

Risk Assessments at Aylesbury Vale Golf Club covering Tiers 1, 2, 3 and 4.

1. General
2. Before your Round (Booking and Arrival)
3. Playing Golf (Tiers 1 to 4).
4. After the Round (Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3 and Tier 4).
5. Competitions and Rules of Golf
6. Pro Shop
7. Bars (Downstairs, Outside and Upstairs)
8. Catering
9. Locker Rooms
10. Driving Range
11. Golf Buggies
12. Hire Trolleys
13. Practice Putting Green
14. Practice pitching green and bunker
15. Staff
16. Final reminders.

1. General

This risk assessment is written on 30th November 2020 and updates the previous version. It incorporates Tier 1, 2 and 3 procedures and should remain relevant if we move from one tier to another.

2. Before your Round

Bookings

All bookings can be made in advance using the BRS booking system. If you do not have a computer you can telephone 01525 240196 to make a booking between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Members can book 10 days in advance and non-members 7 days in advance.

All members must provide contact details when joining the club. All visitors, whether entering the pro shop to play golf or use the driving range, must give contact details for track and trace purposes. The NHS QR Code poster is displayed on both pro shop doors for you to use as an alternative to giving contact details at shop reception.

Members and visitors should take note that full names (Christian name and surname) are now required on the booking tee sheet to assist pro shop staff to identify everyone, gather their contact details and keep groups apart. The system has allowed for 'Guest of Member' or 'x' in the past but this is no longer acceptable.

Arrival and Waiting to Play

It is illegal for gatherings of more than six people to take place indoor or outdoor.

Before leaving home use your own loo! This sounds like the 'nanny state' but it will practically avoid overcrowding in our toilet areas.

Follow the one way arrows from the car park to the golf shop.

Shoes may be changed in your car or in our changing room. Please note if using our changing room that face coverings must be worn, you must keep at least 2m away from anyone else and we ask you not to touch the lockers.

Please note that all lockers and showers within the changing rooms are closed. The shoe cleaners are also closed whilst under covid measures - this means that you will need to bring indoor shoes for the clubhouse.

Arrive 12 minutes before your tee time. If you arrive too early then please either remain in your car or hit a bucket of balls in the range.

When you arrive at the club you must announce your arrival to pro shop staff. Visitors must use the QR code or give track and trace details. The shop staff will then inform you of the order of play in order to keep your group separated from the group in front and behind. You can enter the putting green when the group in front has vacated it to make their way to the 1st tee.

There are two waiting areas, 25m apart, to keep groups separated that are waiting for the 1st tee, should they be required.

Hire trolleys are available but may not be shared. Buggies will not be available until BST begins - our buggies may have perspex dividers between driver and passenger - please enquire in March.

3. Playing Golf

KEEP YOUR SEPARATION DISTANCES AT ALL TIMES ON THE COURSE. The minimum is 2m but there is ample opportunity to remain further apart. The time for greatest focus on this is at the teeing grounds.

Do not touch the flags. Give gimmes within 12 inches for social golf. Use your putter to eject the ball from the hole with our Covid-19 disk system.

Bunker rakes have been removed. There is an individual rake head on sale in the shop at trade £7.50 that fits over any club and is your personal rake - not for sharing!

Ball washers and divot trowels have been removed. Stakes defining the course are now defined as immovable obstructions and should not be touched.

Do not touch stray golf balls.

Please maintain your social distancing when on the putting green

There are hand sanitiser stations and washbasins at the clubhouse. We strongly recommend use of these before and after your round.

Caddies can be used but the group size must not exceed six. They can give guidance but must not handle clubs. They must keep social distancing and maintain appropriate sanitising.

4. After the Round

Social distancing remains paramount in all tiers. Indeed, we go further in our own risk assessment at AVGC and do not think that it is safe for six people to sit around one table. This is because one person may not know they have the virus and could sneeze and infect people sat either side of them. Also our club has a high percentage of more elderly members and it is important to make our environment as safe as we possibly can for them. Since March 2020 we have therefore adopted

our own table and chair layout where there are only two chairs per table and these are at the ends of the table. We do ask all members and visitors to respect this layout and not to move the tables and chairs.

Tier 1.

The downstairs bar, upstairs bar, patio shelter and patio are all available. Table service applies.

Tier 2.

Inside tables can only be occupied by one person or by people all living in the same house. This will effectively close the upstairs bar.

We have built a new patio area that is covered by a perspex roof but all windows and doors can be removed and stored away. Golfers may use this area or the tables alongside the putting green but once again we forgo the option of having six seats around each table and have just two again, one at each end of the table.

You are not permitted to consume alcohol unless it is served with a substantial meal. Table service applies.

Tier 3.

The golf course will remain open but the bar and restaurant will close.

Tier 4.

The bar and restaurant remain closed. You may now only meet one person from another household and this must be outside. Hence all play must now be in one or two-balls.

As a result AVGC have now created 2 nine-hole golf courses and you can book to play either the front or back nine. AVGC have blocked the ability for anyone to book a three ball or a four ball. We appreciate that the [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) guidance would allow for a three or four ball to play together, if from the same household, but we (AVGC) are going to limit play to a maximum of a two ball. In this way there will be a faster, smoother flow of golfers around the course avoiding the potential for hold ups or groups bunching together.

It will not be possible to book for 18 holes. However, operating two nine-hole courses opens up many more tee slots so golfers may stop at the pro shop after nine holes and enquire if there is a free tee time in order to play 18 holes.

We will keep the pro shop door open so you can talk to pro shop staff without going inside. You may go inside but a mask is compulsory, and in tier 4 we are asking for just one customer to enter the shop at a time. The shop is spacious and staff desks are all fully protected with floor to ceiling perspex screens.

There is a 'click and collect' table outside the pro shop. Staff will hand sanitise or don fresh gloves and take your items out to the 'click and collect' table for you.

Follow the new 'one-way' signs to the 1st and 10th tees and maintain your social distancing throughout the round.

In tier4 we have introduced green/red blocks to the range bays. Only enter a clean 'green' bay and as you enter turn the block from green to red. The staff in the pro shop sanitise the bays so please do alert them if there are no more 'green' bays.

5. Competitions and Rules of Golf

At AVGC there are committees to run the competitions but the management still have to apply risk assessments to all activities. As such, while under the covid-19 tier system, AVGC will not be partaking in any club matches, shotgun starts, texas scrambles or open competitions. We may hold County competitions, subject to safe procedures being put in place. The only exception to club matches may be a carefully organised Tavistock Trophy entry whereby just three juniors create a team.

Gatherings of people must be avoided at all times, including registration and presentations.

AVGC will adopt a simple framework of one competition per weekend, one on a Monday for seniors and one on a Wednesday for ladies. These should be 'covid safe' formats, (stablefords and medals), with tee lists published in advance so everyone knows what time to arrive and who they are playing with. Play should be in threeballs and not fourballs. All members will already have given the club track and trace details - however if a member did not give either telephone or e-mail details upon joining then you must do so now.

Knock out competitions are safe and may continue.

In tiers 2 and 3 competitions should be medals or stablefords. In tier 1 foursomes and greensomes may be played, but subject to the following:

Each partner should use their own golf ball, which is only to be handled by that player. For example, the player teeing off from hole 1 is the only player that touches the ball from teeing off through to completion of the hole. The partner teeing off from hole 2 does likewise with their ball. Under the Rules of Golf, a partner is permitted to drop the side's ball in taking relief. It is also permissible to drop another ball when taking relief.

When marking and replacing the ball on the putting green this should be conducted by the partner the ball belongs to. Under this situation the original ball must be used and must not be substituted with another ball.

If the committees wish to run a foursome or greensomes in Tier One then they will need to forward the safety information to all players before play.

Please note that AVGC will be only too delighted to return to the fun formats of golf once Covid is over. (Club matches, Captain's Days, Sundowners, Texas Scrambles etc etc).

The Committees have developed new methods for entering competitions and scoring that do not require writing on lists or exchanging scorecards. Scorecards can be electronic.

Society golf may continue but all society organisers are sent procedures that must be sent to players before play. We require a named tee sheet with track and trace contact details in advance. Players must stagger their arrival and are told when to arrive. Play must be straight forward full handicap stableford in three balls rather than fourballs. Players must adhere to the social distancing measures. Food is served on a rolling basis only, served to table, and only to our spacious layout. No refreshments are available in tier 3 and food must be served to outside tables in tier 2. No prize presentations are permitted.

Junior Competitions

All junior competitions will be cancelled whilst under Tier 4 or higher. The situation would be reviewed as and when the Tier levels are reduced depending upon future government advice.

School Golf Lessons.

All school golf lessons will be cancelled under Tier 4, or higher, from Monday 4th January 21. Again, the situation will be reviewed as and when the Tier levels are reduced depending upon future government advice.

6. The Pro Shop

Face coverings are required in the shop. Please keep at least 2m from others. There is a maximum of four allowed in the shop at any one time.

The pro shop has large protective perspex screens. A new screened desk has been placed near the open door of the shop so you can announce your arrival to pro shop staff without entering the shop, if you so wish. One member can announce the arrival of all in his group.

A visitor can pay in full when they book online, or over the phone in advance. Failing that, they can enter the shop and pay at the counter. The new contactless limit is £45, but if the total is greater than this we can break it down into multiple transactions.

All visitors must give their track and trace contact details or use the QR code that is on both doors. This will be required from people using the driving range as well as the golf course.

If anyone is uncomfortable stepping into the shop, shop staff can put on a pair of fresh gloves and take balls, tees, drinks, chocolate bars etc to our 'Collection Point' table outside the pro shop. You can either pay for this once at the counter, or we can put through a payment taking your card in tissue, or members white card, doing a contactless payment in your full view, and immediately giving you the customer receipt paper copy.

Within the shop the fridge handle is marked "ASK STAFF". We ask you to step back and shop staff will put on a pair of fresh gloves and open the fridge for you and get your drink. If you want a cup of coffee again, please ask our staff for assistance and do not operate the coffee machine yourself. The notice on the coffee machine is there to remind you.

We ask you not to touch items in the shop unless you are going to buy them. Shoes and clothes may be tried on but please hand sanitise before and after. If you do this and decide not to buy please make a member of staff aware. These items will be transferred to a holding area upstairs, with a date attached, and will not be brought back into the downstairs shop until three days later.

We would ask parents to enter the shop and ask that all children under 14 years of age wait outside. This is because children frequently run their hands over golf clubs, golf balls, golf tees etc. Parents are responsible for supervising their children and ensuring that they observe distancing guidelines. They must be taken home if they are not self distancing. Russell Phillips, PGA Golf Professional at AVGC for juniors, will be responsible for supervising the children during his lessons, but will return the children to parental supervision if they fail to keep socially distanced.

7. Bars

The precise rules for bars are dictated by the level of the tier. However, we have our own layout of just two chairs per table, lengthways for additional spacing and safety, and ask that these tables and chairs are not moved.

We have a red/green traffic light system for using tables. A member of staff will have disinfected every table each morning and turn the block to 'green'. As you sit down at a table you should flick it to 'red'. Then, when you leave it will still be red. Other golfers should only sit at a 'green' table. Our staff will turn 'red' to 'green' once they have disinfected again.

There is table service. The menus have been designed so that they can be disinfected. The menus are on the tables.

Downstairs Bar

We have fully enclosed the downstairs bar area with perspex.

The coffee machine is only for operation by staff. Please pay for your coffee with other purchases.

Outside Bar Area.

We have an area outside that is under cover, tables and chairs by the putting green, and in the better weather we can space out tables and chairs across our practice area.

We have built a new path around the putting green for golfers to use to go to the putting green and then on to the 1st tee. This one way system creates more space for those at tables and chairs. After your round either use our trolley park or return your clubs to your car - again this gives more space for those at tables.

We know the outside areas could be cold in winter and whilst we will do our best to add heat we advise golfers to bring hats and scarves! We will serve hot soups, hot food and hot mulled wine (both alcoholic and non-alcoholic). Again, alcohol can only be served with a substantial meal in tier 2.

Upstairs Bar.

The bar has been fully encased in perspex. There is a waiting zone at top and bottom of the stairs so that no-one crosses when using the stairs.

The upstairs bar is our room normally used for functions, weddings etc. It normally can seat 120 persons but the new Covid capacity is 35. Again we have brought in new tables that are just for two people.

Unfortunately all functions and parties do not pass our own covid risk assessments and cannot therefore resume until covid is over.

8. Catering.

We cannot serve group catering. (club matches, league breakfasts, Captain's Days etc). All our catering needs to be table served and on a rolling basis.

In tier 2 we will offer a variety of hot, substantial food but will have affordable options available like sausages, mash and hot onion gravy. We will also offer hot soups and serve teas and coffees outside to warm up golfers.

All condiments are now in individual sachets. Pots of tea are no longer available, however tea will be by individual mugs with milk jiggers and sugar sachets.

9. Locker Rooms.

Face coverings are required.

The showers and lockers remain closed. The toilets and wash basins are open but there are markings on the floor for a queue whilst you wait for the toilet or wash basin to become free.

All doors from outside to wash basins are held open so you may have unfettered access without touching a door handle. Our liquid hand soap kills bacteria.

Please keep your social distancing.

10. Driving Range

We can no longer use tokens and the ball machine as these failed the risk assessment. All balls must now be obtained from the shop. Old driving range tokens can still be used and should be dropped into a box in the shop.

You can buy a single bucket of 20 or 35 balls or buy a passport for 10 x 20 ball baskets or 10 x 35 ball baskets. Driving range bays are not too busy on midweek days but at weekends they can be booked in advance by phoning 01525 240196.

All baskets and balls in the shop have been cleaned already. Please do not touch anyone else's range balls, baskets, or collect any balls from the range itself.

Please use the bays that are nearest to the clubhouse first and move along towards the pros bay at the far end. Once players have reached the far end pro shop staff will disinfect the bay dividers. Enter a 'green' bay and turn the wooden block from green to red as you enter. If there are no further 'green' bays please alert pro shop staff.

In spring time we will re-open our outside grass bays, all of which have 4m + separation distances.

11. Golf Buggies.

We hire golf buggies between March and October. These are strictly one person only buggies, unless the golfers are from the same household. We require visitors claiming to be in the same household to produce evidence from utility bills if they wish to share buggies. Please do make contact with us on 01525 240196 from March 2021 as we may be able to hire buggies with a perspex divider between driver and passenger, if approved by England Golf.

12. Hire Trolleys.

Clean hire trolleys are on the patio. Please return them after your round to the marked 'dirty area' on the wood chip, where staff will disinfect them.

13. Practice Putting Green

This passes the risk assessment as it is so large but it should be used for each group to practice putting immediately before going down to the 1st tee. The maximum number on the green at any one time is 4, with the exception of a pro taking a lesson on the marked off section of the green on the right hand side. Please keep at least 2m apart on the putting green.

14. Practice Pitching Green and Bunker

These are closed as they failed the risk assessment but green staff are taking the opportunity to resurface the green.

15. Staff

Staff have their own instructions but are generally to encourage everyone to keep their separation distance and keep customers, and each other, safe. Please assist them by keeping yourself 2m apart when asking them a question or obtaining service. Please request service from behind the perspex screens wherever possible. Thank you.

16. Final reminders

Remember, if you feel unwell then please stay at home and avoid coming to the club. If you start to feel unwell during your round of golf please go straight home. If you feel you will cough or sneeze then please attempt to go outside or catch the sneeze / cough in a tissue.

Please wash or sanitise your hands frequently whilst at the club. Finally, please maintain your social distancing, even when unwinding with a beer! And many thanks for everyone's support to date.