Cleaning Protocols for Self-Catering Properties and Short-Term Lets in the Context of Covid-19

Version 4

Association of Scotland's Self-Caterers

Supporting self-catering in Scotland

Cleaning Protocols for Self-Catering Properties and Short-Term Lets in the Context of Covid-19

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Contents

Version Amendments:

Page 9, Includes further changes to Policy on guests with suspected cases of Covid-19
Page 15/16, updated guidance on ULV Fogging

Introduction

This document is designed for all short-term accommodation operators: owners, hosts, and property management companies. It contains guidelines on how to clean properties safely in the context of COVID-19, and how to reduce the risk of spreading the virus.

It is the responsibility of every self-catering or short-term rental operator to ensure that they and their properties comply with health and safety legislation in relation not only to self-catering accommodation, but also to ensure the safety of guests and staff in relation to Covid-19.

Limiting the spread of the Covid-19 Virus is therefore an additional consideration beyond your existing responsibilities.

Following the Covid-19 pandemic, hosts, owners and managers of self-catering units and short-term rental operators have a public health responsibility to ensure their accommodation is clean, not only to the eye, but also that any potential virus is removed to the best of their ability to prevent any spread.

Owners and operators have a duty of care to customers and staff even where specific legislation does not exist.

It is essential that housekeepers and cleaners are retrained, and that managers provide them with the right equipment to carry out their jobs effectively.

It is important to have a strict cleaning protocol in place and that this is clearly identified to both cleaners and guests.

This document is divided into two main parts:

1. **high-level guidelines**
2. **further information and resources**.

1. High level guidelines

Background to COVID-19

COVID-19 is a disease which is caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which can be passed via respiratory secretions (i.e. saliva) and faeces, and which can successfully live for up to 2 to 3 days on certain surfaces. COVID-19 is an "enveloped" virus, meaning that it is surrounded by a protective layer of fats and proteins.

COVID-19 can be transferred via hands from one surface to another. By touching a surface which has traces of COVID-19 on it, and then touching your face or eyes, you may become infected with COVID-19.

Soap and hand sanitiser are effective at denaturing the fats and proteins surrounding the virus, and therefore good ways to kill the virus.

Latest evidence published in The Lancet and The New England Journal of Medicine illustrates that information and knowledge is evolving all the time. Currently it is thought that the virus can live on some common household surfaces for:

Surface Type	Present	No Longer Present
Air	2-3 hours	
Paper and tissue	30 minutes	3 hours
Copper	4 hours	8 hours
Wood, cloth and cardboard	1 day	2 days
Glass	2 days	4 days
Plastic and stainless steel	4 days	7 days

*This is based on testing initially, then at 4 days and then 7 days, when the virus was entirely neutralised.

Therefore, these surfaces need to be disinfected before they are safe to touch. All surfaces which are touched frequently, such as light switches, door handles, kitchen surfaces, and bathroom surfaces should be regularly disinfected.

You can find more information about how to disinfect surfaces, as well as more background detail later in this guide.

General advice

You may want to consider increasing the time required to clean, or indeed leave properties empty between guests. Individual property owners or managers will have to make a professional judgement. There is no requirement to leave a property empty for 72 hours.

We recommend that government guidelines are followed in reference to protective clothing for cleaners and housekeepers. Cleaners should consider wearing disposable gloves, aprons and masks, where appropriate, which should be changed between cleans. Cleaners should also wash their hands frequently or use hand sanitiser.

A potential risk when cleaning is accidentally transporting the virus from one part of the property to another, for instance via a cleaning cloth. Operators should consider how they can clean a property in a way which minimises entering parts of the property after they have been cleaned. It is a good idea to create a plan ahead of a clean which does this, and to execute that plan when cleaning.

Do remember to consider those who are at high risk, particularly those with underlying health conditions or the elderly…and that includes you and your family. If you deem the risk too high it may be in your interests to even defer from opening until such time as the threat has passed.

For each changeover, cleaners should follow these steps:
- Risk Assessment (cleaning companies may have their own particular guidelines and risk assessment protocols)
- Load reduction: removal of waste
- Deep cleaning process to remove any residual dirt on surfaces etc
- Professional disinfection: removes the unseen virus and leaves the space safe

More detail can be found in part 2: further information and resources.

Risk Assessments

The core principle of this guidance is risk management. Therefore, all operators should conduct a risk assessment of their property.

Broadly speaking a risk assessment involves identifying potential risks within a property, and taking active steps to mitigate those risks.

One size does not fit all: Whilst every business and property's requirements are different the issues raised here are those which most will have in common. It will be up to you to identify your businesses specific risks and the mitigation required. After all you know your business better than anyone else.

The basic steps for undertaking a risk assessment are as follows:
1. **Look:** for the points of transmission for Covid-19, i.e. the touch points.
2. **Decide**: the likelihood of transmission via that touch point.
3. **Evaluate:** whether your current regime is sufficient or whether you need to more and whether it is 'reasonably practicable' i.e. you may now need to wipe with a disinfectant cleaner all the door handles, which is reasonably practicable, but it will not be reasonably practicable to wipe down the garden gate!
4. **Record**: your findings and draw up a simple list of guidance points for the person/s who are going to do the cleaning, even if it is yourself.
5. **Review:** as the danger of the virus recedes you may want to gradually alter your regime, e.g. reduce the rate of disinfection or re-introduce removed items.

A risk assessment template is attached in the appendix as part of this guidance.

Guidelines for Cleaning

The following steps will minimise the risk of the people responsible for cleaning, contracting the virus and ensuring the accommodation is safe for new guests.

1. Carry out a **Risk Assessment**. This can be done in advance and there can be protocols put in place (A risk assessment template is attached as part of this guidance).

2. Ask guests to air the property during the stay and to strip beds / bag up linen on departure.

3. Provide the correct protective clothing and cleaning products for the cleaners.

4. Cleaners should follow the following process:

   a. Ensure the rooms/property is ventilated whilst cleaning. If it is safe to do so, and won't compromise insurance policies, suggest that guests leave windows open prior to departure. This will ensure that there is no air borne virus in the property.
   b. Understand the clean level required and have the appropriate equipment.
   c. Wear the appropriate protective clothing (gloves, apron and mask where appropriate).

d. Prepare the area to be cleaned (reducing the load) – remove waste, remove dirty linen and towels and carry out any initial cleaning required (ie load dishwasher, clear out fridge for leftovers, clear surfaces, etc).

e. Bedding & Linen: Use gloves to remove dirty linen carefully directly into bags (if it has not been stripped by guests). Linen should not be shaken in case viruses are dispersed through the air. Ensure it is removed from the property prior to cleaning. Clean pillow and mattress protectors should be used for each changeover. Bedding should be sprayed with disinfectant or pillows and duvets can be rotated (removed and left bagged for 72 hours between use). Remove gloves and dispose of them after stripping beds. Wash hands. Apply clean gloves before putting the clean linen on the beds.

f. The same applies to towels, bathmats, tea towels and any other removable linen items.

g. Disposal of waste: waste of any kind should be placed in a plastic bag, tied and removed from the property and disposed of in an external bin. Hazardous waste should be disposed of according to government or council guidelines.

h. Clean using general cleaning products – or hot soapy water. We suggest that all crockery, cutlery, glassware is put through the dishwasher to ensure virus free if possible. Alternatively wash in hot soapy water.

i. Disinfect using appropriate products and ensuring it is left on the surface for the required time to kill the virus: make sure the product will work on enveloped viruses. Look for EN14675 or EN14476 and follow manufacturers guidelines, some products can be misted onto soft furnishings.

j. Wash hands fully after the removal of protective clothing. Hand sanitiser can be used if hot running water is not available.

Guidance for Operators and Hosts

Guests

Operators or Hosts should:

- Keep contact with guests to a minimum, adhering to current social distancing guidelines. Where contact is inevitable (e.g. if checking passports/IDs is part of guest check in), operators or hosts should wear protective clothing and maintain a safe social distance.

- Consider using contact-free check in methods, such as key safes, wherever possible, although they must be mindful that such methods still pose a contamination risk.

- Consider installing a hand sanitiser station at the entrance to the property.

- Ensure that guests have all relevant information that they need ahead of their arrival.

- Provide helpful information for guests via email, including:
    - Helpful numbers and contacts;
    - Guidance in case a guest shows COVID-19 symptoms;
    - Local walks / attractions that are open for use under social distancing rules;
    - Appliance instructions;
    - Heating instructions.

- Make sure that guests have access to appropriate guidance in the event that they develop COVID-19 symptoms.

- Advising guests that you have taken extra steps and letting them know that you have taken all possible steps to protect them and clean the property suitably is important

- Consider providing a cleaning standard tick list for transparency for the incoming guest.
- All properties should have adequate supply of cleaning materials, including virucidal disinfectant, tissues, hand wash and/or sanitiser and cloths, disposable gloves for guests use.
- Guests should be able and encouraged to maintain the cleanliness of the property during their stay.
- Guest Information Folders should be stored in wipeable plastic folders or laminated. Where possible, consider providing these online or via email in advance of a guests arrival.

Maintenance

In order to comply with social distancing rules, only essential maintenance should be undertaken during a guest stay.

Local communities

The lifting of lockdown restrictions to allow self-catering / short-term and holiday rental properties to reopen will be widely publicised. You should therefore be prepared to answer questions from your local community about the measures you are taking to ensure the safety of your guests, staff and those living close by. The sector complied immediately to calls from Government to close properties and to cancel bookings, in order to protect the NHS and save lives. Concern about safety remains the highest priority and will motivate your efforts to open in a measured and considered way.

What to do if you or a staff member develops COVID-19 symptoms

The following rules should be adhered to:

1. If you, or a staff-member, display symptoms of Coronavirus or live in a household where someone else has symptoms, that person must not enter the rental property. COVID-19 Government guidance for the public states: "the most common symptoms of coronavirus are recent onset of a continuous cough or high temperature or a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell". If you or your staff have these symptoms then stay at home for 7 days, or 14 days if living with someone who has the symptoms. There is no need to call NHS 111 to go into self-isolation. If symptoms worsen during self-isolation, or are no better after 7 days contact NHS 111 online, or if there is no internet, call NHS 111.
2. In order for you or a staff member to return to work, you will need to carry out a return to work assessment, to ensure the individual's recovery is clear and they are able to return to work, again this includes yourself. You will need to find out whether staff have any pre-existing conditions or are living with people who are at risk or are vulnerable. All communications with staff should be undertaken electronically. Support should be offered to all staff suffering from mental health problems and be advised to contact mind.org.uk or anxietyuk.org.uk.
3. If you, your cleaner or a member of staff develop symptoms at work they must be sent home and follow Government "stay at home" guidance. If there is an emergency dial 999. Disinfect any touch points that may have been infected by a contaminated person.

What to do if a guest develops or arrives with COVID-19 symptoms

- In the event that a guest develops symptoms whilst staying away from home, they should immediately book a test through NHS Inform or, if they can't get online by phoning 0800 028 2816.

  In accordance with Test and Protect, people with symptoms are required to self-isolate for at least 7 days, and everyone in their household should isolate for 14 days. If the test is negative, everyone can end isolation. If the test is positive, everyone should continue to isolate, and the NHS Test and Protect team will be in touch to start contact tracing. Those contacted through the Test and Protect programme will be required to self-isolate for at least 14 days.

  If guests who are isolating can travel home safely to isolate, avoiding the use of public transport, they should do this.

  In the event that this is not possible, the guest should discuss this with the NHS Test and Protect team. The guest may be signposted to the National Assistance Helpline on 0800 111 4000 if they need help to isolate and cannot arrange it themselves or through friends and family.

  In some circumstances further discussion may be required with the local Health Protection Team and local authority to ensure that the person has suitable accommodation to isolate safely and effectively.

  After the required period of self-isolation, guests and anyone else in their party who has been affected can then return to their main place of residence.

- Be aware that guidance can change, so always check the government sites if a case arises in your business.
- It is understood that if anyone staying in the property contracts the virus they will immediate inform their host/manager who can inform of the next steps to be taken.

Steps that should be taken on hearing of an infection:

- If the property has a communal entrance / communal stairwell, corridor etc a fully protected housekeeper (gloves & apron) should attend as soon as possible and use disposable materials to wipe down all door handles, entrance systems, stairwell banisters, light switches to try and minimise risk of spread to neighbours.
- If property has main door entrance and therefore no further risk to neighbours then the guest should just follow standard self-care methods and in addition, refrain from putting out any rubbish. All rubbish should be double bagged and stored safely for 72 hours before being thrown out. Alternatively, it should be placed in a suitable outdoor bin for removal.

Once a property is vacated post infection, appropriate cleaning procedures should be followed, as per these guidelines.

2 Further Information & Resources

Further information on COVID-19

You might see various references to Coronavirus, such as SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19. The virus itself is called SARS-CoV-2 and is responsible for causing the COVID-19 disease. COVID-19 is shorthand for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (when the disease was first discovered).

SARS-CoV-2 virus is an enveloped virus, and to successfully kill the virus, products must be used that are effective on 'enveloped viruses'. SARS-CoV-2 is passed through respiratory secretions and faeces and can live on different surfaces for different lengths of time. When you touch a surface with virus on it, you can transfer that virus to your hand, which in turn may be ingested by you (through touching your face, rubbing your eyes, etc)

Coronaviruses are part of a family of **enveloped cells**, which means that they're wrapped in a protective layer of lipids (fat) and proteins. Washing your hands with soap, or disinfecting them with hand sanitiser, are effective ways to dissolve the viruses' protective envelope which then exposes and kills the virus.

Further guidance on handwashing:
https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/

More detailed guidance

What products should I be using?

In order to assist in the prevention of the spread of the virus it is important to understand the difference between cleaning and disinfecting. Cleaning is the act of removing dirt and other visible signs of surface fouling, such as grease marks or stains. Disinfecting is when you use specific chemicals to kill viruses or germs (for example when you spray an area with a bleach solution, such as a sink or toilet bowl). It is essential to clean first, and then disinfect.

- **A virucidal disinfectant** is any physical or chemical agent that deactivates or destroys viruses. EN 1276 is a disinfection standard for Bacteria – most specifically MRSA. To be sure of killing viruses you should use a disinfecting agent certified for **EN 14476.**
- Virucidal spray is a very common and cheap method to clean all hard surfaces and high touch points (light switches and door handles) and can easily be implemented by anyone. You just need to check that your spray works on enveloped viruses to be effective against Coronavirus and ensure that it has the appropriate dwell time (leave it to air dry). Some products need diluting so you need to make sure you get the concentrations correct. This method is the best for frequent cleaning and for hard surfaces. It's not so effective on soft furnishings and it also requires you to cover all surfaces manually. Virucidal sprays with EN14675 or EN14476 are tested on similar viruses but haven't yet been tested on SARS-CoV-2. EN14476:2013+A2:2019 are products that have been tested on and found to be effective on SARS-CoV-2. **Look out for products certified as EN 14476.**
- **Sodium hypochlorite** is a solid white powder, but is more commonly used dissolved in water. Solutions of **sodium hypochlorite** are commonly referred to as **bleach**, although household **bleach** also contains small amounts of several other compounds, including **sodium** hydroxide and calcium **hypochlorite**. These products can be purchased online.
- **70**% **Ethanol** (Anhydrous Alcohol) is an effective cleaning agent that kills microbes, denatures proteins, and dissolves lipids. **Ethanol** is also known as **ethyl alcohol**, alcohol anhydrous, denatured alcohol. This product cannot be shipped to a private residence.

Can Bleach kill Coronavirus?

- Bleach is highly effective in combating most of the pathogens that cause diseases with 99.9% germ kill. The latest advice from the World Health Organisation (WHO) is to use diluted Sodium Hypochlorite (bleach) at 0.5% as the recommended solution for disinfection of frequently touched surfaces in homes and healthcare facilities – especially those housing patients with suspected or confirmed cases of SARS-CoV-2 infection.
- Good disinfection procedures (e.g. using sodium hypochlorite @5000ppm/0.5% or 70% ethanol-based cleaners) are expected to be effective against all enveloped viruses and for inactivating SARS-CoV-2. However, the specific strain of virus responsible for causing the current Coronavirus pandemic is not yet available for commercial testing.
- Nonetheless, all bleach products contain between 0.5% and 4.5% Sodium Hypochlorite and given the structural similarities of the COVID-19 virus to the Coronavirus strains tested previously (SARS-CoV, MERS-CoV, Human Coronavirus), and based on the evidence available to us, bleach is assumed to be effective against the new strain. Definitive scientific confirmation of this, as with all other commercially available virucides, can only be provided once testing against COVID-19 Coronavirus has been conducted, following release of the

strain by relevant health authorities. (https://www.domestos.com/uk/coronavirus/useful-facts-to-know-about-coronavirus.html)

All US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registered antimicrobial products are required to undergo a rigorous science-based review of data. This includes items such as the efficacy to support the claims and directions for use on the label, as well as meet specific performance standards in order to make public health claims. However, during an outbreak of a new virus, no products exist on the market that can make claims to kill the virus. This is because it can take up to a year or more to get a viral claim approved through the standard registration process.

Further information: https://en-uk.ecolab.com/articles/2020/05/how-epa-approves-disinfectants

Log Kill Rates

In terms of infection control, the Log Kill Rate means how effective a cleaning product is at reducing bacteria, viruses, or other microorganisms that can be the cause of disease. In microbiology, they use the term colony forming units (CFUs), which is a unit which is used to estimate the number of viable (i.e. living) bacteria or fungal cells in a sample. The following table shows how many CFUs you are left with using different chemical products for the reduction of bacteria. As you can see, the number of bacteria left using a 99.999% product is only 10 as opposed to 1000 with a supermarket product.

Log Kill Rate Chart

CFUs	After use of product killing xx% of bacteria	You are left with	Log Kill Rate
1m	99%	10,000	2-Log
1m	99.9%	1,000	3-Log
1m	99.99%	100	4-Log
1m	99.999%	10	5-Log
1m	99.9999%	1	6-Log

Guide to cleaning different surfaces

According to <u>National Institutes of Health</u> (NIH) studies, Coronavirus can live for up to 2-3 days on plastic and stainless steel surfaces. Since these materials make up many of the things which we regularly touch on a day to day basis, such as light switches and taps, it's vital to disinfect surfaces to reduce the possible risk of transmission between people. This is why the <u>World Health Organisation (WHO)</u> advises the use of diluted Sodium Hypochlorite (bleach) at 0.5% to regularly disinfect frequently touched surfaces such as door handles, kitchen surfaces, and bathroom surfaces. Further studies to help us understand more about how the virus transmits across surfaces are being conducted every day, so it's important to keep up to date and follow the guidance. You can keep up to date through the Centres for Disease Control & Prevention (<u>CDC</u>) or the <u>WHO</u>.
Adapted from: European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) Technical Report: Disinfection of environments in healthcare and non-healthcare settings potentially contaminated with SARS-CoV-2

(S: Suggested O: Optional)

	Healthcare Setting / RED RISK SCU	Non-Healthcare Setting / AMBER RISK SCU	General Setting / Green Risk SCU
Surfaces – be aware of where the surface is – kitchens need to be safe for food preparation.	● Initially Clean with a general detergent or hot soapy water ● Then disinfect with a Virucidal disinfectant OR ● 0.05% sodium hypochlorite OR ● 70% ethanol [S]	● Initial clean with general detergent or hot soapy water ● Then disinfect with Virucidal disinfectant OR ● 0.05% sodium hypochlorite OR ● 70% ethanol [S]	● Clean with general detergent or hot soapy water. [S]
Toilets & Bathrooms	● Virucidal disinfectant OR ● 0.1% sodium hypochlorite [S]	● Virucidal disinfectant OR ● 0.1% sodium hypochlorite [S]	● Virucidal disinfectant OR ● 0.1% sodium hypochlorite [O]
Textiles – Linens, towels,	● Hot-water cycle (90oC) AND ● Regular laundry detergent ● Alternative lower temp cycle + bleach or other laundry products [S]	● Hot-water cycle (60oC) AND ● Regular laundry detergent ● Alternative lower temp cycle + bleach or other laundry products [S]	● Hot-water cycle (60oC) AND ● Regular laundry detergent ● Alternative lower temp cycle + bleach or other laundry products [O]

Cleaning Equipment	● Single-use disposable OR ● Non-disposable disinfected with: ● Virucidal disinfectant OR ● 0.1% sodium hypochlorite [S]	● Single-use disposable OR ● Non-disposable disinfected with: ● Virucidal disinfectant OR ● 0.1% sodium hypochlorite [O]	● Single-use disposable OR ● Non-disposable cleaned at the end of each session [S]
Protective Clothing for Cleaning Staff **(NB check chemical being used for level of mask needed)**	● Surgical mask ● Disposable long-sleeved water-resistant gown ● Gloves ● FFP2 or 3 when cleaning facilities where AGP have been performed [S]	● Surgical mask ● Uniform & plastic apron ● Gloves [S]	● Uniform ● Gloves [S]
Waste Management	● Infectious clinical waste category B (UN3291) [S]	● In a separate bag in the unsorted garbage [S]	● Unsorted waste [S]

Alternative cleaning methods

There are additional cleaning methods such as steam cleaning (heat breaks the virus down), Ozone, Aqueous Ozone, UV light, fogging (dry or thermal) that may be appropriate to engage for common areas or high use zones, however the risk to both guests and cleaners as well as the cost would need to be assessed. Properties need to be cleaned AND disinfected.

- **Steam Cleaning:** Within the steamer, heat is used to transform a single litre of tap water to over 1700 litres of steam, which is enough to clean a small apartment. Because you are only using tap water, you are not leaving behind any chemical residue that may be harmful to guests especially those with allergies. The steam also binds dust together and removes it rather than emitting any allergens and therefore it also improves the air quality. The official UK Government advice is to steam clean your upholstery and fabric furnishings to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

- **UV Light:** UV-C Lights use short wave ultraviolet radiation. The light penetrates the outer structure of the cell and alters the DNA molecule preventing it from replication and causing cell death. It has been used since the 1880s to kill micro-organisms and has been used to successfully kill a range of viruses, bacteria and organisms including: Coronavirus, Ebola, MRSA, Salmonella, E-Coli, Fleas, dust mites and Pneumonia. It has a kill rate of 99.99% (Log 4). Lights can be set up in rooms and left for a set time (timer on the appliance) and the room can be vacated while in operation, or there is hand held UV lights commonly known as 'wands' that can be swiped over surfaces to ensure all living cells are destroyed. Pros are that it can be used in a variety of settings and is safe for use, however you must remember that light travels in straight lines and it won't get into folds in curtains or into hidden cracks.

- **Gaseous Ozone**: Gaseous ozone is emitted from an ozone generator in a sealed space. The room must be absolutely clear of any living things including pets, plants, people and sealed while the generator is in action. The ozone generator draws in Oxygen from the air, converts it to and then emits Ozone (O3). Ozone is very effective in cleaning air, and a number of people use ozone generators to get rid of unpleasant smells. It's kill rate on SARS-CoV-2 is still under investigation, but may be no better than 99.22%. After an ozone generator has finished, the room must be left for a certain time to ensure the ozone breaks down before anyone can enter.

- **Aqueous Ozone**: A stabilised form of Ozone suspended in water for up to 24 hours. Essentially it is a powerful cleaning and disinfecting product that consists of water, oxygen and electricity. A powerful charge is pushed through the water to change the structure. The O2 in water become O3 (oxone). This is a powerful cleaning agent, and after 24 hours the O3 has returned to O2 making it perfectly safe to throw out down the plug as normal tap water. It can be used to pre-disinfect, clean and disinfect, so is a multi-purpose item, however it has not yet been fully tested on SAR-CoV-2. It has been found to be 99.99% (Log-4) effective on a nearest similar virus

- **Ultra Low Volume (ULV) Fogging**: this is the use of machines that push out disinfectant in a fine mist to cover all surfaces, because the mist is pushed out under pressure the disinfectant spreads across a wide area and can get into hard to reach areas. Fogging takes place after cleaning. It does not preclude the need to clean first. Operators must wear full protective clothing (mask, goggles and gloves) and be well trained on both the equipment and the chemicals they are using. EN 14476 compliant chemicals should be used. EN14476 is the European standard for virucidal efficacy, and it is clearly labelled on any compliant

disinfectant product. The disinfectant fluids used in a ULV fogger are no different to the brands that you would buy for use in a pump spray bottle

It is not mandatory to use a fogger. A key advantage to fogging is that the room is safe to be reopened after 15 minutes. 30 minutes to re-open a room to public may be advisable, especially if the room is cold or was fogged with too much density, as evaporation can take a little longer so there could still be wet surfaces (for example, the floor could still be slippery). Ventilation is always a positive method to remove any airborn virus, although evidence suggests that the virus does not remain airborn for long. Ventilation is not required, however, after using a fogger. Bacteria is destroyed within 30 seconds to 1 minute using a fogger.

Fogging with a suitable disinfecting fluid will destroy a virus within 5 minutes. The fine fog lands on all surfaces and condenses. On glass, this may appear to leave a 'smear'. This can be wiped off with a microfibre cloth after 15 minutes. Curtains and soft furnishings should be fogged from a distance, to avoid over saturating it. When used correctly, material should be dry within 6-7 minutes. It may be advisable to do a spot test on some materials.

nb: WHO updated their guidance on 14th May: "In indoor spaces, routine application of disinfectants to environmental surfaces via spraying or fogging (also known as fumigation or misting) is not recommended. Spraying environmental surfaces in both health care and non-healthcare settings (e.g. patient households) with disinfectants will not be effective and may pose harm to individuals. If disinfectants are to be applied, manual surface cleaning with detergent and water using applied friction (e.g. brushing, scrubbing) must be performed first to ensure physical removal of organic materials, followed by use of a cloth or wipe which is soaked in the disinfectant".

Legionella

Legionnaires' disease is a potentially fatal pneumonia caused by legionella bacteria. Property owners and managers have a responsibility to ensure that the risk from exposure to legionella in your premises is properly controlled. Properties that have been unoccupied for any length of time are at risk. Standing water presents a risk of Legionella bacteria accumulating, and is particularly high risk in showers, as Legionella bacteria is dispersed in airborne water droplets, so the spray created by a shower is the perfect delivery mechanism. Anyone using a contaminated shower risks breathing in the bacteria and developing Legionnaires' disease.

- If your shower has not been used for a **week or more**, run water from both hot and cold supplies through the shower hose and showerhead for two minutes. To ensure no spray escapes from the showerhead, run it through a bucket of water or full bath.

- If your shower has not been used for **two weeks or more**, disinfect the showerhead. The showerhead should be removed and the shower run for two minutes. The showerhead should be disinfected before being re-fitted by immersing for at least an hour in any solution designed for cleaning baby feeding bottles (e.g. Milton). Showerheads should be regularly disinfected about four times a year.

- **Raise the temperature to 60°C or higher**. Temperatures above 60°C will kill Legionella bacteria so make sure that the temperature of the hot water in your boiler/cylinder is set at a minimum of 60°C. Beware of burns and scalding and take extra care if you have children. Legionella can survive in low temperatures, but thrive at temperatures between 20°C and 45°C.

- If your property has been **empty for a while**, flush the whole water system for two minutes or more. First flush your toilet, then let the kitchen taps and the hand basin taps run for two minutes or more to let both hot and cold water pass through. Next, flush the shower through as described above. Finally, let any other taps run for two minutes.

Hot Tubs, Pools or Spas
- There is no evidence to suggest that Covid-19 can be passed through water in hot tubs, pools or spas. Proper maintenance and cleaning processes (including disinfection with bromine and chlorine) should deactivate the virus in water. PH levels should be kept at 7, and free chlorine 1.5. However, pools, hot tubs and spas should not be shared between guests staying in other properties.
- However, external touch points need to be handled with protective clothing by maintenance staff and disinfected. Handles, lids and control panels should all be cleaned or disposable protective clothing worn when handling.
  BISHTA guidelines should be followed: www.bishta.co.uk.

Septic Tanks

If your property is not connected to mains sewage but a septic tank, these are anaerobic tanks and a lot of the "waste" is degraded by anaerobic bacteria and the contents requires emptying periodically.

Toilets and sinks have U bends, so using bleach etc should not be a problem.

Septic tank areas outside should be clearly marked.

Recommended sanitation practises for septic tanks should be followed, as these are designed to avoid human contact with contaminated human waste: https://www.who.int/publications-detail/water-sanitation-hygiene-and-waste-management-for-covid-19

One recommended (in usual circumstances) alternative to chlorine bleach which is suitable for use in septic tanks is oxygen bleach (Hydrogen peroxide)

Hydrogen peroxide works by producing destructive hydroxyl free radicals that can attack membrane lipids, DNA, and other essential cell components. This is works as a disinfectant. One of the active ingredients of oxygen bleach is sodium percarbonate, which becomes hydrogen peroxide and sodium carbonate when added to water. Hydrogen peroxide is a known disinfection at concentrations between 6% to 25%, and is recognised as a virucide by the CDC. Oxygen bleach turns to water and oxygen when broken down, and is deemed safe for septic tanks. https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/disinfection/disinfection-methods/chemical.html

Many of the products that are powerful enough to bust the virus is probably not going to be ideal to put into your septic tank. Bleach is the main recommended sanitiser, but septic tanks will only tolerate a very small amount of sodium hypochlorite (bleach). Two options to look at would be Oxygen bleach (see below) or Peracetic Acid (see below). Both of these decompose over 24 hours into water, CO_2, and oxygen, and are safe for disposal in septic tanks

What is oxygen bleach?

Oxygen bleach, or sodium percarbonate, is made from sodium carbonate (also know as soda ash) and hydrogen peroxide. It works by releasing oxygen once it is exposed to water. This release of oxygen lifts stains and dirt off whatever you're cleaning. The only by-product is soda ash. This is safer for septic tanks than "normal" bleach (sodium hypochlorite).

Peracetic Acid (Peritab) is the only other product recommended by WHO for dealing with Coronavirus. High efficacy rates as a broad spectrum Virucide disinfectant cleaner, and can also be used in fogging machines.

7-log kill rate disinfectants (hospital grade)

Sprays, or soluble tablets that revert to H_2O, CO_2 and O_2 within 24 hours (useful if you have a septic tank, and cannot use bleach)

UK legislation related to health and safety

There is already a great deal of provision made under UK legislation in relation to Health & Safety liabilities:
- The Occupiers Liability Acts 1957 and 1984
- The Management of Health & safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the minimum you must do is:
- Identify what could cause injury or illness in your business (hazards)
- Decide how likely it is that someone could be harmed and how seriously (the risk)
- Take action to eliminate the hazard, or if this isn't possible, control the risk

As an employer, you're required by law to protect your employees, and others, from harm (https://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/index.htm)
Further guidance can be found on the Health and Safety Executive's website: www.hse.gov.uk
Further guidance about those at higher risk from COVID-19
https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/whosat-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/

Additional links
- UK Government Guidance: Staying alert and safe (social distancing) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing
- Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance#guidance-for-thepublic
- Best practice: how to hand wash (poster) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/87
- Guidance for employers and businesses on coronavirus (COVID-19) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid19/guidance-for-employers-and-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19#good-practice-for-employers
- COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings
- Public Health England: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/87
- Public Health Scotland: https://publichealthscotland.scot
- Public Health Wales: https://phw.nhs.wales
- Public Health Northern Ireland: https://www.publichealth.hscni.net
- Working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19) https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19
- Cleaning up body fluids https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/guidance/oce23.pdf
- Legionella risks because of water stagnation during the coronavirus outbreak https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/whosat-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/

Additional Accreditation

You may consider additional accreditation in order to increase consumer confidence in your cleaning protocols.

Covid-19 Cleaning Protocol Certified Training:
A no-nonsense, easy-to-follow course created for property owners, managers and their cleaners looking to ensure their properties operate safely when they open: *https://holiday-let-cleaning.teachable.com/p/holiday-let-cleaning-post-covid*

Good to Go Standard:
The Good to Go standard initiative is a self-certification scheme developed by VisitEngland in partnership with VisitScotland, VisitWales and Tourism Northern Ireland. It is directly linked to national and sector specific public health and safety guidelines and aims to give confidence to businesses, visitors and communities of high standards of compliance and hygiene in tourism establishments. It will operate through an online portal, backed up by process checks and supported by a call-centre facility to answer more detailed questions from businesses. It is due to launch shortly and links will be updated when live.

Quality in Tourism's Safe, Clean and Legal Scheme:
www.qualityintourism.com

AA Covid Confident:
The AA COVID CONFIDENT scheme is open to all hospitality establishments that pass the AA's stringent criteria, including: hotels; restaurants; pubs; B&Bs and guest accommodation; camping, glamping and holiday parks; self-catering accommodation; hostels; serviced apartments; attractions; and golf courses. The scheme is free to establishments. *https://www.ratedtrips.com/aa-covid-confident*

This guidance has been developed in partnership by the Association of Scotland's Self-Caterers, the Professional Association of Self-Caterers, and the Wales Tourism Alliance. It is supported by the Tourism Alliance, the Scottish Tourism Alliance and the Wales Association of Self-Catering Operators.

Disclaimer

This content is based on guidance from the HSE (Health and Safety Executive), WHO (World Health Organisation), European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), Global Biorisk Advisory Council (GBAC), and Centres for Disease Control (CDC), NIH (National Institutes of Health), NHS (National Health Service). These agencies do not endorse this content. This is guidance only, and we make no representations or warranties of any kind, express or implied, about the completeness, accuracy, reliability, suitability, or availability with respect to this content provided for any purpose. Any reliance you place on such information is therefore strictly at your own risk.

Appendix

A1) **Risk Assessment Template**

A2) **Cleaning Check List**

Covid-19 Risk Assessment for Short-Term and Holiday Rentals and Self-Catering Properties

Property Name		Date of Next Review:	
Date of Assessment		Notes:	
Assessment Carried out by			

What are the Hazards?	Who Might Be Harmed and How?	What are you already doing to control the Risk?	What further action do you need to take to control the risk?	Risk Factor / Urgency		
				High	Medium	Low
Person to person contact during COVID 19 pandemic (Host and guest)	Becoming infected with COVID19 and further spread the infection		Minimise contact between the two parties. Consider protective clothing for any welcome staff and ensure guests and welcome staff understand social distancing guidelines. Provide a pre-arrival/ departure pack for guests explaining procedures. Use self-check in approaches where appropriate such as lock boxes with Host to video call or phone the guests after guest arrival to ensure customer satisfaction and to answer all queries Ensure guests are not present during interim cleans Any issues needing a maintenance visit to be arranged when guests are out of the property where possible (unless an emergency) Provide a FAQ document on all aspects of the property for example: When bin day is How the boiler works How to switch the heating on How the cooker works This will minimise any visit to the property Ensure all amenities packs are single packaged items Have an illness during stay reporting procedure and useful contact numbers in the property			

Cleaner / housekeeper not fit for work and infected with COVID 19	Could spread COVID 19 through cleaning within the property		Create an ongoing checking system and document for staff health / wellbeing			
Cleaning regimes not effective / fit for purpose	Contaminated accommodation / spread of COVID 19		Create a cleaning plan that all cleaning staff must adhere to and sign for each clean Create a cleaning checklist that all cleaning staff must fill in and leave in property for transparency Create a maintenance checklist that all cleaning staff have to sign for on each clean, any issues to be flagged and dealt with before the guests arrival in-depth ongoing staff training to ensure knowledge, clear understanding, and skills of every task undertaken Cleaning standards checked periodically by supervisors or external 3rd parties (e.g. accreditation) All cleaning team members are given the correct protective clothing and training on how to use correctly and instructions on handwashing, protective clothing disposal and their well being			
Incorrect / ineffective cleaning materials used / Cleaning regimes not recorded	Not cleaning or sanitising the property correctly		Put a cleaning requirement document together, clearly stating what should be sanitised within the property for example Touch points, door handles, banisters, surfaces, bathrooms What should be disinfected, floors, walls Ensure all cleaning materials are clean and fit for purpose Ensure all cleaning equipment is PAT tested and fit for purpose and the being used in the correct way Put a health & safety file together with all cleaning products used and for what purpose, COSHH sheets if required, all previous cleaning / maintenance schedules for the accommodation and all risk assessments			

Dealing with a guest who is unwell or infectious outbreak in your property	The spread of an infection outbreak		Place a what to do if you suspect you as a guest are ill or have an infectious outbreak document in the property including relevant phone numbers and actions required Video call/ call the guests to clearly understand the situation and if the guests need to extend their stay and for how long Build into terms and conditions the cost and requirements if a guest has to extend their stay through illness for self-quarantine Build a relationship with fellow property owners (buddy system) to see if arriving guests can be relocated into one of these properties if original booking cannot be fulfilled due to guest illness Deliver clean linen and linen bag for the guests to place used linen in (leave this in the property) Deliver, medicines, food supplies and extra cleaning materials to the outside of the property			
Incorrectly laundered bedding	Bacteria not killed off properly		Use cotton/ linen bedding and wash on a full 60 degree wash cycle (not a quick wash)			
Changeover clean	Contaminated accommodation / spread of COVID 19		All changeover cleans can only be completed once the guests have left the property Cleaner has filled out the fit for work document All protective clothing is available to cleaner All cleaning / maintenance procedures are adhered to and documented accordingly			
Legionella	Infection of Legionella from standing water if the property has been lying empty		Flush the whole water system for two minutes or more. First flush your toilet, then let the kitchen taps and the hand basin taps run for two minutes or more to let both hot and cold water pass through. Flush the shower through If your shower has not been used for two weeks or more, disinfect the showerhead. The showerhead should be removed and the shower run			

			for two minutes. The showerhead should be disinfected before being re-fitted by immersing for at least an hour in any solution designed for cleaning baby feeding bottles (e.g. Milton). Showerheads should be regularly disinfected about four times a year. Finally, let any other taps run for two minutes.			

Notes on completion	

Check List for Cleaning Self-Catering Units

Date

Property Name

Cleaned by

Signed

Appropriate protective clothing should be worn when cleaning, and protective clothing should be changed between properties.

Cleaning Check List

All surfaces are to be cleaned first, then disinfected

Consideration should be taken to address the impact of children as well as adults: touching lower wall heights and parts of furniture.

Entrance	
Key lock box cleaned	
Keys cleaned	
External handles wiped and disinfected	
Communal Parts	
Internal doors and door furniture wiped and disinfected	
Wipe down walls (children's handprints)	
High level surfaces dusted	
Light and power switches wiped and disinfected	
Surfaces, including skirting boards wiped and disinfected	
Bannisters wiped and disinfected	
Windows cleaned	
Floors hoovered and sprayed with virucidal disinfectant mist	
Wipe down fire extinguishers	
Living Spaces	
Internal doors and door furniture wiped and disinfected	
High level surfaces dusted	
Light and power switches wiped and disinfected	
All surfaces and furniture, including skirting boards wiped and disinfected	
Electrical equipment, wifi hub and remote controls wiped down	
Soft furnishings and curtains steamed	
Mirrors cleaned	
Windows cleaned	
Carpets hoovered and sprayed with virucidal disinfectant mist	
Hard flooring hoovered and mopped with virucidal disinfectant	
Empty Bins and disinfect	
Kitchen	
Internal doors and door furniture wiped and disinfected	
High level surfaces dusted	
Light and power switches wiped and disinfected	
All surfaces and furniture, including skirting boards wiped and disinfected	
Electrical equipment, wifi hub and remote controls wiped down	

Soft furnishings and curtains steamed	
Mirrors cleaned	
Windows cleaned	
Hard flooring hoovered and mopped with virucidal disinfectant	
Empty Bins and disinfect	
Washing machine / dish washer / microwave / kettle / toaster: clean and sanitise doors, handles and controls	
Oven and hob: clean and disinfected surfaces, doors, handles and controls	
Fridge: clean and disinfected inside and out, including handle	
Pans, crockery, utensils to be washed in the dishwasher	
Drawers and cupboards wiped and disinfected	
Floor hoovered and mopped with virucidal disinfectant	
Clean and disinfect high chair	
Bedrooms	
Internal doors and door furniture wiped and disinfected	
High level surfaces dusted	
Light and power switches wiped and disinfected	
All surfaces and furniture, including skirting boards wiped and disinfected	
Electrical equipment, wifi hub and remote controls wiped down	
Drawers and cupboards wiped and disinfected	
Soft furnishings and curtains steamed	
Mirrors cleaned	
Windows cleaned	
Carpets hoovered and sprayed with virucidal disinfectant mist	
Empty Bins and disinfect	
Bathrooms	
Internal doors and door furniture wiped and disinfected	
High level surfaces dusted	
Light and power switches wiped and disinfected	
Clean tiles	
Clean shower / bath / sink including pedestals and splashbacks	
Remove shower head and clean	
Clean and sanitise taps	
Clean plugholes and pour disinfectant down	
Clean and sanitise toilet bowl using a toilet brush to agitate the cleaning process and include under the toilet rim	
All surfaces and furniture, including skirting boards wiped and disinfected	
Electrical equipment, wifi hub and remote controls wiped down	
Soft furnishings and curtains steamed	
Mirrors cleaned	
Windows cleaned	
Carpets hoovered and sprayed with virucidal disinfectant mist	
Hard flooring hoovered and mopped with virucidal disinfectant	
Soak toilet brushes in bleach	
Outside Space	
Ensure bins are labelled (separate bin for used cloths and protective clothing)	
Disinfect bin lids	
Clean outdoor furniture and gates	
Clean any outdoor play equipment	
Clean Barbeques	