

## 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 22<sup>nd</sup> 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.

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.

### 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: 8<sup>th</sup> March and 29<sup>th</sup> 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: 12<sup>th</sup> 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 25<sup>th</sup> 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: 21<sup>st</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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 17<sup>th</sup> 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 27<sup>th</sup> 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 (21<sup>st</sup> 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

<b>Activity or Event</b>	<b>How to Manage groups?</b>	<b>Can Face Coverings be removed? (Other exceptions also apply)</b>
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	Once seated face coverings can be

	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.	removed to eat and drink, replaced before leaving.
Wedding reception (Steps 2 and 3)	Up to 15 people can attend a wedding and a seated reception outdoors at Step 2, up to 30 at Step 3. The hirer 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.	Not required by the bride and groom. Guests 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)*