

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Here at The Bushcraft Company, we want to do everything we can to support the young people who need us most as we respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We stopped delivery of our residential courses on 21 March 2020. This was in line with government advice – and we continue to work to current government guidelines.

We want to let you know about some changes to our programmes (in the short/medium term) that will mean we can safely deliver Bushcraft courses to as many young people as possible.

EDUCATION

The latest guidance from the Department for Education is advising schools against overnight residential for the Autumn 2020 term. We will of course support schools to follow this advice. We will be in touch with you about moving current bookings for Autumn 2020. In order to manage this as best we can we appreciate your continued flexibility.

We are also continuing to take bookings for May 2021 and beyond. Backed by our Active Learning Group promise.

We are continually monitoring the COVID-19 outbreak and what this means for The Bushcraft Company. The challenges that young people face have not disappeared during this pandemic and will have undoubtedly been made worse. That's why we're working hard to operate as safely as possible during these uncertain times.

We are committed to minimising the risk of spreading the virus and are putting in measures so we can work with young people.

To do this, we have carefully considered the number of young people we can safely have in and around our centres, and how we focus our programmes to make the most of the outdoors and large spaces we have access to.

This document explains how we have adapted and will continue to do so, to carry out our work in a safe and appropriate way.

WELFARE

In respect of all young people, teachers and employers who are due to travel to one of our centres or offices, we ask that anyone who has symptoms of coronavirus, or who is in the same household as someone who has symptoms, does not travel to The Bushcraft Company and follows government advice to self-isolate at home.

Symptoms include:

- High temperature
- New, continuous cough
- Loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

Please note: all young people attending courses should bring their own face mask with them.

GOVERNMENT POLICY AND GUIDANCE

To ensure we are keeping young people safe whilst at The Bushcraft Company, we will adhere to all the regulatory practice available and follow all relevant current policy and guidance. We will keep up-to-date with any changes and adapt our practices as required. We are looking and following at guidance related to:

- Education
- Travel and Transport (including travel for our own staff and young people travelling to and from our centres)
- Indoor and Outdoor Learning and Adventure
- Catering and Hospitality
- Management of Facilities and Office Environments

OUR PEOPLE

Our highly experienced and skilled staff are at the centre of a Bushcraft experience. Through ongoing training and guidance, we will ensure that our staff:

- Have a clear understanding of all new practice and procedures that we have put in place.
- Are confident in how a Bushcraft programme can be delivered safely and responsibly.
- Are given continuous updates and changes to practice as we follow guidance issued.
- Receive additional training where required in respect of young people's mental health and wellbeing.

OUR ADVENTURES

Combining adventurous and challenging experiences in the natural environment with individual development and learning is what we always work hard to achieve. This is what makes us unique and different from other residential experiences. We aim to continue to do this whilst keeping young people safe.

- All our programmes will continue to be as adventurous as possible and immerse young people in the wild from the moment they arrive.
- Thanks to our locations, we will ensure we are in the outdoors as much as possible (it is well noted that the risk of transmission is lowest outside).
- Where close contact is necessary, we have adapted our practices to increase distancing.
- We will provide more opportunity for managed self-led activity.
- We will continue to give young people specific time for reflection and deep immersion in nature, which are already embedded into our Bushcraft programmes.
- We will continue to make the most of our unique locations.
- Community living will continue to be an important part of our courses but managed in an appropriate way.

HANDWASHING AND HYGIENE

- Handwashing will be built into a formal part of the daily routine with handwashing stations clearly marked and readily available throughout the day.
- We will continually remind young people to wash their hands and think about their contact with others.
- If young people wish to wear masks this will be permitted, but not enforced.

LEARNING

- We will continue to focus on developing character building and understanding the needs of the whole group and each individual young person.
- We will ensure we consider mental health and wider wellbeing needs of young people and respond appropriately.
- We will allow more time for personal reflection for all young people.
- Have less intensity on focussed outcomes and more on 'letting young people be young people'.
- We will have a specific focus on hygiene, duties, tidiness, and personal responsibility.
- We will help young people learn independent living skills.

OUR CENTRES

Our centres are vital in helping us deliver our programmes and we have been considering carefully how we manage our spaces. Below is an outline of how we will manage the outdoor places directly surrounding our buildings and our residential setting.

- All our centres are in wild places with lots of space outside surrounding them, so we will use outside spaces as much as possible to help young people and staff to move around and reduce the risk of transmission.
- We will have a more controlled and facilitated approach to living on a Bushcraft camp, such as one-way systems and schedules for using common places.
- We will use outdoor space for socialising and mealtimes.
- Where outside mealtimes are not possible, we will have staggered mealtimes so that the number eating at the same time is reduced. Our dining tables will be set up to follow social distancing guidelines.
- We will follow guidelines with respect to dormitory and tent capacity.
- Where appropriate we will create small 'bubbles' of young people on camp. For example, the same young people will eat together and sleep on the same camp.

MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- We will screen all participants and visitors on arrival for COVID-19 by using a questionnaire to assess if they have symptoms.
- Anyone displaying any symptoms of COVID-19, no matter how small will be immediately isolated and cared for.
- Any staff or other young people relating to any individual showing COVID-19 symptoms will also be isolated.
- Staff will be trained to monitor their own health and symptoms and inform us immediately of any changes.
- Should a young person become unwell, our usual procedure of a swift response and escalation where necessary will be put into practice, wearing face masks may be required.
- We will work with the excellent local healthcare facilities should the need arise.

MORE INFORMATION

We hope this provides you, your colleagues, parents, and young people with the reassurance of the changes we are making at The Bushcraft Company to confidently bring young people back to our centres.

Full COVID-19 risk assessments have been carried out as part of our process of developing this document and are available on request.