

Information Sheet

Re-opening Village and Community Halls post COVID-19 closure Issue 9 – Current on 22 April 2021

Those responsible for managing halls are advised to make sure they are on their local [ACRE Network](#) member's mailing list. Also, to keep monitoring their ACRE Network member website and social media channels for any updates or check the gov.uk coronavirus website. This will ensure they are alerted to changes in Government guidance.

ACRE has been working as far as possible with relevant Government departments so that hall managers have confidence they are working to "joined up" guidance. It aims to provide practical information to assist hall managers to comply with Government guidance and the Health Protection Regulations. Where any temporary local lockdowns are in force, those will take precedence over information contained here e.g., certain activities may be curtailed.

Village and Community Halls are multi-purpose premises, so it is based on interpretation, as far as possible, of the Government's Roadmap Out of Lockdown (22nd February 2021) and guidance subsequently published. However, it is not possible to go into the detail of all the relevant Government guidance and links are given in Section 6. Government Guidance for Community Facilities re-issued on 12th April needs to be considered alongside other Guidance for specific activities such as that for grassroots sport and performance so while summaries are given in Appendices D, J and K the links given should be checked. This Sheet may be updated in accordance with any subsequent government guidance.

The term "managers" is used here to describe those responsible for managing a village hall, community centre, church hall, parish hall or similar multi-purpose community facility, whether volunteer trustees, committee members or paid staff. Please note that any advice or information provided here should not be taken as a substitute for professional legal or other advice.

Thank you to Louise Beaton, ACRE Board member and Community Halls Consultant for producing this Information Sheet for ACRE. We are grateful to ACRE Network members for keeping us abreast of what is happening on the ground and to the hall committees who have kindly shared their own documents for contribution to this Guidance.

Also, to all members of the ACRE team for their support.

All comments regarding this Information Sheet are welcome [Deborah Clarke](#), ACRE

Changes in Version 9:

- **Section 1** summarised the Step approach in the Roadmap Out of Lockdown
- **Section 2.2** and Appendix E reflected adjusted “rule of 6 or 2 household” groups.
- **Sections 5 and 6** reflect updated grants and links.
- **Appendix A:** Fire Safety Risk Assessments and Covid -19 Risk Assessments should be reviewed/checked.

Changes in Version 10:

- **Appendix C** – Para 2 of the poster is amended to require those who develop symptoms to obtain a Covid test only.
- **Appendix D has been substantially revised** to reflect the 4 Steps out of Lockdown and the implications for different activities. A table shows when common activities can re-start. The exemption allowing wedding receptions indoors at Step 2 was withdrawn (these may only be held outdoors with 15 attending until Step 3, when 30 can attend indoors). New government guidance for hospitality and catering, worship, children’s birthday parties, organised events is incorporated.
- **Appendix E: Special Hire Conditions:** Changes are made to clauses 4, 7,9,11,18.
- **Appendix J:** provides a summary of the new Performing Arts Guidance.
- **Appendix K:** provides a summary of the information now available about holding sports and exercise.

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1. The Step-by-Step approach

The Government laid out its recovery plans in the Roadmap out of Lockdown. There are four steps in the process. These are set out in Appendix D as they apply to village and community halls and recreation grounds, with a table showing the anticipated step which different types of activity can open. Each step is contingent on all four of the following conditions being met:

1. The coronavirus vaccine programme continues to go to plan.
2. Evidence shows vaccines are sufficiently reducing the number of people dying or needing hospital treatment.
3. Infection rates do not risk a surge in hospital admissions.
4. New variants of the virus do not fundamentally change the risk of lifting.

In summary, subject to a hall being Covid-secure and compliance with social contact rules:

- Under lockdown village and community halls could only open for permitted activities e.g., pre-schools, essential retail, essential work, voluntary and public services which cannot be undertaken from home.
- At Step one (8th March) schools and wraparound childcare opened, with outdoor activities beginning on 29th March.
- At Step two (12th April earliest), village and community halls are also permitted to host a very limited number of additional activities: supervised activities for children, parent and toddler groups, for weddings, wedding receptions (outdoors only) and wakes with up to 15 people, and non-essential retail (such as indoor markets).
- At Step three (17th May earliest), more community activities can take place indoors, subject to size limits and the "rule of 6".
- At Step four (21st June earliest) a full range of activities will be permitted, including dancing, and social contact rules hopefully removed.

2. Planning for re-opening

2.1 The COVID-19 Secure Guidelines: Trustees, managers and any staff need to be aware that the following 6 key points apply. These underpin COVID Secure status and this Information Sheet. Some hirers may be particularly cautious about returning and it will assist everyone if you can make clear that arrangements reflect them:

- **A Covid – 19 Risk Assessment must have been undertaken** before any Community Hall opens.
- **Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell: Nobody** should attend the premises if they have symptoms or are self-isolating due to symptoms in their household.
- **Clean your hands often:** Sanitiser or soap and water should be provided at entry and exit points, sanitiser and/or running water, soap and paper towels or hot air driers in toilets and kitchens.
- **Respiratory hygiene:** Everyone (except children under the age of 7) needs to be encouraged to wear a face mask, avoid touching their mouth, eyes, and nose. Tissues need to be disposed of into a bin, then hands cleaned. A "**Catch it, Bin it, Kill it**" poster is available (see end for link).

- **Regular cleaning of surfaces that are touched frequently:** including door handles, handrails, tabletops, sinks, toilet areas, kitchen surfaces. Ordinary domestic products can be used.
- **Maintain social distancing where possible:** Social distancing guidelines require at least 2 metres (3 steps) to be maintained where possible between individuals or groups, which can be no more than 6 people or 2 households, and, where not possible, 1metre plus other mitigation measures. Bookings can be accepted where social distancing can be maintained and contacts below 2m are minimised and transitory. See 2.2 below.

Do not re-open until you have identified the necessary safety, compliance, management, and operational issues through a COVID-19 risk assessment and established a plan to address and mitigate them. You are not obliged to re-open immediately and it would be unwise to do so if you have not been through that process. If you conducted a Covid-19 Risk Assessment in 2020, it should now be reviewed.

Appendix A provides a checklist of tasks likely to be needed prior to re-opening, of which compliance with COVID-19 secure guidelines is just part.

Hall managers will need to engage with their regular hirers to ensure that the 5 COVID-19 Secure Guidelines requirements above are clearly understood. **Appendix B** provides a pro-forma which can be used to find out from hirers which facilities are likely to be required when. Trustees appointed by organisations which use the premises have an important role to play in communicating these requirements to their members and in ensuring the special hire conditions which need to be applied are followed. See 2.5 below and **Appendix E**.

As part of opening after lockdown, self-certification should be displayed that halls are complying with COVID-19 Secure Guidelines. This will also help users feel confident about using the premises. See **Appendix C** for a sample certificate/poster.

All halls are required to display a QR code for NHS Test and Trace. This is covered in **Appendix M**.

2.2. Social Distancing, capacity and test and trace at Village and Community Halls

a) The Social Distancing requirements: Reducing risk of transmission remains essential. Government Guidance on safe opening of community facilities emphasises the importance of ensuring adherence to social distancing of 2 metres or 1 metre with risk mitigation (where 2m is not viable), such as face coverings, good hygiene, and ventilation. It says that in an “enclosed area, owners and operators should identify an advisory limit on the maximum number of users able to use the community facility”. The size and layout of the premises will determine the maximum number of people that can be accommodated while also facilitating social distancing. In order to achieve social distancing requirements, as far as possible, managers will need to work out the capacity of rooms and set limits on the number of people permitted to use a particular hall or room at any one time. As a starting point, this might be around one quarter of the seating or (for non-seated activities, dancing) capacity set for fire safety purposes or the size of the room in square metres divided by 4 (the answer may not be the same, because the fire capacity is usually based on the number of fire exits). As this method will be based on individuals attending, rather than groups of no more than 6 people or 2 households, this offers a cautious approach and testing out different layouts may allow different (higher) capacities for different activities. See also section 2.5.

b) Larger events: Community facilities which are COVID-19 Secure will be able to hold indoor gatherings, subject to their own capacity limits, which are organized by a business, charity, public body or similar organization from Step 3 but will need to ensure the safety of the public and prevent large gatherings or mass events from taking place. Numbers permitted at weddings, wedding receptions and

other life-event religious ceremonies (funerals, baptisms etc.) rise at each step of the Roadmap (see Appendix D) and are limited to 30 at Step 3. The continued need to prevent large gatherings (where social distancing and track and trace would be difficult) is clear from previous Government Guidance: "Local authorities should avoid issuing licenses for events that could lead to larger gatherings forming and provide advice to businesses on how to manage events of this type", with a reminder that venues can be closed. For events with more than 30 people more attention should be paid to stewarding, and this is reflected in **Appendix E**.

c) The rules on "rule of 6" groups have changed slightly in 2021: Outdoors only at Step 2, and indoors at Step 3, activities will be able to take place providing that people remain within "**a group of up to 6 people or 2 households**". Mixing between different groups will not be permitted. The group limits have previously caused misunderstanding so it's important to focus on the aim, which is to limit risk of transmission to small groups. Key points:

- Groups of up to 6 people or 2 households will be able to socialise together outdoors from 29th March 2021 and use outdoor sports facilities, such as tennis courts and bowling greens. From Step 2 people can attend sports matches as spectators, car boot sales, fetes and other outdoor events organized by a business, charity, public sector body or similar organization, in "rule of 6 groups".
- As long as there are no more than 6 in a group, it appears that a group could be made up of individuals from 6 different households.
- The limit of 6 does not apply to a single household group or support bubble which is more than 6 people, or to a two-household group of more than 6 people. A "linked household" e.g., two households including single parent families is classed as a single household so a two-household group may be more than 6 people e.g., 5 + 3.
- Government will review the Guidance on contacts between friends and family indoors at Step 3, when it will be hopefully become clearer whether within groups people are still required to socially distance from others not in their household. At step 3 permitted activities can take place within the hall's Covid-secure capacity limits and when the social contact rules are clearer it should then become possible to work out whether Covid-secure capacity limits can increase. Until then it is possible that people may wish to chat with friends or family but remain socially distanced within a "rule of 6" group.
- Different "rule of 6" groups should be separated by 2m so that social distancing is maintained between them and they do not mix or mingle. People in groups of one, i.e., individuals not in a group, may need to be socially distanced from other groups.
- Where there is significant likelihood of different groups interacting, activities should not take place indoors in a community facility.
- Organisers of activities are not required to enquire about household arrangements or challenge a group of people arriving together but need to arrange activities so as to avoid mingling between groups.
- At an event, people are advised to limit social interactions with anyone outside the group they attend with as far as possible: For example, each quiz table should have their own pens and paper and not swap the answers for scoring.
- Organisers must not place people together in groups of more than 6, unless an exception applies to the event/activity, e.g., a wedding reception.
- See also **Appendix D**

d) User groups may not know at the outset how many people are likely to attend activities. A booking system is not required but for larger events it may be a useful means of keeping within "rule of 6" groups, capacity, and facilitate recording contact details, as required for NHS Test and Trace. A booking system would be inappropriate for smaller community activities which are important for mental and physical health, as attendance is often dependent on last minute factors. It would be preferable to ask groups to think about how they will deal with any excess, which may depend on the nature of their activity and the

facilities at the hall e.g. “first come, first served”, using other space to increase capacity e.g. garden, kitchen, entrance hall, committee room, re-running an activity later or on another day, some people joining in online either at home or via laptop in another room.

e) NHS Test and Trace: All groups are required to assist NHS Test and Trace by having a system for keeping a temporary record of who attends for 21 days and to provide that data to NHS Test and Trace if needed. (It is not compulsory for people to provide information but could help contain outbreaks.) The Government Guidance for Places of Worship gives a sample consent form at the end. A NHS QR poster must also be displayed at the hall.

f) Lapses in social distancing: Some lapses may be difficult to avoid, e.g. where people pass in internal corridors. Government guidance indicates that such transitory contacts are lower risk. It will be for hirers to try and arrange their activities to avoid these risks if possible, particularly for older or medically vulnerable people.

g) Pinch points: Arrangements will need to be made to manage people at “pinch points” e.g. arriving for an activity and exiting afterwards, in toilets, kitchens and corridors. There is a risk entrances could become congested owing to multiple user groups, or people lingering to read notices or chat, so a socially distanced queueing system is required, e.g. tape on the ground outside and inside the entrance hall, with signage. Staggered arrival and departure times may help.

h) Implementing a one-way flow in and out of the premises should help avoid congestion, particularly where multiple activities are held at the same time. Usually, entry would be via the main entrance, with people leaving via fire exits. **For security**, fire exits would need to be closed by the last person to leave the building, who then leaves via the main entrance. Appropriate signposting will be needed. Any changes to entrances, exits and queues should, however, consider the needs of those with physical disabilities. It may not be possible to implement one-way flow internally, as people may have to cross an entrance hall to reach the toilets or kitchen, so it may be necessary to stagger access to such facilities e.g. a longer interval.

i) Face Coverings: Face coverings must be worn inside village and community halls. The Department of Health and Social Care confirmed to ACRE that:

“On entering a village hall, you will be required to wear a face covering, and will be required to keep it on, unless you are covered under a ‘reasonable excuse’. This could be for a gym class, if you need to eat or drink something, or if you have a health or disability reason to not wear one.”

The exceptions to wearing face coverings are:

- Children under the age of 11 (Public Health England do not recommend face coverings for children under the age of 3 for health and safety reasons)
- People who cannot put on, wear, or remove a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability.
- Employees of indoor settings (or people acting on their behalf, such as someone leading part of a prayer service)
- Police officers and other emergency workers, given that this may interfere with their ability to serve the public.
- Where putting on, wearing, or removing a face covering will cause severe distress.
- If you are speaking to or assisting someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expressions to communicate.

- To avoid harm or injury, or the risk of harm or injury, to yourself or others - including if it would negatively impact on your ability to exercise or participate in an activity.

Trustees and managers are not able to enforce wearing face coverings. However, hirers can be required to encourage those attending activities to do so and/or to comply with the relevant guidance for their sector.

The requirement for people to wear a face covering may help people feel more comfortable about attending activities, and they should be worn on arrival, leaving and when using communal areas such as corridors, toilets. There may be circumstances where it is not appropriate: e.g., when singing in a choir, an exercise class, where someone wears glasses which mist up, interfering with the ability to use a kettle, knife, scissors or needles safely.

Bear in mind that the requirements are designed to limit transmission in venues indoors attended by numbers of people at the same time, and the general advice that it is most important in crowded areas or in areas where people are in contact with others they do not usually meet. They are specifically required in retail spaces such as indoor markets and community shops.

A risk-based approach indicates that people working at the hall on their own, or in a separate area, would not need to wear a face covering e.g., behind a screen in a reception office, a Parish Council office, cleaning or carrying out maintenance work, fire safety checks etc.

j) Consultation with regular user groups will be important as some reorganisation may be inevitable. Some groups may not return for some time but want to retain their usual "slots" while it may be necessary to hire the premises in different ways. For example, groups may need to use the main hall rather than a committee room to achieve social distancing, which may mean re-arranging timings for main hall use. A committee room may need to become a "kettle point" for any offices so that staff do not need to use the kitchen when a hire is in progress. Some groups may be able to continue running activities online to make way for others. **Appendix B** is a sample questionnaire for users, kindly shared by Witcham Village Hall, Cambridgeshire.

k) In case of emergency it is important to prioritise safety: In the event of fire or accident people do not have to stay 1 or 2m apart if it would be unsafe to do so.

2.3 Risk Assessment for COVID-19

Village hall trustees must consider the COVID-19 Secure guidelines (see above) and should undertake their own COVID-19 Risk Assessment to ensure that their staff (cleaner, caretaker) and trustees are safe. It is advisable to review last year's Risk Assessment before opening this year in case anything has changed. See **Appendix F** for an example.

The responsibility for risk assessment and implementation can be delegated to a competent individual or company. Bear in mind that Government guidance on performance says: "Risk assessment is not about creating huge amounts of paperwork, but rather about identifying sensible measures to control the risks in your workplace." Going through a Risk Assessment process and working out the areas of greater and lower risk will hopefully enable a "common sense" approach to which hirers can adapt. It is rarely possible to eliminate risk entirely, your aim should be to do the best to minimise it.

Employers and organisations have a duty to consult workers and volunteers on health and safety so listening and talking to them about how you will manage risks from COVID-19 will show that you take their health and safety seriously.

2.4 Cleaning and encouraging good hygiene.

All surfaces which are frequently touched should continue to be cleaned regularly using standard cleaning products. A decision will need to be made on how frequently cleaning should take place, based on an assessment of risk, and use of the building. Some halls have the resources (staff, finance) to clean regularly used surfaces and equipment before hirers arrive, which is ideal. If that is the case, the cleaner might post a sheet showing when the hall was last cleaned, as a comfort to users.

Many village and community halls, however, have part time or self-employed staff e.g., with other cleaning jobs, who work only a few hours per week, or no staff (users clean before and after activities), particularly halls serving rural areas which are used less frequently. This means that hirers let themselves in, are often responsible for putting out and stowing away the equipment they use and for cleaning the hall after use. Experience is that not all hirers clean up after themselves satisfactorily and trustees have expressed concern that not all hirers will comply with carrying out a higher level of cleaning on leaving so suggestions are given below.

a) **All halls** should:

- Provide sanitiser for hirers to put out at every entrance/exit and in meeting rooms. (Soap and water are acceptable but sanitiser often more practical).
- Post notices at every entrance/exit showing what is expected of users. Erect the "Catch It, Bin It, Kill It" poster and posters encouraging frequent handwashing, see Section 6. If the poster at **Appendix C** is laminated, the time can be given when the hall was last cleaned, but this is not compulsory.
- Advise the cleaner/caretaker as to the extra cleaning required if someone is taken unwell on the premises with a suspected case of COVID-19. This requires disposable PPE and double bagging of PPE and cleaning materials afterwards, which must be stored for 72 hours securely prior to collection: See the link in Section 6 for decontamination in non-healthcare settings.
- Advise hirers bringing or using their own equipment which is stored at the hall that they will need to clean this for each session and before stowing it away or ask their group members to bring their own clean equipment and avoid sharing it.

b) **Where a hall cannot arrange cleaning before every hire**, the appropriate way of discharging the trustees' responsibility and encouraging compliance is likely to be to:

- Require each hiring group to clean surfaces that their group might use **before** their own users arrive, to clean regularly used surfaces such as tabletops and sinks during the hire and to clean them again before they leave. Hirers could be asked to sign a record sheet confirming e.g. "I have cleaned before leaving all surfaces in the rooms used during hire", with the time.
- For the hall to ensure the hall's usual cleaning routine is followed e.g., for floors, and to pay particular attention to cleaning hand wash basins, door and toilet handles and providing cleaning supplies for use by hirers. This means the cleaner/caretaker (or volunteers or another contractor) will need to provide and check/replenish hand sanitiser, cleaning materials (including cleanser, spray disinfectant, washing up liquid, cloths, or paper roll) and tissues and the hirer removes waste to outside bins before the hall is next used. Supplies of soap and paper towels must be provided at toilet and kitchen sinks. Make clear to hirers how often the cleaner attends.
- Limit cleaning of some areas to staff and/or provide instructions to hirers, e.g., where there is a

risk of damage or electrical apparatus is involved. For example, switches should be cleaned by cloth, not sprayed with disinfectant, rubberised, or glued surfaces and upholstered surfaces can be damaged by frequent sprays or vigorous rubbing.

- c) **Use of toilets:** Inside toilets do not have to be made available to the public (which may conflict with safeguarding requirements and social distancing) or kept open when the hall is not in use. It is not compulsory for any public toilets (e.g. serving playing fields) to be opened but where they are Government Guidance for public toilets should be followed.

2.5 Hiring Arrangements.

- a) Halls should give priority to essential services, Pre-schools and schools and endeavor to arrange other hires around these. If that is not feasible without compromising COVID-19 Secure guidelines the hall may have to remain closed for other hirers.
- b) Instruct booking secretaries to allow longer between hires, to allow either the cleaner/caretaker to clean before their arrival or hirers to arrive up to half an hour earlier in order to pre-clean for their own use.
- c) The cleaner/caretaker will need to be given expected arrival times for each hirer or other arrangements made to check sufficient supplies of sanitiser, soap, paper towels and cleaning materials.
- d) Social distancing needs to be maintained so as to reduce virus transmission. It is therefore unlikely that the full range of normal use will be possible during Step 3. The committee will need to decide which hirers can begin to use the hall pending Government guidance that Steps 4 and 5 can be implemented. This will demand a risk-based approach. Points to help you work out which hires are permitted, not yet permitted, or may require more management are given in **Appendix D**.
- e) Hirers will need to be given instructions, guidance and responsibility via special hiring conditions which should be attached to their usual hire agreement. These should be issued in writing and signed or accepted by the hirer in all cases. An electronic signature or email confirmation of the conditions is acceptable. See **Appendix E** for sample special hire conditions.
- f) Hirers should be encouraged to seat or stand people side-to-side, rather than face-to-face, whenever possible. A distance of 2m (two or three empty seats) should be provided between each individual or group if seated. Space should also be allowed so that people can also socially distance from others in their group, if required. (see 2.2c above). Sedbergh People's Hall, Cumbria, have issued photos to help their hirers work out how to arrange their meeting rooms. Barnham Community Hall, Sussex has issued a video. Drawings could be posted on noticeboards.
- g) Hirers should be encouraged to keep the hall well ventilated, opening doors (except internal fire doors) and windows as far as possible, and will need to remember to close them all for security on leaving. It may therefore be necessary for the caretaker or a volunteer to check the premises. Fresh air is preferable to mechanical ventilation. In colder weather windows should either be kept open a small amount or opened every 15 minutes for a short period in order to reduce the risk of a higher "dose" of the virus causing more serious illness, in the event that someone present is carrying it. Extractor fans should be used in toilets and kitchens, where fitted. This film has been produced:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-film-shows-importance-of-ventilation-to-reduce-spread-of-covid-19>.
- h) Those who are clinically vulnerable to COVID-19 are no longer being advised to shield from 1st April 2021 but all those over the age of 70 or who are clinically vulnerable remain advised to limit their

number of social interactions. Hirers should therefore be encouraged to have regard as to whether any people attending their activity are clinically vulnerable, potentially anxious about re-joining community activities and how they will address the need to keep them safe. This is important because although vaccinations reduce the risk of hospitalisation the new variants are a concern. This is reflected in the Special Hiring Conditions at **Appendix E**.

- i) Hirers should be provided with a copy of the hall's COVID-19 Risk Assessment. You may wish to ask to see a copy of their own COVID-19 Risk Assessment. The sample at **Appendix G** can be shared with user groups, to help them think through preparing their own Risk Assessment. It is not compulsory that users complete their own – it is the premises and any play equipment which must be subject to a COVID-19 Risk Assessment.
- j) Prior to Step 4, you and your hirers may wish to encourage those attending to bring their own Food and Drink e.g., water bottles for the time being, rather than making food and drink on the premises, to reduce work cleaning the kitchen. Users should also be encouraged to bring their own equipment where possible, e.g., crafts, keep fit, and can be encouraged to bring their own personal hand sanitiser, wipes, and tissues.
- k) Hirers need to keep a note of the names and telephone number for everyone attending their activity and retain this for 3 weeks so that, in the event of a case, NHS Test and Trace can contact everyone the individual was in contact with. People are not obliged to provide their personal details. Information should be kept securely so as to comply with GDPR (e.g., a password protected phone or tablet, a locked filing cabinet) and then destroyed.
- l) Government guidance asks venues to take steps to avoid people needing to unduly raise their voices to each other, e.g., playing music at loud volume so that normal conversation is difficult, so as to reduce the risk of transmission of the virus from aerosol and droplet transmission. This is addressed in **Appendix E**.
- m) Where part of the premises is leased to another organisation, or subject to an Occupation Licence, that occupier would normally have the responsibility for the management of their facilities in accordance with the relevant Government guidance and will be expected co-operate with the hall managers to achieve safe use of communal areas.

2.6 Employees, self-employed people, and volunteers

a) Organisations have a specific duty of care to employees and, as they also have a duty of care to self-employed staff and volunteers, it is recommended that they are afforded the same level of protection as employees. Government guidance has been issued for Employers and that for offices and contact centres and 5 steps to working safely are the most appropriate for community halls (See links in Section 6). The key point for halls is that, in addition to carrying out the hall's ordinary risk assessment before re-opening, the hall should follow HSE advice for an Employer's Risk Assessment for COVID-19, in discussion with staff, which involves:

- Identifying what work activity or situations might cause transmission of the virus.
- Thinking about who could be at risk.
- Deciding how likely it is that someone could be exposed.
- Acting to remove the activity or situation, or if this is not possible, control the risk.

These points are addressed in the Sample COVID-19 Risk Assessment at **Appendix F**.

b) HSE guidance is that no one is obliged to work in an unsafe work environment and that in the risk assessment you should have particular regard to whether the people doing the work are especially vulnerable to COVID-19. If that is the case with your hall cleaner/caretaker, you may need to make alternative arrangements for the time being.

c) BEIS guidance and other references in Section 6 may help you address questions or concerns from employees or self-employed contractors about COVID-19.

d) If the hall has a resident caretaker, consider whether there are any implications when carrying out the COVID-19 Risk Assessment.

e) If staff are on the premises when the hall is used by others a record of staff working patterns should be kept for a period of 21 days to assist NHS Test and Trace contain outbreaks.

2.7 Performances

The arts industry has been badly affected by COVID-19 and will welcome efforts to accommodate performances. Key points in the Guidance issued by the Department for Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS) are given in **Appendix J**. A report by Live & Local, testing the viability of rural touring arts, has been published by the National Rural Touring Forum, which successfully used this Information Sheet as the basis for running a pilot performance in a village hall in Lincolnshire.

The National Rural Touring Forum has advised promoters commit to advance sales only for rural touring arts, to avoid potential box office queues and facilitate social distancing.

2.8 Playgrounds, indoor exercise, and outdoor sports areas

Aside from organised sports those using outdoor areas (e.g., for informal recreation) should be in groups of 6 or less until Step 3.

Playgrounds, play equipment and outdoor gyms must be subject to a COVID-19 risk assessment and mitigation measures before re-opening. Mitigation may include provision of a COVID-19 secure poster and, for outdoor gyms, a one-way system. The risk of COVID-19 needs to be weighed against the risk to unsupervised children ignoring signage or climbing over fencing if it remains closed. A sample poster is attached at **Appendix I**. See Section 6 for a link to the Government guidance.

Separate Government guidance is published for providers of outdoor sports and recreation facilities and for grassroots sports and gym and leisure facilities, which is reflected in **Appendix K**. See links in Section 6.

Sport and exercise should take place in accordance with guidance issued by the relevant governing body for the sport or activity to deal with COVID-19 risks. ACRE recommends village and community halls require hirers to comply with such governing body guidance, rather than try to adapt their own hiring conditions and policies for each type of activity. (Sports played as individuals, rather than in teams, such as badminton and table tennis are not subject to governing body guidance).

2.9 Catering

Arrangements for catering will depend on the size and nature of the activity and the size and facilities of the kitchen. Common sense should be applied to achieve social distancing. For example, for short meetings people might be encouraged to bring their own water. For longer, small events, such as an art class, people might each use the kitchen to make their own refreshments and clean after themselves.

Refreshments can be served from a hatch, such as at WI or coffee mornings, unless alcohol is served, which can only be provided at tables for consumption when seated until Step 4. Pre-ordering at the start of an event, one person from each table collecting on a tray, may be appropriate. For performances those with a ticket may collect from a bar for consumption in their seats.

2.10 Procedures if someone becomes unwell with suspected COVID-19

a) As a matter of good practice a space should be designated (eg kitchen, committee room) into which anyone will be moved who becomes unwell at the hall with suspected COVID-19 symptoms, so that they are away from other people until transport home or to hospital is available. They should be provided with tissues and a bowl of warm soapy water for handwashing and paper towels. Tissues and paper towels should be disposed of into a plastic bag, which is sealed and placed in a secure place for 72 hours before being disposed of into the general rubbish collection. See **Appendix H**. (The contents of a Covid-19 first aid box do not replace the need for an ordinary first aid box).

b) Other people that have attended the same activity should be asked for contact details if not already available and then to leave the premises. These details should be provided to NHS Test and Trace if requested.

c) A decontamination clean should be carried out in those parts of the premises they have used, in accordance with PHE guidance (see reference section). The minimum PPE to be worn is disposable gloves and an apron. Disposable PPE equipment including gloves should be disposed of into a sealed, labelled or marked plastic bag and placed in a secure place for 72 hours before rubbish is collected. The cleaner should wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds after removing PPE and launder all personal clothing worn on arrival home.

3. The re-opening of Pre-schools – Step 2

From 8th March Pre-schools and nurseries were able to welcome back all children below statutory school age.

For hall committees who hire to Pre-schools and nurseries within the building, this will mean a more careful re-opening of the hall to other hirers or members of the public in order to address the anxiety of pre-school staff, parents and other hall users.

Points which need to be borne in mind are set out here:

Government guidance advises childcare settings to avoid other people attending the premises unless essential: Within Pre-schools, children are encouraged only to mix with a group of up to 8 other children and one or two staff members, to minimise spread in the event of a COVID-19 case. The usual safeguarding procedures also apply.

While the extent of the premises which are used by a Pre-school vary from hall to hall and cleaning or attending to safety issues in that part of the premises used by Pre-school could be regarded as an essential service, it's best if such tasks are carried out when Pre-school are not on site, though that may not always be possible.

Where common areas serve other parts of a hall which are used by other hirers or the public at the same time as Pre-school is in place (such as entrance lobbies, corridors, kitchens, toilets), timing of arrangements will clearly need to be discussed with the Pre-school. For example, cleaning and servicing of these areas might be carried out when Pre-school staff and children are elsewhere on the premises. Hirers' arrival and departure times will either have to be changed so that they do not coincide with the

staggered arrival and departure times implemented by Pre-schools, or a separate entrance/exit used e.g. fire exit or a separate waiting/queueing arrangement created outside.

Responsibility for cleaning door handles, basins and working surfaces by organisations or individuals not connected with the Pre-school will have to be established if common areas are used.

Where the space used by Pre-school during the day is used by another organisation later in the afternoon or evening, arrangements for cleaning within that area will have to be established.

4. Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Will our hall have to re-open when the Government says it can?

A: No – see Section 2.1 above – the hall could remain closed until Step 4. **Make sure you notify the insurer, as unoccupancy terms are likely to apply.** If your hall remains closed your trustees still need to meet from time to time to monitor finances, security and future plans, and review the decision not to re-open. Minute the reasons for closure, so that you can show that the matter has been carefully considered in the event of challenge. In taking such a decision you should take into account the effect on vulnerable residents whom the hall is there to serve, their mental and physical wellbeing, your ability to provide safe premises and the financial implications for the charity. What is the impact on hirers if they cannot offer their activity - either for their users or their income?

Q: Our hall has fan/hot air heaters. Is the airflow likely to cause a risk?

A: If the system is a heat-recovery ventilation system, which maintains a constant supply of fresh air from outside, or otherwise draws air from outside the answer is no. If air is drawn internally but not near head height the risk reduced.

Q: If an outbreak of COVID-19 is traced to our hall, will we, trustees, or staff, be held liable?

A: If those responsible for managing the hall use reasonable endeavours to ensure the hall is cleaned and maintained in accordance with the COVID-19 Secure Guidelines, have prepared a COVID-19 Risk Assessment, **see Appendix F**, and have written records of the action taken this should reduce very substantially the risk of being held liable. Providing this is the case, and any insurer requirements met, any liability should be addressed in the usual way by the hall's public liability cover and legal expenses cover. Not only would a claimant have to prove the committee had been negligent and that they caught the disease at the premises, but they may also be held to bear responsibility themselves by putting themselves in harm's way.

Q: Hirers want to use the hall but pay a reduced fee because their numbers will be lower, and they will be doing more cleaning. We cannot afford this, because we have fixed costs to pay and are having to arrange more cleaning too. Do we have to allow it to open at a reduced fee if it is going to cost us more than the income?

A: It is up to trustees or committees responsible for managing charitable halls to determine what is in the best interests of their hall charity in the light of these exceptional circumstances and predicted financial situation. However, local businesses and self-employed people should pay the usual (market) rate. See also Section 5 as to grants and funding.

Q: What do we do if someone wants to hire the hall for an event at which we think social distancing might not be observed, such as an 18th birthday party?

A: An event such as an 18th birthday party cannot be held until Step 4. You are entitled to either refuse the booking or accept a booking for a future date with the caveat that it is subject to cancellation if

Government guidance at the time would not permit it, or it appeared requirements then in force would not be met. See **Appendix D**.

Q: Where can we obtain a disposable apron and quantities of cleaning materials at low cost?

A: Try your usual suppliers, supermarkets, pharmacy, DIY stores or internet shopping. For decontamination purposes, a plastic apron without sleeves is adequate but halls have found cheap overalls from DIY outlets a good alternative.

Q: We are confused. When should sanitiser, soap and water or antibacterial wipes be used?

A: Provide what is most appropriate. Sanitiser tends to be more easily dispensed at entrances and exits, whereas soap and water easily used in kitchens and toilets. For general cleaning disposable cloths used with and warm, soapy water, paper rolls or spray disinfectant are adequate. If you are concerned that sanitiser will disappear, large bottles may avoid the problem. You could require each hirer to put it out or provide their own. People can be encouraged to bring their own sanitiser, antibacterial wipes and tissues. Wipes must not be flushed down toilets, bins should be provided.

Cleaning:

Q: Our chairs have upholstered backs, seats, and arms, cleaning them between use would damage them and we are told sanitiser spray may leave a sticky residue. Should we buy plastic chairs instead? They are not so comfortable. Should we use a "misting device"?

Q: Our Pre-school asks if we should clean the walls before others use the hall, as children tend to touch them?

Q: Our yoga teacher asks if she needs to clean the floor after the class? They bring their own mats, but people tend to touch the floor, put their water bottle on it.

Q: The room used by our Pilates class has a carpeted floor. Should we disinfect the carpet between each use or replace it?

A: These are all a matter of risk assessment. The emphasis is on cleaning **frequently touched surfaces and cleaning hands regularly**. These surfaces all tend to be touched less frequently than, for example, tabletops, door, and toilet handles. Over summer, keeping doors and windows open to improve ventilation, coupled with vaccination, should reduce the risk. Rather than going to the expense of buying new, less comfortable chairs or a misting device or changing flooring you could consider asking hirers to ask people not to attend if unwell, ensure regular use of hand sanitiser, especially before getting out and stowing these chairs, to use plastic gloves, or rotating their use (so there is a day or two between use of each chair). Some fabrics are dry clean only, so a sanitiser spray should not be used on them. What benefits would a misting device have i.e. would it save wiping regularly used surfaces or staff time? How long is required before rooms can be used again, particularly by anyone with an allergy or asthma, might the chemicals affect them? Pre-schools are encouraging children to wash hands regularly and other hirers are unlikely to touch the same part of a wall as a small child. Those attending yoga and Pilates should bring their own mats, reducing contact with the floor. Unless there is a parent and toddler class using the hall after yoga or Pilates, it is unlikely other hirers will touch the floor. If someone developed Covid-19 symptoms who had recently been at the class, it would then be necessary to consider cleaning the carpet or closing the room for 72 hours.

Q: Our cleaner/volunteers are aged over 70, so were in the vulnerable category recommended to stay at home. What should we do?

A: It is essential to risk assess and discuss the situation with them in the light of their circumstances. They may still wish to minimise contact with others outside their household. For paid people loss of income will be an issue so perhaps you can arrange duties to avoid contact with others e.g. cleaning when no or few people are on the premises. For volunteers, social contact with other people may be very important after lockdown so it will be essential to ensure everyone maintains 2m social distancing and good hygiene.

Q: Do we need to ask every hirer to complete their own Covid-19 Risk Assessment?

A: This is not compulsory, but it may help everybody feel safer if they do so.

Q: Do we need to clean the hall if it has not been used for 72 hours?

A: The virus is not thought to survive longer than this on surfaces so from a risk assessment perspective, no. However, it encourages hirers to maintain a good cleaning routine if they are asked to clean regularly used surfaces before starting.

Q: We are keen to avoid using disposable gloves and aprons for ordinary cleaning. Can we use washable/wipeable items?

A: Yes. Disposable ones are only required if cleaning after a suspected case.

5. Finances

- a) **Charitable Community Halls and Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs):** From 1st April the Restart grant becomes available which, like the previous Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant and Lockdown Payment, is based on Rateable Value (RV): Those halls with a RV of £15,000 or less will receive £8,000, those with a RV over £15,000 and under £51,000 will receive £12,000. The Additional Restrictions Support Grants remain available, which are discretionary grants, so a case for support will need to be made to the local authority. See section 6 for link. Under the Extended Retail Discount (ERD) charitable halls should also receive 100% rate relief until 30th June 2021. Please contact your ACRE Network member if you have any queries about accessing such support.
- b) **Church Halls and Parish/Town Council Halls:** A hall which is ineligible for the above support e.g. a church hall or parish council run hall, may seek the Additional Restrictions Support Grant support from their local authority, which is discretionary. **Applications should be made as soon as possible.**
- c) **Social Clubs:** May apply for the discretionary Additional Restrictions Support Grant from their local authority.

Forward Planning: In view of the long-term effect on hire income it will be particularly important that managers revise budgetary projections to the end of the 2021/22 financial year in order to identify whether these grants will be sufficient to cover any deficit. This needs to be done at an early stage because, if its own free reserves are insufficient, the hall will need to allow time for approaches to be made elsewhere for financial support. Note that any restricted funds held by a charity are unlikely to be available for this purpose, such as donations or grants received for capital works. Financial support may be available from parish and town councils or from local charitable or National Lottery funds where a charity is facing financial hardship and risk of closure because of COVID-19. A crowdfunding campaign might be launched.

6. Government Guidance and other references

Government roadmap and COVID-19 Secure Guidelines:

[COVID-19 Response - Spring 2021 \(Summary\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-spring-2021-summary).

Guidance for the Safe Use of multi-purpose Community Facilities:

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

[Enabling safe and effective volunteering during coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-enabling-safe-and-effective-volunteering)

Guidance for the public on the phased return of sport and recreation

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/providers-of-grassroots-sport-and-gym-leisure-facilities>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-phased-return-of-sport-and-recreation>

Guidance for performing arts

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts>

Guidance for the safe re-opening of outdoor play areas

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-playgrounds-and-outdoor-gyms/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-playgrounds-and-outdoor-gyms>

Guidance for Community Shops and Indoor Markets<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/shops-and-branches>

Guidance from the Dept for Education:

[Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-early-years-and-childcare-providers-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak)
[Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings: code of practice - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-out-of-school-settings-code-of-practice)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care-settings-including-the-use-of-personal-protective-equipment-ppe>

Guidance for employers:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/5-steps-to-working-safely>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/offices-and-contact-centres>

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/assets/docs/working-safely-guide.pdf>

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/assets/docs/talking-with-your-workers.pdf>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

Guidance for cleaning premises contaminated by suspected COVID-19:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

Poster certifying an employer has taken steps to ensure premises are COVID-19 secure:

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5eb963fcd3bf7f5d39550303/staying-covid-19-secure-accessible.pdf>

“Catch it, Bin it, Kill it” Poster:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/south/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2017/09/catch-bin-kill.pdf>

Legionella risk:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/legionnaires/>

<https://legionellacontrol.com/guidance/regular-flushing-control-legionella/>

<https://www.cieh.org/media/4208/legionella-guidance-covid-19.pdf>

Face Coverings:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-safe-outside-your-home/staying-safe-outside-your-home#face-coverings>

Guidance for social distancing and vulnerable people:

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Meeting with others safely \(social distancing\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs>

Guidance for re-opening municipal public toilets

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/896040/Joint_letter_Simon_Clarke_MP_and_Rebecca_Pow_MP

Out of School settings

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protective-measures-for-holiday-or-after-school-clubs-and-other-out-of-school-settings-for-children-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/protective-measures-for-out-of-school-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

Guidance about government grant support for businesses

[Check if you're eligible for a coronavirus Restart Grant \(grants available from 1 April 2021\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-restart-grant)

[Additional Restrictions Grant: guidance for Local Authorities \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/896040/Additional_Restrictions_Grant_guidance_for_Local_Authorities.pdf)

Guidance about Outdoor Events

Coronavirus (COVID-19): Organised events guidance for local authorities

Ventilation

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-film-shows-importance-of-ventilation-to-reduce-spread-of-covid-19>.

Appendices

You are free to reproduce the appendices to use for your hall, please contact the ACRE Network member in your county for word versions, <https://acre.org.uk/in-your-area/network-members/>

Appendix A

Before re-opening the hall, go through the following checklist:

	Task	Done
1.	Advise the hall's insurers whether/when the premises will be re-opening and check any requirements.	
2.	Check the security code or key logs are up to date.	
3.	If a Pre-school is using the premises, check any adjustments to hire arrangements needed for other hirers e.g. arrival/departure times, access to kitchen or toilets. (See Section 3 above)	
4.	Carry out or review your COVID-19 Risk Assessment in consultation with any employees, if you have any. (See Appendix F) Provide to hirers.	
5.	Ensure the Fire Safety Risk Assessment and routine fire safety checks are up to date e.g. fire exit doors are clear, not sticking, fire extinguishers serviced, emergency lighting system and any alarm system are working. (For more information see ACRE Village Hall Information Sheet 37: Fire Safety in Village Halls)	
6.	Consider whether additional cleaning is required, where and when. Consider arrangements for moving, stowing and cleaning equipment. A thorough clean of the hall should be undertaken before it re-opens and the subsequent cleaning regime to follow will need to be identified. Ordinary household products can be used.	
7.	Discuss with your caretaker/cleaner/contractor any changes in work patterns required to ensure the hall meets the COVID-19 Secure guidelines. HSE provides a leaflet of things to discuss with an employee. Agree any changes in writing with cleaners/employees.	
8.	Ensure the caretaker/cleaner has appropriate PPE: Ordinary overalls and plastic gloves are usually sufficient. The overalls should be taken off when leaving and washed. A set of disposable PPE is also needed in case decontamination is required. Contractors should use their own equipment, but an employee should be provided with the necessary equipment.	
9.	Flush through the water system if it has been unused, five minutes for each tap or shower head, to remove any risk of legionella or other bacterial build up and ensure U bends are full. Keep clear of spray (place showerheads in a container of water while flushing to avoid spray) and wipe up afterwards with household disinfectant. Check hot water system is set at a minimum 50C. (See Chartered Institute of Environmental Health Officers guidance, link in Section 6).	

10.	Carry out the routine health and safety risk assessment of the whole premises. Check the electrical inspection (required every 5 years) and PAT testing are up to date and visually check leads. Ensure any fridge/freezer is working at correct temperature, the heating and hot water system operational. Ensure internet is working. Cut grass. Identify and address any items requiring attention e.g. light bulbs failed, trip hazards. (For more information see ACRE Village Hall Information Sheet 15: Health and Safety legislation and Village Halls)	
11.	Provide hand wash and drying facilities: Hand sanitiser needs to be provided at entrance and exit routes. Tissues, soap, toilet rolls, paper towels or hand driers and cleaning products, including disposable cloths or paper roll, should be provided.	
12.	Consider "Engaged/Vacant" signage at the entrance to male and female toilets to limit the number of people within these areas at any one time and similar signage at other "pinch points".	
13.	Provide signage: The certificate that the premises comply with COVID-19 secure guidelines and that people should not enter if they have symptoms should be displayed at entrances (see Appendix C). The PHE posters encouraging frequent, good handwashing techniques and hygiene "Catch It, Bin It, Kill It" available on the HSE and PHE websites should be displayed. (See Section 6). The QR code for NHS Test and Trace displayed (see Appendix M).	
14.	Think about social distancing arrangements in corridors and at entrance and exits: Consider using tape to mark out a 2m distance outside and inside the entrance, and outside fire exits, to encourage people to wait their turn to enter and exit the hall.	
15.	Prepare special hire conditions and instruct booking secretary as to any changes in the Hall's hire policy during re-opening, i.e. which bookings can be accepted, any changes to charges, and to provide hirers with a copy of the COVID- 19 secure poster. (See Appendices C, D and E)	
16.	Identify designated space for someone with suspected COVID-19	
17.	Consider Marketing and Communications: Ensure the website has up to date information, including special conditions of hire. Advertise availability as appropriate. Ensure answerphone message is up to date.	
18.	Review budget forecast for 2021-22. Apply for restart grant and/or Additional Restrictions Support Grant if required, closing date 30th June 2021.	

Appendix B

COVID-19 Re-opening Questionnaire

Adaptation of document shared by Witcham Village Hall, Cambridgeshire

In order for Trustees to make a robust plan of action in readiness for any proposed opening of Village Halls by the Government, it would be extremely helpful if you could complete and return the following questionnaire by2021. This can either be via email or paper versions can be left at:

Name of Group

Name of person completing form:

Address:

Postcode:

Email:

Home Tel:

Mobile Tel:

Please tick appropriate answer		
1	How likely are you to return to use the hall?	Yes No Maybe
2	If you wish to return when would you consider returning?	April (children's activities only) May June Later
3	When you return would you wish to hire the hall for normal sessions or would you like something different?	Normal Different
4	Which day of the week do you prefer to hire the hall?	

5	<p>What is your preferred time for hire?</p> <p>Must include time for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set up • pack away time • sanitisation of groups personal equipment stored at hall 	<p>From</p> <p>To</p>
6	<p>Can you be flexible with hire times?</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>No</p>
7	<p>If only a morning, afternoon, or evening slot available which would you prefer?</p>	<p>Morning</p> <p>Afternoon</p> <p>Evening</p>
8	<p>Which rooms are required?</p> <p>Please note – rooms not required will be secured from entry</p>	<p>Main hall</p> <p>Small room</p> <p>Kitchen</p> <p>Toilets</p> <p>Store</p>
9	<p>Premises equipment needed.</p> <p>Specific numbers will enable efficient use of cleaner's time.</p>	<p>Number of Chairs</p> <p>Number of Tables</p> <p>List specific kitchen equipment</p> <p>Use of dishwasher</p>
10	<p>All equipment stored at hall will need to be sanitised before and after use and will be the responsibility of the hirer to ensure this takes place after every session.</p>	<p>Name of person taking responsibility</p> <p>.....</p> <p>...</p>

11	Will Group require use of Car Park/ garden or field? Please state which area(s)	Yes
12	Any further comments: -	
	No	

PLEASE NOTE:

- a) The hall will be: [thoroughly sanitiser between hires by cleaner] [cleaned once per day by the hall cleaner – regularly used surfaces and toilets] [cleaned thoroughly once a week by the hall cleaner, including floors]. The hiring group will be responsible for cleaning surfaces used regularly during and at the end of hire. Sanitiser or soap and water will be available on entry and exit to the hall
- b) Access will only be allowed during the specific time of hire.
- c) Persons waiting to collect hall users should adhere to social distancing at front of building or remain in vehicle.
- d) Optional [A group risk assessment will be required for hall usage; a sample is provided]
- e) Isolation facilities will be available in [the changing room area] at back of hall.
- f) Optional [The hire charge of the hall will remain the same as before the outbreak for a period of weeks]. All organisations and groups will be given due warning of any increase in hire charges.

To comply with Government advice, the Village Hall Trustees wish to ensure all users can be assured of a safe and sanitised environment in which to return and access our facilities. A risk assessment will be available but may be subject to change at any time in line with Government and Village Hall Guidelines.

The Village Hall uses personal data for the purposes of managing hall bookings, finances, events, and publicity.

Please tick box to indicate that you agree to us holding your data for booking purposes

Appendix C

Sample Poster

HELP KEEP THIS HALL COVID-19 SECURE

- 1. You must not enter if you or anyone in your household has COVID-19 symptoms.**
- 2. If you develop COVID-19 symptoms within 10 days** of visiting these premises you must seek a COVID-19 test.
- 3. Maintain 2 metres social distancing as far as possible:** Wait behind the marked lines as you go through the entrance hall to your activity and observe the one-way system marked.
- 4. Use the hand sanitiser provided** on entering the premises. Clean your hands often. Soap and paper towels are provided.
- 5. Avoid touching your face, nose, or eyes.** Clean your hands if you do.
- 6. Face coverings MUST be worn** unless an exemption applies to a person (eg for health reasons, those aged under 11) or a person has a reasonable excuse not to wear a face covering (eg when taking part in an activity to which an exemption applies). This is a legal requirement.
- 7. "Catch it, Bin it, Kill it".** Tissues should be disposed of into one of the rubbish bags provided. Then wash your hands.
- 8. Check the organisers of your activity have cleaned door handles, tables, other equipment, sinks and surfaces before you arrived.** Keep them clean. We [do our best to/cannot] clean all surfaces at the hall between each hire.
- 9. Take turns to use confined spaces such as corridors, kitchen and toilet areas.** Standing or sitting next to someone is lower risk than opposite them. Briefly passing another person in a confined space is low risk.
- 10. Keep the hall well ventilated. Close doors and windows on leaving.**

This hall was last cleaned at [insert time]

am/pm/eve on [insert date]

Appendix D

The Re-opening of Community Facilities– the Roadmap and the practicalities

This Appendix has been reviewed and updated substantially to reflect the Roadmap of 22nd February 2021 (see also Section 2.2c of the Information Sheet and below, part B).

Community groups need to know when they can safely hold their usual – or a version of their usual – activities and, if so, what conditions will apply, so as to reduce the risk of spreading infection and overcome concerns by more vulnerable people about re-engaging with the community.

Government Guidance makes clear that taking steps to reduce virus transmission remains essential. The overarching points remain HANDS – FACE - SPACE:

“It is critical that everybody observes the following key behaviours:

- HANDS - Wash your hands regularly and for 20 seconds.
- FACE - Wear a face covering in indoor settings where social distancing may be difficult, and where you will come into contact with people you do not normally meet.
- SPACE - Stay 2 metres apart from people you do not live with where possible, or 1 metre with extra precautions in place (such as wearing face coverings or increasing ventilation indoors)”.

The process of unlocking will apply in four steps, with a minimum five weeks between each step. Different parts of England may move to steps two to four at different times.

Each step is dependent on all four of the following conditions being met. All dates are “no earlier than” and the Government will confirm a week beforehand. When accepting bookings, it would therefore be prudent to consider whether these dates might be put back.

5. The coronavirus vaccine programme continues to go to plan.
6. Evidence shows vaccines are sufficiently reducing the number of people dying or needing hospital treatment.
7. Infection rates do not risk a surge in hospital admissions.
8. New variants of the virus do not fundamentally change the risk of lifting.

The revised Social Contact rules (social interactions for groups)

Key points to bear in mind to help address misunderstandings:

- The Public Health regulations and the Government Guidance for Community Facilities is expected to confirm that activities can take place **within a hall’s own Covid-secure capacity limits** at the dates shown in the table below.
- The aim is to contain risk of virus spread to small groups.
- The “rule of 6” has been changed slightly to “a group of 6 people or 2 households”. This means that people must not socialize (ie mix) in groups larger than 6 or containing more than 2 households. These groups must be socially distanced from other groups when attending events. More than 6 people can attend events, up to the number limited by the meeting room’s Covid capacity. **Within** a “group of 6 people or 2 households” 6 individuals or people from two

households can mix, attending an event together and interacting, but those from different households should maintain social distancing. .

- A household group can include a support bubble. A single household group can also consist of 2 linked households (single parents with children) so a "2 household group" can potentially consist of more than 6 people including children. Unless in a "rule of 6 group" household groups must not socialize (ie mix) with anyone they do not live with or who is not in their support bubble;
- These "rule of 6 or 2 households" groups must avoid mingling or mixing with other groups. This does not prevent a friendly smile or greeting, discussion in a meeting, but handshakes, hugs, sharing items and close contact must be avoided with those in other groups.
- There are specific exceptions from these Social Contact rules: For support groups, supervised activities for children, parent and child groups, wakes, weddings, and wedding receptions. At Step 2 the group limit is 15 for these.
- Social distancing between adults from different households/support bubbles is strongly encouraged at all activities at community halls (eg voluntary service activities, emergencies, retail, the elections).

Step One: 8th March and 29th March

From 8 March

- All schools will open, so schools can use village halls.
- Outdoor after-school sports, activities and wraparound childcare allowing parents to work, undertake training, attend medical care will be allowed.
- Two people will be able to meet in outdoor public spaces, meaning they can sit down for a coffee, drink or picnic in a recreation ground, park or playing field.
- Up to 30 can attend funerals, up to 6 wakes and weddings (no longer limited to exceptional circumstances).

From 29 March

- Outdoor gatherings of either six people or two households will be allowed – the "rule of six".
- Outdoor sports facilities such as tennis, bowls or basketball courts can re-open – for up to 6 people or 2 households.
- Outdoors, organised adult and children's sport, eg grassroots football, can return, without spectators.
- Outdoors, supervised activities for children can take place (eg cubs, brownies etc);
- Outdoors, parent and child groups can meet with up to 15 attending, plus under-fives.
- Out of school children's settings will be able to accept all children.

Step Two: 12th April

- Only the group activities shown here are permitted. Other activities (eg art classes, clubs, WIs, craft groups, Parish Council meetings) will not yet be permitted.
- Food and alcohol can be served to those seated in outdoor settings, or as takeaways, alcohol served without the need for a meal, subject to the rule of 6. The 10pm curfew is removed.
- Indoor gyms and dance studios can re-open, but only for people on their own or in household groups. Halls can therefore be used for indoor sports and dance practice by household groups but **not** exercise or dance classes.
- Funerals can take place with up to 30 people; wakes and weddings will be allowed up to 15 guests, wedding receptions up to 15 outdoors.
- Supervised activities for children can open, including dance classes, musical activities, cubs, scouts, brownies, for all children, in accordance with Government guidance for Out of School Settings.

- Parent and child groups can take place indoors, eg parent and toddlers, with up to 15 attending plus under fives.
- Non-essential retail can re-open eg hairdressers, charity shops.
- Outdoor gatherings or events organised by a business, charity, public body or similar organisation, can be held under Covid-19 secure conditions, enabling a village fete. People on a playing field may watch a sports match, subject to the rule of 6. Marquees can be erected and outdoor markets and car boot sales held for up to 56 days p.a. without requiring planning consent.

The social contact rules will continue to apply in all settings - meaning social distancing must be maintained, indoors no mixing allowed between different households. Outdoors the "rule of 6" applies: Up to 6 people or 2 households can meet.

Government guidance issued on 25th February on re-opening businesses and venues in England <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reopening-businesses-and-venues-in-england> said: "indoor events that bring people together - even if they do not mix with other households - must not run until Step 3. This is only permitted if there is an explicit exemption - this includes support groups, supervised activities for children, parent-and-child groups (up to 15 people, not counting those aged under five), communal worship, or a wedding, reception or commemorative event like a wake." However, since then the exemption for indoor wedding receptions has been withdrawn, they can only be held outdoors until Step 3 so a marquee or gazebo is required.

Step Three: 17 May

- Indoor and outdoor gatherings or events organized by a business, charity, public body or similar organization can be organized subject to compliance with Covid-19 secure guidance, risk assessment, the premises capacity limits and the social contact rules.
- Film shows, plays, concerts and sports matches can take place, subject to social distancing.
- Hospitality settings will be able to open for seated service in accordance with the "rule of 6 or 2 households", so community cafes, coffee mornings and social clubs can take place.
- Indoor sports activities, including exercise classes, team sports such as table tennis, badminton, indoor bowls, and indoor soft play for children can take place
- Up to 30 people will be able to attend weddings, receptions, funerals and wakes and other "significant life events" eg Christenings and bar mitzvahs (but not birthdays).
- Outdoor gatherings can take place in a group of no more than 30 people unless a specific exemption applies.
- Organised performance events can take place with up to 50% of capacity indoors up to 1,000 people and 50% of capacity up to 4,000 people at outdoor events.

The "rule of 6 or 2 households" will apply to indoor events unless a specific exemption applies (as for parent and toddler groups). Guidance on social contact between friends and family will be reviewed.

Step Four: 21st June

It is hoped that all legal limits on social contact are removed and dancing is permitted. Outdoor events with more than 30 people can take place.

Restrictions on numbers at weddings and funerals are abolished. This is all subject to the outcome of an Events Research Programme taking place in April and May.

A. Which activities can now take place?

The table at the end of this Appendix summarises when and how common activities are expected to be able to take place in or around community halls.

When can the social contact limits (including group sizes) be exceeded? What are the exemptions?

- for work purposes or providing voluntary or charitable services, including in other people's homes.
- for childcare, education, or training – meaning Pre-schools, education and training provided as part of a formal curriculum.
- for supervised activities provided for children, including wraparound care (before and after-school childcare), groups and activities for under 18s.
- for formal support groups, and parent and child groups – when up to 15 people aged 5 and older (plus children under 5) can attend.
- to provide emergency assistance, avoid injury or illness.
- to fulfil a legal obligation, such as attending court or jury service, and voting.
- To visit a person understood to be dying, where the visitors are members of the household, close family members or friends of the dying person.
- For wakes, weddings and wedding receptions, for which specific limits apply.

Notes on the exemptions:

- i) The limits on group size are to limit the spread of infection. Even where an activity – such as a voluntary service - may be exempt, organisers should consider whether it would help limit the risk to adjust their activities and operate either from home or in groups/shifts which usually comprise the same volunteers.
- ii) The question arises as to whether a hall trustee meeting could be held socially distanced in the hall before Step 3? People are permitted to do voluntary work outside the home which they cannot do from home, but are encouraged to work from home where possible, so the circumstances will dictate whether this is appropriate: During Step 2 plans for re-opening need to be made so if there are practical matters to address connected with re-opening which are better discussed on site, or trustees who are not online are needed for important decisions, then these would potentially be good reasons to hold a meeting in person, if trustees agree.
- iii) Support groups: Although the list below is not exhaustive it would be unwise for an activity to call itself a "support group" in order to avoid the limits on group size. Support groups are defined in the "Stay at home guidance" as groups that "have to be delivered in person" where "formally organised to provide mutual aid, therapy or any other form of support. Support groups must not take place in a private home and all participants should maintain social distancing". Examples include those groups that provide support to:
 - victims of crime (including domestic abuse)
 - those with, or recovering from, addictions (including alcohol, narcotics or other substance addictions) or addictive patterns of behaviour
 - recent parents (including antenatal, breastfeeding, postnatal, and baby and toddler groups, for the provision of support)
 - those with, or caring for persons with, any long-term illness or terminal condition or who are vulnerable (this might include a Stroke Club or dementia support)
 - those facing issues related to their sexuality or identity including those living as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender
 - those who have suffered bereavement
 - vulnerable young people, including to enable them to meet youth workers.
- iv) The limit of 15 for support groups and parent and child groups does not include children under 5 who are accompanying a parent or guardian. Where the rule of 6 or 2 households applies

and for events such as wakes, wedding receptions, it is not clear but risk indicates small babies would not count.

- v) Where a group includes someone working, they are not counted as part of the gatherings limit eg a counsellor can run a support group of 15.
- vi) **Businesses:** While there is an exception to the "Stay at Home" guidance for those at work, it is unlikely to apply to those people attending an activity which is run as a business, such as a weight loss group, only to the person at work. Some people attending may be in the vulnerable category so attention to social distancing essential. Slimming World and Weight Watchers are advised only to carry out weighing, retail activity and 1:1 counselling at halls, followed up by online "socials" and dietary guidance.

B. Application of the restrictions to hall bookings

A risk-based approach needs to be taken, bearing in mind:

- the important need to address isolation, loneliness and mental health issues;
- the needs of families with young people;
- the need to enable people to remain fit and healthy;
- the need for people who normally earn a living around community facilities to do so.
- While vaccination reduces risk of hospitalization, the virus can still be transmitted and new variants are a cause for concern.

The information below is designed to help people work out **how to arrange activities safely**. It 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. It is not necessary for a hall to accept a booking when permitted if it has doubts as to whether the organizer will comply with Covid-secure rules.

Until Step 4, when social contact rules will be relaxed, the following 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) and gathering limits? Mingling between different groups is not permitted.
- 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. While most people aged 70 or over, or clinically vulnerable, will have been vaccinated, arrangements should nevertheless be made to provide for 2m social distancing throughout their use of the premises, including when using toilets. The clinically vulnerable are likely to be particularly cautious.
- Are the organisers willing to clean regularly used surfaces before the event, while it takes place and before leaving? Are they willing to ensure compliance with the requirements to wear face coverings and recording details of those attending or use of NHS QR codes (see Appendix M).
- If activities are to be held outdoors what arrangements will be made in the event of rain or a cold snap, e.g. tents, umbrellas? (planning restrictions on use of marquees have been relaxed so these can be erected for up to 2 months without planning consent.)
- 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, stewarding entrances/exits, 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, sports, performing arts, out of school settings, retail)

- Organisers may be following guidance issued by their own governing bodies (eg for sports), which may be more specific to their activity and should provide reassurance. If there is a slight difference between that guidance and the information here, it will be for the organiser to decide which to follow, because Government Guidance is regularly updated.

How to arrange activities safely?

These notes assume cleaning, hygiene, face masks and capacity limits are met and there is compliance with relevant Government Guidance. If an activity is not covered here, we suggest you look at the closest match.

- **Parent and Child groups:** Up to 15 people aged 5 and over are permitted, plus children under 5, either for voluntary or “business-led” activities (e.g. music for toddlers). Soft toys should be avoided. Parents can be encouraged to bring toys which are not shared with other children. Government Guidance for “early years” may be helpful in making arrangements eg focus on hand cleanliness, arranging the room into small groups. Social distancing will be difficult so arrangements may be needed for any families with clinically vulnerable close relatives who attend.
- **Supervised Activities for Children:** The comprehensive Guidance for Out of School Settings should be followed.
- **Parish Council Meetings and Annual Parish Meetings:** The current regulations permitting local government meetings to be held online expire on 7th May and will not be extended as by then it is expected that meetings of public bodies can take place safely in Covid-secure venues owing to the successful vaccination programme, so parish council meetings and meetings of other public bodies are permitted from 7th May. Councils are encouraged to allow the public to attend meetings online if they wish until Step 4, and to hold their Annual Parish Meetings after Step 3 (due 17th May), when the public would normally attend. Any Council subject to an election needs to hold their Annual General Meeting (when the Chair, Vice-Chair and outside appointments are made) within 21 days of the elections (i.e., by 27th May).
- **Public meetings and public consultation events:** Certain meetings have to take place in public and this is permitted where legally required, as people are allowed to leave home for legal purposes. This applies where a public meeting is required to sell or lease hall property, for example. There are other circumstances where there is an obligation to consult the public (eg large planning applications, Neighbourhood Plans) or invite people to attend, such as AGMs (some long overdue), when those who are not online would be denied opportunity to participate unless other arrangements are made. In such cases, until Step 3, it is recommended that the meeting is advertised as run online, with the facility for those who cannot attend online to attend the hall, and hosted/run from the hall by a small number of people (as permitted work or voluntary work), who ensure social distancing is maintained eg operating a one-way system for an exhibition. These arrangements might be shared with the District Council in order to avoid misunderstandings. At Step 3, digital participation can still be encouraged so as to comply with the hall’s Covid capacity limit. For large meetings attendees can be asked to use the furthest seat from the entrance first unless hard of hearing, leaving two seats between groups of people on either side. Handouts can be 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. Protest meetings cannot be held until Step 2, when they can be held outdoors, or Step 3 indoors, if organised by a business, charity, public body or similar organization.
- **Libraries, book lending schemes and Wifi access:** Halls can provide wifi/internet services during lockdown for individuals who cannot access it at home. For book services, 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.

- **Small events and facilities providing catering:** e.g. coffee mornings, pop-up cafés, luncheon clubs, community cafes. These are permitted with “rule of 6 or household/bubble groups”, outdoors from Step 2 and indoors at Step 3. Table service only should be provided. A distance of 2m is required between tables (unless other measures such as back to back seating are in place). Takeaway drink or food can be provided. Government Guidance for pubs, cafes and restaurants should be consulted to work out how to run these safely. Arrangements should be available for any particularly vulnerable people, to avoid their continued isolation.
- **Playing games at tables:** Step 3: The older age profile and difficulty complying with social distancing at card tables (normally 67cm) led the English Bridge Union to advise Bridge Clubs against re-opening in 2020 and their website should be consulted for any updated guidance. However, where members have been vaccinated an informal local group may feel comfortable with arranging for “rule of 6 or household/bubble groups” to play together and avoid mixing with other groups. Slightly larger tables, hand sanitizer, new cards, cleaning cards and tiles touched by other players should assist.
- **Weddings and wedding receptions:** From Step 2, weddings (and alternative wedding ceremonies), civil partnership ceremonies are permitted indoors and wedding receptions outdoors where attended by up to 15 persons (excluding those officiating), up to 30 indoors at Step 3. Toilets and kitchen facilities can be accessed for outdoor receptions and a meeting room used by one household. It is expected that the 2020 rules will apply: A sit down meal can be provided; musicians may play; a small group of singers perform, but guests may not sing and recorded music is recommended. The bridal couple are not required to wear face coverings and only they may dance. See government guidance on Places of Worship and on Weddings, and for cafes and restaurants in relation to catering.. (Babies are unlikely to be counted in the permitted numbers as they do not “mingle”, causing risk of virus spread to vulnerable adults.)
- **Other life cycle events:** While an event to “mark a person’s death or celebrate their life following a death, such as a funeral” can be held for up to 30 people, government guidance suggests that families consider deferring a celebration or memorial service until it can be held safely and that community facilities should not facilitate large gatherings or celebrations at present. Wakes and similar events are permitted for up to 15 at Step 2, so a hall may be hired to provide refreshments and toilet facilities for relatives and friends who have travelled a distance to attend a funeral. Any refreshments should be provided as “table service” or, if caterers are not engaged, people seated in order to eat and drink, socially distanced ie in household/bubble groups. Baptisms and other religious or belief events are permitted at Step 3 with up to 30, but not birthday parties, and they must remain socially distanced. These exemptions aside, only gatherings organized by a charitable, voluntary, public organization or business can be held at Step 3. While birthday parties could be held outdoors at Step 3 with up to 30 people attending and no singing or dancing, it is unwise owing to difficulties of control.
- **Worship:** Community halls can be used for religious services and worship in accordance with the Guidance for Places of Worship, but not for other church/faith meetings.
- **Social Clubs, bars:** These may open at Step 2 for outdoor, seated service, with access to indoor toilets, and at Step 3 indoors, in accordance with Government guidance for pubs, cafes and restaurants (the hospitality sector). People must not be admitted other than in “rule of 6 or 2 household” groups and groups must not mix. Tables must be 2m part (or with other mitigation such as back to back seating). The following rules remain in place until Step 4: Ancillary

performance activity (eg live music) can be provided for those seated but people must not be encouraged to gather nearby, sing or dance; Music must not be louder than 85db(A) at source, except for live music. Games such as darts and snooker in Clubs and bars are discouraged, but can be played as an activity in their own right at Step 3, at Step 2 at a Youth Club. Hospitality venues, including community cafes, must ensure every individual either uses the NHS QR poster or provides contact details on arrival. The 10pm curfew and requirement for a substantial meal with alcohol are no longer in place.

- **Indoor sport and exercise and dancing classes:** Activities such as exercise classes, badminton, table tennis, indoor bowls, dancing classes, are not permitted for adults until Step 3, even “static” classes such as yoga and pilates. Government guidance (summarized in **Appendix K**, subject to revision) and any guidance issued by the relevant governing body for sport will apply, eg limited martial arts activity may be permitted earlier. Energetic activities such as Zumba and circuit training are subject to tighter capacity and ventilation requirements.
- **Indoor Performances, Rehearsals, broadcasts:** Rehearsals, filming and broadcasting of music, drama and dancing is permitted for professional and educational purposes indoors at Step 2. However, amateur dramatic rehearsals and performances (professional or amateur) are not permitted indoors until Step 3. At Step 2 amateurs can only rehearse outdoors in accordance with the “rule of 6”. At Step 3 a limit of 50% of capacity applies to performances at Community Halls, under Government Guidance on organized events. These should all be held in accordance with the Government guidance for performing arts, summarized in **Appendix J** (subject to any revision). Children’s entertainers need to get back to work and will have plans for managing social distancing and encouraging hand washing, so offer a good option for organised activities for children and young people from Step 2.
- **Outdoor events:** An event organized by a business, charity, public body, or similar organization, such as a fete, car boot sale, horticultural show is permitted at Step 2 if held in accordance with the organized events guidance for local authorities. As well as undertaking a Risk Assessment and following relevant COVID-19 secure guidance, attendees will be expected to arrive and leave in a staggered manner throughout. Attendees cannot congregate in one place for a performance. Seated (table service) or takeaway food and non-alcoholic drink is permitted .
- **Children’s birthday parties:** Many families do not have the space for this at home. A letter from the Minister at DCMS confirms these can be held indoors at Covid-secure Community Halls as a supervised activity for children with a maximum of 15 adults, of whom a children’s entertainer would count as one. Loud music or activity which would encourage shouting or singing is not permitted until Step 4. At Step 3, they can be held outdoors for up to 30. The Guidance for Out of School settings should be followed.

Not permitted until Step 4 (21st June 2021)

- **Dances and discos, teenage or adult parties:** Dance floors and nightclubs are not permitted to open. Loud music is not permitted. Performers are advised not to encourage impromptu dancing by audiences. There should be no **group singing by worshippers or audiences**. Places of worship should take account of the Performing Arts guidance.

C. There has been some concern by trustees about responsibilities and confusion about the way different Government Guidance applies.

The following may help:

1. **Trustees** of Village Halls are unlikely to be at risk if they have undertaken and followed a COVID-19 Risk Assessment before re-opening their Halls, unless the activity is on the specific 'banned' list that is referred to in Regulation 4 (and regularly amended).
2. Risk under the 'crisis regulations' falls to the **event organiser**. If a **hirer, the event organiser**, does not feel the Hall is in a condition that enables them to comply, they should not make the booking. Obligations on the **event organiser** include keeping a record of those attending for NHS test and trace and taking steps to avoid groups of people mingling at activities.
3. **Trustees and managers of** Village Halls will, of course, want to ensure that their premises make it as easy as possible for both hirers and individuals to comply with relevant Guidance through the provision of adequate handwashing, signage, spacing/capacity guidelines, multiple small tables etc. specific to their Hall. The manner or extent to which managers choose to do this is unlikely to alter the risk for them under the regulations.
4. **Hirers** must commit themselves to operating in a COVID-19 Secure way by following the Government's Guidance in force for their activity. The Government guidance says: "if organising an activity, you should carry out a COVID-19 risk assessment to identify actions which could minimise the risk of transmission".
5. **Trustees and managers** of Halls should follow good practice themselves and avoid creating the conditions for the spread of COVID-19 in their community. For this reason, they will want to avoid letting to any **hirer** where there may be an obvious risk of the Guidance being hard to comply with.
6. In order to assure themselves on 4, above, trustees of Halls should ensure **hirers** inform all participating **individuals** that they must adhere to social distancing guidelines and the face covering requirement. *The responsibility rests with the individual to comply and with the hirer (the event organiser) to have carried out a risk assessment and operated the event under COVID-19 Secure guidelines to make it possible* e.g. by laying out seats or tables so as to enable individuals or groups to achieve social distancing from the next individual or group.
7. The Government guidance for **individuals** advises: "you should not hold or attend celebrations of any size (such as parties) where it's difficult to maintain social distancing" and "limit social interaction with anyone outside the group you are attending a place with".
8. **Event organisers** should arrange activities so as to avoid "rule of 6 or household/bubble groups" "mingling", ie mixing with other groups. The group limit does not stop people saying hello, waving, smiling, or conversing briefly in the way many are now used to doing while social distancing in the street, shops or at work. However, an **individual** in one group may not join another group during an activity or event, just as people in restaurants may not join another table. An **event organiser** should ask **individuals** who attempt to mingle with another group to stop.
9. **Space requirements may be difficult to determine** in advance of occasional events, whereas for regular activities this is likely to be less of a problem: Even if people attend in a "rule of 6" group if they are from different households vulnerable people may still require sufficient space for social distancing within their group. Organisers can therefore **ask** whether social distancing is needed *within* a group, so that when an activity is being booked or people are being seated, sufficient space is made available.
10. Common sense can be applied.

Managing social interactions for “rule of 6 or 2 household” groups – examples

Activity or Event	How to Manage groups?	Can Face Coverings be removed? (Other exceptions also apply)
Indoor market: Step 2	People attend in socially distanced household groups. A steward at the entrance checks whether space is available before allowing entry. One way system.	No.
Sewing group: Step 3	People can attend in “Rule of 6 or 2 household” groups at up to the hall’s Covid capacity. They can choose either to sit socially distanced from anyone else (at their own table) or within a group at one large table, but each table must be at least 2m apart from other tables/groups. Those within a household/bubble can be closely seated at their own table, but those from different households in a rule of 6 group are encouraged to be socially distanced.	To take refreshments (seated) or if they interfere with the activity. If glasses steam up, they should be removed for safety (sharp scissors, needles).
Quiz: Step 3	Most people attend in family or friendship groups so need to comply with the “rule of 6 or 2 household group” but some people may attend alone and need to be socially distanced from others. People can be asked to book in advance, and people could join online. At the interval remind people not to mingle between groups, especially if children attend who may want to mix with friends. Invite people from each table to use toilets one by one.	To take refreshments (seated).
Art class: Step 3	12 people. The instructor moves round the room, paying attention to social distancing. Attendees either sit socially distanced not moving between them, or in “rule of 6” groups, where each person is socially distanced but can chat and move within their group during the class and coffee break, but not with other groups.	To take refreshments (seated) If it would interfere with the activity (eg glasses steam up).
Bingo: (Step 3)	Each “rule of 6 or 2 household” group needs to be socially distanced from other groups. If people don’t book in advance, someone needs to show them to a row of seats or table large enough for their group. A 2m wide gangway and 2m separation from tables in front and behind is required.	To take refreshments (seated).
Public meeting (Step 3)	Seats placed in forward facing rows eg 8 on each side of a 2m gangway, each group or individual separated from the next group or individual by 2 empty seats in the row or sitting in a different row. Someone should be available to help seat people so as to achieve social distancing and ensure rows fill from the far end first.	To take refreshments (seated). If it would interfere with the activity eg by a speaker. A PA preferable if available.
Film show (Step 3)	Barns Green Village Hall, Sussex, held 2 shows, with advance bookings in 2020. Limiting group sizes to households/bubbles of 4, empty seats between, gave a capacity of 46. They can continue this way or, raise the group limit to 6 or 2 households. The seats are the refreshment area, people bring their own.	Once seated face coverings can be removed to eat and drink, replaced before leaving.
Wedding reception	Up to 15 people can attend a wedding and a seated reception outdoors at Step 2, up to 30 at Step 3. The hirer	Not required by the bride and groom. Guests

(Steps 2 and 3)	should be asked how the tables should be set out so that household groups, especially those with vulnerable people, socially distance from others. Toilets and kitchen facilities can be accessed for outdoor receptions. One household can use indoor meeting space.	may remove them once seated for the meal.
Coffee morning (Step 3)	People attend to socialise with others, but arrive singly or in pairs. Organisers may allocate or allow them to join a table of up to 6, socially distanced, with whom they can chat. Organisers should explain they must not mingle or move to another table.	To take refreshments, when seated.
WI meeting (Step 3)	The age profile may mean that members are particularly cautious so it would be best to assume they would prefer to sit 2m socially distanced from everyone else, or in pairs, and set the room out accordingly, allowing them to move their own chairs into groups of no more than 6 individuals or two households.	To take refreshments, when seated.

D. Bringing the community back together.

Re-opening is an opportunity to think about how the community can be re-invigorated. While some people will be cautious about re-engaging, others are keen to meet up with friends again, tutors keen to get back to earning a living and newcomers will welcome the opportunity to meet new people. A re-opening event is an opportunity to spread the word that organisations are welcoming new members, about how important the hall is to the community and that it needs new trustees or volunteers to run “fun” community events, for organisations to show what they have to offer (for example, musical performances), to ask people what activities they would like and could help run. It’s also an opportunity to reassure people that they can safely attend events because it is Covid-19 secure.

Afternoon teas, a “pop up pub evening”, an “open day” or fete, making it part of the Annual Parish Meeting, a talent show are a few ideas for Step 3. A combination of posters, notes through doors, a flier on tables at a pub, social media should reach newcomers as well as though who don’t follow social media.

Preparing for re-opening is also an opportunity to re-appraise how the hall is managed and whether the hall could do anything more to address social isolation. Are adjustments needed to book and payment systems, marketing, cleaning, who does what among trustees, other volunteers and staff? If Covid grants have put the hall in a healthier financial situation, this may be the time to invest in refreshing facilities or equipment, installing broadband, so as to better serve local people and encourage use.

A number of halls are facing particular difficulties re-opening owing to loss of trustees or user groups because the usual social contacts which draw in new people have not taken place for such a long time. ACRE’s Information Sheets (e.g., recruiting volunteers, marketing, business planning) can help but if your hall faces particular difficulty, contact your ACRE Network Adviser for support. *(With thanks to Francis Burrows, Action in rural Sussex)*

Appendix E

Sample Special Conditions of Hire during COVID-19

Note: These conditions are supplemental to, not a replacement for, the hall's ordinary conditions of hire.

SC1:

You, the hirer, will be responsible for ensuring those attending your activity or event comply with the COVID-19 Secure Guidelines while entering and occupying the hall, as shown on the attached poster which is also displayed at the hall entrance, in particular using the hand sanitiser supplied when entering the hall and after using tissues.

SC2:

You undertake to comply with the actions identified in the hall's risk assessment, of which you will be provided with a copy.

SC3:

You will be responsible for cleaning door handles, light switches, window catches, equipment, toilet handles and seats, wash basins and all surfaces likely to be used during your period of hire **before** other members of your group or organisation arrive and to keep the premises clean through regular cleaning of surfaces during your hire, paying particular attention to wash hand basins and kitchen sinks (if used), using either the products supplied (which will be in a clearly accessible location) or your own ordinary domestic products. You will be required to clean again on leaving.

Please take care cleaning electrical equipment. Use cloths - do not spray!

SC4:

You will make sure that everyone likely to attend your activity or event understands that they **MUST NOT DO SO** if they or anyone in their household has had COVID-19 symptoms in the last 48 hours, and that if they develop symptoms within 10 days of visiting the premises, they **MUST** seek a COVID-19 test.

SC5:

You will keep the premises well ventilated throughout your hire, with windows and doors (except fire doors) open as far as convenient. You will be responsible for ensuring they are all securely closed on leaving.

SC6:

You will ensure that no more than [30] people attend your activity/event in the Main Hall and (15) in the Small Hall, in order that social distancing can be maintained. You will ensure that people attending do so in groups of no more than 6 or two households and that such groups do not mingle. You will ensure social distancing of 2m between individuals or groups is maintained by everyone attending as far as possible, including while waiting to enter the premises, that they observe the one-way system within the premises, and as far as possible observe social distancing of 1m plus mitigation measures when using more confined areas e.g., moving and stowing equipment, accessing toilets which should be kept as brief as possible. You will make sure that no more than [one] persons use each suite of toilets at one time.

SC7:

You will take particular care to ensure that social distancing is maintained for any persons aged 70 or over or likely to be clinically more vulnerable to COVID-19, including for example keeping a 2m distance around them when going in and out of rooms and ensuring they can access the toilets or other confined areas without compromising social distancing.

SC8:

You will position furniture or the arrangement of the room as far as possible to facilitate social distancing of 2m between individual people or groups of six or less people or 2 households, or 1m with mitigation measures such as: seating side by side, with at least one empty chair between each person or household group, rather than face-to-face, face coverings and good ventilation. If tables are being used, you will place them so as to maintain social distancing across the table between people from different household groups who are face-to-face e.g. using a wide U-shape.

SC9:

You **MUST** keep a record of the date and time the activity started and the name and contact telephone number or email of all those who attend your event (at least one member of any group of up to 6 people or 2 households must provide details). This can be done either by operating an advance booking system which collects these details, or by asking everyone who attends to use the NHS QR poster at the hall entrance to register their attendance and by keeping a record of any who do not register using their smartphone app and the hall's NHS QR poster or your own NHS QR poster. If food or drink is being served, then the contact details of **everyone** attending must be obtained on arrival unless they register using the NHS QR poster or have provided details beforehand.

SC10:

You will be responsible for the disposal of all rubbish created during your hire, including tissues and cleaning cloths, in the rubbish bins provided by the main entrance before you leave the hall. All other rubbish should be taken away with you when you leave the hall.

SC11:

Users are encouraged to bring their own drinks and food. If food or drink is being served or made on a DIY basis (as distinct to a water bottle used during exercise) it must be consumed while seated. Alcohol must only be served at tables, or as a takeaway service or, at a performance of a film, play or concert, to those with a ticket for consumption at their seat. If food and drink is served at tables you **MUST** ensure there is no mingling between groups at different tables, which must be seated in accordance with SC6.

SC12:

We will have the right to close the hall if there are safety concerns relating to COVID-19, for example, if someone who has attended the hall develops symptoms and thorough cleansing is required or if it is reported that the Special Hiring Conditions above are not being complied with, whether by you or by other hirers, or in the event that public buildings are asked or required to close again. If this is necessary, we will do our best to inform you promptly and you will not be charged for this hire.

SC13:

In the event of someone becoming unwell with suspected Covid-19 symptoms while at the hall you should remove them to the designated safe area which is [Committee Room]. Provide tissues and a bin or plastic bag, and a bowl of warm soapy water for handwashing. Ask others in your group to provide contact details if you do not have them and then leave the premises, observing the usual hand sanitising and social distancing precautions, and advise them to launder their clothes when they arrive home. Inform the hall cleaner on [insert contact no:].

SC14: For events with more than 30 people (when allowed) you will take additional steps to ensure the safety of the public in relation to COVID-19 and prevent large gatherings or mass events from taking place, for example by operating a booking system or providing attendants or stewards who will ask people to seat themselves furthest from the entrance on arrival, to exit closest to the exits first and invite people to use toilets in the interval row by row.

SC15: In order to avoid risk of aerosol or droplet transmission you must take steps to avoid people needing to unduly raise their voices to each other, e.g. refrain from playing music or broadcasts at a volume which makes normal conversation difficult.

SC16:

Other special points as appropriate.

e.g., Where a sports, exercise or performing arts activity takes place:

[You will organise your activity in accordance with guidance issued by the relevant governing body for your sport or activity]

e.g., Where a group uses their own equipment:

[You will ask those attending to bring their own equipment and not share it with other members] or [You will avoid using equipment, which is difficult to clean, as far as possible. You will ensure that any equipment you provide is cleaned before use and before being stored in the hall].

SC 17:

You will encourage all those attending your activity to wear a face covering unless an exemption or other government guidance applies to the activity. A face covering is not required when people are eating or drinking but they should be seated.

Appendices' F & G are available as separate documents.

Appendix H

Covid-19 First Aid Box

Contents list kindly provided by Ashenground Community Centre, Sussex

- Face mask (covering) & pair of plastic gloves x 2 – each set in a plastic bag (for responder and patient)
- Plastic face shield – for the responder
- Pocket pack of tissues
- Hand soap in pump dispenser
- Small hand sanitiser gel
- Disposable apron e.g. plastic sleeveless or cheap overalls
- Small packet anti-bacterial wipes
- Rubbish bags x 2 (so disposables can be double-bagged). The outer one marked e.g. "Covid waste".
- Washing up bowl for handwashing

A plastic chair has been placed in the isolation space with a notice above.

Laminated instructions for how to respond are attached to the box and a laminated copy of this sheet is in the box.

All hall users are made aware of this box when they first use the facilities.

Appendix I

Help Keep this Playground and Play Equipment COVID-19 Secure

This Playground is not supervised, and equipment is not regularly cleaned.

- **Do not use this equipment if you are unwell.**
- **Social distancing of 2m MUST always be maintained (or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not possible).**
- **Only one child is allowed on each piece of equipment at a time.**
- **No eating or drinking in the playground.**
- **Parents/Carers: You will need to clean the equipment before your child uses it. Use hand sanitiser or wipes to clean your children's hands before and after use.**
- **Do not touch your face. Remember to cough or sneeze into a tissue. Take tissues home or put them into the bins provided (use an arm if a tissue is not available).**
- **Children's clothes should be washed when they get home.**
- **Families with clinically vulnerable members: Do NOT use the equipment without first cleaning it.**

Appendix J

Performances in Village and Community Halls

This Appendix contains key points from the Government guidance as they relate to performance activities in village and community halls. The important 5 points of the COVID-19 Secure guidelines set out in Section 2.1 of the ACRE Information Sheet should be in place and are not repeated here.

A village hall which has undertaken a COVID-19 risk assessment and is following the steps identified to minimise transmission should satisfy most points in the Government guidance for performance, the full text of which is contained here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts>.

At Step 2 training, rehearsals and performances for broadcast or recording are permitted indoors, without an audience, by professionals only. Amateurs can only rehearse outdoors in rule of 6 or 2 household groups. A hospitality venue operating outside can provide ancillary performance activity for seated customers outdoors, eg low volume live music. However, people must not be encouraged to gather, sing or dance. Drive in performances only are permitted (eg film). Educational activity and tuition of children can take place in accordance with the guidance for out of school activities. Dance tuition for adults can only take place on a one to one basis, not in classes or clubs.

At Step 3 performances to socially distanced audiences are permitted up to 50% capacity at Covid secure halls. Dancing classes are permitted, following [guidance for providers of grassroots sport and gym/leisure facilities](#). Organised outdoor performances can also take place. .

Particular note should be taken of the guidance on safe singing: [recent paper on principles for safer singing](#).

Who Might be at risk?

In the context of a village hall this could be somebody taking part in a performance, a related activity or an audience member, a visiting professional e.g., in a touring company.

If clinically vulnerable or higher risk individuals would normally take part or attend, consider whether they can do so from home, e.g., in rehearsals or by recording performances. Alternatively, they might be given the safest roles or seating which enable them to maintain social distancing (preferably 2m, or 1m with robust risk mitigation). If they cannot maintain social distancing this may not involve an acceptable level of risk.

Key Points

1. **Risk assessment:** Bear in mind that the Government guidance on performance says: "Risk assessment is not about creating huge amounts of paperwork, but rather about identifying sensible measures to control the risks in your workplace."
2. **Singing:** There should be no **group singing by worshipers**. Worship should take account of the Performing Arts guidance. Otherwise singing is allowed outdoors at Step 2 subject to the rule of 6 or 2 households, and at Step 3 indoors subject to risk assessment and mitigation measures set out in the guidance.

3. **Communicate with those using the hall or outdoor areas for performance activities** to ensure the COVID-19 secure guidelines are met. Providing a copy of the hall's own COVID-19 risk assessment showing the measures you are adopting (e.g. your cleaning, entrance/exit, "pinch point" control arrangements) should help them work out what additional measures they need to take, if any.
4. **Communication to the public:** Provide clear guidance on social distancing and hygiene to visitors before arrival, for example by email when purchasing tickets, and on marketing and websites.
5. **Food and drink purchases:** These are permitted at Step 3 by ticket holders for consumption at seats . Consider allowing guests to pre-order and collect refreshments at designated points to reduce queues and pinch points or adopting seat service at intervals. Consider providing programmes in digital format. See also the [guidance for restaurants and bars](#).
6. **Noise:** When the public are attending performances, organisers should ensure that steps are taken to avoid audiences needing to unduly raise their voices to each other. This includes avoiding playing music or broadcasts at a volume that makes normal conversation difficult, e.g., during performance intervals. This is to avoid increased risk of transmission from aerosol and droplet transmission.
7. **Cleaning:** Performances should be scheduled to allow sufficient time to undertake cleaning before the next audience arrives.
8. **At Step 3, outdoor performances organised by a business, charity, public or similar body are permitted up to 50% of site capacity or 4,000 people.** Organisers need to take additional steps to ensure the safety of the public and prevent large gatherings of more than 30 people from taking place. The Government guidance for organised events should be followed.
9. **Those organising performance activities** need to ensure social distancing can be maintained by working out the maximum capacity that is appropriate. It may differ if the activity is static, such as a band rehearsal, or requires movement, such as a ballet class. They may need to consider whether a stage is big enough to rehearse, pay attention to ventilation and sufficient circulation space e.g., between any teachers and classes.
10. **A booking system will be needed to manage attendances or ticket sales**, preferably online or by phone. The National Rural Touring Forum (NRTF) has suggested halls might try using <https://www.izettle.com/gb> or <https://sumup.co.uk/>.
11. **Areas may need to be marked out temporarily** to help people achieve social distancing.
12. **Attendants and Toilets:** Sufficient attendants will be required to manage queues, seating, toilets etc. A longer interval is likely to be required and an attendant present to invite people to use them row by row, to manage numbers.
13. **Space outside for queuing** needs to be available, and safe. People may need protection from traffic by routing them behind physical structures such as bollards or putting up barriers. It may be necessary to liaise with neighbours or local authorities.

14. **The needs of disabled individuals and those who are frail or have sensory disabilities** need to be considered at entrances, exits, in queue management and seating arrangements. Arrangements need to be communicated effectively.
15. **Where social distancing guidelines cannot be followed** in full, all appropriate mitigating actions should be taken to reduce the risk of transmission between people. It may be impractical where one professional works with groups e.g. in a dancing class, costume-fitting, make-up, intimate/fighting scenes. Mitigation measures include, for example:
- increasing the frequency of hand washing and surface cleaning,
 - keeping the activity time as short as possible,
 - using back-to-back or side-to-side seating or working (rather than face-to-face),
 - using screens or barriers, face masks.
- reducing the number of people each person has contact with by using 'fixed teams or partnering' (so each person works with only a few others). These teams should not mingle with each other in a non-socially distanced manner.

Managing Seating:

Seating needs to be provided in a way which ensures social distancing can be maintained between individuals or groups, which should be no more than 6 unless they are a group of two households. Village halls, with removable seating, are at an advantage over theatres with fixed seating. Consider measures such as:

- Space rows further apart than usual, providing 2m spaces (or 1m plus mitigation) between seating for groups, providing one or two empty (marked) seats between rule of 6 or 2 household groups.
- Providing allocated seating and managing seating plans through ticketing systems to ensure social distancing is maintained.
- Provide attendants to help with social distancing e.g. to ask people to occupy seats from the furthest point first and evacuate from the point closest to the exit first.
- Encourage people not to bring bags and coats where possible to reduce clutter at seats.
- Remind those accompanied by children that they are responsible for supervising them at all times and should follow social distancing guidelines, not mingle with friends in other groups.

Handling props, musical instruments, technical equipment etc

To avoid transmission through contact:

1. Instruments and other personal kit should be kept clean by the owner, and not shared with others. Name labels on equipment will help identify an owner or designated user. People should avoid sharing scripts, scores and personal items such as phones, charges, pens etc. A drop off and pick up point should be created rather than passing equipment such as props and microphones hand to hand.

2. Any equipment which has to be shared should be regularly disinfected and always between users.
3. Waste and belongings should be removed at the end of a class, rehearsal or performance.
4. Use a consistent pairing system if people must work in close proximity, e.g. for handling heavy equipment.

Organisers of outdoor performances should also consider:

Consulting the guidance on delivering outdoor events. Points here are only a summary.

- Managing groups who start to mingle with other groups or individuals, which is unlawful and, in doing so, may encourage others to cluster in a similar manner. Communication is key to this.
- Planning car parking to allow sufficient spacing for social distancing in case people need to visit their vehicles to collect chairs, coats, drinks etc. or gather around vehicles.
- Discouraging activities likely to encourage audience behaviours increasing transmission risk, such as clustering, communal dancing, singing and physical contact outside of groups.

Local authorities can provide advice on how to manage outdoor events. They will avoid issuing licenses for events that could lead to larger gatherings forming. If appropriate, the Government has powers under Schedule 22 of the Coronavirus Act 2020 to close venues hosting large gatherings or prohibit certain events (or types of event) from taking place.

Appendix K

Indoor and outdoor exercise and sport

This Appendix contains key points from Government guidance relating to sport and exercise in village and community halls and associated outdoor areas.

Governing body guidance: Sport and exercise can only take place until Step 4 in accordance with guidance issued by the relevant governing body for the sport. ACRE recommends village and community halls require hirers to comply with such guidance, rather than trying to adapt hiring conditions and policies for each specific activity. However, sports played as individuals rather than as teams, such as badminton and table tennis, are not required to produce such guidance.

Where halls are used, the important 5 points of the COVID-19 secure guidelines set out in Section 2.1 of the ACRE Information Sheet should be in place and are not repeated here (social distancing, cleanliness, handwashing etc). A village hall which has undertaken a COVID-19 risk assessment and is following the steps identified to minimise transmission should satisfy most points in the Government guidance for providers of grassroots sport and gym facilities, the full text of which is contained here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/providers-of-grassroots-sport-and-gym-leisure-facilities>.

Organised team sports can be played **outdoors**, including cricket, at Step 1B (29th March) without spectators (except carers of disabled children or supervisors). Personal training outdoors is also permitted at Step 1B. At Step 2, spectators are limited to "rule of 6" groups.

Informal or "kickabout" exercise: Can only take place within "rule of 6" groups, from Step 1B until Step 3.

Organised Sports Participation Events (eg races, walks): These can take place from Step 1B, subject to compliance with the guidance: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): grassroots sports guidance for safe provision including team sport, contact combat sport and organised sport events - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-grassroots-sports-guidance-for-safe-provision-including-team-sport-contact-combat-sport-and-organised-sport-events).

Indoor gyms, fitness and dance studios, indoor sports facilities are able to open from Step 2, but only for single household use and 1:1 training, other group activity cannot take place until Step 3. Therefore yoga and pilates, dance classes, badminton, table tennis, indoor bowls etc can only be held as group activities in village and community halls from Step 3, or as single household activities or for 1:1 training. Exemptions for elite sportsmen and sportswomen, organized sport for people with disabilities, education and supervised activities for under – 18s already apply.

Combat sports: Combat sports, including martial arts, are subject to phased introduction which permits children to take part in contact training indoors in "training bubbles" of up to 15 at Step 1B, and adults to take part in small "training bubbles" with 100 sq ft per person at Step 2 once the guidance for the sport has been approved. [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): grassroots sports guidance for safe provision including team sport, contact combat sport and organised sport events - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-grassroots-sports-guidance-for-safe-provision-including-team-sport-contact-combat-sport-and-organised-sport-events)

Key Points:

1. **Social interaction before and after sport:** This should be extremely limited in line with the gathering limits for rule of 6 or 2 household groups.
2. **Changing facilities:** Until Step 3 these can only be accessed for use of toilets, first aid purposes. People should be encouraged to arrive ready changed and, where possible, travel home to change/shower (there is an exemption for disabled players). If needed, use of any changing

rooms should be managed in a similar way as for toilets.

3. **Payments:** Cash transactions should be avoided – online payments and booking used where possible to manage demand.
4. **Capacity figures and ventilation** may need attention by some hirers: Doors should be fixed open where possible for ventilation (except fire doors), use of outdoor space encouraged where possible. Capacity may be reduced below that already reached for social distancing where high intensity exercise activity takes place, activity is not static, equipment is involved, or an instructor needs to move between groups of socially distanced people. For high intensity exercise (e.g. Zumba) 100% fresh air is required, air should not be recirculated from one space to another, and the capacity of 100 sq. ft (9.29 sq. m) net indoor facility space available per person (including changing rooms, toilets, entrance etc) should be used (section 5 of the guidance).
5. **Dance and exercise:** Temporary floor markings are encouraged to define spacing per individual (e.g. chalk)
6. **Equipment:** People should avoid use of shared objects unless they can be cleaned between users, should bring their own equipment such as mats as far as possible and their own water bottles.
7. **Social distancing:** The usual social distancing requirements for the tier between individuals from different households apply. Where needed, the number of people each person has contact with should be reduced by using “fixed teams or partnering” or creating distinct groups which always work together.
8. **Parents and spectators:** Social distancing among spectators such as waiting children or parent chaperones will need to be managed, e.g. waiting in the entrance hall, car park, or car. Outdoors, spectators should be in groups of 6 or 2 households until Step 3.
9. **Instructors running classes or clubs in several venues:** The instructor needs to take particular care to avoid risk of transmission from one class or venue to another.
10. **Amateur sports clubs:** A phased approach to return is recommended in consultation with volunteers, supported by training for volunteers around compliance with COVID-19 Secure guidelines and according to guidance from the governing body. When running activities for children the guidance for out-of-school-settings should also be used:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protective-measures-for-holiday-or-after-school-clubs-and-other-out-of-school-settings-for-children-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/>

Outdoor sports facilities

The relevant guidance for outdoor sports is:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-phased-return-of-sport-and-recreation/guidance-for-providers-of-outdoor-facilities-on-the-phased-return-of-sport-and-recreation>.

Businesses, charities, philanthropic and benevolent organisations, public bodies, political organisations and venues following COVID-19 Secure guidelines can host larger groups in outdoor spaces, provided they take reasonable steps to mitigate the risk of transmission, in line with COVID-19 Secure guidance and including completion of a risk assessment, subject to the rule of 6. Any other gathering in an outdoor space must not be any larger than 6 people or 2 households until Step 3, when up to 30 people can attend.

FAQs: Sport England have posted answers to FAQs here:

<https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/coronavirus/return-play/frequently-asked-questions-return-sport-and-activity>.

Appendix L

COVID-19 treatment plan

In the event of someone becoming unwell with suspected COVID-19 symptoms while at the hall you should:

- a) Send them home immediately.
- b) Ask other members of your group to provide their contact details if you do not have them.
- c) Ask the rest of your group to leave the premises, observing the usual hand sanitising and social distancing precautions.
- d) Advise them to launder their clothes when they arrive home.
- e) Inform** *insert name and contact number*.
- f) If the unwell person needs to wait for a lift: -
 - (1) Remove them to the safe waiting area, which is *insert details* – a chair and washing bowl should already be there.
 - (2) Put on a mask, face shield, gloves & apron to protect yourself.
 - (3) Provide them with tissues, a plastic rubbish bag, a bowl of warm water & soap for handwashing & paper towels
 - (4) Once they have been collected: -
 1. Remove gloves, apron and face mask to the rubbish bag*
 2. Leave face shield on top for disinfection
 3. Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with warm soapy water
 4. Wait for *insert responsible committee member* to arrive.
 5. Once home - launder all your clothes and wipe down disinfect your car

*Note that the waste should be double bagged and kept for 72 hours before being collected.

Appendix M

NHS Test and Trace QR code

Regulations for the Collection of Contact Details require **every hirer or organisation using a community hall** to comply with the obligation to either collect individual contact details of their participants or ask participants to scan the QR code displayed at the hall.

The hall is expected to register for an NHS QR code and display the official NHS QR poster at or inside the entrance. A hall must also keep records of hirers' contact details. A hall will also need to either collect contact details of participants at their own meetings and events or ask participants to scan the QR code displayed at the hall. Hirers must keep contact details of any participants who do not scan the QR code for 3 weeks after each event.

For practical purposes this means that **the premises** must [register for an official NHS QR code](#) and display the official NHS QR poster, although some hirers may choose to obtain their own code and poster, which they display at the entrance of the room or hall that they are using before their activity starts. For some halls with only a few hirers who are willing to do this, that responsibility could be placed on hirers.

Social Clubs, bars and community cafes must ensure that on arrival every individual either registers using their own NHS QR poster/code or that they take contact details for every individual.

The important principle to remember is that the system is intended to capture information about with whom people have been in **close proximity**, not necessarily very precise details of the place where that contact took place.

Official NHS QR posters can be [generated online](#). Click the links to register and generate a poster. There is more information about NHS QR codes and how to generate them on the [NHS COVID-19 app website](#). Village and community halls need to reinforce the obligation on hirers to keep records through the Special Conditions of Hire (Appendix E, Clause SC9)

The guidance is at: [Maintaining records of staff, customers and visitors to support NHS Test and Trace](#).

Further points:

1. The aim is that those attending can use the QR code if they wish to do so.
2. Village and community hall committees and managers organising activities at the hall will have to comply, including for their own committee meetings.
3. Community halls with no postcode can use that for the nearest available property.
4. Halls with several rooms in use for different activities will need to consider how to avoid the same code being used for two or more activities happening at the same time. This will be covered if hirers have their own QR code for the activity they are running.
5. Organisers of activities can decide how to collect and keep contact details, which should be collected at the point visitors enter the premises if not collected in advance. If on paper it needs to be kept out of public sight and securely stored. People who choose to 'check in' using the

official NHS QR code do not also need to provide their contact details. Use of the NHS QR code cannot be made a precondition of entry (individuals have the right to choose how to provide their contact details).

6. If there is an outbreak associated with a venue, a message will be sent to the relevant app users with the necessary public health advice.
7. Places of worship, including when the venue is used for community activities, are not included but are strongly encouraged to maintain staff and visitor logs and to display an official NHS QR code poster. Consent should be sought from individuals entering.
8. If a visitor interacts with only one member of staff e.g., hairdresser the staff name should be recorded alongside the name of the visitor.
9. A record of all staff working on the premises on a given day, the time and contact details must be kept. This covers anyone providing a service or activity including volunteers. This would include cleaners, caretakers, those working in offices such as Parish Council staff and visiting contractors.
10. Booking systems can serve as the source of information collected. (Visitors can still scan the official NHS QR code if they wish, to help remind them where they have been if asked by NHS Test and Trace.)
11. The NHS COVID-19 app is only able to scan official NHS QR code posters. If another QR code system is being used to collect contact details, you should switch to the official NHS QR code system.
12. If someone does not wish to share their details, entry does not have to be refused but visitors should be encouraged to share their details to support NHS Test and Trace. The accuracy of the information provided will be the responsibility of the individual who provides it. However, entry must be refused to cafes (including community cafes), bars and Social Clubs, when the police can be called if required.
13. Exempt visits: Details are not required from: A police officer or emergency responder on duty, suppliers or contractors making a delivery or collection, those under the age of 16, if someone does not have the mental capacity to provide their contact details.
14. **Failure to comply with collecting details and maintaining records is punishable by a fine.** The first fixed penalty is £1,000.
15. Records should be maintained for 21 days then securely disposed of or deleted, unless also collected for another purpose. All collected data must comply with GDPR.
16. NHS Test and Trace or Public Health Officers will ask for these records only where necessary eg if the premises have been identified as the location of a potential COVID-19 outbreak. The name of the person who has tested positive must not be shared with anyone else, so as to respect individuals' privacy. You must share the requested information with NHS Test and Trace as soon as possible to help minimise the onward spread of COVID-19. If you receive a request

for information from NHS Test and Trace, this does not mean you must close the hall. NHS Test and Trace will, if necessary, undertake an assessment and work with you to understand what actions need to be taken.

17. If a staff member or visitor tells you they have tested positive for COVID-19, you should tell them to stay at home and self-isolate as soon as possible (along with the rest of their household). You must not share details of who has tested positive. You should not use information you have collected for Test & Trace to contact other people, because NHS Test and Trace have authority to do so if required. (This does not prevent suggesting to others attending who are known personally to an activity organiser that they obtain a test). The NHS may send a warning message to other contacts. If social distancing has been carefully observed they may need only to contact the "rule of 6 or household/bubble" group (if any) with whom the person attended. If you identify that there is more than one case of COVID-19 on your premises, you should contact your [local health protection team](#) to report the suspected outbreak.
18. A poster bearing the same QR code will be required at other entrances to the same premises, such as changing rooms, but not at exits such as fire doors. Clubs providing team sporting activities which have their own premises (eg a pavilion) will need their own poster. A poster is not required for a public toilet serving an outside area such as a recreation field.
19. The NHS website provides the following information: Telling people about your test result: **"If you develop symptoms,** you may wish to alert the people with whom you have had close contact over the last 48 hours. You should tell them that you might have coronavirus but are waiting for a test result. At this stage (until the test result is known), those people do not need to self-isolate, but they should take extra care in practicing [social distancing](#) and good hygiene, like washing their hands regularly. They should also watch out for their own [symptoms](#)."