

SAFE SYSTEM OF WORK (SSOW) FOR -

Safe working while mitigating COVID-19 in line with current guidance across all CA operations.

Social Distancing: From 27 September CA will not require individuals to socially distance at CA controlled premises or on sites, however, we ask all staff to be respectful of other people's boundaries and maintain a sensible approach, particularly when working in close proximities to others such as those whom you do not usually meet.

Face Coverings: From 27 September CA will not require individuals to wear face coverings at CA controlled premises or on sites, however, we ask all staff to be respectful of other people's boundaries and maintain a sensible approach should other people chose to continue wearing face coverings.

Premises and sites not under CA Control: CA procedures and controls will be superseded by the requirements of Principal Contractors/Clients/Others in control of premises provided these requirements are not lesser than CA's.

1.0 Introduction

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a viral infection thought to have originated in China, though since then several strains or variants have developed. After an incubation period of approximately 5-14 days people may present with a new, continuous, cough and fever loss or change of the sense of taste or smell, and in some cases difficulty breathing. In many cases the symptoms are minor, however it can prove fatal in those with underlying health conditions or other susceptible groups, such as the elderly. The virus is transferred between people via surfaces touched by infected individuals or directly by transfer between people when microscopic droplets from the infected individual are breathed in.

Please note the above is a brief outline of the virus, its symptoms and those presently identified as most at risk from the infection. It should not be relied upon to provide medical information. For full details staff should refer to information provided by HM Government and the World Health Organization (WHO).

Further to this it is important to remember that the present situation is constantly evolving and therefore the measures described below will need to be reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with current guidance and legislation.

2.0 Scope and Main Principles

This procedure applies to all Cotswold Archaeology operations during the COVID-19 Pandemic and covers the main hazards, as well as rules and regulations that need to be observed to mitigate the risk of infection.

The main principles are to ensure that the risk of spreading the viral contagion Coronavirus (COVID-19) to CA staff, other operatives and the general public is minimised as far as reasonably practicable.

3.0 Purpose

The purpose of this SSOW is to ensure that:

- All hazards and risks are identified, and their severity (likelihood) established.
- Appropriate and proportionate mitigations/safe methods are put in place.
- CA's systems comply with current advice and legal requirements.

Due to the wide variety of circumstances in which CA operates, the control measures noted below have been left deliberately generalised. They must be adapted to each situation, whilst mitigating the risk of infection and complying with relevant legislation and guidance.

5.0 Hazards

The following site-specific hazards have been identified:

- Journeying to and from site in close proximity to other staff, risking infection.
- Sharing tools or other objects leading to risk of infection.
- Risk of infection from high use shared objects and areas such as canteens, door handles etc.
- Increased risk of other incidents or accidents due to understaffing, distraction, stress etc.
- Increased pressure on staff leading to poor physical and mental health.
- Incidents or accidents due to a lack of staff due to self-isolating/illness.
- Increased risk of severe illness in unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated staff.

6.0 Controls- site-based operations (including external visits)

6.1 Pre-Start

- Prior to the commencement of any project on a site controlled by a Principal Contractor/Client or their agent i.e. when CA will not be the only operatives on site, the Principal Contractor, sub-contractor or their agent must satisfy CA that they have suitable control measures in place. Should these controls be found not to be adequate and/or complied with, CA operatives must contact their Project Manager and may have to withdraw from site.
- Prior to the commencement of any project on site an assessment of the project's viability must be conducted) with reference to CA SHE D1.1 *COVID-19 Risk Assessment* and any other relevant advice, etc.
- Any staff exhibiting symptoms or having tested positive for COVID-19 must self-isolate and not attend site.

6.2 During the project.

- During the start of the project the sites Construction Phase Plan must be completed as per normal but with details on the control measures in place relating to that specific site.

- The project leader or other responsible person must ensure that control measures are in place including but not limited to:
 - Regular hand washing
 - Thorough cleaning of all higher risk areas, objects
- Should the situation change, such as instructions by HM Government or the level of staffing available due to sickness or self-isolation, CA must ensure its staff are able to withdraw from site safely (for example limit the number of evaluation trenches open at any given time).
- Hands must be washed/sanitized on entering site as well as regularly during the day and at the end of the day prior to leaving site.
- Each site must establish a cleaning regime, which will include, but not be limited to:
 - Cleaning of all shared use objects and areas such as door handles, welfare cabins, portaloos etc. dependant on the facilities and equipment on each specific site.
 - Cleaning of vehicles.
 - Cleaning of access points.
 - Particular attention should be paid to high use areas such as the canteen facilities, ancillary toilets, washing facilities and portaloos.
- All sites should have enough tools, utensils and other equipment so that sharing is avoided. Where equipment must be shared control measures must be put in place to minimise cross contamination such as:
 - Thoroughly cleaned before and after use by each operative.
- Where possible shared items, such as survey equipment for example, to be assigned to one person only. All sites must have adequate hand washing/sanitising facilities that themselves can be cleaned as appropriate.
- Emergency face coverings will be provided (stored in each First Aid kit for use by the first aider and anyone one they assist. Staff are reminded these are only an aid to prevention of the spread of COVID 19 and must not be relied upon in place of hygiene controls.

6.3 Working on Principal Contractor (PC)/Client sites.

- When working on a site controlled by a PC or Client, CA will require evidence of their procedures in advance. These will be assessed and only sites with appropriate procedures will be attended by CA operatives.
- As per normal operating procedure CA procedures will defer to and be superseded by those put in place by a PC/Client, however CA's procedures will not be diluted/reduced if in conflict with the PC/Client.
- Should staff encounter conditions or behaviours that may expose them or others to risk they must inform their Project Leader or the PC/Client immediately. The project manager must be informed. Should the issue not be resolved CA operatives may have to remove themselves from site.

7.0 Controls – Office based operations

7.1 General controls

When working in a CA office you must:

- Use the hand sanitiser provided on entering/exiting the office
- Wipe down surfaces if instructed to do so e.g. in kitchen areas, toilets
- Wipe down all surfaces if sitting at a 'hot desk', including the desk and equipment.

- Use hand sanitiser as instructed around the office e.g., at the printers
- Make sure your desk is clear of all papers/documents at the end of each day.

When working in a CA office you must not:

- Enter the office if you have COVID-19 symptoms
- Enter the office if you have been instructed to self-isolate by NHS 'track and trace' services
- Remove any signage that has been put in place
- Not share dishes and utensils. These should be washed thoroughly before and after use.
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Operating our offices safely relies on all colleagues following the measures that have been put in place. Colleagues are empowered to challenge those not working safely or raising concerns with their Line Manager or the Head of HR & Facilities. We expect colleagues to challenge in a respectful way and those challenged to respond in the same manner.

7.2 Visitors, Deliveries and Collections

When physical visits are necessary the following must be adhered to; -

- Visits should be arranged in advance and planned to avoid peak times such as the start and end of the day.
- Visitors must use the main entrance to the office and sign the office Visitors book.
- Visitors must be instructed in the specific control measure they need to follow as detailed above
- Visitors must be monitored as appropriate. Anyone who does not follow CA procedures while operating on CA premises will be asked to leave.

8.0 First Aid

- All sites/offices must have adequate first aid provisions including trained staff and first aid kits.
- Any person who suspects they have symptoms of COVID – 19 must not attend work.
- Any person who develops COVID – 19 symptoms whilst at work must self-isolate and where possible return home. If someone is incapable of returning home an ambulance should be summoned. The Project Managers must be informed, and steps will be taken to minimise any potential risk. Full guidance can be found in *CA SSOW C-19 Outbreak Procedure*.

9.0 Review/Compliance

As noted above daily checks must be performed by the Project Leader/Managers or other responsible persons. The Project Manager or their designated representative must conduct regular reviews including site visits, where applicable, to ensure proper controls are in place.

Failure to comply with these control measures could result in colleagues being removed from site/offices and disciplinary action being taken. However, colleagues

retain the right to refuse to carry out any action that may endanger themselves or those around them without fear of reprisal.

References

Section D1.1 – Coronavirus Risk Assessment