

## Updated statement for UKBMS recorders relating to Coronavirus Covid-19 – 3/06/2020

### Butterfly monitoring permitted across the UK from 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2020 (with travel restrictions in Wales & Scotland)

1. The UKBMS partners (Butterfly Conservation, UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, British Trust for Ornithology and Joint Nature Conservation Committee) consider the welfare of staff, volunteers and partners of utmost importance and are taking the threat of Coronavirus (COVID-19) very seriously. We are working closely with other organisations involved in biodiversity monitoring in the UK, and are constantly reviewing how government guidance in relation to COVID-19 impacts on our schemes.
2. Over the last few weeks restrictions relating to outdoor activities have been relaxing at varying pace across the different nations of the UK. We were able to resume butterfly monitoring in **England** from 14<sup>th</sup> May, and in **Northern Ireland and Scotland** (with some restrictions) from 29<sup>th</sup> May.
3. As a result of recent policy updates, the UKBMS has decided that **transect walking and WCBS recording can also now resume in Wales from Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June**, for those recorders who are not 'shielding' or 'self-isolating'. You may only record individually or with members of your own household, and stay at least 2 metres from anyone outside your household at all times. Further advice from the government on staying safe outdoors can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-safe-outside-your-home/staying-safe-outside-your-home>
4. The guidance in both **Wales and Scotland** remains more restrictive in terms of travelling for leisure/exercise purposes, so **you should only resume monitoring on sites which are within a short distance of home** (broadly within 5 miles), avoiding public transport wherever possible.
5. Additional Notes:
  - Some public sites will be maintaining local restrictions or keeping car parks closed to ensure social distancing measures are not compromised. Before you resume monitoring, you must check that the landowners/site managers are happy for you to do so where appropriate.
  - If your site or transect route are set up in such a way that would make it difficult to maintain social distancing throughout your walk (including the journey to/from the site) then you should not resume butterfly monitoring on that site.
  - If you carry out your survey alone, don't forget to refer to the lone working advice in the general [UKBMS Health & Safety guidance](#).
  - No-one should feel any pressure to resume monitoring if they are not entirely comfortable doing so. In particular, if you are considered a clinically vulnerable individual, and therefore at higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus, then you must be extra vigilant in maintaining social distancing.
6. We will continue to review all the advice from the UK Government and the devolved administrations and will update our guidance as and when appropriate.

7. In these difficult times there are much more important considerations than butterfly monitoring, and nobody should worry that their transect is not being covered. We already understand that coverage will be greatly reduced this year (as it was during the Foot & Mouth outbreak in 2001), but monitoring is very much a long-term project which will not suffer unduly from the occasional short-term crisis. The health of yourselves and your families is of much more immediate concern.

Thank you for your continued co-operation.

Please continue to follow the latest advice and guidance from your appropriate country administration:

England: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Scotland: <https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19>

(see also): <https://www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot/access-outdoors-during-current-coronavirus-outbreak-guidance-public-and-land-managers>

Wales: <https://gov.wales/coronavirus>

(see also): <https://gov.wales/guidance-changes-coronavirus-regulations-1-june>

Northern Ireland: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-regulations-and-what-they-mean-you>

Please check for any updates at [www.ukbms.org](http://www.ukbms.org) and if you have any doubts or queries regarding this advice, contact the UKBMS team at [transect@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:transect@butterfly-conservation.org)