

# IBSC COVID Policy and Member Guidance

24<sup>th</sup> December 2020

## IBSC COVID-19 UPDATE, 5 January 2021

Following the introduction of further restrictions by the Scottish Government on 5 January, the Club has suspended all trips and training events until further notice.

This is for 2 reasons: Firstly, although organised club ski touring trips is still permitted as a 'non-contact outdoor sport', the new regulations limit the group size to a household group plus only 1 other person. With group sizes limited to two persons, from a mountain-safety perspective, this is too small for a club trip. Additionally, although travel to outdoor exercise is still permitted within local authority areas (and up to 5 miles from the boundary), the Scottish Government guidance advises that all travel should be 'local', which again currently makes organised club trips impracticable to hold.

The Club appreciates how frustrating this is for us all, and greatly values the continuing support of our members. We will still be holding upcoming virtual talks on avalanche awareness, Mountain First Aid and Norwegian ski Touring and will be looking to see what other events we can hold online - ideas are welcome!

In the meantime, keep your skis waxed, enjoy the fact a great base for mid and late season skiing is being laid down, stay local, and stay safe.

## Policy Statement

*Ski Touring and mountaineering are non-contact outdoor sports and the Inverness Backcountry Snowsports Club (IBSC) is permitted to run organised trips and training events at all levels of restriction under present regulations. Members may also organise informal trips if they wish, but these are limited to no more than 6 persons between 2 households and are not subject to this policy.*

*The club is committed to ensuring all of its trips, training and other events are run in a Covid secure manner and comply with the latest UK and Scottish Government law and SportScotland and Mountaineering Scotland guidance. This is for the protection of our members and the public to reduce the spread of Covid-19 and to meet our club insurance obligations.*

*The IBSC committee is responsible for approving guidance to members, trip and contacts and the club trip, training and events programme. The club has appointed a Covid officer who is responsible for monitoring any changes to the law or Covid regulations under which the club operates, drawing up and maintaining the club's Covid risk assessment and providing advice to the Committee on the content of relevant Covid guidance. Trip contacts are responsible for ensuring attending club*

*members are aware of the relevant club guidance, make a record of attendance and ensure contact information is up to date.*

*IBSC has taken specific mitigations, including limiting groups on the hill to 6 members and issuing club members with Covid and other guidance which covers what steps they should take before traveling, how they travel to events, what equipment they will need, including the additional requirements arising from reduced mountain rescue availability, what steps they should take with the trip contact before setting off onto the hill and what steps they should take on the hill.*

*To comply with the legal requirement to keep records of people attending trips or training events in person for contact tracing purposes, the club will rely on member contact information kept in club records plus contact information provided to the trip contact. Club members have been advised that their contact information may be shared for contact tracing purposes.*

*For more information on IBSC Covid guidance please refer to the club website or contact the club Covid officer at [training@ibsc.org.uk](mailto:training@ibsc.org.uk)*

## **Member Guidance**

**In the constantly changing pandemic situation, the following guidance is subject to change at short notice, and you should continue to keep checking when registering and preparing for trips.**

### **Purpose**

- IBSC is committed to following UK and Scottish Government (SG) law, SportScotland and Mountaineering Scotland guidance. The Mountaineering Scotland guidance for clubs is the most immediately relevant to IBSC trips and events and can be found [here](#) and contains much useful information and links to other guidance.
- This guidance is to help club members attending trips and events understand what they need to do to comply with club policy. All members attending club trips are asked to familiarise themselves with this guidance and be aware it will change in line with regulations.
- Club members should also be familiar with the club's general guidance when registering to attend a trip. This can be found [here](#).
- If you have questions regarding any of the following, please contact the club Covid officer at [training@ibsc.org.uk](mailto:training@ibsc.org.uk) any member of the committee.

### **When registering for a trip**

- Only registered club members may attend trips which they have booked in advance. Do not turn up on the day expecting to tag along – for insurance reasons you will not be able to join the group. Trip spaces will be restricted and group size on the hill will be limited to 6. There may be more than one independent group per trip.

- Do not register if travel from where you live to where the trip is planned if the current rules will prohibit this by the time of trip. SG travel guidance can be found [here](#). ***For these purposes, club trips are not essential activities.***

### **When preparing for a trip**

- Ensure that you have a safe plan for travel to and from the trip venue that is compatible with [current SG travel guidance](#). You should avoid sharing in a vehicle with people who are not members of your household or extended household as much as possible unless you have no other option, and then you should take the protective measures set out in the SG travel guidance.
- Please ensure your contact information is up to date on your member profile. You will need to provide a telephone number to the trip contact which the club will need to retain for 21 days for contact tracing. The trip contact may also ask if they can use your number to set up a WhatsApp group for the trip to help with planning.
- Make sure you have all the right kit – guidance on the club website can be found [here](#) You will also need to take a face covering and hand sanitiser as well as a personal first aid kit. Mountain rescue services have advised that response times may take longer and that hill-goers should be as self-reliant as possible hence you should consider taking more warm clothing than usual, such as a synthetic duvet jacket. Club equipment is available for loan but will be subject to a 72-hour quarantine period between use.
- Be flexible. Trip Contacts will have a lower threshold for amending or cancelling a trip if the forecast weather indicates that 2 metre distancing is likely to prove difficult or dangerous.

### **On the day of the trip**

**DO NOT ATTEND A TRIP IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING ANY COVID SYMPTOMS, EVEN IF MILD. DO NOT ATTEND IF YOU ARE REQUIRED TO SELF ISOLATE.** NHS guidance on symptoms can be found [here](#).

- At the rendezvous point, and on the hill, participants from different households should maintain 2 metre distancing. If closer contact becomes necessary, e.g. due to one participant requiring to assist another with an equipment issue face coverings should be worn and hands cleaned with alcohol hand gel following contact. An exception to this is if weather conditions make the use of bare hands undesirable and unsafe.
- At the rendezvous point the trip contact will ask you to confirm your name and if there has been any change to your contact telephone number from that given to the trip contact beforehand. This is necessary for contact tracing purposes and is a legal requirement. You will be asked if you are experiencing any Covid symptoms. A record of who attended and their

contact information will be kept by the club for 21 days and will be shared with contact tracing authorities if necessary.

### **If problems arise on the hill**

- General Advice: If someone is unwell or has an accident, the group will need to judge the situation as they would with any mountain emergency. Assessment should be conservative without allowing minor problems to become major ones. Do not hesitate to turn back, but in all events group members should avoid travelling alone on the hill.
- Government advice for first responders and Covid can be found [here](#). In particular you should note that in the event of a suspect cardiac arrest in adults, the advice is **not to perform mouth-to-mouth ventilation but to perform chest compressions only**.
- If Covid symptoms are suspected in someone, the group should agree the appropriate course of action. If symptoms are mild, a change of plan may not be necessary but it would be prudent to ensure that, the group remains or moves to within easy reach of the car park. If significant shortness of breath or uncontrollable shivering is a feature, or if the participant is in any other way significantly unwell, they should be escorted back to the car park by the safest and shortest route, either by the whole group or by a subsection of it. 2 metre distancing should be maintained but no other precautions are required.
- If the participant is especially unwell, the group should phone 111 or 999 depending on severity of symptoms with the call timing dependent on the local geography, including proximity to hospital and likely ambulance call-out and transit times. If the participant requires physical assistance, this should be given by the minimum number required to help and unless the conditions make it additionally hazardous everyone should wear face coverings.
- If assistance is clearly required, the group should consider phoning Mountain Rescue, even if their presence is not immediately required. If it is not possible for the group to safely evacuate the affected participant, Mountain Rescue should be called as soon as possible.
- If dealing with a serious casualty where the Mountain Rescue have been called, it will be necessary for some or all of the group to stay with the casualty. Whilst waiting for assistance the group should focus on keeping themselves and the casualty warm, dry, sheltered, fed and watered. Face coverings should be worn when participants of different households require to be within 2 metres of each other: very likely to be required given that sharing of warmth and shelter (e.g. a group shelter, bothy or snow hole) may be necessary.
- You may be required to self-isolate after contact with the casualty. Please refer to the NHS Test and Protect [guide](#).

### **After the trip – contact tracing**

- If, after a trip you develop symptoms you should follow the NHS [Test and Protect](#) guidance –

**self isolate and book a test.** If within 10 days of the trip, you should provide them with the contact details for the IBSC Covid Officer (Brendan Hughes, [training@ibsc.org.uk](mailto:training@ibsc.org.uk)).

- At the request of Test and Protect, the club will provide them with the contact information for other trip participants using the information held in club records and confirmed on the day of the trip. Test and Protect will then contact other trip participants if necessary. It is not your responsibility to contact other trip participants directly.

*IBSC Committee*

*24th December 2020*