

## Appendix D

### Management of Social Distancing at Community Facilities and Activities A Risk Based approach

Following the end of lockdown community groups need to know whether or not they can once again use community facilities to hold their usual – or a version of their usual – activities and, if so, what conditions may be appropriate so as to reduce the risk of spreading infection and address fear.

The following takes a risk-based approach to a complex situation, bearing in mind: the hundreds of different kinds of organised activities which take place in or around village and community halls and playing fields; the important need to address isolation, loneliness and mental health issues and take advantage of the warmer summer months; the needs of families with young people; the need to enable people to remain fit and healthy; and the need for people who normally earn a living around community facilities to do so. This note cannot cover every situation and is intended only as a guide to help halls draw up their own policy towards accepting bookings, with tips shared by halls, so that the Booking Secretary knows how to respond to requests.

The following points should be considered in risk assessing whether each potential hirer can meet the COVID-19 secure guidelines:

- Can attendance at indoor activities be limited to the capacity figures the hall sets and will the organiser be able or willing to comply with social distancing requirements (see Section 2.2)? What arrangements would be made if more people attend than the room has capacity for? A meeting which usually takes place in a committee room may need to be moved to a larger space to allow social distancing.
- The likely age of those attending. If 70 or over, or if clinically vulnerable, can arrangements be made to ensure 2m social distancing **throughout** their use of the premises, including when using toilets.
- Are the organisers willing to clean regularly used surfaces before the event, while it takes place and before leaving?
- Will very young children be attending, who would find social distancing difficult, and how will that be addressed?
- If activities are to be held outdoors what arrangements will be made in the event of rain or a cold snap, eg tents, umbrellas?
- Will other organisations be using the premises at the same time? If so, what arrangements will be made to avoid contact between the different groups e.g. staggered start/finish times, Occupied/vacant signage for toilets?
- If an activity will take place outside, will it require access to toilets? If so, a charge would be reasonable to help defray cleaning and other costs such as water rates and insurance.
- Will it comply with any Government Guidance for specific activities (eg places of worship if a religious ceremony is to take place, guesthouses and hostels if for overnight accommodation such as cubs). The older age profile and difficulty complying with social distancing at tables has led the English Bridge Union to advise Bridge Clubs against re-opening for a period. Other national organisations may issue their own advice following consultation with Government eg re use of Cricket nets.

The following are all subject to social distancing, cleaning and hygiene being met:

## Group 1: Permitted

- **Activities which provide essential services, or otherwise already permitted:** e.g. Pre-schools, food and medicine distribution, making PPE, Pop-Up COVID-19 testing. Retail activities such as Community Shops and indoor markets (eg Farmers Markets, Craft Markets, Antique Fairs) must comply with Government Guidance for the retail sector.
- **Use by Schools.** Guidance has kindly been provided by the Charity Commission, which is available from your Network member if required.
- **Office and certain other forms of employment:** e.g. Building work to the hall, Parish Council, or other office, hire by local companies or organisations for training events, distribution purposes, video recording/transmission. A hairdresser or health therapist (providing they are not offering a service which is not yet allowed to re-open such as nails). The relevant Government Guidance for that type of employment should be observed.
- **Activities which can be held outdoors and where social distancing can be readily achieved:** e.g. tennis, bowls, football training, keep fit type classes, dog training classes, dancing classes. Equipment should be cleaned regularly e.g. gate latches, handles, balls etc. DCMS guidance permits personal training or coaching if outside, if people are able to follow social distancing guidelines and provided no more than 6 people from different households are gathering. People who play team sports can now train together (eg hold fitness sessions) "but they must be in wholly separate groups of no more than 6 and follow social distancing guidelines". See link to DCMS guidance in Section 6.
- **Activities held indoors where smaller numbers of people attend:** For example: seated activities and meetings held in a large hall such as art classes, history group, dog training classes, weight loss groups, Parish Council meetings. While it is recommended that meetings continue to take place digitally rather than face to face, where possible, the Government Guidance for community facilities specifically permits meetings of civic, political or community groups (eg parish council, ward meeting of political party, charity board of trustees), MP or councillor surgery/drop in sessions. A combination may be feasible: A face to face meeting may help those who struggle with digital technology to participate or attend, while others participate digitally.
- **Libraries and book lending schemes:** Users should be asked to clean hands on arrival, regularly if browsing and when leaving. Returned books should be placed in a

box for 72 hours before placing back on display. Cash donations placed in a bowl and handled by one person wearing gloves.

## **Group 2: Requiring more careful management**

- **Small events providing catering:** e.g. coffee mornings, pop-up cafés or luncheon clubs, where seating may be out of doors and/or well-spaced. Takeaway drink or food can be provided from a room directly accessed from outside. Government Guidance for pubs, cafes and restaurants may be helpful in working out how to run these safely. Community cafes will be required to comply with that Guidance. NB Special arrangements should be made for vulnerable people in the shielding category who wish to attend, to enable participation and avoid their continued isolation.
- **Activities for children and young people:** e.g. cubs, parent and toddler activities, small youth clubs, railway modelling club, Sunday school, summer holiday playschemes, picnics or BBQs in outdoor areas. Fitness or sports activity should only be held outdoors. For activities with toddlers, soft toys should be avoided and parents can be encouraged to bring their own toys.
- **Public meetings and public consultation events (eg planning):** A one-way system can be created for exhibitions. For meetings attendees can be asked to use the furthest seat from the entrance first unless hard of hearing, handouts provided at the end rather than at the beginning. Contact details should be taken (for NHS Test and Trace) by one person so attendees do not share a pen. Digital participation can also be encouraged.
- **Other larger events including those with seated audiences:** eg gardening club, film show, bingo, quiz night. Attendees should be asked to use the furthest seats from the entrance first unless hard of hearing. A booking system can be encouraged to manage numbers and obtain contact details for NHS Test and Trace.
- **Weddings and wedding receptions -** weddings and similar life cycle religious ceremonies are permitted where attended by up to 30 persons. Recorded music is recommended. A musician may play a non-wind instrument. Any receptions should be limited to this number to avoid mass gatherings. See also Government guidance on Places of Worship. Government guidance for cafes and restaurants may be helpful in relation to catering.
- **Celebration events:** Government guidance is that community facilities should not facilitate large gatherings or celebrations so numbers at any such events would need to be carefully controlled. It would therefore be advisable to limit numbers to 30, as for weddings. Note that loud music or broadcasts are not currently permitted, the purpose being to avoid aerosol dispersal.
- **Social Clubs and bars:** These may open in accordance with Government guidance for pubs. They may also provide takeaway refreshments from a room accessed directly from outside.

**Group 3: Not permitted at 4<sup>th</sup> July, awaits further Government guidance:**

- **Indoor sport and exercise classes:** Activities such as badminton, table tennis, Zumba, carpet bowls, dancing classes and School PE lessons are not permitted indoors: The Government Guidance for multi-purpose community facilities says indoor community facilities should “not permit sports activities that would typically take place in a gym, sports venue or a fitness or dancing studio”, which have not yet been permitted to open. ACRE have questioned whether this includes gentle exercise such as yoga, pilates (where clients are well spaced in a large hall and the premises are well ventilated). However, to our regret, Government have confirmed that their Guidance does include them, these are not permitted owing to the risk of aerosol transmission of the virus.
- **Outdoor sports involving bodily contact or competitions, or a ball shared by many players:** e.g. football matches, cricket
- **Live Performances:** Including drama, comedy, music, choirs (owing to risk of aerosol transmission of the virus among performers and audience). Further guidance is awaited

#### **Group 4: “Grey Areas”**

##### **Rehearsals, broadcasts, solo performances etc**

Government guidance is expected about how performing arts activity can be safely managed in different settings, including rehearsing, filming and broadcasting without an audience. ACRE hopes that DCMS Guidance may clarify the situation, allowing carefully arranged rehearsals by amateur dramatics and panto groups and some kinds of band practices (eg without woodwind or brass instruments), as well as those performances which, in ACRE’s view, are less “aerosol risky” when considered in the light of risk mitigation for an event as a whole, such as solo performers, those playing piano, guitar and other non-wind instruments, mime, children’s entertainers (where a carefully arranged magic show, for example, can help keep young children socially distanced).

In the meantime showing a film of the performance taking place earlier in the hall may offer a (less satisfactory) solution. (Cinemas and concert halls are permitted to re-open for film).

##### **Indoor Bowls**

Bowling and croquet Greens are permitted to re-open so carpet or short mat bowls can be held outdoors. However, moving mats would be difficult. Bowling alleys are not yet permitted to re-open but offer a very different environment to indoor bowls. While Government guidance advises community facilities against permitting indoor exercise owing to aerosol transmission, indoor bowls represent an activity rather than exercise, owing to its gentle nature. The ability to socially distance would indicate that it could be permitted providing there is adequate ventilation. However, the age profile and possible clinical vulnerability of players would need to be considered. The English Short Mat Bowling Association are in discussion with Government about how safe play can recommence and guidance will be available on their website.