\*The following islands in Argyll and Bute are at level 3: The Isle of Coll, the Isle of Colonsay, the Isle of Erraid, the Isle of Gometra, the Isle of Iona, the Isle of Islay, the Isle of Jura, the Isle of Mull, the Isle of Oronsay, the Isle of Tiree, and the Isle of Ulva. \*\* All islands in Highland are in level 3, except the Isle of Skye and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles).

## Introduction

Currently, mainland Scotland, Skye and the Western Isles are in Level 4 Stay at Home, whilst some islands are in Level 3.

This document covers the essentials of the current restrictions as they affect boating in Local Authority areas in Level 3 and in Level 4 Stay at Home. It should be read in conjunction with the most recent full guidance from RYA Scotland issued on 3 December 2020 noting specifically that Stay at Home supersedes all Level 4 information.

The information within this document is tailored **towards RYA affiliated clubs and recognised training centres as well as individual members and the wider boating community across Scotland** and is designed to aid your decision-making process and planning, not replace it.

It is still possible to go boating as a form of exercise, following the outdoor gathering rules, but we remind everyone that that we are in the grip of a pandemic and any activity should be conservative of risk. The overriding message for Scotland's boating community is to 'Stay at Home' wherever possible and we must all do our bit to stop the spread of the virus.

Subject to a full risk assessment, facility providers such as Clubs, Training Centres, Marinas and Boatyards may open to allow access for boat owners but will each make their own decisions on whether or not they open their doors or gates to people in the locality. We encourage boat owners to utilise the services of staff at their storage facility if at all possible, in an effort to avoid making a journey, to respect that facility providers may not be able to open and advise owners to contact facility providers before travelling to confirm access.

If you are fortunate enough to live in an area within which you are able to get to your boat, please consider if you can help out someone else who cannot travel, by checking their boat for them.

Importantly in this revised lockdown, although travel is restricted, and you are expected to stay at home/close to home whenever possible, you may travel **within your local authority area** to go boating as your form of exercise.

For essential maintenance on your boat you may travel outside your local authority area. For the time being essential maintenance is work which if not undertaken would cause failure or become an imminent safety issue and we suggest [examples](#) below. Travel for essential maintenance should not be used as a pretext to spend the day aboard 'pottering' or for a weekend away. You should not stay longer than the length of time required to check your boat and undertake the essential maintenance.

Clubs and Centres who require to get their boats serviced or repaired to enable safe activity, may travel to collect or deliver the boat(s) from a professional provider.

To check what level of measures apply in your area or venue where you intend to participate in activity, please check the postcode on the [Government webpage](#). You should be prepared for restrictions to change at short notice and this may result in activity being adapted, postponed or cancelled.

If you have any queries about this most recent guidance please do get in touch with the RYA Scotland Team.

James Allan  
CEO RYA Scotland

## **RYA Guiding Principles – applying across Scotland and the Home Countries**

These are the RYA and RYA Scotland's guiding principles that will underpin all guidance across the boating community. We would encourage decision makers to use these principles to inform their own decisions during the Covid-19 period.

1. **We will always follow Government advice – [Scottish Government](#)**
  - The COVID-19 preventative measures are vital to protecting health and wellbeing and to minimising pressure on frontline services. We have a collective and individual role to play by following the Government guidelines.
  
2. **We will, as a boating community, take a considerate and conservative approach**
  - **Considerate of others** be mindful of the potential impact that you could have on other water users and local communities. Do not place unnecessary extra strain on the RNLI and emergency services
  - **Conservative of risk:** help to minimise risk by taking an extra conservative approach to your boating.

The COVID-19 preventative measures are vital to protecting health and wellbeing and to minimising pressure on frontline services. We have a collective and individual role to play by following the Government guidelines.

Remember **FACTS** for a safer Scotland.

- Face covering
- Avoid crowded places
- Clean hands and surfaces regularly
- Two metre distance from other people
- Self-isolate and book a test if you have COVID-19 symptoms

People who are symptomatic should self-isolate for 10 days and household members also for 10 days. No one who is self-isolating should attend a sports facility or activity.

Protection Levels		
	Level 3	Level 4 'Stay at Home'
<b>Travel for boating activity, training, or events</b>	<p>Participants aged <b>18 years or over</b> (adults) living in a Level 3 area should only travel within their Local Authority Area to take part in organised physically distanced non-contact sport or exercise outdoors or for boat maintenance.</p> <p>You can also take part in local informal exercise such as walking, cycling, rolling, golf, running, including sailing, (up to 5 miles of their local authority boundary area) that starts and finishes at the same place but straddles the boundary of two local authority areas. This could include boundaries on the water as long as you depart and return to the same location and don't go ashore but cannot include any activity organised by a club/centre or National Governing Body.</p> <p>Participants aged 17 and under can travel to and from Level 0, 1, 2 and 3 areas to take part in organised sport and physical activity training and competition.</p>	<p>All participants, both children (aged 17 and under) and Adults (18 years or over) can travel to take part in organised outdoor non-contact sport or exercise within their local authority area.</p> <p>Participants aged 17 and under can travel into and out of a Level 4 area for organised activity if that is where their sport, club or activity usually takes place.</p> <p>Exemptions to travel restrictions include travel to boats for <a href="#">essential maintenance</a> in line with guidance for owners of second homes.</p> <p>You can also travel within your Local Authority area to take part in local informal exercise such as walking, cycling, rolling, golf, running or sailing (up to 5 miles of their local authority boundary area) that starts and finishes at the same place but straddles the boundary of two local authority areas. This could include boundaries on the water as long as you depart and return to the same location and don't go ashore but cannot include any activity organised by a club/centre or National Governing Body unless for essential training.</p>
<b>Indoor gathering</b>	<p>No in-home socialising, this will include socialising below deck No Indoor gatherings. 6 people /2 households indoors in public places. Single Household / extended household only overnight</p>	<p>No in-home socialising, this will include socialising below deck No Indoor gatherings Overnight not permitted.</p>
<b>Outdoor gathering</b>	<p>6 people/2 households Outdoors - 2m physical distancing.</p>	<p>4 people/2 households Outdoors (not including U12s towards the people) - 2m physical distancing. 4 people/4 households Outdoors (not including U12s) for those between 12-17yrs of age.</p>

<p><b>Organised outdoor activity (Non-contact)</b> Training, racing or Social sailing without contact</p>	<p>Field of play bubble of 30, including coaches and officials, can be applied for all ages in non-contact situations.</p> <p>Maintain 2m physical distancing</p>	<p>A <a href="#">Field of play bubble</a> for adults and young people aged 12 and over can be applied in a non-contact situation. Bubbles should be no more than 15 people, including coaches/Instructors/Volunteers (who are needed deliver the activity). Multiple 'bubbles' can apply if the appropriate measures and permissions are in place.</p> <p>Children, Young People and adults can take part in organised racing within their usual club or facility environment. This does not include inter-club competition.</p> <p>A children's (aged up to 11) outdoor sporting 'field of play bubble' at Level 4 can consist of up to 30 people including coaches and officials at any one time. Multiple 'bubbles' can apply if the appropriate measures and permissions are in place.</p> <p>Maintain 2m physical distancing</p>
<p><b>Organised outdoor activity (Contact)</b> Training, Racing or Social Sailing with contact</p>	<p>Field of play bubble can be applied for under 18s in contact situations.</p> <p>Adult contact sport not permitted.</p>	<p>NOT PERMITTED</p>
<p><b>RYA Training</b></p>	<p>If deemed necessary, RYA Training could take place using the non-contact field of play bubble as above.</p> <p><b>Essential</b> Training or examinations for work purposes or leading to qualifications for employment will be able to continue providing the appropriate measures are in place to mitigate against the risk of infection.</p>	<p><b>Essential</b> Training or examinations for work purposes or leading to qualifications for employment will be able to continue providing the appropriate measures are in place to mitigate against the risk of infection.</p>

<b>Toilets</b>	<p>Operators may open public toilets if they follow the guidelines outlined on the Scottish Government website <a href="#">Opening Public Toilets Guidelines</a></p> <p>Changing rooms and showering facilities should remain closed where possible, although they should be made available for participants who require additional support such as disabled people or those with special needs. If they are to be opened then specific guidance relating to use of 'Changing and Showers' is available at <a href="#">Getting Your Facilities Fit for Sport</a>. This is applicable at all levels where facilities remain open.</p>	<p>Indoor sports facilities and club houses; closed including changing rooms and showers.</p> <p>Toilets may be open if they follow guidelines outlined on the Scottish Government website <a href="#">Opening Public Toilets Guidelines</a></p>
<b>Hospitality</b>	<p>No sale of alcohol indoors or outdoors. Food may be consumed on the premises. Time restrictions may apply.</p>	<p>Not permitted (Exception for Hotel for work related stays).</p>

## Definitions

**For these definitions refer to definitions section in guidance issued on 3 December 2020**

Informal Boating

Organised Boating activity with contact

**Organised activity** should be organised by a club, class association, recognised training centre or RYA Scotland, have a [COVID officer](#), take and retain for 21 days details for [test and protect](#), completed risk assessments, and put mitigating factors in place.

This enables an outdoor sporting 'field of play bubble' to be formed that can consist of a maximum of 15 adults (30 at Level 3 or children up to 11 years in Level 4) including coaches, officials and other support staff at any one time. Multiple bubbles, each with up to 15 adults (30 at Level 3 or children up to 11 years in Level 4), can be used in training. Normal physical distancing guidelines and restrictions on social/public gatherings will still apply before and after the activity takes place.

For the avoidance of doubt – the option to apply a field of play bubble, only applies to:

- Organised outdoor activity for which all participant details are recorded and kept for 21 days.
- Co-ordinated and managed by a club, class association or recognised training centre
- A maximum number of 15 people in a single bubble
- Activity should be delivered within RYA guidance and ratios
- People must not move into or out of a bubble once it has been established
- Participants must not move between more than one bubble during the day

Where there are multiple bubbles operating at the same venue these must be risk assessed to ensure there can be no mixing of participants before, during or after the activity. Specific mitigations could include staggered start times, limiting car parking or controlling access / egress points. Where training, racing or events are planned and include multiple bubbles; organisers should, as part of their risk assessment, consult with relevant local authorities, environmental health, the police, or other body responsible for the safety of the public. Agreement must be reached with these bodies before the training, racing or event takes place.

Spectating is specifically not permitted other than where a parent/guardian is supervising a child or vulnerable adult. Parents/guardians who are supervising their children should abide by Scottish Government physical distancing guidance and stay at least 2m away from those out with their own household. Groups of parents from different households should not congregate before, during or after the activity.

**Organised Boating activity without contact/non-contact** - Non-contact sport or activity is defined as “a sport or activity in which the participants are physically separated by playing rules such as to make it difficult for them to make physical contact during an activity”. This includes individual sailing, same household sailing and racing and can be extended to training where activities are adapted to allow for physical distancing.

**Essential training** – Essential training is described by **sportscotland** as; An essential requirement for employment or deployment, paid and voluntary.

The retention or completion of a formal qualification.

The retention of a license or endorsement.

Safe delivery or supervision of sport and physical activity

Essential training for Key Workers can take place in all levels providing there are mitigations put in place for reducing contact, increasing separation and maintaining good hygiene measures. These should be documented in a risk assessment and adhered to by participants and deliverers.

**Essential Maintenance** - Essential maintenance is work which if not undertaken would cause failure or become an imminent safety issue. Some examples are;

Repairs to prevent water ingress

Winterising engines

Pumping out bilges

Maintaining/Replacing mooring and berth warps

Essential maintenance should be completed as quickly as possible. Travel for essential maintenance should not be used as a pretext to spend the day aboard ‘pottering’ or for a weekend away. You should not stay longer than the length of time required to check your boat and undertake the essential maintenance.

## Cleaning Information

We recommend you carry and use hand sanitiser which should be at least 60% alcohol based. Regularly washing of hands with soap and water is still preferable where there are the facilities to do so.

Detergent wipes need to be appropriate for the surface they are being used on.

Cleaning products should conform to EN14476 standard or any detergent will need to be followed by chlorine releasing agent. However, be wary of cleaning requirements for specialist boating equipment such as life jackets and always follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Be mindful of our fragile marine environment, do not release bleach products into the water and dispose of used wipes, gloves and masks responsibly. In addition, it may be worthwhile looking at best practice for general cleaning of equipment via - [The Green Blue](#).

### **Local outbreaks or clusters**

Scottish Government travel advice and guidance relating to local outbreaks or clusters of coronavirus cases is available at [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): local advice and measures](#).

Where a local outbreak has been reported, clubs and training centres within this locality should review Scottish Government 'local measures' guidance, their facility/operational risk assessment and consider if additional mitigating actions should be put in place to reduce risk. This may, for example, include suspending activity, enhancing hygiene and physical distancing measures or introducing additional activity restrictions. Please do not hesitate to contact us to ask for further support in this situation.