**BRISTOL FENCING CLUB FENCING CLUB RETURN TO FENCING**

**COVID SAFE FENCING CLUB**

**INTRODUCTION**

This document lays out the measures that should be taken by fencers, clubs, officials, volunteers, coaches, and spectators before, during and after all recreational fencing activity as well as specific advice relating to lessons and sparring. It applies to indoor fencing activity delivered from 25th July in England. These protocols and rules are in addition to the usual safety rules our club adheres to.

Any resumption of, and ongoing participation in, fencing activity in England is, at all times, governed by;

1. Government Guidelines (this includes Public Health England)

2. Venue Specific Rules (includes use of changing rooms, movement/volume of people, hygiene protocols)

3. British Fencing Guidelines including Fencing Specific Adaptations to meet measures such as social distancing.

This document refers to current UK Government guidance for England available as at 15th July. It is subject to change in response to the current COVID-19 Alert Level, community prevalence of COVID19 and/or to reflect additional or updated UK Government guidance.

Much of this document is a reiteration of British Fencings General advice but has been adapted and added to make it specific to our club. British Fencings full return to fencing can be found here: <https://www.britishfencing.com/indoor-fencing-england-restarts/?fbclid=IwAR3fUJ2uPJ3d_R94tq_2KrAd4iGySBD_PViOwIPkcHml0MSZLOJyjP_Kp98>

Please Note: notwithstanding our club protocols there is a risk of transmission with participation in any indoor or outdoor group activity. By coming to our sessions, you are opting to participate in fencing activity. The club is doing all it can to effectively manage these risks to make a safer environment for all club members, in line with Government and British Fencing Guidelines.

1. **SUMMARY – INDOOR FENCING FROM 6 NOVEMBER 2020**

Currently Cotham School are not opening their indoor facilities until November. We do not have an alternate venue in the interim.

*1.01* Seniors will be working in groups of 6 fencers. Juniors will be working in groups of up to 15 fencers. All fencers must remain 2 metres apart as far as possible.

*1.02* Activity is restricted to groups of a maximum of six people.

*1.03* You can have more than one group of six in a hall, providing you are able to maintain social distancing within the space available and the total number of people (including non-fencers) within the hall does not exceed government and venue guidelines on use of indoor space.

*1.04* Fencers can rotate within their specific group, but social distancing must be maintained within this group where at all possible. You cannot move groups within a session.

*1.05* Fencing activities (including 1:1 lessons, pairs work and sparring) where it may NOT be possible at all times to stay 2m apart are subject to adaptations and additional measures to reduce risk. This document lays out these adaptations (see below).

*1.06* PPE must be worn at specific times, detailed below, What When Where How Why.

*1.07* There will be strict equipment rules in place for use of fencing equipment (see below).

*1.08* All equipment, personal, loaned, and club, must follow strict cleaning protocols, designed in response to the Covid19 situation by British Fencing.

*1.09* Venue specific restrictions will be in place and you will be responsible for ensuring you adhere to these.

1.10 ALL club members are strongly recommenced to be Members of British Fencing to come and fence (see 2.09).

*1.11* We have an online booking system in place. You must book online pre session. Booking will close at 12pm midday on the day of the session (see *11.01*).

1. **PRIOR TO FENCING**

**All participants (fencers, coaches, officials, volunteers and spectators) should:**

*2.01* Check for symptoms of COVID-19 before travelling to training. In line with current UK Government Guidance, if an individual is symptomatic and/or living in a household with a possible COVID-19 infection, they should remain at home and follow UK Government guidance. In addition, any participants who have been asked to isolate by NHS Test and Trace because they are a contact of a known COVID-19 case, must not exercise outside their home or garden and must not exercise with others.

*2.02* Follow UK Government guidance on shielding and protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19.

*2.03* Comply with all public health restrictions and avoid high risk behaviour outside the sports setting to reduce the risk to others.

*2.04* Carry out personal hygiene measures before and after fencing activity.

*2.05* Bring their own hand sanitizer where possible and maintain strict and frequent hand hygiene measures at all times.

*2.06* Follow UK Government guidance on best practice for travel, including minimising use of public transport and limiting car sharing.

*2.07* Ensure familiarity with the instructions issued by the club, specifically in relation to hygiene and social distancing.

*2.08* If possible, arrive at club sessions changed and ready to start.

*2.09* Ensure that contact details are up to date with Bristol Fencing Club records. Membership of British Fencing is strongly recommended – a free 90-day Introduction membership for new members is now available.

**Prior to starting the club has:**

• Named **Caron Hale** as Club COVID-19 Officer and is registered with British Fencing.

• During each session, the Covid-19 officer will be present, if not, one of the other coaches/assistants will have that responsibility. It is up to the officer to make sure all Covid-19 safety precautions are being followed.

• We have added additional Risk Assessments that cover outdoor and indoor activity. Risk mitigation measures will be put in place and regularly monitored.

• Coaches have received specific COVID-19 training to create a safer environment for training at the club and implement COVID-19 mitigation plans identified in the Club Risk Assessment.

• We have a copy of the venue’s Risk Assessment available to make sure they are following sufficient steps and that we can work within them.

• We will be continuing our online Zoom sessions.

• The club has tested the following protocols with test sessions to make sure they are safe to use.

1. **COMING TO THE CLUB**

The club will be running a little differently from normal. We have had to put certain steps in place for the safety of all members and supporters.

*3.01* We will be working with the online booking system Eventbrite (see Section 11) to manage the club groups. You will need to sign up and use the Eventbrite system to book classes. *You cannot just turn up to the club*. Booking will close 12pm on the day of the class.

*3.02* Seniors will be working in groups of 6 fencers. Juniors will be working in groups of up to 15 fencers.

*3.03* When booking a session, you will need to complete a small health questionnaire, which needs to be confirmed before the start of the session.

*3.04* If you develop symptoms after attending the club, please inform us ASAP via email so we can report to British Fencing and work with the NHS Track and Trace system.

*3.05* Face masks will be required, at all times, inside the venue. More details in part 4.

*3.06* When arriving at the venue, please arrive on time. The coach/assistant will meet you at the gate of the main car park. Please make sure to keep socially distanced outside the venue. Parents drop off and wait elsewhere outside the venue, and then pick up from the same gate at the end of the session. The main car park gate and gym entrance will be time locked so please ensure prompt arrival and departure.

*3.07* You will only be able to borrow foils and lame jackets. You must have your own or hired equipment (cleaned in relation to our cleaning and hygiene protocols, in section 5). You are able to loan kit from the club with a refundable deposit plus a small termly hire fee. You will then be responsible for cleaning and bringing to each session.

*3.08* Please bring your own water bottle.

*3.09* Please use hand-sanitizers at entrance to the sports hall, on the table inside the lobby or use your own hand-sanitizer.

*3.10* You may use the school’s QR code at the Sports Hall entrance but it is not obligatory.

*3.11* To increase ventilation, external doors will be opened so please take appropriate clothing.

1. **CLUB USAGE OF PPE (this includes age under 11s)**

*4.01* During all fencing activity indoors face coverings must be worn. The face covering must cover both your mouth and nose. This includes with a fencing mask on. While in your safe zone, we will allow the removal of the face covering if breathing becomes difficult (eg after a match or if it is hot) please ask the coach first. This is to allow adequate recovery from carbon dioxide build up under masks.

*4.02* If you are unable to wear a face covering for any health or social reasons please let us know in advance via the Bristol Fencing Club email so we can make sure we follow protocol outlined in our risk assessments.

*4.03* While wearing your Fencing Mask you must keep your face covering on. If you do not want to wear it under your fencing mask you can wear a mask liner. A mask liner is a piece of cotton lining, or other face covering, connected to the inside of the mask, it must cover under the chin and over the front of the nose.

*4.04* The British fencing equipment manufacturer Leon Paul have created some mask liners that clip into the mask. They can be found here: <https://www.leonpaul.com/leon-paul-mask-shield-x-10.html>

*4.05* If you are unwilling to buy these you can make your own, watch the video on the Leon Paul website for an explanation as to how they work.

*4.06* You must bring your own face coverings or mask liners, we will not be providing any.

*4.07* Our coaches will be wearing face coverings at all times during the sessions indoors.

*4.08* Please bring your own hand gel to wash hands between matches. There will be hand wash and wipes on each piste to use. If you are unable to use hand gel please see *5.14* and *5.15*.

*4.09* If your Face covering falls off or comes loose during the session. Do not panic. Calmly replace the covering when you are able.

*4.10* If you wish to wear plastic gloves, you will still need to follow standard cleaning protocols, using sanitizer on them.

1. **CLEANING EQUIPMENT BOTH PERSONAL AND CLUB KIT**

**Full British Fencing Cleaning protocols can be found here** <https://www.britishfencing.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/BF-Return-to-Fencing-Equipment-Cleaning-Protocols-v24th-June-2020.pdf>

Fencers should,wherever possible, only use and touch their own equipment. There should be no sharing of personal equipment within a session. Personal equipment includes Masks, Gloves, Under Plastrons, Jackets, Swords, Body Wires, Socks, Breeches.

Please make sure to follow manufacturer’s guidance for washing temperatures. DO NOT tumble dry fencing equipment.

**Personal and Loaned Equipment**

*5.01* All clothing (Jacket, Under Plastron, Glove, Breeches, Socks, T-shirt) must be clean on arrival and washed in-between sessions.

*5.02* All other equipment can be wiped down with anti-bacterial/viral wipes.

**Club Equipment**

*5.03* We will be following British Fencings Cleaning Protocols for all club equipment. These can be found using the link above. Majority of kit will be ‘quarantined’ between use.

*5.04* Spools, wires and boxes will be wiped down at the beginning and end of sessions. Coaches/assistants will be setting up and putting away equipment.

*5.05* To touch club boxes and spools, fencers will be required to use hand gel before touching equipment, and where possible use foot or sword to turn on scoring box.

**PPE Indoors**

*5.06* Face Coverings must be worn at all times indoors. Mask linings may be worn while masks are on instead. Unless as stated in *4.01*

**PPE Outdoors**

*5.07* Face Coverings are not required to be worn for outdoor sessions unless sparring is taking place, in which case face masks or mask liners must be worn.

**Personal Hygiene**

*5.08* Fencers must make sure their clothing and fencing equipment is clean on arrival to each session.

*5.09* Hands must be washed or sanitized on arrival to the venue, hand sanitizer will be available on arrival at the venue.

*5.10* Hands must be cleaned before and after fights. Bring your own hand sanitizer.

*5.11* Please bring a towel to wipe any sweat from hands or face.

*5.12* While we will have our own first aid kit on hand, we recommend you have your own small version with your kit. This is to reduce contact time. This could just be some plasters etc.

*5.13* Please put your glove on LAST, after you have plugged onto the box. And take your glove off before unplugging. Remember you will need to use hand gel before unclipping from the spool.

*5.14* If you are unable to use hand sanitizer due to medical reasons please contact us prior to the session via email.

*5.15* If you are unable to use hand sanitizer due to medical reasons please make sure to wash your hands before coming to the sessions and on arrival please wash your hands in the venue toilets being careful to have minimal contact with door handles etc. Please wash your hands regularly throughout the session. Please refrain from touching any club equipment while at the club. If you do accidently touch any club equipment please tell your group coach ASAP and they will come and wipe down the equipment for you.

1. **THE VENUE**

**Sports Hall, Cotham School, Cotham Lawn Rd, Cotham, Bristol BS6 6DT,**

**Entrance and Exit**

Please wait at the gate by the main car park for the coach to come and collect you and remain socially distanced at all times. There will be no room for parents to attend the session. Please ensure punctual arrival and departure. The gate will be kept locked during the fencing session.

1. **HOW THE CLUB SESSION WILL RUN**

**Arrival**

*7.01* When you arrive at the car park, please wait to be collected by one of the group coaches at the walkway gate. While waiting please make sure you are keeping socially distant from others (2m). The Coach will then take a register.

*7.02* Before entering the venue please put on your face coverings. There will be hand sanitizer on entry to be used. Please, where possible, keep 2m apart from others inside the venue.

*7.03* We will make sure there are plenty of small breaks so that oxygen levels can be maintained while wearing a face covering.

*7.04* If you are under 16 you must be accompanied by your parent at the gate. Children under 16 must not be left alone at the gate until the coach has taken the register.

*7.05* We understand some under 16s travel to the venue either by themselves or with friends. If this is the case, then please contact us via email to discuss.

**Groups** (see *11.01*)

You will be assigned into a group on arrival There will be no switching groups or close interaction with other groups. The coach will not be switching groups.

**Warm Up**

*7.06* Warm up will be run at a relatively low intensity, focusing on movement and stretching. Warm ups will be socially distant at 2m between people. We may play games, but none that require sharing kit or touching each other. Warmup will be performed in the same working group.

**Footwork**

*7.07* Footwork sessions will run similar to warm ups. Low intensity and socially distant at 2m.

**Getting changed**

*7.08* There are no changing facilities available at the venue. Please arrive ready for fencing activity.

**Sparring**

In line with British Fencing protocols actual fencing sparring and pairs work will look a little different. 2m social distancing should be respected where possible (see *6.0*)

*7.09* Whilst not engaging in activity everyone should wear face coverings.

*7.10* Fencers will not mix with other groups in the same venue.

*7.11* Do not make any physical contact with other participants (such as shaking hands or high five). Salute from the en garde line.

*7.12* Adapted sparring between two individuals in the group can take place and is limited to 1 x 15 hits or 3 x 5 hits. Fights will last no longer than 10minutes of fencing time or 15 minutes total elapsed time.

*7.13* Coaches can deliver a maximum of 15 min lessons to individuals within a club session but cannot give lessons to fencers in different groups within the session.

*7.14* Corps a corps, deliberate close quarter actions and any actions that breach the 1m distancing are not permitted.

*7.15* Fleching/running attacks are not permitted.

*7.16* Face coverings can be worn under fencing masks for low intensity training. Participants (fencers and coaches) wearing face coverings should monitor their breathing and heart rate and take regular breaks. If face coverings are not being used, fencing mask liners should be worn. Where face coverings are used, coaches should adapt lessons and training to keep physical intensity levels low with frequent breaks.

*7.17* Participants should avoid any shouting/screaming, particularly during 1:1 activities.

*7.18* Use hand sanitizer before and after each match. Make sure to not touch the club equipment (spools, box) while wearing your glove. Wipe down equipment after use.

**Leaving the Club/ Venue**

*7.19* Participants must keep face coverings on until they have left the venue.

*7.20* On leaving the session/ venue please wash your hands using the available hand sanitizer. If you are unable to use hand sanitizer for health reasons, please see *5.14* and *5.15*.

*7.21* Participants who are under the age of 16 must be picked up in person by parent/carer.

*7.22* In the case of late pick up please inform the club as soon as possible. The pupil will then be brought back inside, following protocol, and kept with the coaches in the venue space until you arrive.

**Groups**

*7.23* Once you are assigned to a group there will be no switching groups or close interaction with other groups.

*7.25* Groups may change each session. The coach may not be switch groups during the session.

*7.26* Groups must stay in their group’s zone at all times.

1. **FIRST AID**

*8.01* While we will have our own first aid kit on hand. We recommend you have your own small version with your kit. This is to reduce contact time. This could just be some plasters etc.

*8.02* Coaching staff will follow the guidelines for administering first aid set out by the venue’s risk assessment. They are as follows:

*Participants from the same household will be required to self-administer first aid under the guidance of staff.*

*Participants from different households will be required to administer first aid on themselves under staff guidance.*

*In the event of a serious injury an ambulance will be called and assistance for the injured party will be given from a distance by the member of staff.*

*In the event of a cardiac arrest the member of staff will dial 999 and then, whilst wearing a face mask, face visor and gloves, and administer CPR in accordance with*[*https://www.sja.org.uk/get-advice/first-aidadvice/unresponsive-casualty/how-to-do-cpr-on-an-adult/*](https://www.sja.org.uk/get-advice/first-aidadvice/unresponsive-casualty/how-to-do-cpr-on-an-adult/)

1. **GDPR**

*9.01* All information shared through our booking site will be kept secure by us for 21 days.

*9.02* Your personal information may be shared with British Fencing and the Government track and trace initiative in the case of suspected Covid19 cases related to the venue or our sessions. That information may be used in line with their own GPDR protocol.

*9.03* Your personal information may also be shared with the venue provider. This will be first and last names, plus contact details.

*9.04* You will be required to input your information on our online booking system (Eventbrite). By doing this you agree to their data usage policies.

1. **Consequences Of Not Following Protocol**

*10.01* Please follow these protocols at all times. The coach will remind you if you break the rules.

*10.02* If you repeatedly break the rules either on purpose or by accident you will be asked to leave the session.

*10.03* If you repeatedly break these rules you may be asked to not come back to the club.

**11. ONLINE BOOKING**

*11.01* We are using EVENTBRITE for our online booking system.

*11.02* You will be required to create an account to log into the site.

*11.03* The events are set as ‘Private’ and so booking can only happen through a link we will send to you each week.

*11.04* Each session may be shortened to allow time to pack up and clean as necessary at the end.