

Vertex Industry Group Roadmap for Reopening – Spring 2021



England ONLY

The Roadmap for reopening our sector's outdoor sport and leisure facilities has been endorsed by the British Activity Providers Association, the Outdoor Industry Association and one of our members local government enforcement Primary Authority. Our members can demonstrate that they are COVID Secure and can comply with government legislation and guidance which permit them to reopen their venues and activities as laid out in the [Government's Roadmap steps](#) for reopening.

The Government's Roadmap and timelines for each Step may be altered at any time, so this guidance could be updated.

The Government's Roadmap states "*Outdoor activity has been prioritised because the likelihood of COVID-19 transmission is substantially lower in the open air than indoors. This restores more freedom to people more quickly while minimising the impact on transmission.*"

Professor Mark Woodhouse, professor of infectious disease epidemiology at the University of Edinburgh and of the SAGE sub-group said. "*There's never been a Covid-19 outbreak linked to (the outdoors)... anywhere in the world to the best of my knowledge.*"

As restrictions are lifted it will be critical that the industry continue with the proven protocols and procedures that have been put in place to minimise transmission of the virus as well as continuing to follow mandated government and public health guidance.

Our industry is COVID-19 secure and takes a responsible approach in providing controlled vertical access adventure for pre-booked customers, offering physical activity and exercise for the wellbeing and mental health of both customers and staff.

The Vertex Industry Group members will be opening their venues and facilities at different stages in line with the Government's Roadmap for [reopening businesses and venues](#) in England as detailed below:

Step 1, Part 2: Monday 29th March

The Vertex Industry Group, are confident that our activities ¹ are consistent with the Government's examples of outdoor sport and leisure facilities that can reopen under Step 1, Part 2 of the Government Roadmap – namely organised outdoor sport & outdoor play including outdoor climbing walls and outdoor gyms. We are confident that our facilities are analogous with these examples cited in the Government's Roadmap as permitted to reopen and our methods of operation comply with the requirements of the government guidance..

From the 29th March, the 'rule of 6' or two households meeting outdoors will be permitted, though people from different households will still need to socially distance from each other, follow the guidance and use common sense. The "Stay at Home" rule will end but people should still minimise the number of journeys made and stay local. Visitors to our venues that open in Step 1 should be LOCAL and long journeys should not be encouraged.

Rope courses and organised off-ground sports activity venues that can open on this date are those that:

- Can control the movement of their customers around their sites as well as their time on the activity structure(s), and
- Can operate safely and within the permitted rule of 6, two households outdoors government guidelines*, and;
- Can, as far as is reasonably practicable, communicate to their customers the government's recommendation to remain local, and;
- Have an up-to-date COVID 19 risk assessment and a "Staying Covid-19 Secure" information poster on display for staff, customers and public, and;
- Provide advice to customers reminding them about social distancing and remaining within their group, and;
- Follow the government "Hands, Face, Space" campaign, and ;
- Follow the Vertex Industry Group, "COVID-19 Reopening Advice and Considerations".

¹ EN 15567:2015, **13.1 ropes course** constructed facility consisting of one or more activity systems, support systems and, if needed, an appropriate safety system with restricted access and requiring supervision

EN 12572-1:2017, **3.1 artificial climbing structure** sports equipment consisting of a purpose-built climbing structure, which shows various construction characteristics, and is designed for various uses in sport climbing objectives.

“Sports, amusement and recreational activities were worth an estimated £12.8 billion in the UK in 2019 (£11 billion in England),, providing around 565,000 jobs (484,000 in England). The easing of measures could enable some of these activities to return and take advantage of the spring/summer season and recover lost revenues. These businesses are particularly important employers for young people, with 37% of their workforce between 16 to 24 years old (compared to a national average of 11%).”

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Step 2: no earlier than Monday 12th April

Following the government’s move to Step 2 of the Roadmap domestic travel will be allowed and theme parks and tourism destinations will open. Some indoor venues such as Climbing walls and further outdoor attractions are also permitted to reopen. Members of the Vertex Industry Group that can open on this date will include:

Outdoor Venues:

All remaining outdoor leisure activity will be permitted to reopen provided they;

- Can operate safely and within the permitted rule of 6, two households outdoors government guidelines*, and;
- Have an up-to-date COVID 19 risk assessment and a “Staying Covid-19 Secure” information poster on display for staff, customers and public, and;
- Ensure their method of operation is COVID Secure, and;
- Follow the government “Hands, Face, Space” campaign, and;
- Follow the Vertex Industry Group, “COVID-19 Reopening Advice and Considerations”.

Indoor Venues:

Indoor operators of leisure and sport facilities will be permitted to reopen, but only for use by people on their own or in household groups and provided they can meet the five bullet points above.

Step 3: no earlier than Monday 17th May

Following the government’s move to Step 3 of the Roadmap, all remaining members of the Vertex Industry Group are permitted to reopen provide they:

- Can operate safely and within the permitted rule of 6, two households outdoors government guidelines*, and;
- Have an up-to-date COVID 19 risk assessment and a “Staying Covid-19 Secure” information poster on display for staff, customers and public, and;
- Ensure their method of operation is COVID Secure, and;
- Follow the government “Hands, Face, Space” campaign, and;
- Follow the Vertex Industry Group, “COVID-19 Reopening Advice and Considerations”.

“...exercise and physical activity should play a key role in the UK’s recovery from the pandemic” **Prof Chris Whitty, the Chief Medical Officer for England”**



* Note

1. Some providers may work with different customer groups e.g. schools, youth groups, organised childcare providers. These client groups may have different group numbers/bubbles that allow different ratios or operating guidance to be applied. Under the Government guidance, some of these groups may be permitted to attend venues and activities with ratios higher than the rule of 6 and two households e.g. “parent and child groups can also take place outdoors with a limit of 15 attendees”.

2. Many of our members run mixed facilities, are located across all regions of England, and will need to review the Government guidelines, consider local factors and the information above to determine which Step they fit into and therefore when they can safely reopen. This may mean that they open different parts of their facilities at different times aligning with the different Steps, resulting in a staged approach for reopening their outdoor and indoor sport, recreation and leisure facilities.