



A SAFE RETURN TO WHEELCHAIR RUGBY

GUIDANCE FOR CLUBS



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MESSAGE FROM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

All of us are looking forward to a return to wheelchair rugby. Not only do those who play the game want to get a ball in their hands again, but we all want to be able to re-engage with our friends and colleagues in our wheelchair rugby communities. It has been a tough few months and I am afraid it is not over yet. I suspect that we will be living with COVID-19 and its impact on our lives for some time to come so it is critical that we recognise this, and adapt our behaviours and practices to enable us to return safely to play the game we love.

There is always risk involved in playing any sport but COVID-19 presents a further set of risks which cannot be completely eradicated but which we can reduce providing we strictly follow Government and Great Britain Wheelchair Rugby (GBWR) guidance and do not let our guard down.

To return safely to play will require us all to follow a number of different practices and procedures in order to mitigate the risks associated with COVID-19. I anticipate that social distancing will be with us for some time yet and full game play and contact will be some way down the line. As a community we have always understood the importance of good hygiene practices but these will have to be taken to an even higher level if we are to reduce the risk of transmission of the virus. There is also a further critical dimension to return to play which is the availability of the different venues that clubs use and ensuring that these facilities are effectively risk managed. This will require clubs to work with their venue provider to undertake a risk assessment and agree mitigation measures. GBWR will help support this process.

As the National Governing Body (NGB) for wheelchair rugby this document outlines GBWR's advice, guidance and planning to support individuals and clubs' return to play throughout Great Britain. It is based on the Return to Rugby 5 Step Plan.

It is important to note that whilst Government guidance regarding COVID-19 is continuously evolving, GBWR will only move through the 5 Steps following careful consideration of the risk specific to our sport and participants. Any movement of the sport through the steps will be communicated directly to members and clubs.

The information in this document will be continuously reviewed and updates published. The publishing date of the document will always be written on the front page of the guidance. If you are unsure of which is the latest guidance then please email daniel.hook@gbwr.org.uk.

We are all in this together, all trying to keep one another safe whilst enjoying the sport we love in the company of those we like spending time with. Be prepared to check and challenge yourself and others to help sustain a safe space for us all. Thank you for your patience and understanding.



David Pond
Chief Executive

LOCKDOWN & LOCALISED LOCKDOWNS

The guidance within this document and the 5 Step Return to Play does not override any Government legislation or directives in place to manage the response to COVID-19.

This includes the implementation of localised lockdowns. Should you be based in an area which is subject to a lockdown please adhere to Government and local Government directives.



RETURN TO WHEELCHAIR RUGBY

The individuals who make up our community have different levels of functionality and as such individual risk levels will be different. Therefore throughout this document there will be instances where our return to play (RTP) guidance is more cautionary than advised within Government guidance.

We will highlight these areas throughout the document.

Clubs

Prior to the start of training for the first time, each club is to complete the Club Declaration Form online, and GBWR will confirm receipt.

Please note, this declaration only needs to be submitted by each club once, unlike the Individual Declaration Form (detailed below) which is to be completed by all attendees for each session.

 [View Online Form](#)

Opt-In Process

All participants must only RTP by their own informed choice through an 'opt-in' consent process which will be managed by their Club COVID-19 Lead, using a GBWR template.

It is a person's choice whether they RTP based on their own assessment of the individual risk. That is one reason why it is important that before a RTP, individuals seek the advice of their medical practitioner so that they fully understand the risks for them personally and can make an informed decision about RTP.

Opt-In to RTP does not remove the requirement for your club to take all reasonable steps to provide a safe playing environment in compliance with Government guidance issued. However, your club will be unable to remove all the risks associated with RTP and it is important that all participants understand this.

Under 18s

Where a participant is under 18 years old, they will be required to have opt-in consent of a parent/carer.

COVID-19

& OUR COMMUNITY

Specific guidance applies to those who may be more vulnerable to COVID-19, and who should not be leaving home to take part in physical activity. These broadly fall into 4 groups and information regarding each can be found below:

Self- Isolating

If you fall into this group you will be unable to leave home to access wheelchair rugby activity.

 [Advice](#)

Shielding & Clinically Extremely Vulnerable

Individuals in this group are defined, on medical grounds, as clinically extremely vulnerable to coronavirus – that is individuals with specific health conditions and who have been advised to ‘shield’.

Always refer to the latest guidance issues by your Home Government, please note this may vary dependant on where you live.

Clinically Vulnerable

Although this group can meet outdoors and take part in physical activity and exercise, they should be especially diligent about social distancing and hand hygiene.

 [Advice](#)

Other Groups

There may be other groups who have a heightened risk of getting seriously ill from COVID-19, a comprehensive list can be found on the NHS website.

 [Advice](#)

ASSESSING RISK

Maintaining the health and wellbeing of all involved in wheelchair rugby is paramount during all stages of RTP and it is therefore essential that a thorough risk assessment is completed to ensure all risks are identified and managed appropriately.

Clubs

A risk assessment is a vital tool to support clubs to identify risks and to put in place measures to manage them. It is critical that all clubs carry out COVID-19 specific risk assessments ahead of RTP, along with following all GBWR guidance. The completion of a thorough risk assessment is an essential insurance requirement and requires sign-off from your facility provider (where appropriate).

GBWR has created a Risk Assessment template and guidance for clubs to use.

 [View Template](#)

All Club COVID-19 Leads must complete GBWR online training modules via ReActivate, and attend a GBWR webinar.

Please note that clubs should ensure that they include within their assessments risks and measures for all participants including volunteers and staff.

Clubs must also complete an on-the-day checklist prior to each wheelchair rugby training session taking place, and maintain a record. GBWR has prepared the checklist template for clubs to use.

 [View Template](#)

Individuals

It is essential that everyone participating in wheelchair rugby is aware of the risks associated with RTP and clearly understand that their participation is by consent only through an 'Opt-In' approach. All participants are to complete an Individual Declaration Form on every occasion they wish to take part in a wheelchair rugby session. The online form will be made available to individuals by the Club COVID-19 Lead electronically (a link via email, Whatsapp or similar means) and must be completed online before leaving home on the day of the particular session. The club will then have immediate confirmation of individuals registered for each session.

Whilst GBWR has provided guidance on preventative measures in line with Government guidance to reduce the spread of COVID-19, we cannot guarantee that you or anyone you come into contact with will not become infected with COVID-19. Further attending facilities and activities could increase your risk and the risk of those you come into contact with of contracting COVID-19.

TEST AND TRACE

Test and Trace allows the NHS and Government to trace the spread of the virus, isolate new infections and plays a vital role in giving early warning if the virus is increasing, locally or nationally.

To facilitate effective Test and Trace GBWR requires all individuals to register as above on every occasion they wish to join a wheelchair rugby activity.

Club

Test and Trace – by having an accurate online register of all session participants clubs will be able to precisely and immediately access all attendee contact information and facilitate the COVID-19 Test and Trace process. Session participants includes anyone present at a particular session.

Should a club become aware of a case of COVID-19 amongst their activity participants, please follow the Test and Trace process and guidance as detailed by the relevant Government guidance link below.

How it works

Please clearly and accurately record all actions taken by the club during this process. Please also update GBWR of any confirmed cases of COVID-19 by emailing covid-19@gbwr.org.uk.

GBWR TRAINING

All Club COVID-19 Leads plus a minimum of one other club member must complete GBWR's virtual online training via ReActivate and GBWR will share details of the ReActivate sign-up process directly with Club COVID-19 Leads. This must be completed before attending a GBWR webinar for further guidance.

This training will include, in addition to general information around COVID-19 best practice, wheelchair rugby specific guidance on equipment cleaning, managing session registers, coaching whilst adhering to the 5 Step Plan and completing risk assessments. Separate training links for England, Wales and Scotland are provided, and the training reflects any variations in guidelines required by each country.

 [Training Registration: England](#)

 [Training Registration: Wales](#)

 [Training Registration: Scotland](#)

 [Training Login: All Clubs](#)

The dates and times of the webinars will be communicated to clubs and published on the [GBWR website](#).



OUR VOLUNTEERS

Most of our clubs rely on the support of a number of committed volunteers who give freely of their time and attention. It is important that clubs pay particular attention to engaging with their volunteers to determine whether they are able and willing to return to support.

In addition, clubs will need to assess how many volunteers are needed and in what roles. It is essential that clubs adhere to the restrictions on staff / volunteer numbers as per the 5 Step Plan. There may be some new roles required as part of the COVID-19 plan and if so clubs will need to determine whether any additional training is required to support the roles. Sport England has produced some very helpful advice and support tools to help clubs with their volunteer plans.

[Sport England Support & Advice](#)

Please note that all clubs have a duty of care to take reasonable steps to protect the health and safety of volunteers, employees (if you have any) and those taking part.

Organisations have a duty of care towards their volunteers and an obligation to protect them under section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

COVID-19 OFFICER & CLUB LEADS

GBWR has appointed a COVID-19 Officer who will support the NGB and Clubs to identify risks in relation to COVID-19 and to help them put in place procedures to mitigate such risks.

In addition all Clubs are to appoint a COVID-19 lead who will be responsible for ensuring that any wheelchair rugby activity is managed in line with GBWR's RTP guidance.

We have produced a standard Role Description for this position.

 [View Description](#)

Prior to RTP every club must provide details to daniel.hook@gbwr.org.uk of their COVID-19 lead.






SAFEGUARDING PROTOCOLS

Safeguarding protocols must be strictly adhered to all points of RTP and at no point should any safeguarding guidance be overlooked or ignored. If in doubt, consult your Club Welfare Officer or the GBWR Safeguarding Officer at safeguarding@gbwr.org.uk.

FIRST AID PROVISION

You must have adequate first aid provision for your session. For qualified First Aiders administering first aid during times of COVID-19, the Resuscitation Council UK, St John's Ambulance and the British Red Cross have all issued guidance.

-  [Resuscitation Council UK Guidance](#)
-  [St Johns Ambulance Guidance](#)
-  [British Red Cross Guidance](#)

GDPR COMPLIANCE

As outlined in this guidance document, individuals will complete an Individual Declaration Form to 'opt-in' for each session they attend.

Following each training session, Club COVID-19 Leads will upload the collated session registers (comprising this opt-in data of all attendees at the session) to a secure portal available to GBWR and designated club officers only. This data will allow effective implementation of the Test and Trace procedure, and also be used to ensure that clubs have adhered to all requirements of GBWR's RTP guidance throughout the pandemic.

For further detail on GBWR's use of personal information, please see our Privacy Notice, available at gbwr.org.uk or by contacting GBWR's Compliance & Membership Officer at daniel.hook@gbwr.org.uk.

GBWR will maintain these records in accordance with the Information Commissioner's Office instructions regarding holding data during the COVID-19 pandemic.

 [View Advice](#)

INSURANCE COVER

Membership of GBWR provides our clubs with Public Liability, Products Liability, Professional Indemnity, Directors & Officers Liability, Abuse and Employers' Liability insurance for GBWR sanctioned activities only.

Should an individual or club not follow GBWR advice and guidance – either intentionally or unintentionally – it will risk voiding insurance cover.

It is therefore critical that all clubs adhere to the GBWR requirements and make sure their committee and volunteers are clear of all GBWR advice and guidance with regard to RTP and understand the club's responsibilities.

Please use the checklists as an aid.

[Go to checklists](#)





FURTHER SUPPORT & GUIDANCE

These guidelines are accurate at the date of publication but are subject to change in line with government guidance. Keep checking the GBWR website for any updates.

This information has been prepared to support clubs' RTP. It is given in good faith but any liability of GBWR or their professional advisors (including their respective members or employees) to you or any third party which may arise out of the reliance by you or any other party of the contents of this publication is hereby excluded to the fullest extent permitted by law.

THE 5 STEP PLAN

The 5 Step Return to Wheelchair Rugby

There will be a 5 step approach to our return to play wheelchair rugby.

GBWR will determine the particular stage that clubs can operate at based on risk assessments and government advice.

The Return to Wheelchair Rugby 5 Step Plan can be summarised as:

- Step 1: Individual Training
- Step 2: Training in Pairs
- Step 3: Team Training (Groups of 5)
- Step 4: Team Training (Groups of 10)
- Step 5: Game Play and GBWR Sanctioned Competition



[View the 5 Step Plan](#)

GBWR CHECKLISTS

What will GBWR do?

GBWR will:

- Support Clubs with training and practical guidance and advice to enable them to ensure all activity is risk managed and consistent with the latest Government Public Health Guidelines particularly in regard to health, travel, social distancing and hygiene
- Put safety first: in particular focus on measures which minimise the risk of infection and transmission of the virus
- Support clubs to undertake risk assessments and provide protocols and guidance on practices aimed at reducing risk and protecting all of those attending sessions
- Listen to the needs of clubs and communicate clearly and regularly with them and the membership
- Remain agile, supporting Clubs to respond quickly to changing circumstances, guidance and advice
- Provide a lead COVID-19 Officer who will be available to support Clubs with guidance and advice

What will Clubs be required to do?

Clubs will be required to:

- Meet all Government Public Health and GBWR guidance and requirements before returning to play
- Work with their venue provider to produce a COVID-19 risk assessment
- Confirm that all individuals who attend a training session including (but not limited to) coaches, players, officials, support workers, volunteers and parents have registered for the particular session thereby enabling effective Test and Trace measures
- Meet all Government Public Health, venue specific and GBWR requirements and protocols pre, during and post training and play
- Sign a compliance agreement confirming they will adhere to all Government, venue and GBWR guidelines and requirements
- Provide a member to be the COVID-19 lead and GBWR point of contact for COVID-19 matters
- Complete the on-the-day checklist prior to each wheelchair rugby training session taking place, and maintain a record

GBWR

CHECKLISTS (CONT.)

What will individuals be required to do?

All individuals who attend a wheelchair rugby training session including (but not limited to) coaches, players, officials, support workers, volunteers and parents will be required to:

- Undertake a self-assessment for any COVID-19 symptoms prior to leaving home and only leave home to participate in wheelchair rugby if they and anyone they live with are free from COVID-19 symptoms
- Complete the club registration and 'opt-in' declaration process each time they attend – this is the Individual Declaration Form. This is to be completed by all individuals who are present at the location of the session including (but not limited to) coaches, players, officials, support workers, volunteers and parents, thereby enabling effective Test and Trace measures. It is an individual's choice as to if and when they RTP based on their own assessment of their individual risk. Individuals are strongly advised to consult with their medical practitioner so as to understand fully the risks associated with RTP for their particular condition before opting in. The Individual Declaration Form will also include the agreement that the individual confirms that they will adhere to all government and GBWR guidelines and requirements
- Where a participant is under 18 years old, they will be required to have parent/carer consent to opt-in
- Follow the best practice for travel to training and play: the use of public transport and car sharing should be minimised
- Follow all hygiene and social distancing requirements at all times

GBWR

CHECKLISTS (CONT.)


Guidelines for Clubs: *Education*

Individuals should be aware of the latest Government Public Health Advice	✓
Individuals should be aware of the status of COVID-19 in their local/national setting	✓
Regular updates on changes should be available to clubs and any relevant adjustments to practices and procedures made before any subsequent training session is held	✓
Individuals should be briefed in the steps to limit the spread of COVID-19, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ respiratory etiquette ▪ hand washing ▪ physical distancing ▪ no spitting or clearing of nasal except into a disposable tissue that is to be hygienically disposed of immediately 	✓
Individuals should be provided with information on the meaning of the following measures: quarantine, self-isolation, and self-monitoring	✓
Individuals should be briefed on how to clean chairs and equipment	✓
Club COVID-19 Lead and one other club member must have completed the GBWR virtual online training modules of ReActivate and have attended a GBWR webinar before the club can resume training	✓

GBWR

CHECKLISTS (CONT.)


Guidelines for Clubs: *Prior to Arriving at the Venue*

	PEOPLE	
Preparation	<p>All individuals who intend to attend the training session must undertake a self-assessment for any COVID-19 symptoms</p> <p>If an individual is symptomatic/and or living in a household with possible COVID-19 infection they should remain at home and follow UK Government Guidance. No-one should leave home to participate if they or someone they live with has any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a high temperature ▪ a new, continuous cough ▪ a loss of, or change to, their sense of smell or taste <p> Check your Symptoms</p>	✓
	Individuals are to register their intention to attend a session on the day the session is to take place by completing the online Individual Declaration Form	✓
	Clubs/Venues should ensure government safety and hygiene guidelines are available for individuals	✓
	Clubs/Venues should ensure all areas in and around venue allow for recommended social distancing (including carparks) to be maintained	✓
	<p>Clubs should inform individuals what a return will look like – dates, times, delivery method, what to bring, social distancing and hygiene expectations</p> <p>Review before each session</p>	✓
	Individuals should ensure that prior to leaving their home both their day and sports chairs have been washed with appropriate disinfectant, detergent and water with a brush and sponge	✓

GBWR

CHECKLISTS (CONT.)

Guidelines for Clubs: *Prior to Arriving at the Venue (cont.)*

	PEOPLE	
Preparation (cont.)	Individuals should seek the advice of their medical practitioner and understand the particular risks to them of return to play	✓
	Club COVID-19 Leads are to check that everyone entering the training venue has registered for the session	✓
	Complete the on-the-day checklist prior to each wheelchair rugby training session taking place, and maintain a record	✓
Travel	Individuals should minimise the use of public transport and car sharing	✓
	Individuals should maintain strict social distancing and hygiene routines	✓
Hygiene	All equipment including wheelchair, ball, cones, water bottles, kit bags, gloves etc. should be properly sanitised before and after play in accordance with GBWR guidelines	✓
	<p>On return home individuals should wash all training kit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Items should be washed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. There is no additional washing requirement above what would normally be carried out If someone with symptoms, or a confirmed case, of COVID-19 has been in the area, laundry should be washed according to Government guidance <p> Government Cleaning Guidance</p>	✓
	Individuals should handwash or use sanitiser before and on arrival	✓
	Individuals should have their own tissues, towel and sanitiser	✓

GBWR

CHECKLISTS (CONT.)

Guidelines for Clubs: *Prior to Arriving at the Venue (cont.)*

	VENUE	
Signage	Government social distancing and hygiene guidelines must be clearly displayed	✓
Social Distancing	Individuals should abide by government guidelines in social areas e.g. car park, outside venue, reception areas Athletes should “Get In, Train, Get Out”	✓
	Changing rooms and facility showers should not be used and washroom use should be minimized to essential use	✓
Hygiene	Club COVID-19 Leads should confirm with the venue that the facility is compliant with current government legislation including legislation and guidance related to COVID-19 A risk assessment should have been completed and risk mitigation measures put in place and monitored by the Club COVID-19 Lead	✓
	Permanent or portable handwashing / sanitising stations should be available in a visible and accessible spot at the entrance and exit to the venue and consistently filled	✓
	Closed bins for safe disposal of hygienic materials (e.g. tissues, towels, sanitary products) should be available in washrooms	✓

GBWR

CHECKLISTS (CONT.)

Guidelines for Clubs: *During the Session*

	PEOPLE	
Social Distancing	Individuals should adhere to the social distancing requirement applicable to the relevant step of the 5 Steps to Return to Wheelchair Rugby currently in place	✓
	If a player needs assistance getting into their chair and doesn't have his own support worker then a nominated volunteer/staff will provide assistance Gloves and facemask should be worn and changed after use	✓
	Coaches and support staff are to maintain the 2m distance requirement other than to right chairs or deal with injuries or emergencies	✓
	Coaches and players are not to form team 'huddles' and should avoid congregating together Team 'talks' should be limited in time and strict social distancing should be observed	✓
	Individuals should avoid shouting during the training session	✓
Hygiene	Players, coaches and support staff are to wear gloves and facemasks throughout the period of training	✓
	Support staff are to use fresh gloves for each occasion they are required to come onto the court in support of athletes e.g. to right chairs, provide chair adjustments, treat minor injuries	✓
	Food should not be consumed during training other than pre-packed energy drinks or snacks	✓

GBWR

CHECKLISTS (CONT.)

Guidelines for Clubs: *During the Session (cont.)*

	EQUIPMENT & VENUE	
Hygiene	If athlete/staff requires assistance to bring chair/equipment into training facility, a nominated volunteer/staff will assist Gloves and a facemask should be worn	✓
	Personal equipment should not be shared during a session e.g. chair, strapping, glue, Vaseline, water bottle	✓
	If a club chair is used by more than one individual it must be appropriately cleaned before being used by a different person (as per GBWR cleaning guidance)	✓
	Balls should be wiped or sprayed with disinfectant at the start of the session, at 15 minute intervals and at the end of the session (as per GBWR cleaning guidance)	✓
	Players' gloves should be wiped or sprayed with disinfectant at the start of the session, at 15 minute intervals and at the end of the session (as per GBWR cleaning guidance)	✓
	Cones and any other equipment or placings used for training should be wiped or sprayed with disinfectant at the start and end of each session (as per GBWR cleaning guidance)	✓
	Closed bins for safe disposal of materials should be available at the side of the training area	✓

GBWR

CHECKLISTS (CONT.)


Guidelines for Clubs: *During the Session (cont.)*

	EQUIPMENT & VENUE (CONT.)	
Hygiene	If an individual performs their own chair adjustment at the venue only their personal tools should be used	✓
	If chairs are adjusted by anyone other than the athlete, then the chair requiring maintenance or adjustment should be cleaned and sanitized before and after each repair or adjustment	✓
	Club tools should be utilised by one individual at a time and cleaned and sanitised before and after each repair or adjustment	✓
	<p>If a wheel change is required assistance can be given with the athlete in the chair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> this should be done by nominated staff wearing gloves and facemasks the wheel should be sanitised and repaired in a designated mechanic's area 	✓
	<p>If other mechanical assistance to the chair is required during training the athlete should not remain in the chair and must adhere to 2m social distance guidelines whilst the chair is adjusted</p> <p>The chair should be sanitised, taken to the designated mechanic's area by a nominated individual who should wear gloves and facemask</p>	✓

GBWR

CHECKLISTS (CONT.)

Guidelines for Clubs: *Post Play*

PEOPLE	
Maintain social distancing during off-court and preparations to pack and leave the venue	✓
Remove gloves and wash or sanitise hands	✓
One club representative should be responsible for collecting and disinfecting any shared equipment e.g. cones, markers, balls	✓
Individuals should exit the venue whilst maintaining social distance and not congregate together	✓
<p>On return home individuals should wash all training kit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Items should be washed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, and there is no additional washing requirement above what would normally be carried out If someone with symptoms, or a confirmed case, of COVID-19 has been in the area, laundry should be washed according to Government guidance <p> Government Cleaning Guidance</p>	✓
On return home individuals should wash day and sports chairs as per GBWR guidance	✓

SUMMARY

OF GUIDANCE

Return to Wheelchair Rugby

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