

At present, incidence of the virus continues to increase with the probability that during the summer, numbers will reach or surpass those experienced at the peak of the second wave of the pandemic at the start of 2021.

Vaccination cannot be the sole means of containing the spread of the virus; hand and respiratory hygiene, social distancing, face-coverings and good ventilation are also important factors in lessening the spread of the disease. While these are not mandatory after 19 July, they are still important public health mitigations and ought to be recognised when planning activities in our halls.

This guidance has been written in response to the decision by the Government to move to step 4 of the 'Roadmap out of Lockdown'. The approach taken by the Government in this step is to remove most coronavirus legislation but to promote guidance that emphasises the personal and corporate responsibility of individuals and organisations to protect others and themselves.

From Step 4, legal limits on the numbers of people allowed to meet indoors and outdoors will be removed as will social distancing rules.

- Social distancing is still recommended where practical, especially for those previously shielded.
- The government is asking that venues do continue to ask people to register for venue check-in (the QR code) as it will continue to form one of the main ways of them identifying people who may have been exposed to coronavirus. Testing, contact tracing and self-isolation will remain in place as key protections against the virus – including the need to self-isolate if you are a contact of someone who tests positive. That requirement will be lifted for double-vaccinated people and under 18s, on 16 August.
- It will no longer be a legal requirement to wear a face covering, though the government expects and recommends that people wear face coverings in crowded and enclosed settings to protect themselves and others.
- The use of sanitiser or frequent hand washing is encouraged to lower the transmission risk to others.
- All hall hirers should continue to clean frequently touched surfaces and touch points before and after each hire, to protect themselves and other users.
- Non-fire doors and windows should be opened before, during and after your session to allow covid air particles to escape.
- Organisers should review and update their COVID-19 Risk Assessment to follow the latest Government guidance and that of your sector.
- Email updated Risk Assessments to stbarnabashalls@gmail.com