

Updated statement for UKBMS recorders relating to Coronavirus Covid-19 – 24/3/2020

Butterfly monitoring activities to be suspended until further notice

1. The UKBMS partners (Butterfly Conservation, UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, British Trust for Ornithology and Joint Nature Conservation Committee) consider the welfare of staff, volunteers and partners of utmost importance and are taking the threat of Coronavirus (COVID-19) very seriously.
2. The UK Government delivered a very strong and clear message on 23rd March 2020 with their updated guidance:
 - **The single most important action we can all take, in fighting coronavirus, is to stay at home in order to protect the NHS and save lives.**
3. The UKBMS has taken that advice on board and decided that **all transect walking and WCBS recording should cease**, until such time as these restrictions can be safely lifted. Butterfly recording is not an essential activity and we cannot justify promoting it in the current circumstances.
4. In these difficult times there are much more important considerations than butterfly monitoring, and nobody should worry that their transect is not being covered. We already understand that coverage will be greatly reduced this year (as it was during the Foot & Mouth outbreak in 2001), but monitoring is very much a long-term project which will not suffer unduly from the occasional short-term crisis. The health of yourselves and your families is of much more immediate concern.
5. We will continue to monitor this situation closely and will produce revised guidance when the time is right. Please check for any updates at www.ukbms.org.

We recommend that you continue to follow the UK Government's response to the situation at <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>.

If you have any doubts or queries regarding this advice, please feel free to contact the UKBMS team at transect@butterfly-conservation.org