

# Bishop Auckland Golf Club

## Response to Covid -19 Crisis: Frequently Asked Questions

These questions and answers attempt to clarify the most common queries arising from the guidelines we are following to ensure we can play golf safely and observe HM Government restrictions.

### **Q – What should I do if I believe I have Coronavirus (or someone I live with has it) and I have visited BAGC in the last 14 days?**

A – The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- **high temperature**
- **new, continuous cough.**
- **loss or change to your sense of smell or taste**

If you or someone you live with begins to display these symptoms use NHS 111 online coronavirus service and follow their advice. Telephone BAGC Secretary and advise him of your situation and who you encountered when at BAGC. Do not visit BAGC again until you have either been tested and received a negative outcome or you have self isolated for 14 days and the symptoms have gone away. Under no circumstances should you visit BAGC if you think you or someone you live with has coronavirus symptoms.

### **Q – What is the permitted playing format?**

A – With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 groups of up to 4 players from different households are permissible under HM Government regulations.

### **Q – What should I do if I have been advised to shield or I am not comfortable playing with someone whom I don't know?**

A – Use the “Reserved By” option in BRS to fill any available slots in the tee time you are booking.

### **Q – When should the “Reserved By” option be used in BRS?**

A – This option has been introduced to allow vulnerable members to reserve tee times without the fear of being joined by people outside their “social bubble.” The only other acceptable use is to reserve a tee time for a club knockout competition.

**Q – Can members over the age of 70 play golf?**

A – This decision is down to the individual golfer, but we have taken all possible steps to make BAGC a safe place to play. The [advice for clinically vulnerable groups](#) remains the same. If you are in this group you are advised to stay at home as much as possible and, if you do go out, take particular care to minimise contact with others outside your household.

If you are living in a household with a possible COVID-19 infection or if you are classified as extremely vulnerable on health grounds, the [guidance](#) is that you should remain at and exercise at home.

**Q – What are the social distancing rules at BAGC?**

A – Our interpretation of advice issued by England Golf and BIGGA is

- Only play when you have booked a tee time on BRS. Do not begin your round before 7am.
- At all times maintain a distance of at least 2 metres between yourself and anyone else you encounter.
- Arrive and leave within 20 minutes of starting or finishing your round
- Use only the designated entry and exit routes for the course
- Observe the markings on the practice ground and limit use of the practice putting green to 4 players
- Tee off at your designated time; do not tee off early.
- Play the course in the correct order, do not “jump around” between holes (8<sup>th</sup> green to 12<sup>th</sup> tee for example) as this may compromise social distancing on subsequent holes..
- Do not congregate on the clubhouse veranda or in the car park
- Do not touch the flagstick and use only your own equipment on the course.

**Q – When will we be allowed to play in competitions?**

A – Games Committee has rescheduled our calendar and we hope that we will be able to complete all major “Board” competitions this season. Resumption of 18 hole rounds with effect from 29<sup>th</sup> May and resumption of 4 balls with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> June means we have a good chance of completing all competitions, with the exception of April, May and June Monthly Medals. However, an increased number of qualifiers will be allowed into the Medals Final from the Medals to be played in July, August and September.

**Q – Can others join players on course?**

A – An individual golfer may be accompanied by either a household member or a person from outside their household. In the case of the latter example, social distancing rules must be observed.

Existing groups of two golfers cannot be joined on course by anyone else.

**Q – Are the practice areas, practice net and putting green open?**

A – Yes but social distancing rules must be observed, aided by using the marked areas and designated access and exit routes. Please use marked practice balls and collect only your own balls before leaving.

No more than 4 players should use the practice putting green at any one time to make it easy for social distancing rules to be followed. This may mean giving priority of use to the players in the next group due to tee off.

**Q – How many rounds can an individual play in a week?**

A – Under the unlimited exercise guidance from HM Government, there is no ceiling on how many rounds an individual can play while following all the rules.

**Q – Is the Pro Shop open?**

A – Yes although there are certain government restrictions relating to “over the counter” transactions. Michael will explain the services he can offer, including tee booking. Strict social distancing rules are in place and hand sanitization is available.

**Q – Can Michael Pilgrim still provide tuition/coaching?**

A – The UK Government has confirmed that one-to-one coaching is permissible if it takes place outside under strict infection control measures and observing social distancing. Michael has been given full guidance by The PGA and will offer tuition/coaching using this guidance. Whether or not to benefit from coaching under current conditions is a decision for individual golfers.

**Q – Can buggies and trollies be used?**

A – Individuals can use their own buggies and trollies. These should not be shared.

Buggies and trollies are available to hire from the Pro Shop but should not be shared and should be collected only after receiving confirmation from The PGA Professional that they have been sanitized and are ready for use.

**Q – When will the clubhouse and toilets reopen?**

A – Full clubhouse facilities cannot be reinstated until Government restrictions are lifted on the sale of food and beverages to be consumed inside. In the meantime a “grab and go” takeaway service for hot and cold drinks, hot and cold sandwiches, soup, and snacks will be introduced with effect from Friday 5<sup>th</sup> June. Toilets will be open with effect from Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June. Members must take personal responsibility for observing social distancing to the extent that it is possible in narrow passageways. The “one way” system to be introduced and signposted must be followed rigidly with no “doubling back” and members must not congregate around the clubhouse entry and exit points or outside the clubhouse in groups of more than six.

**Q – Is insurance cover provided by England Golf to members of affiliated golf clubs valid?**

A – As long as golf courses are legally open for play then current insurance cover remains valid.

**Q – What is the current advice for juniors playing the game at a time of restricted play?**

A – BAGC is following the [safeguarding procedures](#) for children and vulnerable adults during Covid-19, developed by England Golf.

**Q – Can benches be used?**

A – Most benches / seating have been removed from the course. Where they remain in place, golfers should act responsibly and avoid use. Similarly most other course furniture (bins, ball washers, bunker rakes) has been removed and the water fountain will remain turned off for the foreseeable future.