

Tier 2 Rules-for village halls and community centres as we come out of the 2nd lockdown.

These new rules will come into effect from the beginning of Wednesday 2 December and so halls can open on this day. The local restrictions are set out here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-restriction-tiers>

Please read the full information here about tier 2 -High alert and what we can and cannot do – these are in full in the appendix if you prefer. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tier-2-high-alert>

The local restrictions are set out here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-restriction-tierswhat-you-need-to-know> and detailed in the attached Appendix.

The following is a summary. It should be noted that there may be changes when the regulations come to be discussed in Parliament:

- Village and Community Halls will be permitted to open in a COVID-19 secure manner, observing Hands – Face – Space.
- Those in Tier 3 may not be used for private hire e.g. birthday parties.
- Indoors, the rule of 6 applies in Tier 1; In tiers 2 and 3 social interactions – i.e. mixing or mingling – should only be within households/support bubbles. This also applies to places of worship.
- Christmas fayres and Santa’s grottos are permitted in COVID-19 secure venues.
- Indoor exercise and dance classes and sports are permitted in tier 1 in accordance with the rule of 6, in tier 2 with social interactions limited to households/support bubbles. In tier 3 they not permitted. Exceptions apply e.g. supervised activities for under 18s.
- Public attendance at indoor and outdoor performances, shows (e.g. school nativity plays, Christmas pantomimes) and sporting events is limited to 50% of capacity in tiers 1 and 2 but these events are not permitted at halls in Tier 3. Film shows, plays, concerts, spectators at sports events are not permitted in tier 3.
- There are slightly different rules for cafes and bars in tiers 1 and 2. In tier 3 takeaway, delivery or click and collect services only are permitted.
- Funerals may take place with 30 attending, wakes and similar events with 15. Weddings may take place with 15. Wedding receptions are permitted with 15 in tiers 1 and 2 but not permitted in tier 3.
- An exemption in all tiers on gathering limits applies for formal support groups, and parent and child groups – up to 15 people aged 5 and older.
- Outdoors the rule of 6 applies to all public spaces e.g. recreation fields, parks, public gardens.
- From 23 December to 27 December, people may choose to form a Christmas bubble.
- On New Year’s Eve the normal rules for the tier apply. Consequently, it is unlikely that a hall in a tier 3 area could be used other than for a wake or wedding, but halls in tiers 1 and 2 could be hired

for e.g. a concert, a wedding reception, a dinner. This is the link to the list, which will be reviewed on Dec 16th: **Full list of local restriction tiers by area.**

People are asked to avoid travel between tiers, but this is not an absolute ban. Consequently, where a hall is located in tier 2 close to a tier 3 area and regularly used by those living nearby in tier 3, it is not necessary to stop people from tier 3 attending their usual activities, particularly if required for mental and physical wellbeing.

However, hirers can be asked to be extra vigilant about Hands, Face, Space.

Risk factors in the Hospitality sector

Papers present to SAGE indicate transmission risk is a combination of environmental and behavioural factors: higher risk contacts are those that are close, prolonged, indoors, face to-face, in poorly ventilated and/or crowded spaces, or involve “loud” activities. The disinhibitory effects of alcohol are likely to exacerbate difficulties with social distancing.

Guidance for early years, childcare and out of school settings re-issued.

This has been re-issued to take account of the return to regional restrictions on Dec 2nd, e.g. concerning site visitors; guidance on singing and dancing in line with that for the performing arts. See: Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures?utm_source=af56d798-ed31-4a6f-8dc5-f79ef6560a98&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily

and: Protective measures for holiday or after-school clubs and other out-of-school settings for children during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

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?utm_source=65c2ec81-5d52-4531-b8b0-4b6b5f0e8e0c&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily

Other activities in halls

This is what it says in further tier 2 guidance here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tier-2-high-alert#contents> about other groups meeting in halls.

Other activities, such as hobby groups, organised indoor sport, physical activity and exercise classes can continue to take place, provided that different households or support bubbles do not mix. Where it is likely that groups will mix, these activities should not go ahead. There are exceptions for indoor disability sport, and supervised sport and physical activity for under-18s, which can take place with larger groups mixing.

Recently Asked Questions

1. Can yoga, Pilates and similar indoor exercise classes take place from 2nd Dec?

Yes, but only in tiers 1 and 2, not in tier 3.

2. What difference does the "rule of 6" make (tier 1 and outdoors)?

Under the rule of 6 more than 6 people can attend an activity: It means "social interaction", i.e. mixing and mingling between people, should only take place within a group of 6. Groups of up to 6 should remain at least 2m apart.

3. In tier 3, does "Music with Mummy" (a franchise offering music for tots, no singing except for the leader) for a small number of parents with their children qualify as a support group?

It should do, serving to prevent isolation in parents with young children.

4. In tier 3, can a sculpture class meet outside on the VH car park and just use the vh for toilet purposes?

The sculpture class can meet in the village hall, providing social interactions are limited to within households/support bubbles (aside from the tutor) and people are otherwise 2m apart. If they meet outdoors the rule of 6 applies, but bearing in mind the limited risk of mingling between households in a sculpture class, meeting indoors with windows opened every 10 to 15 minutes would appear unlikely to create significant risk of COVID, while avoiding the weather raising other health risks.

5. Can Slimming World/ Weight Watchers take place in Tier 3? It is not clear if it can be classed as a formal support group? It cannot really be classed as a support group (which covers e.g. AA, bereavement). However, these businesses provide health benefits and can take place, providing each household/support group is socially distanced at 2m and does not mix or mingle with others. Holding them for weighing in purposes only with attendees following the strict COVID-19 guidelines is also acceptable.

6. Can a stroke club, serving vulnerable individuals re-commence? Some of the users cannot use the one-way system created using the fire exit unaided. This kind of support group has important mental and physical health benefits. With someone on hand to prevent anyone coming into the hall as people are leaving the risk associated with passing someone else (which is lower than being in proximity for a period) would be addressed. Face coverings are required, which also helps.

Christmas lunch gatherings at village and community halls

In the past some halls have been used either to provide Christmas lunch for those living alone who would otherwise not see anyone on Christmas Day or hired by large families. A Christmas lunch for those living alone run by a formal organisation appears to be permitted in all tiers under the exemption for support groups, providing no more than 15 people (plus volunteer staff) attend.

Seating arrangements will need to take account of anyone who is clinically vulnerable. The guidance for restaurants should be followed (e.g. table service only). In tiers 1 and 2 it may be possible to cater for a higher number, in accordance with guidance for restaurants.

This year it is possible that families with small homes, especially those with relatives who are medically vulnerable, may consider hiring a hall so that they have a larger space to allow adequate social distancing for a “Christmas bubble”. At present Government Guidance indicates it is permissible except in tier 3, where private hires are not allowed. We are checking the position.

Up to three households will be allowed to form a ‘Christmas bubble’ from December 23 to 27. Individuals will also be able to travel between tiers. Christmas bubbles will be able to gather in private homes, attend places of worship together and meet in outdoor public places in all tiers.

Aside from that the usual restrictions are in place, so a domestic party involving dancing would not be permissible in a village hall, whereas in tiers 1 and 2 a meal with low background music would be.

Sale of Christmas Trees

The Health Protection Regulations have been amended to permit the sale of natural Christmas Trees. This would permit a stall being set up in a hall car park.

Appendix

Local Restrictions Tiers from Wed 2nd Dec as applied to village and community halls

NOTE: subject to changes when Regulations are laid

Over-arching points:

- When meeting indoors good ventilation needs to be provided e.g. by opening windows every 15 minutes so fresh air can enter. This reduces the risk of a higher “dose” of the virus reaching people, which can cause more serious illness, in the event that someone present is carrying the virus.
- 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).
- It is hoped that areas in higher tiers may be moved to lower tiers following review.

Across all 3 tiers, everyone:

- must wear a face covering in most indoor public settings, unless they have an exemption

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>

- should follow the rules on meeting others safely

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing>

➤ must follow the gathering limits at their tier except for in specific settings and circumstances. These exemptions are detailed at the end of this guidance. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-restriction-tiers-what-you-need-to-know#exemptions>

➤ who can work from home should do so.

In all tiers, the following businesses and venues can remain open providing it is in a COVID-19 secure manner: i.e. these activities can take place.

- public buildings, such as libraries, community centres and halls. In tier 3 they should not host events for private hire, such as birthday parties or most other social activities.
- essential and non-essential retail, including indoor and outdoor markets and car boot sales
- certain leisure and sporting facilities such as gyms, sports courts and facilities, fitness and dance studios, outdoor playgrounds – subject to relevant social contact rules in each tier. In tier 3 indoor group activities and classes should not take place e.g. keep fit.
- personal care and close contact services such as hairdressers
- essential public services such as the NHS and medical services, courts, and jobcentre plus sites
- places of worship – communal worship can now resume, subject to social contact rules for the tier.
- allotments, recycling and waste centres, public toilets, car parks.

Carol singing

Carol singing or carol services can take place in COVID secure halls if all attendees follow advice in the suggested principles of safer singing <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-suggested-principles-of-safer-singing/covid-19-suggested-principles-of-safer-singing>

and guidance for the Performing Arts <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts>

This applies to both professional and amateur choirs. If singing does take place, steps should be taken to reduce the risk of transmission, including limiting the number of people participating as far as possible.

The cumulative effect of aerosol transmission means the more people involved, the higher the risk of transmission. For adult amateur performances and rehearsals, consideration should be given to the case for proceeding (or not), given the wider health context of the area and participants (e.g. any vulnerable individuals).

Local gathering limits will apply, i.e. if more than one group of six (in tier 1) or household (in tier 2 or 3) is performing or rehearsing indoors, they must not interact, mix or 'mingle' (aside from conducting/directing).

Social distancing must be maintained between groups or households at all times. However, an audience or congregation should not participate in any activity that can create aerosols, including singing, shouting, and chanting at an indoor performance.

Where a performance is held outdoors, an audience or congregation may join in with singing and should follow performing arts guidance i.e. audience or congregation members should follow social distancing of 2m and event organisers should ensure this is maintained. Attendees should remain seated where possible.

Door-to-door carol singing can take place in a group(s) of no more than six participants. If there are more than six people in total, each 'group' must not interact, 'mingle' or otherwise socialise.

Participants should maintain at least 2m distance from anyone they do not live with and the threshold of any dwellings.

See also guidance for the safe use of places of worship during the pandemic.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july>

Performances by pupils, such as nativity plays, should take place within existing school bubbles and avoid mixing across groups. In tiers 1 and 2, parents are permitted to attend, subject to appropriate safeguards, but in tier 3 audiences are not permitted so livestreaming and recording performance would be required.

Supervised activity for children is exempt from limits on gatherings in every tier. This means children's choirs and other out-of-school settings can continue in accordance with the protective measures guidance for holiday or after-school clubs and other 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>

Tier Posters A series of posters displaying information about the various tiers of restrictions in England from 2 December 2020 are available here:

Tier posters: Medium, High and Very High

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tier-posters-medium-high-and-very-high?utm_source=795b3ace-84b4-4724-b2df-e79ac54d3316&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily

Here are the full details of all the tiers in case it is helpful:

Tier 1: Medium alert

- People must not socialise in groups larger than 6 people, indoors or outdoors, other than where a legal exemption applies. This is called the 'rule of 6'. Note that this does not prevent larger meetings

or activities from taking place (e.g. film shows), it means that people attending must remain within a group of 6 or less and minimise interaction with others outside that group.

- hospitality businesses selling food or drink for consumption on their premises are required to:
- provide table service only, for premises that serve alcohol
- stop taking orders after 10pm, and close between 11pm and 5am
- early closure (11pm) applies to cinemas, theatres, concert halls, bowling and bingo halls. Cinemas, theatres, and concert halls can stay open to conclude performances that start before 10pm.
- public attendance at outdoor and indoor events (performances and shows) is permitted, limited to 50% capacity (or 1,000 people indoors if lower).
- public attendance at spectator sport and business events can resume inside and outside, limited to whichever is lower: 50% capacity, or either 4,000 people outdoors or 1,000 people indoors
- organised outdoor sport, physical activity and exercise classes can continue
- organised indoor sport, physical activity and exercise classes can continue if the rule of 6 is followed. There are exceptions for disability sport, sport for educational purposes, supervised sport for under-18s, which can take place with larger groups mixing
- places of worship remain open, subject to the rule of 6 unless a legal exemption applies
- weddings and funerals can go ahead with 30 people attending funeral ceremonies, 15 people attending wedding ceremonies and receptions, wakes and linked commemorative events.
- People living in a tier 1 area who travel to a higher tier area should follow the rules for that area while there.

Tier 2: High alert

- People must not socialise with anyone they do not live with or not in their support bubble in any indoor setting. So, within a COVID 19 secure hall people must minimise interactions with anyone not in their household/support bubble.
- Outdoors people must not socialise in a group of more than 6 people - the 'rule of 6' applies
- pubs and bars must close, unless operating as restaurants. Hospitality venues can only serve alcohol with substantial meals
- hospitality businesses selling food or drink for consumption on their premises are required to:
 - provide table service only, in premises which sell alcohol
 - stop taking orders after 10pm and close between 11pm and 5am
- early closure (11pm) applies to casinos, cinemas, theatres, museums, bowling alleys, and bingo halls. Cinemas, theatres, and concert halls can stay open beyond 11pm to conclude performances starting before 10pm

- public attendance at outdoor and indoor events (performances and shows) is permitted, limited to whichever is lower: 50% capacity, or either 2,000 people outdoors or 1,000 people indoors
- public attendance at spectator sport and business events can resume inside and outside limited to whichever is lower: 50% capacity, or either 2,000 people outdoors or 1,000 people indoors
- places of worship remain open subject to not socialising with people outside the household/support bubble while indoors, unless a legal exemption applies
- weddings and funerals can go ahead with 30 people attending funeral ceremonies, 15 people attending wedding ceremonies and receptions, wakes and linked commemorative events.
- organised outdoor sport, and physical activity and exercise classes can continue
- organised indoor sport, physical activity and exercise classes will only be permitted if it is possible for people to avoid mixing with people not in their household/support bubble. There are exceptions for indoor disability sport, sport for educational purposes and supervised sport and physical activity for under-18s, which can take place with larger groups mixing
- Those living in a tier 2 area must continue to follow tier 2 rules when travelling to a tier 1 area.

Tier 3: Very High alert

- People must not socialise with anyone they do not live with or not in their support bubble in any indoor setting. So within a COVID 19 secure hall people must minimise interactions with anyone not in their household/support bubble.
- Outdoors people must not socialise in a group of more than 6 in public spaces including parks, a public garden, or a sports facility – the ‘rule of 6’
- bars pubs, cafes are closed –takeaway, click-and-collect, or delivery services are permitted.
- indoor entertainment venues must close.

These include the following, meaning the relevant activities are not permitted in village and community halls:

- indoor play areas, including soft play
- bingo halls
- bowling alleys
- cinemas, theatres, and concert halls
- snooker halls
- leisure and sports facilities may continue to stay open, but group exercise classes (including fitness and dance) should not go ahead.

- organised outdoor sport, and physical activity and exercise classes can continue, however higher-risk contact activity should not take place
- organised indoor sport, physical activity and exercise classes cannot take place indoors. There are exceptions for indoor disability sport, sport for educational purposes and supervised sport and physical activity for under-18s
- there should be no public attendance at spectator sport or indoor performances. Large business events should not take place.
- large outdoor events (performances and shows) should not take place, with the exception of drive-in events
- places of worship remain open, but people must not attend with or socialise with anyone outside their household/ support bubble, unless a legal exemption applies.
- weddings and funerals can go ahead with restrictions on the number of attendees – 15 people can attend wedding ceremonies, wedding receptions are not allowed, 30 people can attend funeral ceremonies, 15 people can attend wakes and linked commemorative events.

Exemptions from gatherings limits in all tiers:

- for work or providing voluntary or charitable services, including in other people's homes
- for childcare, education, or training – meaning 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, and children's playgroups
- for formal support groups, and parent and child groups – up to 15 people aged 5 and older
- to provide emergency assistance, avoid injury or illness
- to fulfil a legal obligation, such as attending court or jury service.

More to come on singing in the Community Halls newsletter from CFO

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Prepared on 30th November 2020/ Note that content is subject to change following discussion by Government