

COVID-19 Social Distancing Toolkit and Guidance

11 June 2020

1.0 Introduction

Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) will be working in partnership with district and borough councils to ensure Gloucestershire's high streets, shopping areas and public places can be opened up safely over the coming weeks and months to facilitate economic recovery.

To enable these places to function safely, social distancing will have to be observed by the public; however this is likely to create a range of issues given the limits in place for interior spaces such as shops, as well as in locations with restrictive outside spaces such as those found in many market towns across the county. This document seeks to provide guidance to district and borough councils as well as other community organisations on implementing schemes to facilitate economic recovery and reinvigoration of our shopping areas as we move out of the COVID-19 lockdown.

It is not practical for GCC to lead on all schemes that seek to aid the economic recovery, however because most of the public realm available on high streets and around shopping areas are adopted highway, there is a need for GCC to be involved in this process.

This document details the learning gained from the trial social distancing schemes GCC have already delivered and provides a suite of measures and the principles behind those measures that can be employed without the need for individual approval for these measures to be used on the highway.

2.0 Principles and methodology

Measures introduced to aid social distancing will be put in place to provide the public with a reminder of the need to social distance as well direct them to use responsible ways to queue and negotiate the high street and/or shopping area. As such they will need to be sensible and realistic and will need to take into account likely behaviours. Non-compliance with the guidance provided in one area may lead to further non-compliance in another area of the scheme. The "pop up" and temporary nature of a scheme will mean it is not always going to be possible to introduce highway changes which are as accessible as permanent schemes however steps should be taken to ensure that no group (either pedestrian or cycle users) is unduly disadvantaged and any measure put in place, and as such disabled parking and public transport facilities should not be altered unless suitable alternative arrangements are provided. In addition schemes should adhere to the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) Courtesy Code (a copy of which is can be found in Appendix 1) as a minimum.

3.0 Signs

3.1 The use of temporary signs (correx or foamex) will be permitted to be fixed to existing street furniture. GCC have a stock of signs available for use (at cost price, see appendix 5) however borough and district councils are free to procure their own signage in line with our specification.

3.2 Signs approved for use on the highway are included in Appendix 2. Any signs not included in this appendix will require specific approval from GCC.

Example: Temporary signs have been used effectively in High Street – Tewkesbury, Bath Road – Cheltenham and Bourton on the Water Village Centre (Appendix 3).

4.0 Floor markings and stickers

4.1 Floor markings and stickers can be used to provide 2 metre marks for queues or in areas of high footfall. GCC have a stock of floor stickers which are available to purchase (at cost price see appendix 5) . The use of self procured floored stickers is also permitted. (Appendix 4)

4.2 Markings can also be provided in the form of sprayed stencil markings. These have been used effectively to indicate the recommended direction of travel or as queue markers. There are a range of stencils available to purchase from sign manufacturers. The paint used for stencils should be aerosol line marking paint or water based emulsion paint. These markings can be refreshed as required. The use of thick solvent based paints is not permitted as these can prove difficult to remove.

4.3 In areas where queues from shops are likely to encroach on other shop fronts, sprayed stencil markings can be used across doorways to indicate areas that need to be kept clear to allow social distance to those entering and exiting shops.

4.4 In high footfall areas queuing area can be marked off from pedestrian movement corridors using stickers or floor markings.

Example: Temporary floor markings and stickers have been used in Bourton on the Water (Appendix 3).

5.0 Bollards and barriers

5.1 Bollards and barriers should only be used to protect pedestrians and cycles from vehicular traffic and should not cover any existing dropped kerb crossing points, access to cycle facilities, private vehicular accesses or pedestrian crossings.

5.2 Barriers, bollards or cones used on the highway will need to conform to and be set out and subsequently maintained in accordance with Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016.

5.3 Specific permission will need to be sought from GCC prior to the installation of a physical barrier on the highway. This should be discussed with your Local Highway Manager please email enquiries to highways@gloucestershire.gov.uk.

Example: Water filled barriers have been used to section off on street parking to increase areas available to pedestrians in High Street – Tewkesbury and Bath Road – Cheltenham (Appendix 3)

6.0 Street Furniture

6.1 It is difficult to social distance on footways of less than 3.0m wide. Because of this the removal of street furniture may be beneficial. Localised narrowing presents less of an issue, however cumulative narrowing below 3.0m significantly limits the ability of pedestrians to socially distance.

6.2 Where usable footway widths are less than 3.0m wide, consideration should be given to the removal of unnecessary street furniture. This may include planters, benches, A-boards, outdoor tables and seating as well as wares for sale.

6.3 Consideration may be given to relocating street furniture used for business purposes (such as tables and chairs outside cafes) to areas that offer sufficient space to social distance if possible and practical.

7.0 Cycle Parking

7.1 Provision of additional cycle parking will be permitted in areas that provide sufficient width to enable cycle stands to be erected whilst enabling social distancing for pedestrians. There are a number of bolt down options available.

7.2 Any works involving digging, drilling or fixing to the highway will need to be undertaken by competent persons with suitable insurance. Typically operatives will need to be accredited under the New Roads and Streetworks Act and carry public liability insurance of £10M.

7.3 Temporary signage to guide cyclists to new facilities is permitted.

8.0 Pedestrian flow control

8.1 In areas where it is not possible for pedestrians to socially distance due to the width of the footway the use of a pedestrian one way can be implemented using the “keep left” principle. Where footway widths are less than 3.0m this can be achieved by pedestrians keeping to one side of a street, however this can only be safely implemented if there are suitable and convenient crossing points to avoid unnecessary walking as this is likely to lead to non compliance.

8.2 In areas of high footfall, this can also be considered where footways are more than 3.0m wide.

8.3 The use of this measure can be achieved by using floor markings and “keep to the left” signage.

Example: This has been used in high footfall areas of Bourton on the Water

9.0 Feedback and information

9.1 Consideration should be given as to how members of the public can make feedback. On the trial schemes already implemented, signs were erected with details on how feedback could be provided.

Appendix 1

RNIB - Coronavirus Courtesy Code

We recommend that:

1. A Coronavirus Courtesy Code should be promoted to enable safe social distancing for all road users. We would be happy to work with others on its development to help all pedestrians and road users to:

- Keep safe and keep 2 metres apart
- Be aware that not all disabilities, including sight loss, are visible
- Work together to ensure everyone can use our roads and paths

2. Preference must be given to allocating extra space for cyclists from the road, not from the pavement space.

3. Any signage indicating any new pop-up cycle lanes should be placed on the road/cycle lane, not on the pavement.

4. Shared space between cyclists and pedestrians must be avoided. Blind and partially sighted pedestrians find it extremely difficult to detect cycles, whilst cyclists may not realise that a pedestrian has sight loss. Mobility aids such as white canes can get caught up bicycle wheels, which is a further hazard to both.

5. While retaining dropped kerbs at crossings for wheelchair users, kerbs should be kept allowing visually impaired people to safely find the pavement edge.

6. Existing controlled crossings should be maintained.

7. Warning markings and signs must also be provided to instruct cyclists to stop when pedestrians are near or on the formal crossing.

8. Many existing bus stops are inaccessible to people with sight loss if these must be reached across cycle lanes - new bus stop arrangements introduced under the scheme must be accessible to the visually impaired.

Further details can be found at rnib.org.uk

Appendix 2

DfT approved signage



Living our values every day

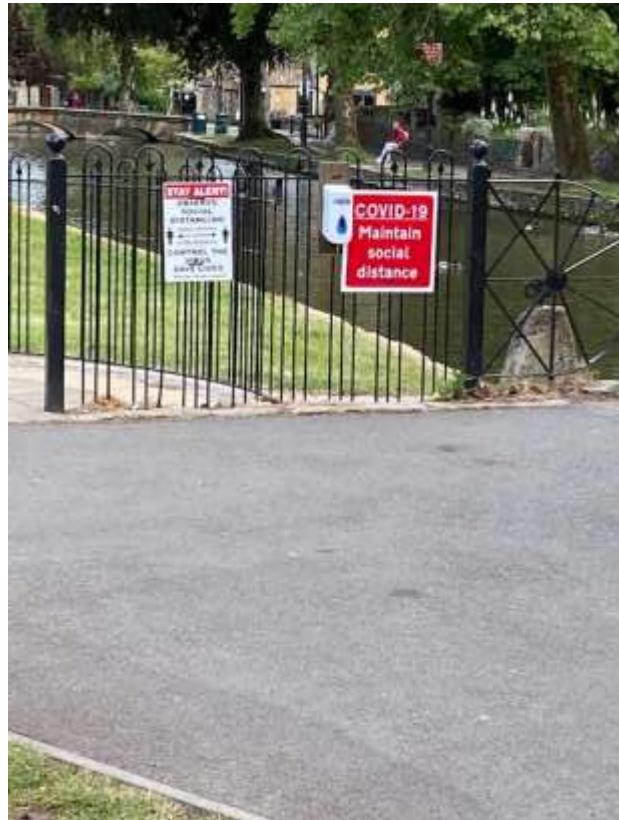


Appendix 3

High Street, Tewkesbury



Appendix 3 (cont.)**Bath Road, Cheltenham**

Appendix 3 (cont.)**Bourton on the Water**

Appendix 4**Floor stickers**

Appendix 5

Sign costs

Sign type	Cost/Unit (exc. VAT)
Floor Sticker	£2.50
450mm x 450mm foamex (any type)	£7.90*
750mm x 750mm foamex (any type)	£13.75*

*price includes fixing clips (2 per sign) but not cable ties