

## **SOC outings: advice to branches in response to the Covid 19 pandemic**

**Participants in an SOC outing are responsible for their own health and safety and should not put themselves in a position that could place them, or others, in danger. They should never undertake any activity if they have concerns about their own or others' health and safety but should stop the activity immediately.**

**Participants must follow all Scottish Government guidelines in effect at the time of the outing. This advice is under constant review and should there be a localised outbreak, may vary from one place to another.**

The following SOC advice is intended to be helpful and is in addition to any such mandatory Government or Scottish Government regulation and guidelines.

### **General Practice**

- Avoid crowded places and sites that rely on the use of bird hides. Choose quieter locations outside where it is possible to spread out to see the birds.
- Maintain physical distancing, keeping a minimum distance between individuals from different households as per government guidance. NB This will still need to be maintained on narrow pathways and when watching any particular bird!
- Consider restricting group numbers on an outing, so that physical distancing can be managed in a way that is appropriate for the location.
- Ensure you all carry hand sanitiser (minimum 60% alcohol content) and use it regularly because it is unlikely that frequent hand washing for at least 20 seconds using soap and water will be possible.
- Wear a face covering over your mouth and nose as per the current government guidance. Other cough and hygiene measures are also important.
- Ask any participant to cancel if they feel unwell in any way on the morning of the activity.
- Overnight stays should only be considered if all the points outlined in this note and Government mandatory guidelines can always be strictly adhered to.

### **Travel**

- Avoid using public transport where possible, and wear a face covering if unavoidable.
- If using a private vehicle, do not share it with a member of another household.
- Facilities such as car parks, toilets, garages, and cafes may not be available or may be too crowded. Planning needs to take this into account.

### **Equipment and surfaces**

- Avoid sharing equipment (or snacks) with individuals from other households.
- If anyone does share equipment, disinfect it between users and use hand sanitiser (minimum 60% alcohol content).
- Minimise contact with shared hard surfaces such as gates and use sanitiser where this happens.