


## Green Sefton

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30<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Dear Sir / Madam

### **Update on Covid Restrictions: from 2<sup>nd</sup> December**

You will be aware that since the commencement of the national lockdown back in March we have sent several of these letters to provide an update on access to Green Sefton services. As the government announce changes in its response to the national emergency, so too must we respond to consider if locally changes are required to allowing access to services.

This is our latest bulletin, explaining the publicly announced measures as they effect our activities, **with effect from the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020**. (NB the new measures are still subject to discussion in Parliament on 1<sup>st</sup> Dec, and we will update you further should any significant amendments be made at that point)

From 2<sup>nd</sup> Dec, government is proposing to replace National Restrictions with a return to local arrangements where each area is categorised into 3 Tiers. Sefton is categorised as a Tier 2 area, not a Tier 3 area as we were before the month-long national lockdown. This is to be reviewed every 14 days throughout the Winter. Tier 2 means we must be on “high alert” - we will still see some restrictions, but a relaxation of other services provided and the following is intended to outline those changes:

## **Visiting Parks, Coast and other Greenspaces**

Overall, our outdoor open spaces remain freely open and accessible but our indoor facilities such as Council managed pavilions remain closed and we are unable to authorise any public events until further notice.

You can continue to exercise or visit outdoor public places but in a Tier 2 area like Sefton:

- **You must not socialise with anyone you do not live with or who is not in your support bubble in any indoor setting, whether at home or in a public place.**
- **You must not socialise in a group of more than 6 people outside, including in a garden or a public space – this is called the ‘rule of 6’.**

All visitors are urged to following these simply measures, regardless of the purpose of your visit or activity:

### **Remember, ‘Hands. Face. Space’:**

**hands** – wash your hands regularly and for at least 20 seconds

**face** – wear a face covering in indoor settings where social distancing may be difficult, and where you will come into contact with people you do not normally meet

**space** – stay 2 metres apart from people you do not live with where possible, or 1 metre with extra precautions in place (such as wearing face coverings)

## **Volunteers**

We greatly value the work done by volunteers working on our sites and they can now resume volunteering as they did before - but the ‘rule of 6’ applies and no more than 6 volunteers should assemble. A covid19 risk assessment is necessary to cover for the work of volunteers and we can help support groups unsure or needing assistance. Volunteers need to be aware that any gatherings of more than six people are against the law.

- Volunteers must adhere to the same ‘rules’ as before the Tier 3 designation. You must bring your own tools and equipment, not shared equipment. Please follow the rules regards Hands, Space, Face.

## **Outdoor Facilities that REMAIN CLOSED**

- Southport Skate Park – this site remains closed pending its refurbishment to install new ramps and the site will be relaunched in January. (This closure is not related to measures to control the risk of infection).

## **Outdoor Facilities that REMAIN OPEN**

- Playgrounds - The government allows that children's playgrounds remain open. All our sites are signposted with instructions as to their use to minimise the risk of Covid-19 infection.
- Outdoor Gyms – these were closed but can now reopen. Anyone using equipment must sanitise the surfaces prior to the use of equipment. As the Council has 30 sites it may take a few days before we can recommission them, and to have all sites fully open again.
- Allotments- our allotment sites remain open. Tenants must limit their activity to their own plots, not mixing with other tenants and adhere to rules on the control of Covid-19 which are displayed at entrance gates.
- Dog Exercise Areas – these remain open to use.

## **Buildings**

As the national guidance suggests households cannot mix indoors at all right now, then use of buildings is not appropriate at this time.

Signage is about to be erected on each building indicating the measures required in each premises for opening/ use in due course.

In an earlier briefing we have asked groups to provide risk assessments and to complete an application form for agreeing/ booking the use of premises. We are now intending to return to assessing these applications with a view towards opening premises in the New Year (subject to government not changing further any restrictions or Sefton moving into Tier 3). We know that many groups have found it difficult to undertake work in the last few months and our hope is that we can see a return to use of our premises (subject to bookings being approved, and bearing in mind the national guidance of no mixing indoors).

## **Sports Fixtures**

We have over 270 sports teams and clubs using our pitches for grassroots sport, predominantly football.

The use of our pitches can now resume for fixtures but the restrictions previously in place on site still apply. There should only be one family spectator bringing children to junior fixtures and no accompanying visitors to adult fixtures.

To allow teams the maximum opportunity to recover fixtures that could not be played in the national lockdown, we propose three measures to assist you to complete your season.

- In place of the normal three-week Christmas break at Christmas, we propose only a two week break from use of pitches. Pitches will be available until closedown on the 21st December and reopen for the weekend of the 3<sup>rd</sup> / 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021.
- The Council intends to extend the season until the 30<sup>th</sup> May 2021 to support fixtures being completed.
- The opportunity to play midweek games will be given to Leagues. Midweek games could be played but realistically, given daylight issues, for games to finish with a 6.30pm KO it would be from April 2021 before this opportunity could be provided. This would allow an extra 6 midweek games.

Please note: The Council may request teams to alter the match venue at the end of the season depending upon the number of teams still seeking to play. This will allow us to focus on pitch reinstatement at the earliest opportunity, and aim to have pitches available for play for the 21/22 season in a timely manner.

## **Re-opening of Municipal Golf Courses**

Bootle Golf Course and Southport Golf Links will reopen from 2<sup>nd</sup> Dec but have the same infection control measures in place as prior to the lockdown. This means, for example, that you must be masked to enter the golf shops. Please check rules of play before you begin your game.

### **More Information**

More information on Coronavirus can be found on our website at:  
<https://www.sefton.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Thank you in advance for supporting efforts to keep everyone safe from the risk of infection. If you have further queries, please contact us at [greensefton@sefton.gov.uk](mailto:greensefton@sefton.gov.uk)

We are pleased to see Sefton not remaining as a Tier 3 area and with the continuing efforts we all make I hope it wont be long before we are able to see the borough becoming a Tier 1 area.

Yours sincerely



Mark Shaw  
Service Manager – Green Sefton