



OPW

Oifig na
nOibreacha Poiblí
Office of Public Works

**SKELLIG MICHAEL,
COVID 19 HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT PLAN 2021**



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1.0 Introduction

This COVID 19 Site Management Plan is designed to control and implement OPW site COVID 19 management procedure for OPW National Monuments operational staff, OPW guides and site visitors.

This Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Safety, Health & Welfare Act 2005, Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013, and all associated guidance as set out by the CIF, HSE, HSA and WHO.

The aim of this plan is to set out the provisions that must be implemented prior to and during the time period of, and duration of the return to work during COVID -19 pandemic. The purpose of this plan is to ensure the protection and safety of all personnel returning to work, members of the public and the compliance with all government and associated governing bodies guidelines.

OPW will ensure that all significant aspects related to COVID 19 are addressed by operational controls. OPW will implement control procedures as far as reasonably practicable to ensure the safety of their staff, subcontracts and members of the public.

The normal health and safety requirements of any work activity must not be compromised at this time – there is no derogation to the usual health and safety legislative requirements.

If an activity cannot be undertaken safely, it should not take place. All site personnel have a duty of care to report to site management of any work activities that they may undertake that may create hazard to themselves and other and ensure that correct controls are in place.

Site management should monitor the implementation of this Plan in tandem with site specific health and safety procedures and remind the workforce at every opportunity that their purpose is to protect the themselves, their colleagues and the members of the public.

All those involved with the work activity have a statutory duty to comply with any information provided, which may be relevant to safety, health and the environment. OPW is committed to putting the health and safety of their staff, contractors and members of the public first and to ensure that exposure to COVID 19 is eliminated or minimised as far as is reasonably practicable.

A culture of health and safety awareness and responsibility will be maintained on the project by:

- Leading by example.
- Providing adequate resources.
- Providing relevant training; and
- Making the necessary systems and management procedures available.

OPW National Monuments operational staff shall identify, document and maintain a site specific COVID 19 Risk Assessment of its activities in order to determine the risks associated, controls required and persons responsible for implementation.

OPW shall examine and assess its activities and complete a site specific COVID 19 Risk Assessment of the risk identified as potentially significant and the control measures required for these works.

OPW will establish and maintain a site-specific risk assessment to record all legislative, regulatory, internal and other policy requirements pertaining to the COVID 19 pandemic of its activities. OPW will ensure that they are aware of the changes in legislation and that they take appropriate action to ensure compliance.

OPW have prepared and will implement and maintain for the duration of the project/pandemic, a COVID 19 Site Health and Safety Management Plan that will identify potential measures required to eliminate or reduce hazardous associated activities that may transmitting or the cross contamination the virus. The Site Management Plan will be in accordance with the requirements of Irish and European legislation, best practice and guidelines.

Site Management Plan (SMP) provides a structure for the assessing the hazardous/risk and controls required for all activities. It will consist of the following:

1. Identifying roles and responsibilities.
2. Duty of Care Proposals.
3. Significant Hazards and Management.

A copy of this Plan will be made available to all relevant personnel on site. All site personnel and subcontractors will be informed about the objectives of this Plan and of their responsibilities which fall upon them as a consequence of its provisions.

The aim of this Plan is to identify and communicate control measures to reduce risks of transmission of COVID 19. The purpose of this plan is to identify the applicable legislation and ascertain how they will be made specific to the island.

1.1 Project information

Site Key Representative

Pat O'Shea – OPW Staff Foreman

Robert Harris – OPW Skellig Senior Guide

1.2 Health and Safety Documentation.

Prior to recommencement of work activities on site after the COVID 19 lockdown period, all health and safety documentation should be reviewed to ensure that the documentation is aligned with the relevant regulations. The measures as outlined in the CIF Construction Sector COVID 19 Pandemic Standard Operating Procedures and the Return to Work Safety Protocol: COVID 19 Specific National Protocol for Employers and Workers to be implemented accordingly.

This is a live document that will be updated as necessary during the course of the project/season and pandemic and as and when additional guidance is issued by, but not limited to, CIF, HSE, HSA and WHO.

This Plan and any subsequent revisions/updates shall be coordinated by and approved by the OPW Management before re-issue.

The COVID 19 plan shall be brought to the attention to all personnel working on the island and any other revision discussed and communicated.

During coordination meetings/safety meetings, site inspections along with government guidelines, the site management team shall review the COVID 19 policies and procedures and will determine if additional controls or procedures are required. The COVID 19 Plan and the Site Risk Assessment shall be updated and briefed to all operatives where required.

The OPW Management will retain a controlled copy of the document and a copy of the most up to date document stored on the island in the site safety folders for all operatives to review if requested and for site audit purposes.

Personnel must stay agile as new information comes available that may change approach in procedures, processes or PPE and introduce such information as and when it is required.

1.3 Pre-planning for works.

A return to works when permitted should follow a phased transition, which respects the need for ongoing social distancing.

Commencement of work should be phased, firstly with safe mobilisation and implementation of COVID 19 operating protocols and then transitioning to a wider restart of all associated activities.

Prior to site opening, a full preparation for the COVID 19 protocols and work practices will be carried out. This will include cleaning of welfare facilities, ensuring sufficient hygiene (hand wash, hand sanitisers) products and clear signage is in place.

Gradual mobilisation is subject to a successful review of all work activities to be carried out, guidelines provided by the CIF, HSE and of the sites Method Statements, Risk Assessments and COVID 19 site-specific rules and procedures. It will involve return to full site activity under the site-specific COVID 19 protocols as outlined in the COVID 19 site specific Risk Assessment in line with the general return of work required.

Keeping within social distancing guidelines, staff shall be staggered so that they may all be briefed on the new site documentation and protocols accordingly.

OPW Management is responsible for the implementation of this Plan and for the instruction of OPW staff personnel on the various control and compliance measures required. They are responsible for

ensuring that all personnel on site, including any site visitors or sub-contractors, have been made aware of the specific requirements in relation to the management of the transmission of COVID 19 (Coronavirus) on site. Specifically:

- To ensure that a member of site management is officially appointed, trained, and accepts the position of the COVID 19 Compliance Officer for construction works. In the case of Skellig Michael, two members of the site team are to be appointed as compliance officers to allow for rotation and to have a back-up officer.
- To ensure that the OPW's COVID 19 online induction course, COVID 19 self-declaration/questionnaire and COVID 19 related toolbox talks have been completed by all OPW personnel prior to returning to work and arriving on site.
- The inclusion of COVID 19 as a hazard in site specific Risk Assessments and Method Statements (RAMS) for work activities.
- To ensure that these RAMS are effectively communicated, reviewed, and signed off on.
- To ensure that all site facilities are sufficient to allow for correct social distancing and hygiene requirements as detailed in the CIF Construction Sector COVID 19 Pandemic Standard Operating Procedures.
- To ensure that there is a contact-tracing logbook being kept on site by the COVID Compliance Officer to record daily contact between employees, where on site they are working, how many are working in the same area, and the accommodation that they are using. This log should also incorporate the boat operator and any other personnel they employ.
- To designate location for the purpose of a person needing to self-isolate should they develop symptoms of COVID 19 while on the island, until they can be brought back to the mainland.
- Where an OPW personal shall develop symptoms of COVID 19 while on the island, they shall be escorted back to their cabin to isolate until they can be removed from the island and brought back to the mainland.

1.4 COVID 19 Compliance Officer

OPW National Monuments, will appoint a COVID 19 (COVID 19) Compliance Officer (both Pat O'Shea and Tom Kerrisk) for their works. The COVID 19 Compliance Officer must be clearly identifiable and received COVID 19 Compliance Officer training. The main roles of the COVID 19 Compliance Officer are:

- To monitor and maintain a log of the day to day site activities to ensure compliance to the 2-meter rule for social distancing.
- Ensure personnel on site complete the relevant COVID 19 Questionnaire / Self Declaration.
- Ensure there is sufficient, up to date signage erected on site to educate all personnel about the COVID 19 controls in place.
- Promote and coach good hygiene practices to all personnel onsite.

- Ensure regular cleaning of welfare facilities, handrails, door handles, etc. is undertaken in their work area. (OPW Guides shall be responsible for cleaning and sanitising of common touch surfaces for the visitors)
- Ensure hand wash liquid/soap and hand sanitisers are replenished as required. Each Friday a stock take for hand sanitiser should be carried out to ensure that there is sufficient supply for the coming week.
- Make Project Management aware of any COVID 19 concerns raised by site personnel.
- Report any areas of non-compliance to management and ensure these are addressed.
- Consider provision of additional controls for exceptional circumstances
- Keep up to date on HSE guidelines.

Should a worker on site become unwell and symptomatic, the COVID 19 Compliance Officer will:

- Inform site management if there is a confirmed case or if they have been made aware of an individual with COVID 19 symptoms.
- Isolate an individual with symptoms in a segregated area away from other personnel. OPW staff to isolate in their cabin.
- Following site protocol for individuals with COVID 19 symptoms.
- Assisting in contact tracing should there be a confirmed case of COVID 19.

The site management and the COVID 19 Compliance Officer shall ensure that spot checks are carried out throughout the day and that audits are carried out and documented to demonstrate the crews compliance.

1.5 Return to Work - COVID 19 Self-Declaration And Inductions

Prior to returning to work or from annual leave, all persons shall have to complete a COVID 19 Self Declaration and submit to OPW Management in advance of returning to site. Should any person returning to work experience new symptoms, workers will be advised not to come to work and seek medical advice.

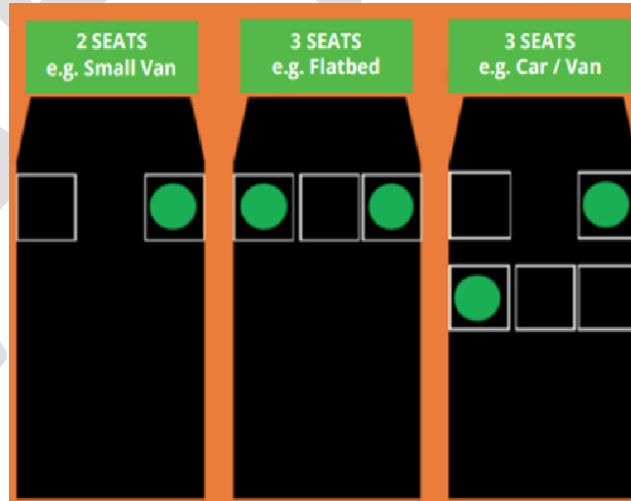
All personnel involved in operational work activities shall receive a site induction that incorporates the COVID 19 Site Specific Rules, policies and procedures. This briefing shall be conducted outside in an open area where minimum two meters social distancing can be obtained. Where required, the briefing shall be staggered to reduce interaction among contractors.

1.6 Travel To And From Site.

To ensure, in so far as possible, that OPW employees on Skellig Michael remain free from COVID 19, no person showing any symptoms should attend site. See Appendix A for list of symptoms.

Where a worker exhibits any signs of COVID 19 or has been exposed to a confirmed case, they should not travel to work. Social distancing is required when travelling in vehicles to/from the pier and when on the boat.

The OPW policy for maximum road vehicle occupancy is shown below.



Skellig Michael is situated 11.6km from the mainland and is only accessible by boat.

Travelling to the island begins at Portmagee Pier, where employees board an OPW chartered boat, The Agnes Oilibhéar C98, which is operated by Owen Walsh.

The Agnes Oilibhéar is now 45 years old, and is limited in size, capacity, and overall performance. The journey to/from Skellig Michael on this boat takes from between 1 hour and 25 minutes to 1 hour and 40 minutes, depending on the weather and ocean swell.

Other more modern boats which are bigger in size and capacity, licenced to take tourists to Skellig Michael each season, can complete this journey in between 45 and 50 minutes.

Portmagee Pier



The Agnes Oilibhéar



The seating area can accommodate a maximum of 4 people, allowing for compliance of 2m social distancing.

There are no hand sanitiser stations, hand washing facilities, toilet, or any COVID 19 control measures on board.



Struggling to reach the landing pier at high tide.



The journey to and from Skellig Michael on board the Agnes Oilibhéar is frequently very rough, and it is common for those on board to experience sea sickness and extreme discomfort, which often leads to people physically getting sick over the side of the boat.

This significantly increases the risk to employees of COVID 19 cross contamination while making the journey to and from Skellig Michael, amplified by the fact that there are no control measures on board.

Arriving on the island, or back on the mainland, after a journey like this can often leave passengers disorientated and feeling unwell for a significant period of time, posing an added health and safety risk if they need to complete tasks on the island, climb steps, or drive home from Portmagee Pier when back on the mainland.

Due to the above factors, consideration should be given to sourcing another boat for the purpose of transporting OPW employees and materials safely to site on Skellig Michael.

In contrast to the Agnes Oilibhéar, The Shelluna, which is a passenger boat operated by Pat Joe Murphy to bring tourists to Skellig Michael has been used this season to bring OPW personnel to the island for site visits. It is bigger than the Agnes Oilibhéar, can accommodate approximately 6-7 people at the correct 2m social distance, has an on-board toilet as well as having hand sanitising stations and COVID 19 control measures in place.

Personnel who have taken the journey to Skellig Michael on both of these boats have commented on the immeasurable difference between the two, in relation to speed, comfort, safety and an overall reduction in sea sickness symptoms.

The Shelluna



1.7 Social Distancing

To prevent the spread of COVID 19 on site, a minimum social/physical distance of 2m between personnel is to be implemented. Work processes within a safe system of work should be reviewed and adjusted where necessary to reduce the number of times that people come in close contact with each other.

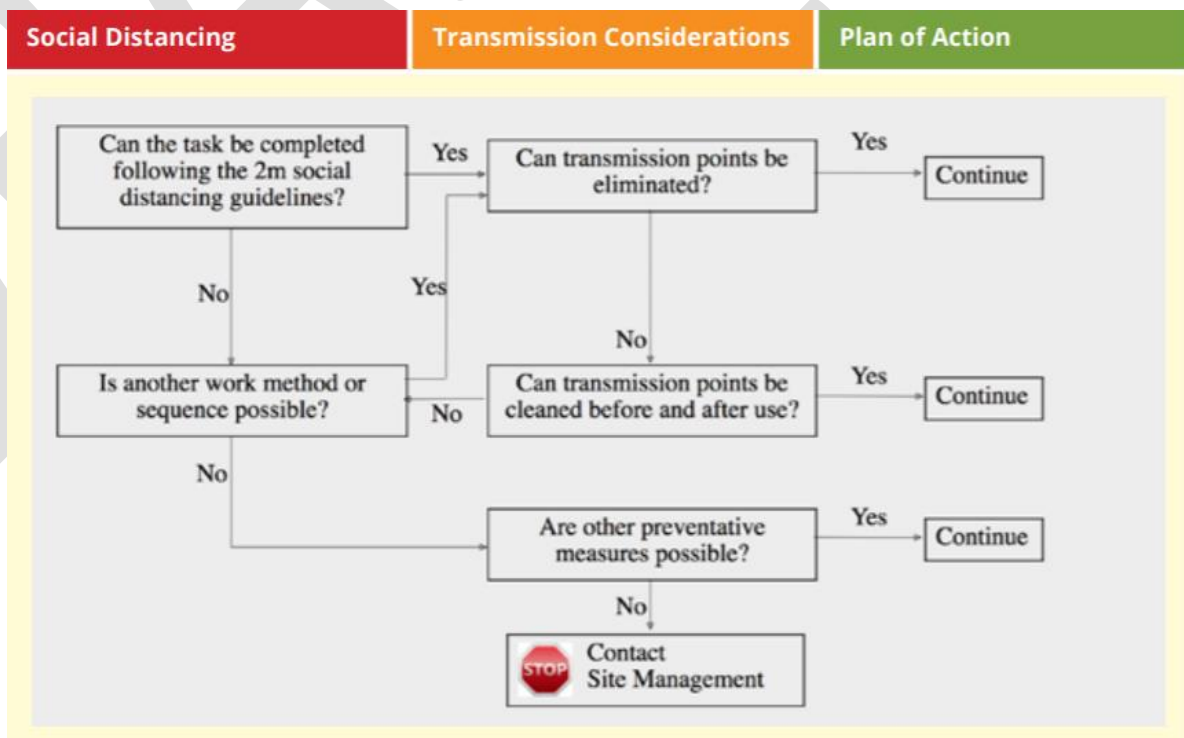
Where it is not possible to maintain the required 2m physical distance between personnel, additional control measures must be applied. Where works cannot be carried out in which two meters can be maintained, a specific risk assessment shall be carried for essential works – Record the works that need to be carried out and the correct controls that are required to be implemented i.e. hand sanitisers, PPE, job rotation. Ensure time to carry out the task is reduced to a minimum. Works that must be carried out inside the meters must be approved along with the specific risk prior to commencing work.

To reduce the possibility of transmission of COVID 19, controls will be in place to staff from interacting with other each other as much as possible. Sharing of huts shall not be permitted during the COVID 19 pandemic and each hut shall be single occupied at a time.

Additional control measures for personnel working within 2m of each other on site:

- Verify before the task commences that no employee involved has any symptoms of COVID 19.
- PPE in line with the risk assessment must be in place i.e. gloves, face mask etc.
- Prior to fitting gloves for the task, personnel involved must thoroughly wash and sanitise their hands.
- Minimise the amount of time personnel will be within 2m of each other, one person should step aside to a point over 2m away directly after the stone is secured into position safely

Flow chart for reviewing work processes in relation to social distancing. The flow chart must be followed for work processes and considered in all RAMS



1.8 Close Working

Social distancing as recommended by the HSE must be adhered to and close contact with others must be eliminated as far as reasonable practicable. All steps of the task procedures and activities must be taken into consideration. Should there be instances where social distancing cannot be maintained and where this has been identified, additional control measures must be implemented. Workers must follow the below set of guidelines in addition to controls set out if working within 2m of one another. Workers must not be showing any signs or symptoms of COVID - 19 and must receive prior agreement from site management:

PPE is present in line with the RAMS / Risk Assessment (masks and gloves etc.).

Prior to donning appropriate gloves, personnel shall wash / sanitise their hands thoroughly.

There are 2 types of work in the <2m transmission zone:

A) no physical contact between colleagues

B) physical touching will occur (manual handling / pushing – pulling side by side, shared tools and equipment).

Scenario B is of higher risk than scenario A.

Scenario A - preferably, personnel will wear masks with eye protection and gloves.

Scenario B - preferably, personnel will wear masks and gloves and on completion, dispose any contaminated PPE.

Safety signage that does not impede visibility and does not increase safety hazards will be erected.

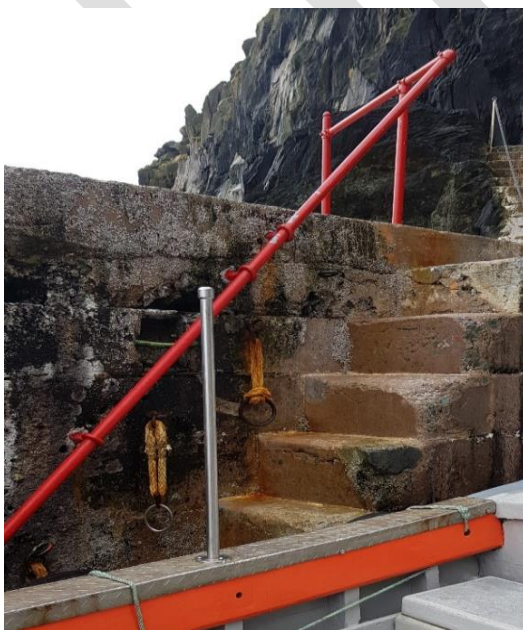
At the end of the task, all tools, equipment and surfaces for scenario A & B work must be sanitised or disposed of accordingly.

Dispose of disposable PPE regularly appropriately throughout the day. When disposing, place them into rubbish bags and tie a knot when full/end of shift and place in second bag.

1.9 Prevention of Cross Contamination

The potential for cross contamination is elevated where there are high levels of surface contact points such as on the boat to the island, handrails and chains at the pier and access paths, doors to the storage buildings, the toilet and shower unit, site access gate, the lower lighthouse building and any other point or object that site personnel touch frequently.

Handrail on the lower pier steps which is used when boarding and disembarking the boat.



Handrail chain to/from the pier



The chain on the steps leading up/down to the pier. A hand sanitise station will be installed at the top of the steps and operatives shall be advised to sanitise their before or after use to reduce cross contamination.



Staff accommodations and welfare huts



Surfaces within the staff welfare facilities have high levels of contact and should be cleaned/disinfected regularly, the huts are single occupancy only to reduce the risk of cross contamination Operatives shall be responsible for cleaning and sanitise before and after themselves. A "clean as you go" policy to be implemented. OPW shall provide sufficient cleaning products.

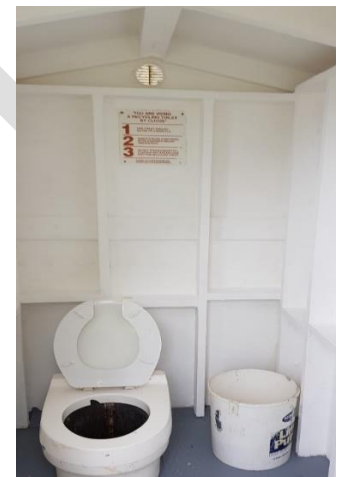


Skellig Michael
COVID 19 Management Plan

Site entrance - gateway



Staff toilet and shower facilities



Mixers, mortar buckets, shovels, wheelbarrows, and the Active power track machine are all items with a high level of contact and should be cleaned/disinfected accordingly between users.



During staff rotation or when leaving the island, all personal shall be responsible for cleaning and sanitising their accommodation. A “Clean as you go” policy to be implemented. When the personal is leaving the island, they shall be responsible for sanitising their cabin prior to departure and windows left open for ventilation. In addition, the next personal utilising the cabin shall also disinfect/sanitise the cabin and wipe down/spray all areas. OPW staff shall be responsible for the implementation of the cleaning regime and sanitising of their own areas. OPW shall provide all cleaning products required for the cleaning/sanitising of the cabins

1.10 Control measures to prevent cross contamination

- Ensuring that the COVID 19 Compliance Officer monitors the day to day activities on site to ensure social distancing and hygiene rules and being followed, and that the OPW’s COVID Compliance Officer checklist is being completed for the construction activities.
- The COVID 19 Compliance Officer shall be a constant presence on site ensure and hygiene rules are being maintained and adhered to, intervene where non-conformances are identified and shall carry out daily audits/inspections to document results.
- There are 8 self-contained accommodation huts on Skellig Michael, each with its own facility for cooking and tea/coffee making facilities. These huts are to be single occupancy only and each have hand sanitiser dispensers and soap dispensers installed.
- Sanitising stations have been installed at the pier, at the site entry point, outside the hut areas and at the toilet and shower unit. Additional sanitising stations shall be erected where required.
- All persons arriving on Skellig Michael must be directed to sanitise their hands at the hand-sanitising station highlighted at the pier. As there is no water source on the island, and all fresh water is transported to the island by boat, the recommended guidelines for regular handwashing are made more difficult. More hand sanitiser than usual is therefore required in the place of soap and water
- Restricted access on site to work area to only essential and authorised personnel, no tourists/members of the public are permitted near work area
- Touch points should be reduced with a “handsfree” approach where possible, e.g. wedging a door open where it is in frequent use and sanitising products readable available to wipe down surfaces.
- Break times should be staggered to prevent cross contamination between employees.
- Social distancing must always be maintained when employees are working near each other.
- If a number of employees are working in the lower lighthouse at any one time, this work should be co-ordinated in a manner that social distancing is maintained within rooms.
- Safety documentation for all outside contractors conducting work on Skellig Michael must be reviewed before they attend site. To ensure they are COVID 19 compliant and that they have updated their Safety Statement, Risk Assessments, Method Statements, Safe System of Work Plans (SSWP’s) and Safe Job Procedures (SJP’s).

- During the Daily Pre-Start Talks (crew involvement in the developing the daily site risk assessment -SSWP) reference COVID 19 and specifically social distancing and hand hygiene practices will be discussed. Basic COVID 19 controls must be taken into consideration and highlighted.
- Toolbox talks will be carried out to ensure everyone is aware of the controls in place. Any updates or changes that require implementation will be communicated during this time.
- Safety audits and site inspections will be carried to ensure compliance with site rules and procedures.
- Posters prepared by the HSE will be displayed to advise workers of the hazards associated with COVID 19 and the measures to be taken to prevent the spread of the disease.

DO:

Wash your hands properly and often. Hands should be washed:

- ▶ *after coughing or sneezing*
- ▶ *before and after eating*
- ▶ *before and after preparing food*
- ▶ *if you were in contact with someone who has a fever or respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing)*
- ▶ *before and after being on public transport if you must use it*
- ▶ *before and after being in a crowd (especially an indoor crowd)*
- ▶ *when you arrive and leave buildings including your home or anyone else's home*
- ▶ *before having a cigarette or vaping*
- ▶ *if your hands are dirty*
- ▶ *after toilet use*
- ▶ Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough and sneeze.
- ▶ Put used tissues into a bin and wash your hands.
- ▶ Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

DON'T:

- ▶ Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean.
- ▶ Do not share objects that touch your mouth – for example, bottles, cups.



Disposable Gloves

Do not wear disposable gloves in place of washing/sanitising hands. The virus can get on gloves in the same way it gets on hands. Also, hands can become contaminated when gloves are taken off. Wearing disposable gloves can give a false sense of security and are not as effective in daily life as continuously washing or sanitising hands.

A person might potentially:

- Sneeze or cough into the gloves - this creates a new surface for the virus to live on

- Contaminate yourself when taking off the gloves or touching surfaces
- Not washing your hands as often as you need to and touch your face with contaminated gloves.

Face Masks

Facemasks are to be worn while inside any enclosed building and where the preferred 2 meters social distancing can't be maintained. The task shall be risked assed and the correct mitigation measures shall be implemented. Control measure and good hygiene measures to be implemented at all times while at work. .

1.11 Cleaning to prevent cross contamination

All welfare facilities and high levels of surface contact points will be subject to rigorous cleaning and disinfecting regime on a regular basis to ensure good hygiene standards are maintained. Enhanced cleaning procedures are to be implemented on site, handrails situated at the pier, around the welfare unit's and in areas of high touch, including:

- Door handles, padlocks, and chains.
- Taps and washing facilities
- Toilet flush handle and seat
- Handrails or chains, access gates and touch points on scaffolding
- Wheelbarrows, shovels,

Wiping/cleaning down of contact points should be done using antibacterial wipes or a wet cloth with soap application. Surfaces used are to be cleaned prior to and after each use and also before.

For common touch points such as handrails should be cleaned twice daily where possible i.e. halfway through the day (after arrival of last boat) and end of working day (departure of last visitors boat).

Personnel should use the same tools/equipment daily and if there is any crossover of tools, they should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected between users.

Rubbish collection points should be emptied daily with the sealed bags stored for removal off of the island.

This cleaning regime shall be inspected regularly by OPW management to ensure that controls are been adhered to and that personnel are using the cleaning products provided to ensure that the area is kept clean and sanitised.

Disinfectant wipes and hand sanitiser will be made available throughout the island and specifically at entrance to welfare facilities and places high level of high levels of surface contact points.

A site cleaning checklist should be implemented, to be checked and signed off by the Site Supervisor/COVID Compliance Officer for the operational staff and the head guide on the island.

1.12 Site Meetings and Inspections

Where on-site meetings are necessary, the numbers attending should be kept to as few as possible, details of those attending should be recorded in the on-site contact tracing logbook. Adhering to the mandatory 2m social distancing rule, on the boat journey to Skellig Michael and while on site. The meeting should be conducted in an open designated space which will allow for correct social distancing for the numbers attending.

To ensure onsite co-operation with procedures outlined in this document and control measures outline in the COVID 19 Risk Assessment are adhered to, the COVID 19 Compliance Officer and Site Management will complete regular inspections on all crews and complete COVID 19 Checklist.

1.13 Site Visits by External Consultants, State Bodies, Universities, and Contractors

Only authorised, pre-approved visits are permitted to Skellig Michael. Prior to authorisation, details outlining the purpose of the visit, date, duration, and the number of personnel that will be attending must be specified.

All visitors must ensure that COVID 19 control measures are included in their updated Risk Assessments, Method Statements and Safe System of Work Plans and that these are received and approved in advance of their visit to Skellig Michael.

The name and details of all personnel who travel to Skellig Michael must be recorded in the on-site log book for the purposes of contact tracing.

A site induction including COVID 19 control measures and emergency procedures will be conducted when personnel arrive on the island, if authorisation is granted to travel to Skellig Michael at the weekend when there are no OPW workers present, this induction must be carried out before departing.

N.B.

- National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) Bird Survey visit, shall be allocated a single occupancy accommodation huts. Dates are to be confirmed for 2021 and they are to advise OPW National monuments prior to departing.
- In addition, other surveys may need to be carried out on the island, dates shall be confirmed in advance and appropriate controls measures implemented. All personal shall be briefed on the site rules, procedures and guidelines.

1.14 First Aid

In addition to the Skellig Michael Site Emergency Rescue Plan, OPW's updated First Aid responder guidance document 'SPS COVID 19 001' is to be communicated to and signed off by first aiders on site. This guidance document outlines the policy on key interventions, hand hygiene, PPE requirements and the steps to deal with injuries and CPR in a safe manner in relation to cross contamination of COVID 19.

First Aid responders must carry out a Dynamic Risk Assessment based on the person's injuries or symptoms. Avoid contact where at all possible. The following guidelines are to be adhered to:

- Any OPW staff member presenting with symptoms consistent with COVID 19 should be treated as a suspected case. In such cases, the individual is to go back to their cabin to minimise risk of infection to others and wait for transportation back to mainland. Operative is to contact their GP and inform them of their symptoms and await for further instruction.
- Any visitor presenting with symptoms consistent with COVID 19 is to be treated as a suspected case. In such cases, move individual to an isolated area to minimise risk of infection to others.
- Standard infection control precautions are to be applied when responding to any first aid incident in the workplace. Hand washing with an alcohol-based hand gel/hand sanitiser must be carried out before and after providing any first aid treatment.
- Only one First Aid Responder to provide support/treatment, where practical. The First Aid Responder when carrying out first aid, where close contact cannot be avoided, should wear additional PPE (face shield, disposable gloves, disposable apron and a mask). A mask should also be provided to injured party to limit droplet dispersion. Masks must cover the mouth and nose and create an adequate seal around the face.
- If you suspect a person has experienced a cardiac arrest, do not listen or feel for breathing by placing your ear and cheek close to the person's mouth. If you are in any doubt about confirming cardiac arrest, the default position is to start chest compressions only until help arrives.
- Persons with minor injuries (cuts, abrasions, minor burns) - where practical, a First Aid Responder should avoid close contact and advise the injured party what steps to take in treating their injury while maintaining social distancing.
- No reusable equipment to be returned to service without being cleaned/disinfected. Disposable PPE and any waste should be disposed of appropriately.
- Wash/sanitise hands thoroughly before putting on and after taking off PPE.
- In the event where a visitor is seasick after the tourney, the responder is to administer first aid while maintaining social distance. The responder shall advise the casualty in what to do. At the First Aid Responders discretion, where the visitor may require additional treatment, then the first aider shall apply full PPE equipment provided.

Accident & Emergency and Rescue by the Emergency Services

In case of a serious health emergency or accident, OPW will contact Kerry Coastguard who will transport the Coastguard Mountain Rescue Team and Kerry Mountain Rescue Team to the Island.

The Rescue Team will have to transport the casualty on a stretcher down the steps for evacuation from the landing pier by lifeboat.

Maintaining proper distance between the rescue team and a casualty on a stretcher will be impossible on the descent from the Monastery.

Accidents and health emergencies are inevitable on Skellig Michael due to the physical challenges for visitors in accessing the Monastery.



Anchor points to facilitate lowering a stretcher in an emergency are located at numerous points on the way up to the Monastery. To increase the speed of rescue, anchor points are to be fixed and left in position

Additional PPE (disposable dust masks, gloves, aprons and face shields) shall be stored on site in the event of emergency or for first aid. A stock take is to be undertaken each week to ensure that sufficient supply first aid equipment is on site for the coming week.

1.15 Suspect / Confirmed Cases

What to do if there has been a confirmed case

The HSE must be contacted and site management must follow the advice given. This will include, but not limited to:

- Anyone that has been in close contact with that person will be asked to stay at home and self-isolate for 14 days from the last time they had contact with the confirmed case.

What to do if there is a suspect case

If someone becomes unwell or starts to show any symptoms of COVID 19 while at work they should be removed from site and instructed to go back to their cabin. In the event of a member of the public displays signs they are to be confined and isolated away from the other visitors. The suspect case should be requested to call their doctor and proceed as per medical advice received.

Cleaning spaces with suspect/confirmed case

Close any areas that suspect/confirmed cases have been in and secure for 72 hours where possible, wait until this time has passed for cleaning as the amount of virus living on surfaces will have reduced significantly by 72 hours.

The minimum PPE to be worn for cleaning an area where a person with possible or confirmed COVID 19 is disposable gloves, surgical mask and a disposable apron. Hands should be washed with soap and water for 20 seconds or sanitised with hand sanitiser after all PPE has been removed. Additional PPE may be required i.e. eyes in areas of high contamination

Return to work process

In the event of a worker either being a suspected/ confirmed case of COVID 19 or a known “close contact” with a confirmed or suspected case, this protocol must be followed to ensure they are fit to return to work by means of self-declaration. Fitness for Work should be considered from two perspectives:

1. Does their illness pose a risk to the individual themselves in performing their work duties?
2. Does their illness pose a risk to other individuals in the workplace?

The following steps should be followed, in line with current public health advice:

- Any person who displays symptoms consistent with COVID 19 must stay away from work, self-isolate and contact their GP by phone as part of the triage process. They must also notify their line manager. An individual will be classified as either a suspected or confirmed case, based on HSE decision to test / outcome of test.
- An individual who is a known close contact with a confirmed or suspected case will be contacted by the HSE through its contact tracing process. Advice regarding self-isolation for a period of 14 days since their last “close contact” with a confirmed/suspected case must be followed.
- An individual must only return to work if deemed fit to do so and upon approval of their medical advisor and having coordinated with their line manager. When an individual is symptom-free and are deemed fit to return to work, the key criteria are:
 1. 14 days since their last “close contact” with a confirmed/suspected case and have not developed symptoms in that time, or
 2. 14 days since the onset of their symptoms and 5 days since their last fever (high temperature), or

3. They have been advised by a GP / healthcare provider to return to work. Line Manager should confirm the relevant criteria above with the individual and write down their responses.

2.0 Visitor Safety

2.1 The Boat Journey to Skellig Michael

The journey for the majority of visitors to Skellig Michael begins at Portmagee Harbour on board one of the 15 licensed boats that can transport and land passengers onto the Unesco World Heritage Site. There are also another two departure points, one boat leaves from Ballinskelligs and another from Derrynane.

Currently, these licences allow a maximum of 12 passengers on board for the journey to Skellig Michael. This allows a maximum of 180 visitors on the island per day. Depending on the size of each boat and their layout for passenger and crew positioning, adhering to government guidelines, the number of passengers will be reduced in contrast to the pre-COVID 19 capacity.

It is advised that control measures such as, confining numbers to ensure social distancing, installing hand sanitising stations on board, displaying COVID 19 signage, enhanced cleaning/disinfecting and passengers advised to wear face masks to reduce the risk of cross contamination while on the boat.

Portmagee Harbour, main departure point.



2.2 Staggering of the Boat's Departure and Landing Times.

Currently the licenced boats bringing passengers to Skellig Michael arrive in the morning at the same time to drop off their passengers and similarly in the afternoon when collecting passengers. This leads

to overcrowding on the landing pier before visitors make their way up towards the bottom of the South Steps, where a safety briefing is conducted, and the guided tour begins.

There would be a higher risk of cross contamination in this situation as all of the passengers visiting on a given day land at the same point, in large numbers, and use the same access handrail on the pier steps over a short period of time and remove their gear (wet gear, life jacket etc.). Passengers who are seasick and have physically gotten sick during the crossing or are feeling unwell and disorientated as they disembark the boat amplify this.

The pier can be crowded at peak periods during the day when visitors are arriving and waiting to depart the island. Due to the small footprint of the landing area, the timing of boat arrivals and departures been staggered, with a time allocated schedule would be advantageous to control the numbers of visitors on the landing pier at any one time, and to allow for correct social distancing of passengers congregating.

The staggering of the arrivals and departures through a time schedule would also be beneficial for reducing the number of visitors climbing at any one time to the Monastery and congregating at common areas such as during the Guides safety talks/lecture.

Other measures to reduce the risk of cross-contamination upon arrival should include the use of hand sanitiser and disinfection of handrails after each group has landed.

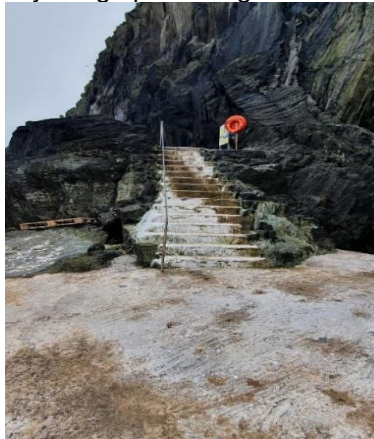
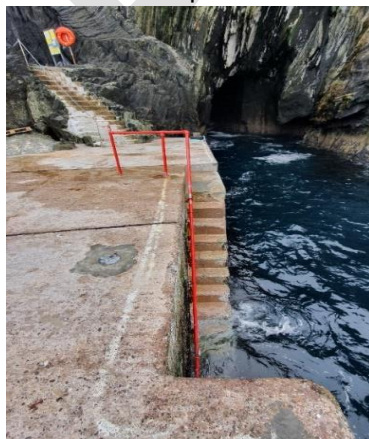
Visitors gathering at the pier on arrival/departure.



The landing pier



The handrails on the steps will be touched by a high percentage of visitors arriving.



The handrail at the pier is too dangerous for OPW to clean/sanitise regularly due to risk of falling into the water, as the steps are narrow and slippery. Therefore, visitors to be advised to sanitise their hands immediately upon arrival to the island.

A hand sanitisation to be installed and signed posted at the top of the steps.

2.3 The Lighthouse Road

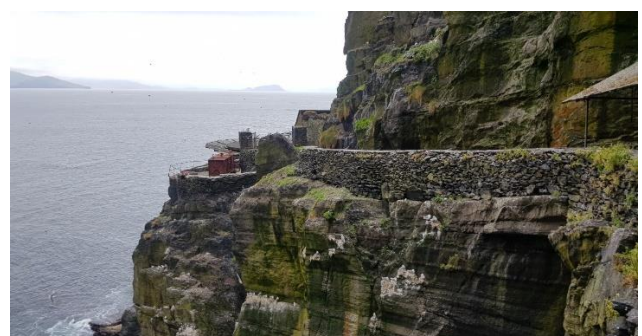
Visitors proceed along the lighthouse road at Blind Man's Cove, where there is a safety railing installed. This railing is used by visitors to hold on to as they often feel disorientated and seasick from the boat journey.



There would need to be an enhanced cleaning/disinfection plan for all of the railings such as this one that are frequently touched, coupled with the use of >65-70% alcohol based hand sanitiser stations to reduce the risk of COVID 19 cross contamination between visitors and staff on the island.

The OPW guides twice daily shall sanitise the chain handrail as part of the cleaning regime. Common touch points to be sanitised halfway through the day and again at the end of the day i.e. when last boat departs.

Cross Cove, a wooden canopy has been constructed on this section of the path to protect visitors from any potential rock fall from above. The pathways on the island is narrow and social distancing is not possible in places when visitors are meeting on the walkway. Members of the public shall have to take responsibility of their own safety and take their own precautionary measures.





The path leaving Cross Cove and passing alongside the enclosed helicopter pad area



Where OPW National monument operational staff are carrying out work activities on the island, the area shall be cordoned off from the public and signed posted to prevent unauthorised entry.

2.4 Starting point for the Tour and the Safety Briefing

Visitors gather in this area at the bottom of the South Steps for a safety briefing before they begin their climb up the steps to the Monastery. The wearing of facemasks is advised as best practice to be worn by OPW guides when speaking to the visitors and where visitors congregate. To encourage social distancing the Guide to be issued with a voice amplifier so that visitors may be able to hear better especially in poorer weather conditions. At this point, some visitors decide that they will not undertake the climb, for numerous reasons, and will remain below until it is time for them to depart the island.

The restricting of numbers of visitors to the island would be beneficial during the delivery of the safety briefs by the guides as visitors may congregate close together, breaching social distance guidelines to be able to hear the guides brief especially during poor weather conditions.

At the start of the safety brief, visitors shall be advised to sanitise their hands before ascending (hand sanitisation station to be installed) to reduce contamination when using the handrail and where visitors cannot be distant and maintain social distance, to wear mask/coverings. Visitors shall be advised to give way where possible to other visitors already on the steps either descending or ascending on the narrow steps or passageways.

There will need to be a controlled system in place for visitors ascending and descending the steps to the Monastery. Guides shall be stationed throughout the island at strategic locations while remaining in contact with each other using two wat radios. A guide shall be positioned at the bottom of the steps, Christ Saddle and a third in the Monastery.

Social distancing is not possible for visitors to pass by each other on the narrow steps (just over 1m wide in places) going up or down, and the risk of an accident/fall happening will increase if a person is trying to step aside as far as 2 meter to avoid another person.

During this safety talk, visitors shall be advised to take care of their own safety and give way where possible for those already on the steps where social distancing cannot be maintained especially where the steps are steep and narrow and can be slippery when wet.

The South Steps leading up to the Monastery



2.5 Starting the climb

Throughout the island, some areas of the steps are narrow and cannot maintain the desired two meters of social distance.

This ledge at the start of the ascent is especially dangerous as there is a sheer drop on one side, fatal accidents have occurred here in the past.

A chain handrail is fixed here for visitors to hold as they walk across. Social distancing is not possible if visitors walking up are meeting visitors that are walking down. Members of the public shall have to take responsibility also of their own safety and give way to personnel either ascending or descending where safe to do so.

As common touch point, this chain handrail shall be incorporated into the cleaning regime by the OPW Guides and sanitised twice daily. Visitors to be advised to use hand sanitiser installed at base of steps prior to commencing ascent to reduce cross contamination and signage erected to illustrate the standard HSE Covid-19 precautions (social distancing, coughing etiquette, no touch face with hands etc.)

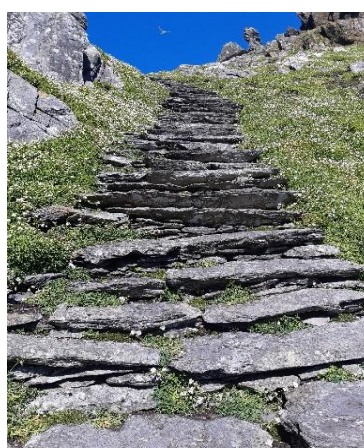


As this chain railing is used by everyone walking across the ledge, it will need to be sanitised/disinfected frequently.

Visitors who decide not climb to the monastery shall not be allowed to walk to the lighthouse due to the amount of required work to be carried out by OPW staff. Gate at bottom of steps need OPW welfare facilities shall be kept closed at all times.



Prior to the island reopening to the visitors, steps/passageway shall be cleaned of debris and moss to reduce the risk of slips trip and falls when wet.



2.6 'The Wailing Woman'

As visitors continue up the steps, at 30m up they arrive at an area where there is a vertical piece of bedrock known as 'The Wailing Woman'. At this point, visitors tend to leave the steps to walk across and take photographs. Caution is needed here, especially when descending as the ground has loose stones and it is easy to lose your footing and slip.



Social distancing will need to be monitored in this area as visitors group here to take photographs. A sign to be erected stating for visitors to give way for visitors ascending to ensure that social distancing is maintained and for the safety of the visitors as the steps are narrow and can be slippery.



Uneven ground with loose stones



In the area in front of 'The Wailing Woman' there is a piece of metal that was once part of a wench system to transport goods up the steps, this is now obsolete and should be cut off/ removed as it is a trip hazard.



When the weather is poor and the steps are wet and deposited with puffin guano they can be very slippery and extreme caution is needed, especially on descent when slips and falls are more likely.



No edge protection, extreme caution needed (especially in wet conditions). The installation of a more robust warning sign/barrier at this turn is required.



The puffins are acclimated to the presence of people on the island and can sometimes fly directly in front of and overhead of visitors who are walking on the steps.



Members of the public shall have to take responsibility of their own safety and give way to personnel either ascending or descending the steps where safe to do so as social distancing cannot be maintained. If visitors numbers are confined and visiting times staggered, then a traffic light system may be advantageous where the guide on the bottom steps and the guide positioned at the Christ Saddle can communicate between each other and control numbers.

2.7 Christ's Saddle

At the top of the first section of steps visitors come to an area called 'Christ's Saddle', this is an area of flat ground between the two peaks. They are encouraged to take a break here and to have a snack or food that they have brought with them to the Island.

Again, social distancing will need to be monitored and supervised in this area to ensure visitors keep apart when taking a break. A hand sanitising station could be installed here, possibly mounted to the fence, to allow visitors to sanitise their hands after eating and before continuing up to the monastery.

A Guide to be positioned at this location to supervise social distancing and ensure that visitors do not linger too long and congregate.

It would be advantageous again if visitors numbers are limited to the island and docking times are staggered as would allow time for visitors to rest here as one group of visitors are in the monastery. The guides can maintain contact to implement a traffic light system and once one group of visitors have descended then allow the next set of visitors to continue to ascend to the monastery.

Gate to be repaired to prevent unauthorised entry into restricted area



2.8 Steps from Christ's Saddle to the Monastery

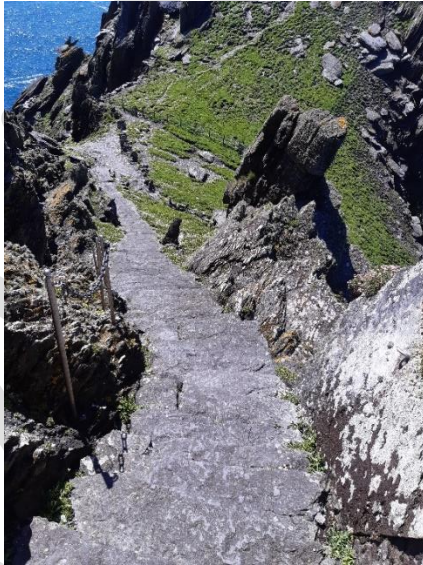
The steps leading up to the Monastery are narrow and exceptionally steep, this leads to some people needing to stop and catch their breath while climbing, so others behind are forced to stop on the steps and wait. When wet, extreme caution is needed, especially when descending.

There will need to be more time and space given to visitors on these steps to allow them to remain socially distant from each other.

A sign at bottom of steps to the Monastery advising the visitors to give way to visitors descending on the steps for the safety of the visitors and for maintaining social distancing as steps are narrow and dangerous sections with cross winds.

The chain handrail on the steps is in frequent use, both when ascending and descending, so there is a high risk of cross contamination and it will need to be sanitised accordingly to the cleaning regime twice daily. Visitors prior to ascending steps shall be advised to sanitise their hands to reduce risk of cross contamination.

Steps from Christs Saddle up to the Monastery and the chain handrail, where there is a high risk of cross-contamination between visitors. The chain shall be incorporated in the cleaning regime and visitors advised to use hand sanitising station which shall be installed at the Christ Saddle. Visitors are to give way for personal on steps descending.



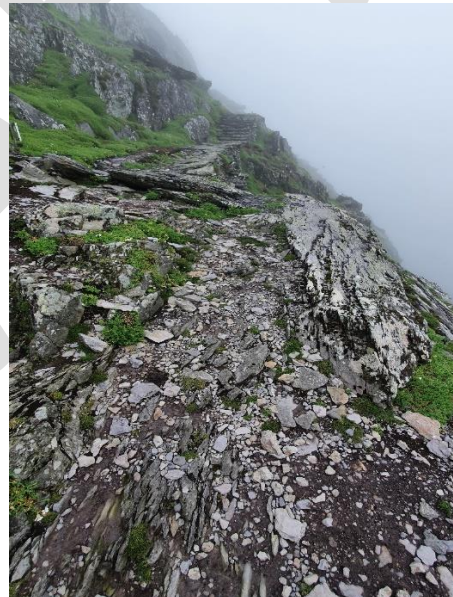
The steps from Christs Saddle are very steep and hazardous, especially when wet



As visitors come to the top of the steps, the path continues over a rocky outcrop, which is very uneven and has loose stones on it.



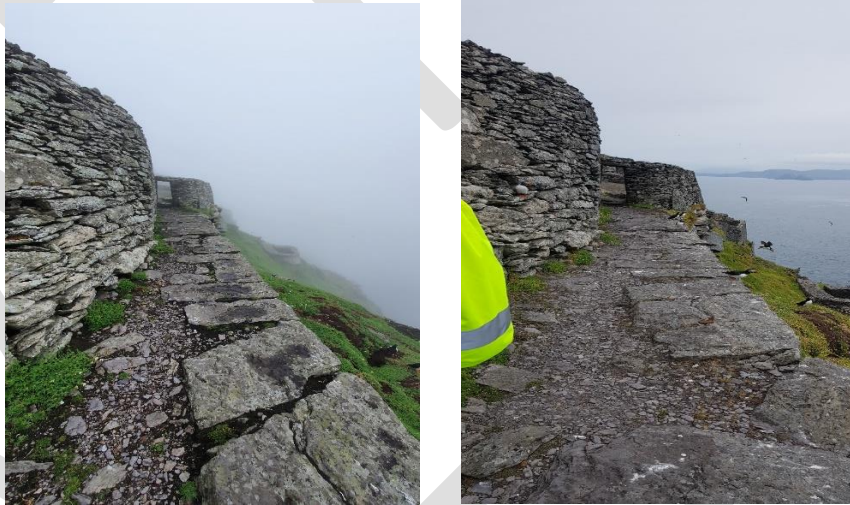
There is a high risk of slips, trips and falls here and caution needs to be taken. If visitors were to go in both directions along this path, social distancing would be impracticable and hazardous. Members of the public shall have to take responsibility of their own safety and give way to visitors already on the path where safe to do so.



2.9 Narrow path before the Monastery entrance

The path leading to the monastery is very narrow, just 1.1m wide at a point, and does not allow for social distancing of two people, there is a sheer drop on one side of the path making it very dangerous if one visitor was trying to walk past another.

It is also very slippery when wet and visitors need to show caution when walking along it, especially in bad weather.



Members of the public shall have to take responsibility of their own safety and give way to personnel already on the path where safe to do so.

It would be advantageous if visitors' numbers are confined to the island, Guides may be able to implement a traffic light system where they can maintain contact with each other in the Monastery and Christ saddle to advise whether visitors are descending or ascending.

If visitor numbers are confined and visiting times staggered, then a traffic light system may be advantageous where the guide positioned at the Monastery can control visitors entering and leaving through the narrow doorway and maintaining communication with the guide positioned at the Christ Saddle to control numbers.

2.10 The Monastery Area

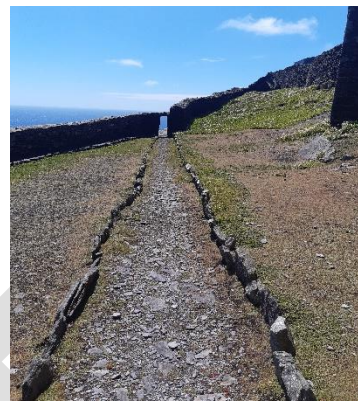
Narrow access doorway leading into the Upper Monks Garden, with restricted head height.

Visitors gather here to begin their tour of the Monastery. The tour group will have to remain 2m apart from each other, following the HSE guidelines. Members of the public shall have to take responsibility of their own safety and maintain social distancing.

A Guide (advised by OPW to wear a face covering) shall be positioned here to provide advice and to monitor social distancing. Guides shall inform visitors that a short lecturer about the history of the Monastery shall take place after a short after visitors a quick to look around. Visitors shall be provided with sufficient time to walk around the Monastery in a safe manner been able to maintain social distancing and allow visitors in front to take photographs or one visitor in hut at a time. Here they shall advise the visitors to provide appropriate distancing between each other and time to see the huts. One visitor at a time allowed in a hut.

A freestanding hand sanitisation station should be installed for visitors to sanitise their hands as entrance passageways are narrow through walls are in the Monastery and Beehive Huts. Visitors may touch the stone walls when passing through the narrow entrances and sanitising their hands will reduce cross contamination and reduce risk of transfer.

Narrow entrance passageway through the wall of the Monastery



This path in the passageway is very slippery when wet. Visitors will have to pass through here one at a time, and as they do there is a tendency to touch the stone along the passageway, adding to the risk of cross contamination.

The main area within the Monastery where the beehive huts are located. This is where a guide will give a lecture as part of the tour so it is an area where visitors congregate. It would be advantageous if visitors numbers are confined and staggered to reduce numbers. Visitors advised to wear face covering where two meters social distance may not be maintained.



Social distancing within the Monastery, the Beehive huts, and narrow passageways will be very difficult and it is advised that group sizes would need to be reduced accordingly.

Visitors shall have to take responsibility of their own safety and appropriate distance between themselves as they shall be provided sufficient time in Monastery to walk around

The entrance into one of the Beehive huts, it will be difficult for visitors to know if there is someone else inside until they go in themselves



During the Guide lecture of the history of the Monastery, the Guide advised to be positioned on top of steps so that they may maintain social distance from the visitors below. Guide shall advise the visitors prior to commencing lecture to wear face coverings if social distance cannot be maintained as visitors congregate to hear the lecture. To encourage social distancing, the Guide to be issued with a voice amplifier so that visitors may be able to hear better especially in poorer weather conditions.

2.11 Returning to the Pier

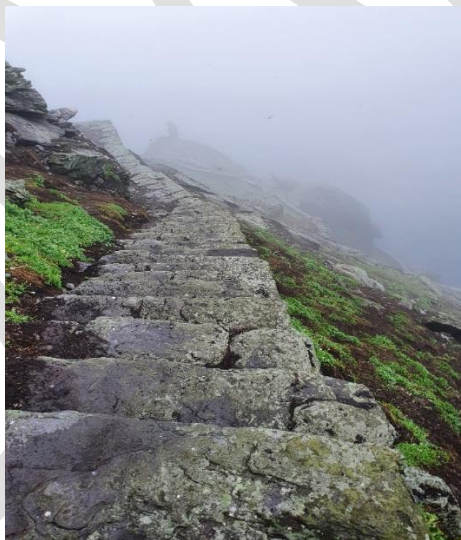
Descending the stone steps is more difficult and hazardous than climbing, especially in wet/damp conditions. If there are more visitors coming up the steps, it becomes dangerous and social distancing guidelines cannot be followed.

Members of the public shall have to take responsibility of their own safety, maintain social distancing and to give way to visitors descending down the steps where possible.

Confining visitors numbers to the island at any one time and staggering arrivals/departures would be advantageous as would reduce numbers and for guides to be may able to maintain a traffic light system.



The stone steps can get very slippery when wet



3.0 Signage and Hand Sanitisation Station

COVID 19 Signage has been erected on Skellig Michael at the pier, at the site access gate and on welfare huts and the toilet and shower facilities for workers OPW. More COVID 19 HSE guidance signage will need to be erected and replaced as have deteriorated due to weather conditions for visitors if they are returning to the island.



Sign faded and need replacing



Hand sanitising stations shall be installed at strategic locations throughout the island:

- Each self-contained accommodation huts are to have hand sanitiser provided.
- Sanitising stations to be installed at the pier, at the site entry point, outside the hut areas and at the workers toilet and shower unit.
- Hand sanitiser station based at the base of the steps with two hand sanitisers for each station and one at Christ Saddle to allow visitors to sanitise their hands after eating and before continuing on up to the Monastery and one in the Monastery for sanitising hands before and after entry into narrow passageways.

- Hand sanitiser will be made available throughout the island and specifically at entrance to welfare facilities and places high level of high levels of surface contact points.

On arrival to the island, all persons will be given a short safety brief and must be directed to sanitise their hands at the hand-sanitising station highlighted at the pier and advised to use stations provided throughout the island during the day. As there is no water source on the island, and all fresh water supply is restricted, the recommended guidelines for regular handwashing are made more difficult. More hand sanitiser than usual is therefore required in the place of soap and water.

A cleaning regime shall be implemented to reduce the risk of cross-contamination which will include the use of hand sanitiser and disinfection of handrails twice daily. There would need to be an enhanced cleaning/disinfection plan for all of the railings such as this one that are frequently touched, coupled with the use of >65-70% alcohol based hand sanitiser stations to reduce the risk of COVID 19 cross contamination between visitors and staff on the island.

As the chain railings are used by all visitors and personnel, they will need to be sanitised/disinfected frequently. High levels of surface contact points will be subject to rigorous cleaning and disinfecting regime on a regular basis to ensure good hygiene standards are maintained. Enhanced cleaning procedures are to be implemented and a cleaning regime of welfare facilities and all other common touch areas shall be implemented. Regular cleaning of common touch areas at least twice daily.

As there will be a heavy use of hand sanitiser due to the number of visitors on the island each day and OPW staff, the inspection of the hand sanitiser and the replenished is to be incorporated into the cleaning regime which is carried twice daily of the island.

OPW shall ensure that there is sufficient stock on the island in advance of opening to the tourist and a stock take shall be carried out weekly and replenished where required. OPW operational staff return to island on weekly basis and shall carry over cleaning and sanitising products where required.

Appendix A – COVID 19 Symptoms

Coronavirus COVID-19 Public Information

What are the symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19)?

It can take up to 14 days for symptoms to appear.

The most common symptoms are:



Cough

This can be any kind of cough, usually dry but not always



Fever

High temperature over 38 degrees Celsius



Shortness of Breath



Breathing Difficulties

You may display one, some or all of these symptoms.

If you are experiencing worrying symptoms, you should contact your GP

OR call HSELive 1850 24 1850.

COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Symptoms

| Symptoms | Coronavirus <small>Symptoms range from mild to severe</small> | Cold <small>Gradual onset of symptoms</small> | Flu <small>Abrupt onset of symptoms</small> |
|----------------------|--|--|--|
| Fever | Common | Rare | Common |
| Cough | Common (Usually Dry) | Mild | Common (Usually Dry) |
| Shortness of Breath | Sometimes | No | No |
| Aches and Pains | Sometimes | Common | Common |
| Sore Throat | Sometimes | Common | Sometimes |
| Headaches | Sometimes | Rare | Common |
| Fatigue | Sometimes | Sometimes | Common |
| Runny or Stuffy Nose | Rare | Common | Sometimes |
| Diarrhoea | Rare | No | Sometimes for Children |
| Sneezing | No | Common | No |

Sources: World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Coronavirus **COVID-19**



HELP PREVENT CORONAVIRUS



Wash your
hands



Cover mouth if
coughing or sneezing



Avoid touching
your face



Keep surfaces
clean



Stop shaking hands
and hugging



Keep a safe
distance

**The virus spreads in sneeze and cough droplets,
so regularly taking the above measures helps
reduce the chance of it spreading.**

Appendix B - A Map of Skellig Michael

