



Media Release

embargo until time/date

Date: 8 April 2020

Islanders urged to think very carefully before they take part in open sea based activities

The current lock-down restrictions allow for two hours of exercise a day. The guidance states you can go walking, cycling, running, sea swimming or take part in other open sea activities for your own health and welfare together with members of your household provided social distancing is maintained with any members of the public you may meet.

With the current fine weather, ormering tides and the Easter weekend approaching it is important that Islanders understand that sea based activities may be dangerous at the best of times. We know that people are desperate to take part in sea based activities but we are urging Islanders not to do so if they are not experienced, and those who are experienced should take extreme care and consider any and all safety precautions. Anyone who has an accident or gets into difficulty may need to use the emergency services which will divert important resources away from managing the COVID-19 situation.

In respect of the ormering tides this week – Islanders should recognise that ormering may be a dangerous activity. Advice from Sea Fisheries is that it is a risky exercise and this is not the time to try ormering for the first time. Sea Fisheries Officers have an obligation to police ormering as there are strict requirements regarding the size of ormers that can be collected and how they are found. Whilst they will be policing ormering as normal, this will be more complicated than usual due to social distancing requirements. If we add into the mix people who don't understand how to ormer and those who are trying it for the first time we are putting our frontline officers at unnecessary risk.

Similarly with recreational fishing from land, this is permitted as an open sea activity, but any person taking part should be experienced and take safety precautions and avoid fishing with people outside of your household, and always observe social distancing.

This does not extend to recreational fishing from a boat, which is not advised. Commercial fishing is considered essential work.

Dr Nicola Brink said:

‘Whilst I appreciate that it is frustrating that people cannot take part in activities that they normally enjoy, I would urge Islanders to listen to the advice and stay at home, only make essential journeys and not to put themselves or others in danger.’

If you choose to take part in open sea activities it is at your own risk and it is advisable that you have other person from your household with you for safety reasons. If that is not possible, go with one other person provided that social distancing is maintained.

We understand that many Islanders live alone or with family members who are unable to exercise. You may, therefore, also exercise with one other person who is not a member of your household provided that social distancing measures are maintained.

Ends