

## **New Bookings During COVID-19**

**Melmerby Village Hall** [www.melmerbyvillagehall.co.uk](http://www.melmerbyvillagehall.co.uk)

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### **D)Management of Social Distancing at Facilities and Activities at Melmerby Village Hall - A Risk Based approach – 20<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

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

**This document applies to Melmerby Village Hall and sets out its policy towards accepting new bookings so that the Booking Secretary knows how to respond to such requests.**

**The following are all subject to social distancing, cleaning and hygiene being met. They constitute a broad spectrum of activities and cover more than are likely to be seen at the village hall.**

#### **Group 1: Permitted**

- Activities which provide essential services, or otherwise already permitted: e.g. Pre-schools, food and medicine distribution, making PPE, Pop-Up COVID-19 testing. Retail activities such as Community Shops and indoor markets (e.g. Farmers Markets, Craft Markets, and Antique Fairs) must comply with Government Guidance for the retail sector.
- Use by Schools: Guidance has kindly been provided by the Charity Commission, which is available from your Network member if required.
- Office and certain other forms of employment: e.g. Building work to the hall, Parish Council, or other office, hire by local companies or organisations for training events, distribution purposes, video recording/transmission. A hairdresser or health therapist (providing they are not offering a service which is not yet allowed to re-open such as nails). The relevant Government Guidance for that type of employment should be observed.
- Activities which can be held outdoors and where social distancing can be readily achieved: e.g. tennis, bowls, football training, keep fit type classes, dog training classes, dancing classes. Equipment should be cleaned regularly e.g. gate latches, handles, balls etc. DCMS guidance permits personal training or coaching if people are able to follow social distancing

guidelines. People who play team sports can now train together (e.g. hold fitness sessions). See Appendix K and link to DCMS guidance in Section 6.

- Activities held indoors where smaller numbers of people attend: For example: seated activities and meetings held in a large hall such as art classes, history group, dog training classes, weight loss groups, Parish Council meetings. While it is recommended that meetings continue to take place digitally rather than face-to-face, where possible, the Government Guidance for community facilities specifically permits meetings of civic, political or community groups (e.g. parish council, ward meeting of political party, charity board of trustees), MP or councillor surgery/drop in sessions. A combination may be feasible: A face-to-face meeting may help those who struggle with digital technology to participate or attend, while others participate digitally.
- Libraries and book lending schemes: Users should be asked to clean hands on arrival, regularly if browsing and when leaving. Returned books should be placed in a box for 72 hours before placing back on display, cash donations placed in a bowl and handled by one person wearing gloves.

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

- Small events providing catering: e.g. coffee mornings, pop-up cafés or luncheon clubs, where seating may be out of doors and/or well-spaced. Takeaway drink or food can be provided from a room directly accessed from outside. Government Guidance for pubs, cafes and restaurants may be helpful in working out how to run these safely. Community cafes will be required to comply with that Guidance. NB Special arrangements should be made for vulnerable people in the shielding category who wish to attend, to enable participation and avoid their continued isolation.
- Playing games at tables: While the older age profile and difficulty complying with social distancing at card tables (normally 67cm) has led the English Bridge Union to advise Bridge Clubs against re-opening for a period, an informal local group may be able to arrange social distancing if household groups always play together and slightly larger tables are used. Using new cards or cleaning them is advisable. For games such as scrabble, tiles would need to be cleaned and not touched by other players.
- Activities for children and young people: e.g. cubs, youth clubs, railway modelling club, Sunday school, picnics or BBQs in outdoor areas. For summer holiday playschemes Government guidance for out-of-school settings applies. For activities with toddlers, soft toys should be avoided, parents can be encouraged to bring toys which are not shared with other children. Pre-school type arrangements are appropriate i.e. focus on hand cleanliness, arranging the room into small groups. However, it has to be recognised social distancing will be difficult so arrangements may be needed for any families with clinically vulnerable close relatives who attend.

- Public meetings and public consultation events (e.g. planning): A one-way system can be created for exhibitions. For large meetings attendees can be asked to use the furthest seat from the entrance first unless hard of hearing, handouts provided at the end rather than at the beginning. Contact details should be taken (for NHS Test and Trace) by one person so attendees do not share a pen. Digital participation can also be encouraged.
- Other larger events including those with seated audiences: e.g. gardening club, film show, bingo, quiz night. Attendees can be asked to use the furthest seats from the entrance first unless hard of hearing. A booking system can be encouraged to manage numbers and obtain contact details for NHS Test and Trace.
- Weddings and wedding receptions: Weddings and similar life cycle religious ceremonies are permitted where attended by up to 30 persons. Recorded music is recommended. A musician may play a non-wind instrument. From 1<sup>st</sup> August sit down wedding receptions are permitted for no more than 30 people. See also Government guidance on Places of Worship. Government guidance for cafes and restaurants may be helpful in relation to catering.
- Celebration events: Government guidance is that community facilities should not facilitate large gatherings or celebrations at present. Events such as baptism or funeral teas, wedding anniversary lunches, are therefore best accepted in accordance with the limit of 30 for sit down wedding receptions. For private events no more than 30 are permitted if outdoor areas may be used. Note that loud music or broadcasts are not currently permitted, the purpose being to avoid aerosol dispersal. Consequently it is not yet advisable to hire for teenage or adult birthday parties.
- Social Clubs and bars: These may open in accordance with Government guidance for pubs. They may also provide takeaway refreshments from a room accessed directly from outside. Games such as darts and snooker are discouraged in the Government guidance for pubs. However, they can be permitted if not played in a Social Club or bar but as an activity in their own right or e.g. at a Youth Club.
- Indoor sport and exercise and dancing classes: Activities such as yoga, keep fit, badminton, table tennis, indoor bowls, dancing classes, and School PE lessons are permitted indoors from 25<sup>th</sup> July. These should be held in accordance with the Government guidance, summarized in Appendix K, and any guidance issued by the relevant governing body for sport. 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 will shortly be permitted, including professional touring performances, amateur dramatics, pantomime groups, children's entertainers, band practices without woodwind or brass instruments (unless played by professionals). These

should be held in accordance with the Government guidance for performing arts, summarized in Appendix J

- Outdoor Performances and events: See Appendix J.
- Children's birthday parties: Many families do not have the space for this at home. While they are not banned from taking place at community facilities, large gatherings or celebrations are not permitted and the maximum allowed is 30 for an outdoor event organised by a private individual (including in private gardens). Managing social distancing, tea and hand washing for a small group of children would be easier so a lower capacity limit advisable, e.g. no more than 12 children plus supervising adults. The number would depend on factors such as size of room, age group, whether all already attending the same school and used to group working, whether one of the supervisors is used to managing social distancing etc in a school or Pre-school, whether a children's entertainer will perform (permitted from 1<sup>st</sup> August). Children's entertainers need to get back to work and will have plans for managing social distancing and encouraging hand washing, so a good option for those that can afford it.

### **Group 3: Not permitted at 25th July, awaits further Government guidance:**

- Singing: Including choir practice, congregations, and performance.
- Woodwind and brass instrument rehearsals and performances by amateurs.
- Outdoor events: If more than 30 people will attend and the event is not organised by a charity, public body, business, or political organization in compliance with Covid-19 Secure guidelines.
- Dances and discos: Nightclubs are not permitted to open. Loud music is not permitted, and performers are advised not to encourage impromptu dancing by **audiences**.

### **Conclusions**

Where there is doubt, the Bookings Secretary should consult committee members. They, in turn, should consult professional bodies supporting village halls through COVID measures if there remains a degree of uncertainty.

This policy is applicable at the current time but is subject to change according to measures introduced by government.

## 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. 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>

**From 11<sup>th</sup> July** organised team sports could be played outdoors, including cricket, and outdoor sport and physical participation events held, outdoor gyms used.

**From 25<sup>th</sup> July**, indoor gyms, fitness and dance studios, indoor sports facilities will be able to open, which means that activities which would be held there, such as yoga and Pilates, dance classes, badminton, table tennis, indoor bowls etc can be held in village and community halls.

### Key Points:

1. **Governing body guidance:** Sport and exercise should take place in accordance with guidance to deal with COVID-19 risks issued by the relevant governing body for the sport or activity. 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.
2. **Changing facilities:** People should be encouraged to arrive ready changed and, where possible, travel home to change/shower. 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 requirements apply to stay in groups of no more than two households (indoors) and (outdoors) no more than two households or six individuals from different households, with 2m social distancing between these groups or 1m plus mitigation measures where that is not possible (e.g. extra ventilation). 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 if there is insufficient room in the hall, e.g. waiting in the entrance hall, car park, or car.
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. Halls should check the steps they are taking to avoid transmission and how many facilities they are operating in.
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**

Outdoor sports have been permitted since 11<sup>th</sup> July. The relevant guidance 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>.

It is against the law for gatherings of more than 30 people to take place in private homes (including gardens and other outdoor spaces).

Businesses, charities, 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. Any other gathering in an outdoor space must not be any larger than 30 people.