HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS
FOR THE TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY OF DOMINICA
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Health and Safety Guidelines were developed through a collaborative effort of the Ministry of Health, Wellness and New Health Investment, The Ministry of Tourism, International Transport and Maritime Initiatives, and the Standards and Protocols Subcommittee of the COVID-19 Tourism Task Force. Subject matter experts from the private sector reviewed and provided input to this process as well. A heartfelt thanks go out to all the contributors that made completion of this document possible.

OVERVIEW

Health and Safety Guidelines have been developed to help guide service providers in the Tourism Industry to keep guests, employees and local community safe from risks and mitigate the spread of COVID-19. The guidelines are minimum requirements and each service provider or owner can implement more advanced guidelines if so inclined. As medical research advances or the risk profile related to Covid-19 changes, the guidelines will be revised.

The document outlines guidelines for the accommodation, transportation, vending and tour operation sectors. A team comprising of officers from the Environmental Health Department (EHD) of the Ministry of Health, Wellness and New Health Investment and the Quality Assurance Unit of Discover Dominica Authority (DDA) will undertake assessments to ensure that the minimum requirements are being adhered. If all minimum requirements are met the tourism service provider will be issued with Environmental Health Department (EHD)’s Certificate of Approval.

Training is an integral component for the successful implementation and maintenance of these guidelines and for keeping visitors and employees safe. Discover Dominica Authority and / or other industry partners will provide training and sensitization programs. In addition, it is highly recommended that a comprehensive training program specific to one’s operations be developed, updated as necessary, and implemented for the continued safety of guests and employees.

We encourage our visitors to the island and guests to our properties, sites and attractions to adhere to the health and safety guidelines. Continue to wear your face mask, wash and sanitize your hands regularly and practice good respiratory hygiene. These practices are within your control and will help to keep you, our residents and the island you love so much safe.
Dominica’s economy has been increasingly strengthened by tourism, as the government made great strides in the positioning of this country as a world-class ecotourism destination. But the stranglehold that the COVID-19 pandemic has on the economies of every country across the globe, means that our growth was stalled as we took swift actions to mitigate the spread of the infectious disease in Dominica.

While we shall remain guarded against the heavily predicted second wave of COVID-19, Dominica’s successful containment of the disease (less than 20 confirmed cases to date) inspires confidence and underlines our strict adherence to the protocols outlined by the World Health Organisation (WHO), Pan-American Health Organisation (PAHO) and the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA).

Driven by the innate resilience of our citizens, this country was restored quickly despite being devastated by Hurricane Maria in 2017. In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have exercised a similar capacity to recover, to the point that we can now safely welcome you to rediscover Dominica.

You have the assurance that the Government of Dominica, guided by the Ministry of Health, Wellness and New Health Investment, has put systems in place to ensure that our citizens continue to abide by the protocols that helped us avoid the brunt of COVID-19.

I want to take this opportunity to welcome you to Dominica and thank you for choosing us. Our stellar track record with the containment of COVID-19 bodes well for your safety while you enjoy your stay here on the Nature Isle.

The Ministry of Tourism, International Transport and Maritime Initiatives is elated that we are ready to welcome visitors back to nature’s island, where we have and continue to work tirelessly to ensure that it is one of the safest destinations in the world.

In collaboration with the Tourism Task Force, comprising of members of the public and private sector, we have formulated a plan towards a responsible and safe reopening of the industry that many of us so dearly love.

Through the entire process, the health and safety of our residents and visitors has been our highest priority, thus the decision for a phased reopening.

We have reviewed our product offerings to ensure that you will be safe as you explore our hiking trails, go whale watching, relax in our Sulphur spas or enjoy any other nature-based activity.

Together with the Ministry of Health, Wellness and New Health Investments, we have developed and implemented protocols for the collective health and safety of every guest.

Our hearts go out to all the hospitality ambassadors here and all over the world who have been impacted. But as nations begin to reopen, there is hope, we shall rebound.

Dominica, with its verdant rainforests, world class resorts and hotels, exquisite cuisine and Kalinago heritage is ideal to be your sojourn, whether for days or months.

We welcome you! Nature awaits!
ACCOMMODATIONS
SCOPE
The scope of this document entails guidelines as it relates to hotels, guesthouses, apartments, villas, cottages, auxiliary accommodation, inns, bed and breakfast, lodges and resorts.

DOCUMENTATION
Accommodations must be in possession of valid licenses/permits to operate and for all relevant areas to include, restaurants, food storage, food handling areas, kitchens, bars, beauty salons, barber shops, manicure, pedicure, swimming pools, jacuzzi.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES
- Accommodation provider must identify a management team that will audit the COVID-19 protocols and guidelines with regular inspections to ensure compliance. A minimum of one employee at any time during operating hours must be a specifically trained and designated as the COVID-19 Point Person. The person should:
  - Conduct regular spot checks throughout the property
  - Observe protocols being enacted
  - Serve as a point of contact for employee and guest complaints and document and investigate complaints.
- Management must establish log-in procedures for employees and clients and maintain that information for potential contact-tracing.
- Management should have a ‘Health Desk’ with the following capacity:
  - A designated person
  - A logbook or record system
  - Information to be collected:
    - Measured temperature
    - Vital signs
    - Any chronic medical conditions
    - A daily report to be prepared and submitted to or collected by the Health Information Unit (HIU) of the Ministry of Health, Wellness and New Health Investment.
- Accommodation provider must institute a policy for allowing guest(s) who test positive in country to extend their stay.
- Management must enact policies on property to maintain visitor privacy.
- Accommodation sector must complete Covid-19 Action Plan to submit to the Ministry of Health, Wellness and New Health Investment for review and appraisal prior to opening. The plan must detail measures put in place to address all areas of the operation to manage and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 amongst guest and staff. Additionally, the action plan should be flexible and continuously updated as new information becomes available.
Plan should be sent to Isabella John at environmentalhealth@dominica.gov.dm and Odile Jno Baptiste at ajnobaptiste@dominica.dm. Following which an assessment will be undertaken by the Quality Assurance Unit of DDA and the Environmental Health Department.

- Implementation of a robust continuing education and training system at accommodation to ensure all staff members are fully aware of the risk that exits according to duties and mitigation measures to minimize risk and exposure to COVID-19.
- Plan for implementation of clear measures approved by the Environmental Health Department to manage suspect COVID-19 cases in house while liaising with the quarantine authority or designated focal point.

GENERAL

- Infrared temperature thermometers preferably contact less to be used at entrances, for employees, guests, and suppliers. Anyone displaying a temperature over 100°F should be taken to a private area for secondary screening.
- Refrain from handshakes, hugs, and kisses. Determine some other way to welcome guests.
- Ensure that employees that are under Quarantine Order are not at hotel.
- Have procedure in place to manage suspected cases of COVID-19 with guests and employees.
- Implement and enforce strict hygiene rules for staff, based on CDC/WHO and Ministry of Health, Wellness and New Health Investment guidelines.
- Shared equipment is sanitized at end of each shift use (radios, engineering tools, etc).
- Ongoing training for staff regarding measures and health and safety.
- Provide staff with PPE masks and gloves where necessary and enforce use.
- Enforce physical distancing for staff and guests.
- Touch-free hand sanitizer stations in all public areas.
- Post posters reinforcing physical distancing and hygiene rules.
**GUEST ARRIVAL/FRONT DESK AND LOBBY ENTRANCE**

- Install a glass/plexiglass barrier between the front desk agents and guests.
- Create structured/dedicated lines including system to ensure 6ft distancing.
- Use mobile check-in and check-out process or other self-check-in/check-out method.
- Introduce mobile keys or disinfect physical keys. Use antiseptic wipes to clean key cards after every use.
- All equipment should be disinfected between use.
- Luggage sanitization on arrival at property.
- Luggage carts should be sanitized after every use.
- Bellman uses a disposable glove for each bag handled. Bags are left in front of room at door and not taken into the room.
- Bellman wipes handles with disinfectant prior to guest handling.

**STAY**

- Guest should be encouraged to wash and sanitize their hands frequently.
- Hand sanitizer dispensers, touchless whenever possible, should be placed at key guest entrances, exits and contact areas such as reception areas, hotel lobbies, restaurant and bars entrances, meeting and conference spaces, elevator landings, pools, spas and gyms, business centers.
- Guests should be encouraged to keep their social distance from employees and other guests that are not part of their party.

**AMENITIES (POOL, GYM, SPA)**

- Cleaning & sanitizing protocol practiced as per guidelines.
- Chaise lounge chairs to be sanitized after each guest use.
- All guest contact surfaces to be sanitized after each use.
- Towel area should be sanitized frequently.
- The entire pool area should be sanitized at least twice a day in the morning and evening.
- All lounge chairs set with appropriate physical distancing at least 6 feet apart.
- Number of persons in the gym should be restricted as per the Ministry of Health, Wellness and New Health Investment guidelines for physical distancing. It is recommended that at least six feet be left between machines or people.
- All gym equipment should be sanitized after every use.
- All contact areas within the gym should be sanitized every hour including all change rooms and washrooms.

**CONFERENCE SPACES**

- Meeting and banquet set-up arrangements should allow for physical distancing between guests in all meetings and events based on Ministry of Health, Wellness and New Health Investment requirements.
- Food and beverage service at conferences and meetings should be packaged.
- Individual bottles of water on meeting tables instead of a carafe for the table.
FOOD AND BEVERAGE
- Tables cannot be pre-set.
- Set restaurant with at least a six feet distance between tables; reservations should be encouraged.
- Cleaning and sanitization protocol.
- Sanitize restaurants 3 times a day (after breakfast, after lunch and after dinner service).
- All tables and chairs should be sanitized after every guest.
- Menus should be sanitized after every guest or menu could be on a chalk board or disposable.
- Sanitizer available for guests use, preferable touch free ones.
- Condiments to be served in single use containers (either disposable or washed after each use).
- Check presenters, votives, pens and all other reusable guest contact items to be either sanitized after each use or single use.
- Place mats should be sanitized after every use.
- Sanitize trays (all types) and tray stands after each use.
- Hostess station and point of sale to be sanitized after every use.
- Hostesses and managers to manage physical distancing at entries, waiting areas and queues (in addition to signage).
- Food preparation stations to be sanitized at least once per hour.
- Kitchens to be deep cleaned and sanitized at least once per day.

ROOM SERVICE
- All equipment sanitized prior to assigning.
- Food, tables and trays are delivered in hallway (with plate covers) and guest are notified it is outside room. Guests will retrieve own table/tray.
- Table/tray placed outside room when done.
- Charge to room automatically, with no check signing.
- No printed menus in rooms. Consider an app or in-house tv channel.
- Suspension of mini bars.
PUBLIC AREAS

- The following areas should be sanitized at least once per hour or more often if required:
  - Guest elevators
  - All entry doors
  - Restaurant and public area handrails
  - All front of house washrooms
  - Lobby areas
  - Activity areas
  - Souvenir shops
- Any area where guests or employees queue should be clearly marked for appropriate physical distancing. This includes check-in, check-out, elevator lobbies, coffee shops and casual dining and taxi lines.

HOUSEKEEPING

- Carts, trolleys and cleaning equipment and accessories to be sanitized at the start and end of each shift.
- Guest linen should be delivered and removed from guest rooms in single use sealed bags.
- Pillow protectors and mattress pads on the guest room beds are to be changed after every check-out.
- All items stored on shelves in the housekeeping storage rooms are placed in bags and not exposed to the open air when not in use.
- Extra pillows and blankets stored in the guest room closets should be removed and available upon guest request.
- Specific sanitation consideration should be paid to the following guest room areas: desks, counter tops, tables and chairs, phones, tablets and remotes, thermostats, cabinetry, pulls and hardware, doors and doorknobs, bathroom vanities and accessories, bathroom fixtures and hardware, windows, mirrors and frames, lights and lighting controls, closets, hangers and other amenities.
- Spray with long-term disinfectant via an electrostatic sprayer prior to every check-in.
- Minimize contact with guests while cleaning hotel rooms; guest room attendants should offer to return at an alternate time for occupied rooms.

EMPLOYEES (STAFF AREAS)

- Employee temperature to be taken on arrival at work.
- Employee assures that all items brought from home/ outside are disinfected when arriving at work (e.g. chef knives).
- Employee will wash hands every 30 minutes or when compromised.
- Employee must wear mask, and gloves always and replace when masks or gloves are compromised.
- All personal items like cell phones and bags need to be locked away in the locker and can only be retrieved during the employees’ break.
- No handshake policy – verbal warm welcome procedure.
- Physical distancing should be mandatory among staff.
SIGNAGE
• Adequate posters and information should be placed in and around accommodation to provide relevant information/ reminders on COVID-19 action plan to both guest and staff. For example, frequent hand washing, frequent use of hand sanitizers, cough and sneeze etiquette etc.
• Signage must be installed in high-traffic areas indicating proper use and disposal procedures.

SUPPLIES
The recommended supplies listing is as follows:
• No contact hand-held thermometers and/or full body thermal scan - one per entrance. Quantity based on size of property (at least one per use for guest and one for staff)
• Face Masks (enough for each staff member for each shift to have at least one)
• Alcohol-based hand sanitizer (greater than 60% ethanol alcohol or 70% isopropyl alcohol)
• Medical grade Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (N95 face masks, face shields)
• Spray disinfectant/wipes
• Single use paper napkins or towels
• Soap dispensers and/or hand sanitizing stations
• Cleaning agents
• Hands-free garbage cans with covers
• Measuring device (tape measure, yardstick, 6 ft. pole etc.)
• Indicators (flags, markers, stakes, cones etc.)
• Back of the house (BOH) and front of the house (FOH) signage for protocols, awareness regarding symptoms and Ministry of Health, Wellness and New Health Investment contact information
• Tape/stickers
TRANSPORTATION AND ACTIVITY VENDORS
CAR RENTAL

• When conducting transaction with guests, employees should wear a mask.
• Employ the use of touchless online pick-up and processing of rental vehicles where possible to limit the exchange of clipboards, pens/pencils and paperwork. If not possible sanitize pens/pencils after each use.
• Place markers on the floor to mark required physical distancing space while in the waiting/reception area and outside of the office.
• Arrange furniture in the waiting/reception area to allow for physical distancing.
• Install or make available hand sanitizer in the entrance area. Require patrons to sanitize or wash their hands upon entrance to the business.
• Wear face masks at all times inside the office.
• Remove shared reception area material including magazines and books.
• Disinfect the reception desk/table and reception area continuously throughout operating hours.
• Disinfect the reception desk area upon an employee shift change including chair, computer, keyboard, desk, etc.

Sanitization of Office

• Sanitize all equipment regularly and continuously throughout the day, with computers, desk, chairs, furniture etc. being wiped down every two hours at a minimum.
• Wear protective apparel while cleaning and sanitizing, including a face mask.
• Utilize hands-free garbage cans with covers for no touch waste disposal.
• Turn-off water source for water fountains and include signage marking them as closed until further notice.

Sanitization of Vehicle

• Wash the rental vehicle thoroughly and sanitize by wiping down frequently touched surfaces such as door handles, steering wheel, gear shift, door console, air vents, seats and all hard surfaces using alcohol-based sanitizing spray (greater than 60% ethanol alcohol or 70% isopropyl alcohol) before handing over to the next customer.
• Steam clean/wash all mats and upholstery within the vehicle prior to handing over to the next customer.
• Rotate vehicles where possible to allow for space between rentals - between 24 and 72 hours (where feasible given supply and demand).
• Log and report any suspected illnesses of customers and employees to the Ministry of Health & Wellness and New Health Investments including dates and times, signs and symptoms observed, age and gender of the person(s) showing signs and symptoms.

CRAFT AND SOUVENIR SHOPS

• Wear masks at the stall at all times.
• Temperature should be taken every day on entry to the Port restricted area.
• Create structured/dedicated lines including system to ensure 6ft distancing.
• Alcohol based sanitizers (greater than 60% ethanol alcohol or 70% isopropyl alcohol) to be provided for customers.
• To reduce unnecessary contact and touching of merchandise, display a single size run (XS, S, M, L, XL) of top selling apparel. Provide a new item depending on the size to the customer if available.
• Wipe items after each contact with a patron using alcohol-based sanitizer. For items which cannot be safely sanitized require customers and assistants to wash or sanitize hands before touching/handling the item.
• Wash or sanitize hands after receiving payment.
DIVE SHOPS AND WATERSPORTS

- Limit the number of passengers per water sport vessel to 70% capacity to allow for physical distancing.
- Enforce 6 ft. physical distancing between patrons (individuals or groups) if practical and safe. This can be done with the use of tape and markers at the entrance where guests are expected to queue up waiting to board the vessel or engage in an activity.
- All guests should have their temperatures taken prior to boarding the boat.
- Employ the use of disposable serving utensils. Discontinue the buffet service on excursion vessels.
- All snacks should be packaged and served by staff where possible.
- Vessel should be sanitized before and after every trip.
- Sanitize water equipment after each use (life jackets, snorkel, kayaks, pedal boats, banana boats, oars etc.). This can be managed through an inventory and numbering system. All equipment is to be numbered and logged when it is checked-out, returned and cleaned. This will provide a record of sanitation.
- All equipment used by divers, snorkelers or boat passengers must be disinfected after use hung up to dry afterwards. The following equipment MUST be disinfected before reuse:
  - Snorkel
  - Regulator mouthpiece, (Primary and secondary)
  - BCD oral inflator
  - Masks
- Ensure handrails are available for boarding vessels to limit the exposure of crew to helping individuals onto the vessel.
- The Center Disease Control (CDC) recommends a solution of 1/3 cup bleach per gallon of water (22mL bleach per L water) with a soaking time of 1 minute for hard, nonporous surfaces. This relatively weak 2% bleach solution and short contact time should not cause damage to scuba regulators.
- Frequently touched areas within the dive shop should be sanitized every hour for e.g. counters, shelves, racks, door handles, and any area that may come in contact with the guests.
- High-touch areas including cylinders and fill stations should be sanitized as it is likely that a virus could survive at diving gas storage pressures.
- As the wearing of face masks maybe a drown hazard, the use should be discouraged for all water activities.
- Ensure alcohol-based hand sanitizer (greater than 60% ethanol alcohol or 70% isopropyl alcohol) is available for guests.
- Discontinue the use of laminated menus with costs and descriptions which are handed out to guests. As an alternative, post the information on signage boards. Sanitize pens used for completing water sport waivers after each usage.
- Dive shop employees should maintain good hygiene by washing hands frequently.
- Update the company’s existing emergency action plan to include a potential COVID-19 infection by staff or customers. Be sure to outline all disinfection protocols and ensure that they are being diligently followed by all staff.
TAXI SERVICE PROVIDER

Airport Capacity
- Limit capacity of Airport Taxi for home pickups to 70% capacity for groups of strangers i.e. 16 seaters to carry 10, 29 seaters to carry 20, smaller buses to carry 4 and SUV and cars to carry 2.
- For airport pickups please adhere to the roster guidelines of the Airport Taxi Association i.e four (4) persons per cab. However, there is an exception of two (2) passengers for SUV and cars.

Protection
- Transport all passengers in the back. Do not allow passengers to sit next to driver.
- Limited contact with the passenger (plexiglass between driver and passenger is advised).
- Wear face mask at all times inside of the vehicle. This includes passengers and driver.
- Guests should wash or sanitize hands prior to entering the vehicle.
- Provide hand sanitizer (greater than 60% ethanol alcohol or 70% isopropyl alcohol) to guests within the vehicle.
- Transportation operators should have routine daily temperature checks on arrival at the airport.

Luggage Handling
- Wash or sanitize hands upon completion of luggage handling with an alcohol-based sanitizer (greater than 60% ethanol alcohol or 70% isopropyl alcohol).

Payment /Tipping
- Arrange for payment for transportation to be done through the hotel (where possible) to limit the exchange of cash.
- Wash or sanitize hands after receiving payment.

Sanitization
- Vehicles should be sanitized before and after each trip. Interior of vehicles to include seats, handles and windows should be wiped down with an approved form of sanitizer.
- Vehicles should be sanitized by trained personnel and not taken to a car wash.
HAIR BRAIDERS

- Hair braider temperature should be taken on entry to the Port restricted area.
- Wear a mask when providing a service.
- Visitors should be encouraged to wear a mask.
- Alcohol based sanitizers (greater than 60% ethanol alcohol or 70% isopropyl alcohol) to be provided for customers.
- Hair braiders should wear protective clothing for example an apron or cape.
- Hair accessories should be sanitized with alcohol and barbicide before use.
- Chair should be sanitized before and after servicing a client.
- Wash hands with soap and water before servicing clients.
- Sanitize or wash hands after receiving payment.
- Avoid congregating in the designated area of operations.
- Discontinue the use of price lists which are handed out to guests. As an alternative, post the information on signage boards.

TOUR GUIDES

- Prior to the start of the tour hands should be washed or sanitized.
- Masks should be worn on tour based on the activity (land-based vs water base may vary)
- Maintain physical distance between guest while on tour.
- Monitor for proper physical distancing, ideally 6 ft. between individuals or groups unless impractical or unsafe. Individuals in the same party (family and friends) do not need to adhere to strict physical distancing requirements.
- Tour guides should seat at the front of the bus or vehicle.
- Refrain from taking photos using guest cameras or phones.
- Encourage visitors to use tip bins.
- Adhere to protocols set forth by the tour operating company or hotel.
- Tour Guides are to adhere to protocols for the ports and site and attractions i.e. temperature checks, wearing of masks etc.
- Carry alcohol-based hand sanitizer (greater than 60% ethanol alcohol or 70% isopropyl alcohol) and utilize it after interaction with guests including the exchange of currency.
TOUR OPERATORS-TRANSPORTATION AND TOURS TO SITES FOR CRUISE AND STAYOVER VISITORS

- Management to designate an individual charged with the responsibility of screening Tour Guides and Taxi Operators/Drivers in their employ. Screening will include temperature checks and recording, observing for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and equipping with hand sanitizer and face masks etc.
- Ensure seats, windows, door handles are sanitized before and after tour; especially if doing multiple trips.
- Ensure there is limited contact with the guest (plexiglass between driver and passenger is advised).
- Transportation operators should have routine daily temperature checks administered by the Dominica and Sea Port Authority (DASPA) upon entry into the restricted area.
- Ensure driver, tour guides and guests wear masks.
- Ensure alcohol-based hand sanitizer (greater than 60% ethanol alcohol or 70% isopropyl alcohol) is available, in the vehicle, for guests.
- Limit the capacity on buses and other vehicles to 70%.
- Groups and members of same party should be kept together.
- Consider a tip bin to avoid contact between guest and driver or tour guide.
- Buses and vehicles should be boarded in order – furthest from the entrance first.
- Signage on the vehicle as reminders of protocols.
- Ensure drink stop venues adhere to physical distancing, hand washing, and sanitation requirements as stipulated by the Ministry of Health, Wellness and New Investment.
- Signing of waivers may have to be done electronically, prior to getting off the ship.
SITES AND FACILITIES WITHIN NATIONAL PARKS, TRAILS AND ECOTOURISM SITES

- A schedule of when the site is available to visitors will be published to the public
- The forestry, Wildlife & parks Division will develop a training schedule for Park wardens for training before opening and on an ongoing basis
- Management of the Tourism Facilities will post COVID-19 health related signage as appropriate for the function and the size of the space
- The Forestry, Wildlife & Parks Division will develop and erect COVID-19 health related signage for the trails
- Management of the Tourism Facilities will implement a sanitization and cleaning schedule in accordance with general protocols of cleaning and sanitizing of restrooms and other infrastructure after use by both staff and visitors
- The Ministry of Environment will develop and implement a system of paying user fees to limit contact with employees
- Management to establish log-in procedures for employees and visitors and maintain that information for potential contact tracing; (temperature to be included);
- The Forestry, Wildlife & parks Division and the Ministry of Tourism to report any suspected case of COVID19 to the Ministry of Health and Wellness
- Management of the tourism facilities will provide details on the number of people that can be in the facilities and on platforms as per the physical distancing guidelines

MEASURES RECOMMENDED FOR VISITORS

- Visitors must observe physical distancing at trails
- Keep your distance 6ft between other hikers
- Hike in single file
- Give way to other groups you may encounter.
- Carry along a mask in case you encounter other hikers.
- Carry along your own sanitizer.
- Avoid congested areas.
- Where there are loop trails; use the entire loop to limit the chances of encountering other trail users.
- If you feel sick, stay home.
- Visitors should call the National Parks office at 1 767 61 1 5854 to inform of their intention to hike the more difficult trails.

*PLEASE NOTE THAT HEALTH AND SAFETY OF VISITORS AND STAFF IS A PRIORITY*