

How do we provide a safe environment in our Community building from the 19th July?

Here is the overview on the government Covid page directed at individuals;

England has moved to Step 4 (19th July)

- Government expects and recommends that people wear face coverings in crowded areas such as public transport;
- being outside or letting fresh air in
- minimising the number, proximity and duration of social contacts.
- encouraging and supporting businesses and large events to use the NHS COVID Pass in high risk settings. The Government will work with organisations where people are likely to be in close proximity to others outside their household to encourage the use of this. If sufficient measures are not taken to limit infection, the Government will consider mandating certification in certain venues at a later date.

Although most legal restrictions have been lifted at step 4, and many people have been vaccinated, it is still possible to catch and spread COVID-19, even if you are fully vaccinated, and we are still in the third wave of this pandemic in the UK.

COVID-19 will be a feature of our lives for the foreseeable future, so we need to learn to live with it and manage the risk to ourselves and others.

As COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, it is important that we all use personal judgement to manage our own risk. All of us can play our part by exercising common sense and considering the risks. While no situation is risk free, there are actions we can take to protect ourselves and others around us. Following this guidance will help you stay safe and protect others by controlling the spread. Every action to help reduce the spread will reduce any further resurgence of the virus in the coming months.

Lifting restrictions

Most legal restrictions to control COVID-19 have been lifted at step 4. This means that:

- You do not need to stay 2 metres apart from people you do not live with. There are also no limits on the number of people you can meet.
- However, in order to minimise risk at a time of high prevalence, you should limit the close contact you have with those you do not usually live with, and increase close contact gradually. This includes minimising the number, proximity and duration of social contacts.
- You should meet outdoors where possible and let fresh air into homes or other enclosed spaces.
- The Government is no longer instructing people to work from home if they can. However, the Government expects and recommends a gradual return over the summer.
- The requirement to wear face coverings in law has been lifted. However, the Government expects and recommends that people wear face coverings in crowded areas such as public transport.
- There are no longer limits on the number of people who can attend weddings, civil partnerships, funerals and other life events (including receptions and celebrations). There is no requirement for

table service at life events, or restrictions on singing or dancing. You should follow guidance for [weddings](#) and [funerals](#) to reduce risk and protect yourself and others.

- There are no longer restrictions on group sizes for attending communal worship. COVID-19 has not gone away, so it's important to remember the actions you can take to keep yourself and others safe. Everybody needs to continue to act carefully and remain cautious.

Full details available at this link;

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do>

What does this mean for organisations who run community buildings and hire out space?

The government have lifted the legal restrictions relating to Covid. But we are and for the foreseeable future will be living with the ever present risk of transmitting or contracting Covid in exactly the same way as we have for the last few months. The difference is that through being vaccinated the risk of transmission and the impact of Covid on our health and the outcome being fatal has been reduced – not eradicated. So as operators of buildings that will encourage people to be active and engaged we need to remember that we have a general duty of care to keep our staff, hirers and visitors safe, so;

Where activity can take place we will need to ensure the premises are opened in a covid secure way. This will mean reviewing any covid related risk assessments to ensure that they reflect what you are actually doing from the 19th of July. The legal requirements for wearing a face covering and to socially distance are being relaxed for individuals. However, as organisations and businesses we do now need to consider the duty of care we owe to staff, hirers and visitors and this will most likely mean that you will want to retain some degree of face covering and social distancing within your building. To help with this we have created a template statement (at the end of this document) for you to adapt and use to this effect through your terms and conditions, booking process, social media and signage within your building.

Other guidance and information relating to covid is starting to migrate to the HSE web page

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/index.htm>

In revisiting your covid risk assessment use the HSE page for additional information (or get in touch with us directly if this is at all unclear and we will help where we can).

Even though an increasing proportion of the population has received two vaccination doses, the following remain the main control measures to limit the continued spread of Covid regardless of whether people are fully vaccinated, so as part of providing a Covid safe environment you will want to consider (links in the table below);

- Adequate ventilation
- Good hand hygiene
- Frequent cleaning

Collecting visitor details is also still a requirement. It is still necessary to provide a manual option to do this for those visitors who do not have access to the NHS track and trace app. Where people are attending a session such as Zumba, it is appropriate for the hirer to collect these details so long as they are able to readily share these with the NHS should your organisation be contacted as part of the NHS track and trace programme (link in the table below).

Below is a table that considers control measures and bookings from the 19th July.



Activity	Step 4 19 th July	Ongoing guidance and information
Covid secure measures		
Face covering Social distancing 2m or 1m+ with additional measures	No longer a legal requirement	Still a good idea to minimise the likelihood of transmitting or contracting Covid (even if people have had both vaccinations) in places that are; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enclosed • Busy • Mixing with people who don't know each other
Adequate ventilation	https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/equipment-and-machinery/air-conditioning-and-ventilation/index.htm	
Good hand hygiene	https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/cleaning/handwashing-using-hand-sanitiser.htm	
Sufficient cleaning	https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/cleaning/cleaning-workplace.htm	
Collecting contact details	It is no longer a legal requirement for venues to display an NHS QR code or request that customers, visitors and staff 'check in', this is still encouraged.	
Bookings – Indoor or outdoor		
Early years providers	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-guidance	
Support groups	No legal limits on attendees, no legal requirement to wearing face coverings or to social distance	
Wedding ceremonies, funerals, wakes and other life events	No legal limits on attendees, no legal requirement to wearing face coverings or to social distance.	Specific guidance available; weddings, partnerships, receptions and celebration planning, funerals and commemorative event planning no limits on the number of people who can sing indoors or outdoors
Worship	No legal limits on attendees, no legal requirement to wearing face coverings or to social distance	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship no limits on the number of people who can sing indoors or outdoors.



		This includes indoor congregational and communal singing.
Dance and Exercise	No legal limits on attendees, no legal requirement to wearing face coverings or to social distance	https://emduk.org/important-information-from-emd-uk-on-coronavirus-covid-19/#toggle-id-1
Sport	No legal limits on attendees, no legal requirement to wearing face coverings or to social distance	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-grassroots-sports-guidance-for-the-public-and-sport-providers#whats-changed
Meetings e.g. committee, interest groups, AGM's	No legal limits on attendees, no legal requirement to wearing face coverings or to social distance	

Links and further information

Community centre specific guidance – Gov.uk – last updated 17th May

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-multi-purpose-community-facilities/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-multi-purpose-community-facilities>

Local authority areas receiving short term additional support/guidance – check to see if this applies to your area;

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do#extra-support-deployed-in-areas-receiving-an-enhanced-response-to-covid-19>

Template statement you may want to adapt to encourage people to continue to wear face coverings and to socially distance within your building;

‘Even though the legal restrictions for socially distancing and wearing face coverings lifted on the 19th July we [insert name of organisation] have a duty of care to provide a safe environment both for our staff and visitors. With that in mind we would like to continue to provide a safe environment with particular consideration for those in our community who either have not yet received both Covid vaccination jabs or who continue to be at a greater risk of contracting Covid. To help us we would really appreciate that you continue to wear a face covering while in the communal areas of the building [put up signage to indicate these areas]. While you are within your session the discretion to wear face coverings will continue to sit with the organiser of your activity, although if these sessions are busy we would encourage you to wear a face covering especially where you are mixing with people you don’t normally meet.

In addition, we would also request that you continue to avoid congregating in any communal areas of the building prior to or after your activity’.

First aid provision – Face coverings have never been recognised PPE, however through the process of reviewing your risk assessments and now that face coverings are not a legal requirement you may want to look into any first aid provision on more detail to check you are following current guidance;

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/first-aid-and-medicals/first-aid-certificate-coronavirus.htm>

Collecting Contact details for NHS track and trace;

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/maintaining-records-of-staff-customers-and-visitors-to-support-nhs-test-and-trace?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=656a1931-7d4a-4a16-bb78-7cf168c6b2be&utm_content=daily#history



Suggested next steps checklist

The following table may help you plan a way forward that is appropriate for your organisation that allows you to check you've covered everything and that you continue to provide a safe environment for all – staff, hirers and visitors. The first couple of rows have been filled with potential options, feel free to adapt and add more rows/details to suit you – if there is anything not covered in the table and you aren't sure how to proceed please get in touch.

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Item	What changed from the 19 th July – Step 4	What we will do	Who needs to know and how will we do this	Completed
Face coverings	No longer a legal requirement – but recommended when; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In a confined space In a busy space Interacting with people you don't normally mix with 	Encourage use of face coverings; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> within our building encourage hirers to support this stance 	Staff – meeting, email, what's App group (Information to staff is best delivered as directly as you can to enable discussion. It is helpful to consider concerns and have responses ready to ensure any changes go smoothly and staff are fully engaged in the process) Hirers – T&C's, Booking form, email Visitors – social media post, signage in building, encouraging hirers to share information	
Social distancing 2m or 1m+	No longer a legal requirement – but recommended when; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In a confined space In a busy space Interacting with people you 	Encourage people not to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> congregate in the communal areas of our building Queue for sessions within the building Interact with people they don't normally mix with. 	Similar to above – for this measure you may have or will in the future alter some physical measures such as; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staggered start times Reduced capacities for your internal spaces Reduced session slots One way systems 	



	<p>don't normally mix with</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One in one out toilet use • Screen as reception areas <p>Bear in mind these don't need to change immediately, it is merely that the legal requirement has been removed – the measure is almost certainly still a good idea and a good way to reduce the likelihood of transmission</p>	
<p>NHS Track and Trace (QR code)</p>	<p>No longer a legal requirement – but recommended</p>	<p>Encourage people to sign into our building. Hirers should continue to take registers for their own records but we will encourage them to continue to make these details available to NHS track and trace should you be contacted (if you are not using the NHS QR code this contact will be due to someone testing positive letting the NHS know that they were in your building, with is likely to be more targeted than being 'pinged' by the app...</p>	<p>Similar to the first point about face coverings. For this item it will help people to understand whether they will need to use the NHS app to 'check in' to your building. This is causing problems to some businesses and there is a 'feeling' that the accuracy of the app is based more on the range of an individual's Bluetooth feature on their phone, rather than the 2m or 1m+ guidance. However you feel on this topic it is vital that individuals who feel unwell DO NOT visit your building and if anyone does become aware that they may have had covid when they were in your premises it is essential that they share that information with the NHS to help reduce the spread of covid - this is regardless of whether they were actually ill (asymptomatic) or if they have had both vaccinations.</p>	



Risk assessments	Still a legal requirement. Need reviewing to remain in line with any changes that you are making (these need reviewing each time you make changes to what you are doing in terms of Covid)	The HSE have a growing resource to help with this; https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/index.htm these keep changing, for example face coverings are not PPE, and social distancing is no longer a legal requirement so these sections have been removed or you are directed elsewhere for information – we will continue to monitor this...	Staff – may need training or information to ensure they are kept up to date Hirers/visitors – where changes impact what you expect from these individuals you will want to amend T's and C's, booking forms or processes and you may need to display signage to underpin any changes	
First Aid provision	This will need reviewing if your first aiders are no longer wearing face coverings	While face coverings are not PPE you may want to consider the wellbeing of your first aiders now these are not a legal requirement, so this is a good time to refresh knowledge on what first aid cover you have decided to provide be it for staff only or staff and visitors; https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/first-aid-and-medicals/first-aid-certificate-coronavirus.htm	Staff – may need training or additional information to ensure they are up to date with what is expected of them. Hirers/visitors – this would be a good opportunity to remind people of the cover provided and how they interact with this.	
Insurance/licences		If you are reopening for the first time since lockdown you should check these are in date		
Building checks		If you are reopening for the first time since lockdown you should check everything is in working order from your lights, power, fire extinguishers, legionnaires test as applicable		