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# BACK TO WALLBALL

GUIDANCE FOR CLUBS, VENUES AND COACHES

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# Back to Wallball Guidance for Clubs, Venues and Coaches

*This "Back to Wallball Guidance" has been produced using the framework in "Back to Squash", created by England Squash – our thanks to them for sharing with us their great work to help us keep our members safe.*

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Version 1

## Introduction

This guide is designed to support Wallball clubs and venues, and their members, with their return to play, following the restrictions in place during the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to reopen and provide a safe environment for players and staff, clubs and venues are obliged to ensure they have completed a thorough **COVID-19 risk-assessment**. Each club has its own unique set of circumstances, and so plans must be tailored to suit specific needs.

As social distancing cannot be guaranteed, the normal game of Wallball should not be undertaken in its doubles format in any indoor environment, whereby the 4 players are likely to remain in close proximity for significant portions of the game. Included in this guide is a clear set of 'ways to play' to provide options to get people back on court whilst maintaining reasonable social distancing in indoor environments. Guidance may differ for Wallball taking place on outdoor courts, where this is the case it is referenced below as "Outdoor".

To reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19, Wallball players must wear gloves for all points of contact with a Wallball, as should coaches involved throughout the duration of a session. Balls should be regularly sanitized during play, and replaced between each game. Should there be visible sweat on the ball following contact with a players body, the ball should be switched and sanitised. Gloves should be regularly cleaned with a sanitising wipe at regular breaks in play. Post activity gloves should be cleaned thoroughly, and it is recommended that all used gloves are left to sit in a well ventilated area for 48 hours after use. All other kit and equipment should be clean before use and washed after any Wallball activity involving other players. Outside of activity on court, players and coaches should maintain social distance and follow Government guidelines.

Cleaning and good hygiene, in conjunction with social distancing, continues to be the most effective method of reducing the risk of infection from COVID-19. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that clubs take all steps to implement their own cleaning and hygiene protocols, whilst ensuring that individual members recognise that they have a part to play, by washing/sanitising hands, not touching court walls, and helping clean contact points where possible. Players area required to sneeze/cough into a tissue, sleeve or elbow rather than on to gloves. High fives, handshakes and hugs should be avoided.

To support clubs/venues in safely returning to play, this toolkit contains:

1. Top five tips for clubs and venues
2. Creating a club/venue COVID-19 Secure Plan
3. Guidance for conducting a COVID-19 risk assessment
4. Ways to play
5. Delivering COVID-19 secure Wallball for coaches.
6. Where to find additional support and resources

If your club shares or rents its courts from a separate provider (e.g. if you are based at a leisure centre), then you should work with the owner of the courts to establish a safe return to play, as there may be different protocols, and you must follow their guidelines at all times.

UK Wallball has a nominated COVID-19 Officer, who you can email at [luke.thomson@ukwallball.co.uk](mailto:luke.thomson@ukwallball.co.uk) – he will endeavour to answer your questions and concerns or highlight where you can find further information.

## Definitions

**Clubs and venues** – anywhere that Wallball is played in an organised manner, including all commercial, educational, rented, members clubs, and public facilities.

**Members** – wallball players who pay a membership fee for access to a club/venue.

**Workforce/staff** – all paid or unpaid personnel, including volunteers and third-party contractors who support the ongoing running of the club/venue

**Coaches** – individuals that provide organised on-court activity including coaching, practice and training in group and/or individual sessions.

## Disclaimer

You must remain aware of the latest Government and Public Health England guidelines for your region/specific location – this will be the most up-to-date source of guidance and will always supersede the advice in this document. The latest guidance can be found on the following links:

- UK Government Guidelines - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/providers-of-grassroots-sport-and-gym-leisure-facilities>
- Public Health England Advice - <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>
- HSE Guidelines - <https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/coronavirus.htm>

As guidelines and restrictions change, UK Wallball will update its COVID-19 guidance.

## 1. Top five tips for clubs and venues

Before returning to play, consider the following:

1	Keep up-to-date with UK Government guidelines at all times (including any regional variations/exceptions). This is your responsibility. <b>All</b> aspects of Wallball activity must follow current social distancing guidelines.
2	If your club/venue isn't ready to open safely from the point that UK Government allows it, don't feel pressured to. The safety of your members and staff remains paramount.
3	Take your time with reopening. Start small and adjust and adapt as frequently as you need to.
4	Create a <b>COVID-19 Secure Plan</b> that is manageable for your club/venue, using the template <b>COVID-19 risk assessment</b> provided as a starting point. Email UK Wallball if you are unsure about anything or need further support.
5	Communicate regularly with your members about what is happening and what you are doing to limit the risk. Use all available channels including social media, text, and your website.

## 2. Create a club/venue COVID-19 Secure Plan

Use the following table as a checklist to inform your club/venue COVID-19 Secure Plan. These tasks must be completed before you consider reopening:

Area	Action	Responsibility	Complete
<b>Leadership &amp; Management</b>	Appoint a COVID-19 Lead Officer and support group to devise and deliver the COVID-19 Secure Plan, and monitor and report progress/success.		
	Develop and conduct a COVID-19 risk assessment, specifically for your club/venue's set of circumstances – see additional guidance below.		
	Formalise a bespoke COVID-19 Secure Plan based on the outcome of your risk assessment for your club, before courts reopen.		
	Establish a cleaning/hygiene routine that is; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• based on the results of the risk assessment</li> <li>• in line with the relevant guidance for your facility</li> <li>• has clear timings and allocated responsibilities</li> </ul>		
	Club/venue nominated First Aider to be aware of current HSE guidance and implement any necessary actions (including obtaining any necessary PPE required as dictated by the results of the risk assessment).		
	Establish a plan for what to do if someone develops symptoms at your club/venue, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining social distancing</li> <li>• Advising them to return home if safe to do so and manage their symptoms in line with the relevant advice.</li> <li>• If the person is unable to travel home safely, they should be isolated from others and someone from their household contacted to make safe arrangements. If this is not possible</li> </ul>		

	then phone 111 and follow instructions.		
	<p>Identify workforce/staff/responsible members who can ensure the relevant safety measures are being adhered to by members whilst the club/venue is open, including responsibility for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registering visitors/members</li> <li>• Social distancing, on and off-court</li> <li>• Hygiene and cleaning regimes</li> </ul> <p>You may be able to utilise coaches or volunteers/responsible members who must be fully aware of, and take responsibility for ensuring adherence to, the club/venue's guidelines.</p> <p>This may require the creation of a rota for workforce/staff, or changes to your opening schedule to accommodate it.</p> <p>If you are unable to resource this effectively and/or feel that your members may be at risk, then we recommend that the club/venue should remain closed.</p>		
	<p>Agree and communicate policies and procedures to workforce/staff and members before reopening your venue. Please also refer to NCVO advice on volunteering.</p>		
	<p>Recommunicate policies and procedures to workforce/staff and members as they are changed/updated.</p>		
	<p>Ensure that all existing club policies, particularly those relating to matters of safety and duty of care, are reviewed and where appropriate, updated to reflect the new way the club will operate. E.g. safeguarding and inclusion policies. (such as CPSU guidance)</p>		
	<p>Ensure that the leadership/ management group understands and actions an agreed plan to resolving/ tackling any localised cases.</p>		
<b>Club/venue Access</b>	<p>Determine the maximum number of members safely allowed in the club at any one time (i.e. the number that can safely guarantee social distancing) and factor this into the booking system (note that this should also account for people who are not</p>		

	playing, including workforce/coaches/management/ other).		
	If appropriate, install screens at reception areas to protect workforce/staff.		
	Introduce separate entry and exit points to the club, if possible.		
	Consider the flow of people through your building and remove bottlenecks where possible e.g. remove turnstiles.		
	Provide hand sanitiser at key points in the club e.g. club entrance/reception/ court doors/exit. Regular handwashing and avoiding sharing of objects should be considered as the primary control for minimising transmission through contact.		
	Ensure only the minimum number of staff/volunteers are on site.		
	Review your accessibility to ensure that you can continue to provide safe access for all your current and potential members/others, including those with disabilities or special needs.		
	Saunas and steam rooms should remain closed.		
<b>Club Environment</b>	Implement the current Government social distancing measures, consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Car parking space/arrangements</li> <li>• Entry and exit routes</li> <li>• Reception areas</li> <li>• Off-court areas</li> </ul>		
	Close any courts that may limit your ability to implement social distancing (i.e. due to limited/restricted access).		
	Identify and close non-essential social spaces.		
	Remove furniture and seating areas to discourage congregation/socialising indoors.		
	Remove/do not allow use of water dispensers.		
	Maintain adequate ventilation throughout your facility, in line with the relevant guidance. Keep doors and windows open where it is safe to do so.		
	Implement a no-cash/contactless payment system.		
	Minimise contact with non-essential contact points where possible e.g. door		

	<p>handles by keeping doors open, removing light meter boxes etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide cleaning materials to minimise risk where these contact points cannot be eliminated.</li> <li>• Give your members clear instructions that they must not touch the walls (this is included on the posters below).</li> </ul>		
	<p>Obtain and provide anti-bacterial wipes, spray, paper towels and non-touch bins outside courts and throughout the club for players to wipe down surfaces including door handles, banisters etc. – NOTE: please follow standard practice for court care – i.e. walls should not be cleaned with disinfectant to avoid damage to the plaster/paint.</p>		
	<p>Review your club/venue’s provision of toilet facilities for the needs of staff and members/others, in line with Government guidelines.</p>		
	<p>Close changing/shower facilities, unless you can provide a suitable cleaning/hygiene regime in line with Government guidelines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the need for these facilities by requiring members to attend the club/venue ready to play and change/shower at home after their visit.</li> <li>• You may need to retain these spaces for the purposes of hand washing and personal hygiene.</li> </ul> <p>As a guide, the use of changing rooms and showering facilities should be avoided where possible, although these must be available for participants with disabilities or special needs.</p>		
	<p>Ensure the toilets, courts and communal areas have a strict cleaning schedule and are cleaned regularly, in line with the relevant guidance (for non-medical settings)</p>		
	<p>Review provision of bar area/catering facilities in line with the relevant guidance.</p>		
	<p>Review provision of retail/merchandise facilities in line with the relevant guidance.</p>		



	Use posters and signage at key points in the club, to remind members of new protocols, expectations and everyone's responsibilities.		
	Do not allow sharing/borrowing or hiring of Wallball equipment / kit from the club or fellow members.		
	Have clearly designated positions from which coaches/volunteers leading activity can provide advice or assistance to players whilst maintaining social distancing.		
<b>Court Bookings</b>	Implement a court booking system to act as a log of who has been in the club, eliminate overcrowding and aid contact tracing. Using an online system is recommended, where possible.		
	<p>Create a daily register recording who has entered and exited the club, and at what time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect only name and time of entry/exit to avoid data protection issues – your club membership database should already contain other information required for Track and Trace purposes.</li> <li>• This should be completed by workforce/staff, to avoid contact with pen/paper/surfaces.</li> <li>• Ensure that your club's privacy policy is in line with GDPR legislation, reflects the changes to your collection of data and allows members to opt out of 'Track and Trace'.</li> </ul>		
	Implement a policy of <i>no play permitted without prior booking</i> , to manage attendance levels.		
	Set a maximum number of players per court as per Government guidelines (this may include limits regarding players from different households etc).		
	Adapt/stagger the start time of each court booking to minimise contact between members.		
	Leave a reasonable time between court bookings to allow for cleaning e.g. court booking for 35 mins, leaving 5 mins for cleaning touch points and then 15-20 mins for air circulation.		

<b>Members &amp; Visitors</b>	<p>Request members/visitors to declare that they are healthy and symptom free before they are allowed into the facility (parents should do this on behalf of children/minors). Prepare a clear statement, and ensure that all have read and agree, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any member who has recovered from a COVID-19 infection where symptoms required hospitalisation should consult their GP before returning to play.</li> <li>• Members/visitors and staff are not permitted onsite if they have been in contact with anyone who has been unwell with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 during in the two weeks prior.</li> <li>• Members/visitors and staff are not allowed onsite if they feel unwell or show any COVID-19 symptoms.</li> <li>• Any member/visitor who becomes unwell or shows COVID-19 symptoms after visiting the club/venue must follow the the relevant guidance (NHS), declare this to the club/venue, and also consult their GP immediately.</li> </ul>		
	<p>Review club/venue policy for members, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrive promptly (no more than 5 mins ahead of playing) and leave immediately after playing.</li> <li>• Use hand sanitiser on arrival and departure.</li> <li>• No handshaking/physical contact and always maintain social distancing.</li> <li>• No sneezing/coughing into a hand or glove, please use a tissue or a sleeve.</li> <li>• Bring own water bottle and arrive at the club with it full.</li> <li>• Bring own towel to wipe away sweat.</li> <li>• Do not wipe hands on court walls.</li> <li>• Bring your own balls and gloves.</li> <li>• Bring a change of shirt if you are prone to sweat a lot.</li> <li>• Wear clean clothing to each session.</li> <li>• Leave appropriate social distance space between your kit bag and others.</li> <li>• Players to arrive at the club in kit, ready to play and they should shower at home.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Please add to these depending on your own club environment/situation)</i></p>		

	<p>Review club/venue policy for visitors attending with members, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limiting or not admitting non-playing/non-member visitors accompanying players where club/venue capacity and/or social distancing cannot be maintained.</li> <li>• Provide clear direction to where non-playing/non-member visitors must wait to ensure social distancing and to limit the risk of people coming into contact (e.g. bar areas/outside spaces if available).</li> <li>• Having a separate entry/exit register for visitors to capture information that you may not hold elsewhere, for tracking and tracing purposes.</li> <li>• Consider your policies for any contractors working at or delivering to your facility.</li> </ul>		
	<p>Inform all members of the new protocols at the club <b>before</b> the courts reopen (request that they share with any visitors they plan on attending with).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider recording that they have read and understood your new protocols/measures and will adhere to them.</li> <li>• Clearly communicate the responsibility that each member has in keeping the club/venue safe.</li> </ul>		
	<p>Inform members of club/venue COVID-19 First Aid protocols on arrival.</p>		
	<p>Encourage members to bring essential supplies to treat minor injuries and take a phone in case of emergency.</p>		
	<p>Review Government guidelines regarding contact with vulnerable/shielding individuals, create a policy for these staff/members and communicate to individuals (this may include not allowing these members to return to the club at this stage).</p>		
	<p>NOTE, face coverings are not recommended on court, as per the following Government advice: 'All forms of face coverings may restrict breathing efficiency and should not be used during exercise except on specific advice from a physician.'</p>		

### 3. Guidelines for conducting a COVID-19 risk assessment

We have provided a template COVID-19 risk assessment. You should review and update this template in line with the specific situation and circumstances of your club/venue. This may mean adding or removing items from this risk assessment – ultimately it is your responsibility to ensure that this is comprehensive and correct for your club/venue.

You can complete the risk assessment yourself, though it is recommended that you get appropriately qualified health and safety (H&S) support or advice to help you (e.g. IOSH or NEBOSH qualified). It is strongly recommended that all Wallball clubs/venues complete a written risk assessment, regardless of situation/scale.

It is strongly advised that you consult with your workforce/staff during the risk assessment process, and that they are kept informed of the results and any resulting actions required. Employers and facility operators have a duty to reduce workplace risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level.

A risk assessment should follow a recognised and standard methodology, in that it must:

- **Identify significant risks**
- **Identify controls required to comply with legislation**
- **Remain appropriate and valid over a reasonable period of time**

With regard to COVID-19 – this is an additional risk to your typical club/venue risk assessment process, therefore you must define controls for this additional risk. As UK Government information and advice changes, risk assessment(s) should be reviewed and updated accordingly.

**This means the reasonable period of time may be short for each re-assessment.**

The standard methodology for this risk assessment is to:

1. Recognise that the hazard is Covid-19
2. Assess the persons potentially exposed to the hazard
3. Identify Risk Points i.e. where the hazard and people meet
4. Put in place Risk Controls recognising a hierarchy based on: -
  - a. Elimination of the Hazard (which is not possible for COVID-19)
  - b. Substitution (which is not applicable)
  - c. Engineered Controls i.e. built in safeguards like barriers and signs
  - d. Administrative Controls i.e. change the way things are managed
  - e. PPE Protection

The COVID-19 risk assessment should recognise that:

- The virus is spread in minute water droplets that are expelled from the body through sneezing, coughing, talking and breathing.
- The virus can be transferred to the hands and from there to any contacted surfaces.
- It can survive on surfaces for a period after transfer (depending on such things as the surface type, its moisture content and ambient temperature).

**If the virus is passed from one person to another, while many survive infection, some may become ill or even die from the disease. It is therefore regarded as a HIGH HAZARD.**

Taking account of the types and variety of people participating in Wallball - the following persons have been identified as being potentially exposed to the virus:

- **Instructors, Coaches and Officials**
- **Training Members – Over and under 18 years**
- **Special categories such as Disabled, Vulnerable People or Pregnant Women**
- **Spectators, visitors and third parties (including parents/guardians of children)**

Each category is affected equally by the virus through human transfer and surface transfer.

## 4. Ways to play

There are several ways members can play. The following table outlines the different ways to play Wallball that should be adhered to and are relevant for all levels of ability. Remember that the Government guidelines that have permitted indoor courts to open include instructions that activities must be modified in such a way that social distancing can be maintained throughout the activity.

**Note: there should be no more than two players on court at one time.**

Who	Activities allowed	Considerations
Members from the same household or <i>support bubble</i>	Singles or Doubles Match play (indoors or outdoors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gloves must be worn</li> <li>Hand and touch point hygiene before and after playing.</li> <li>Gloves and ball should be sanitised between games and cleaned thoroughly post sessions.</li> </ul>
	Coach led/supervised activity (indoors or outdoors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gloves must be worn by all players and the coach.</li> <li>Hand and touch point hygiene before and after playing.</li> <li>Social distancing between coach and members.</li> <li>Gloves and ball should be sanitised between games and cleaned thoroughly post sessions.</li> </ul>
Individuals	Single player (solo) practices (indoors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gloves must be worn</li> <li>Hand and touch point hygiene before and after playing.</li> <li>Gloves and ball should be sanitised between games and cleaned thoroughly post sessions.</li> </ul>
	Coach led/supervised activity (indoors or outdoors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gloves must be worn by all players and the coach.</li> <li>Hand and touch point hygiene before and after playing.</li> <li>Social distancing between coach and player.</li> <li>Gloves and ball should be sanitised between games and cleaned thoroughly post sessions.</li> </ul>
Two members from different households (not in a <i>support bubble</i> )	Singles Match play (indoors or outdoors)  Or  Coach led/supervised activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gloves must be worn by all players and the coach.</li> <li>Players should limit use of blocking to reduce distancing issues.</li> <li>Hand and touch point hygiene before and after playing.</li> </ul>

	(indoors or outdoors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social distancing between players outside of rallies.</li> <li>• Social distancing between players and coach.</li> <li>• Gloves and ball should be sanitised between games and cleaned thoroughly post sessions.</li> </ul>
Up to <b>four</b> members from different households	Singles Match play (indoors) Or Singles/Doubles Match play (outdoors) Or Coach led/supervised activities (indoors or outdoors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gloves must be worn by all players and the coach.</li> <li>• Players should limit use of blocking to reduce distancing issues.</li> <li>• Hand and touch point hygiene before and after playing.</li> <li>• Social distancing between all players outside of rallies.</li> <li>• Social distancing between coach and players.</li> <li>• Gloves and ball should be sanitized between games and cleaned thoroughly post sessions.</li> </ul>

### Wallball Match Play

Where match play is appropriate this can be carried out under regular Wallball rules. Players should take special consideration around blocking and should follow new blocking guidelines:

- players should limit blocking attempts. Where a player wishes wish to call for a block by their opponent, in instances where social distancing would be compromised by attempting to retrieve the ball, this call should always be granted by the blocking player or match referee.

**Coach led / supervised activity.** A range of activities and practices are feasible, if led by a qualified and experienced coach who ensures that social distancing is always in place, including by having clearly designated positions from which the coach can provide advice or lead the activity. An individual coach can;

- coach a maximum of **five players** from different households not in support bubbles per session indoors, or a maximum of 30 outdoors.
- use multiple courts, with a maximum of **two players** per court indoors, and **four players** per court outdoors
- coach same-household groups or those in support bubbles, in line with the club/venue's maximum number of members

## 5. Delivering COVID-19 Secure Wallball (for coaches)

How to deliver organised activities and coaching sessions in a safe and practical way:

### a. Pre-session

- Members must be advised of COVID-19 safety protocols and processes before they arrive, remind members that whilst the club/venue is doing everything possible to minimise the likelihood of infection, they are attending at their own risk
- Session times and sizes should be adjusted to meet social distancing requirements (based on current Government social distancing measures and including delaying/staggering start times)
- Equipment (balls) should be cleaned with >60% alcohol wipes
- Signage displayed where required
- Warning tape laid if required on court/shared space

### b. On arrival

- Members arrive on time at the pre-agreed session time
- No booking = no play = no exceptions
- Members come ready dressed for the session
- Members to bring all their own kit, including gloves. No kit can be shared, borrowed or hired
- Members to bring their own labelled water bottle
- Members to bring their own first aid kit if possible
- Members always keep socially distanced from all other members
- Members wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds before entering the court/training room (where facilities allow)
- Members clean their hands with sanitiser on entering the court/training room
- Doors/windows are kept open (where possible) to maintain ventilation and stop/reduce further touch points
- Payments are contactless [or delivered in sealed and labelled envelopes]
- Spectators are only allowed if they are able to maintain social distancing
- Members may wear masks and/or gloves if they wish

### c. Training

- Class sizes should be adjusted to allow for social distancing for all members
- Members from the same household do not need to social distance (refer to latest Government guidelines)
- Session activity continues to follow the risk assessment for the specific activity
  - Follow current Government guidelines on contact with people not from the same household
  - Follow current Government guidelines on minimum social distancing
- Equipment is cleaned after each use by a person or group
- Any spillages are cleaned Immediately
- Use of toilets allowed in accordance with venue instructions/Government guidelines
- Members to minimise contact with all surfaces as much as possible and use wipes to clean



**d. On Leaving**

- Members must take all their possessions with them
- Members clean their hands with sanitiser on leaving the court/venue
- Members leave the venue immediately
- Members under 18 will wait with the coach until collected

**e. After Session**

- Floors/walls/doors are cleaned
- Equipment is wiped clean
- Session is reviewed and any modifications for next session advised to members

## 6. Where to find additional support and resources

- Sport England – <https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/coronavirus>
- Club Matters – <https://learn.sportenglandclubmatters.com/course/view.php?id=71>
- UK Government Guidelines for employers and businesses - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19>
- Public Health England Advice - <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>
- HSE Guidelines - <https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/coronavirus.htm>
- Safeguarding guidance - <https://thecpsu.org.uk/>
- Guidance for the public on the mental health and wellbeing aspects of coronavirus – <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-mental-health-and-wellbeing-aspects-of-coronavirus-covid-19>

UK Wallball has a nominated COVID-19 Officer, who you can email at [luke.thomson@ukwallball.co.uk](mailto:luke.thomson@ukwallball.co.uk) – they will endeavour to answer your questions or concerns or provide you with further contact details to find more information.