



Bristol Community Ferry Boats Ltd
44 The Grove
Bristol
BS1 4RB

Operating Procedures for all Bristol Ferries Vessels and Personnel Updated 19th January 2021

These procedures are compliant with the Coronavirus (COVID-19): Safer transport – guidance for operators issued on 12th May 2020, updated 18th January 2021, Marine Information Note (MIN) 616 (M+F) Amendment 4 issued by the MCA, and Working Safely during coronavirus (COVID-19) published 11th May 2020 and updated 6th January 2021.

The Risk Assessment and operating procedures will be kept under review based on practical experience and updated governmental advice.

Introduction

Bristol Community Ferry Boats (BCFB) has taken steps in consultation with members of staff to determine the safest means of operating; in doing this we have considered the safety of our personnel as a priority and the safety of passengers using the services.

We have put in place alterations to our normal operating procedures for the protection of BCFB personnel and members of the public. It is very important that these procedures are followed.

Local COVID Alert Levels

From, and including, **2 December 2020** a system of local restriction tiers will apply to passengers in England. Passengers are advised to check the local restriction tiers that apply in their area and at their destination before they travel.

There are four tiers for local restrictions; Tier 1 – Medium Alert, Tier 2 – High Alert and Tier 3 Very High Alert & Tier 4 Stay at Home. Government guidance states what each of these local restriction tiers means for individuals.

Transport operators providing services through or within these areas can continue operating services as normal. BCFB have identified that our current services operating will not be defined as essential travel therefore the majority of our services will operate in Tier 1 & 2 only. We will review risk assessments regularly to ensure they remain relevant and appropriate.

Vessel Utilisation

BCFB recognise fully the requirement to operate using the guidance provided by the UK government, in doing this, vessels have been selected for specific tasks to enable the safest possible experience for passengers and crew. This includes providing vessels with enough room to allow social distancing, options for managing passenger flow, open air space for passengers and good ventilation when using inside spaces.

Social Distancing

Passengers and staff working on our vessels should keep their distance from people outside their household, recognising that this may not always be possible. From the 4th July 2020 the government

advice states that as many people as possible comply with social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable).

BCFB will continue to keep working groups as small as possible and will ensure that all crew wear face coverings.

Skippers and Crew on the vessels should ensure that the reduced passenger carrying numbers detailed in the table below are adhered to. This is essential to allow appropriate social distancing to be practiced by passengers.

In line with the current government COVID-19 guidance; passengers will be restricted to no more than 6 people per group. This applies in all situations including group bookings, passengers will be advised that they will need to restrict their groups when on board a vessel to no more than 6 people i.e. 6 people sat in a group.

We will ensure that passengers are sitting or standing side by side or behind other people rather than facing them, where seating arrangements allow.

Vessels in use will be restricted to passenger numbers below that permitted by the Passenger Certificate. The passenger numbers have been restricted to well below the normal maximum carrying capacity. This is to allow for social distancing in line with government advice when passengers are on board the vessel. The number of passengers permitted will be subject to change, as guided by governmental and local experience. It is essential that passengers comply with the requirements for face coverings and that crew ensure that the passenger spaces are well ventilated (See face coverings and ventilation sections)

Vessel Name	Normal Passenger No's	Reduced Numbers Permitted
Margaret	25	6
Independence	46	9
Matilda	49	17
Brigantia	47	17

Skipper, Crew and Office Personnel PPE

Face masks, gloves, aprons, and hand sanitiser will be provided for the Skippers, crew, and other personnel in close contact with public to help in the safeguarding of both BCFB personnel & passengers. Skippers, crew, & office personnel should wear gloves & face masks when in the vicinity of passengers.

Passenger Assistance

It is important that the crew and any personnel who are monitoring passenger boarding and leaving the vessel maintain social distancing where possible. This does mean that the crew will be **unable to provide the level of passenger assistance that would normally be the case**; the crew cannot offer a helping hand and cannot carry a passenger's luggage, pushchairs etc. Crew should give verbal instructions to aid passengers in safe boarding and leaving of the vessel.

Small, well behaved dogs can still be welcomed to travel.

The crew assisting with boarding should be able to support anyone who is seen to slip or be falling to prevent injury. Should the need arise all life-saving procedures will adhere to standard training.

Passenger Announcements

Announcements will be made once passengers are all onboard the vessel.

This Covid announcement will be additional to our standard safety announcement.

“Good Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to this Bristol Ferry Trip.

Please also observe social distancing to the best of your ability including when seated.

Please also leave in orderly fashion.

Face coverings must always be worn whilst onboard.

Hand gel is available for passengers to use throughout.

Thank you”

Face Coverings and Hand Sanitiser

All Passengers and crew are required to wear a face covering when using public transport with effect from 15th June 2020, including **all** Bristol Ferries vessels, as set out in the government guidance. This is now further clarified within the social distancing section of the guidance which states clearly that face coverings are to be worn where social distancing is not possible.

A face covering should cover your mouth and nose while allowing you to breathe comfortably. It is important to use face coverings properly and wash your hands before putting them on and after taking it off.

Some people may be exempt from wearing a face covering, for example children under the age of 11, people with breathing difficulties and people whose disability may make it difficult for them to wear a face covering.

A face covering is not the same as the surgical masks or respirators used by healthcare and other workers as part of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Hand sanitiser will be available on the vessels for passengers to make use of.

Protecting Passenger Flow

When arriving at the quayside it is important that passenger movements are managed to ensure that social distancing can be observed.

There will be signage on the vessel and at boarding locations advising passengers to queue well away from the boarding location and await instructions from a member of staff prior to moving towards the vessel.

To ensure that this happens, passengers will be not allowed into the boarding area until all passengers have left the vessel. When leaving the vessel, the skipper and crew should encourage social distancing of passengers by verbal instruction.

Wherever possible BCFB personnel will manage passengers who are waiting to board. They will ensure that the vessel is empty of all disembarking passengers prior to allowing new passengers to enter the boarding area. The passengers will then be advised to socially distance when boarding.

The Skipper, crew and shore personnel will advise passengers to make use of the open-air spaces where possible. They will also advise passengers to socially distance when sitting or standing on the vessel for the passage. A one-way system may be in place to ensure that social distancing can be practised.

Cleaning

Government advice for cleaning is:

Cleaning an area with normal household disinfectant after someone with suspected coronavirus (COVID-19) has left will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.

Wear disposable or washing-up gloves and aprons for cleaning. These should be double bagged, then stored securely for 72 hours then thrown away in the regular rubbish after cleaning is finished.

Using a disposable cloth, first clean hard surfaces with soapy water or anti-viral cleaning product. Then disinfect these surfaces with the cleaning products you normally use. Pay attention to frequently touched areas and surfaces, such as bathrooms, grab-rails in corridors and stairwells and door handles.

If an area has been heavily contaminated, such as with visible bodily fluids, from a person with coronavirus (COVID-19), use protection for the eyes, mouth, and nose, as well as wearing gloves and an apron.

Wash hands regularly with soap and water for 20 seconds, and after removing gloves, aprons and other protection used while cleaning.

The vessel should be thoroughly cleaned prior to the start of the daily schedule and at the end of the day. Where practical the vessel should be thoroughly cleaned in between trips.

Additionally, the vessel should be cleaned throughout the day paying attention to areas where passengers have contact with handrails, handles etc.

Ventilation

Operators have been advised to ensure that where possible there is a flow of clean fresh air through the vessel. Skippers and crew must; where it is safe to do so ensure that windows and doors are open to allow a flow of air and passengers should be encouraged to use open-air spaces.

Contactless Payment

Ticket purchase arrangements have been made so that all customers can purchase tickets online, as an alternative contactless payment is also available.

Emergency Incidents

The existing emergency procedures should be followed with the addition of encouraging social distancing where it is possible.

If anyone becomes unwell with the symptoms of coronavirus in a transport setting, they should be sent home and advised to follow the stay at home guidance. If they need clinical advice, they should go online to NHS 111 (or call 111 if they don't have internet access). In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. They should not visit a GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or hospital.

There is currently no requirement to self-isolate if you have been in proximity with someone showing coronavirus symptoms in the workplace and have been following social distancing measures. If you have been in contact with someone who has a positive test self-isolation rules will apply. Workers should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell. It is not necessary to close the transport setting or send any staff home. For more information on when to self-isolate see the [NHS Guidance](#)