

Moving Beyond Protection Level 0

Introduction

On 3 August the First Minister announced that Scotland would move beyond Protection Level 0 with effect from Monday 9 August 2021. This will mean the ending of most remaining COVID-19 restrictions. The following summarises the changes and what this means for village halls.

The rules taking effect on 9 August

- Face coverings will still be required.
- Contact details should continue to be collected for Test and Protect.
- No venue, legally, will be required to close.
- Physical distancing will no longer be required by law.
- Limits to social gatherings will no longer apply.

The following is now advisory:

- Physical distancing (especially indoors);
- Good ventilation;
- Rigorous hygiene; and
- Home working.

What will this mean for village halls?

Village halls will need to ensure all those entering continue to wear a face covering unless exempt. (They can be removed, albeit temporarily, to take part in sport or exercise, to eat or drink, or when seated during children's activities).

User groups should continue to collect contact details and pass them to village hall management committees. These must then be discarded after 21 days. You should therefore continue to ensure the Test and Protect Posters are displayed clearly.

With the end of physical distancing, and of size limits to social gatherings, halls may choose to increase their capacity for most, if not all activities. That said, management committees are entitled to set their own criteria for bookings, so you may decide instead to keep physical distancing at 1 metre (and therefore your current capacity limits).

Also, with good ventilation and hand-hygiene remaining advisory, it would be wise to keep sanitisers in place and to try and maximise ventilation inside halls.

With all venues able to reopen from 9 August, there are no longer any restrictions on the type of activity that can be held in a village hall. Again though, it is up to the management committee to decide upon what is and is not allowed.

Given these changes; village hall management committees will need to review their COVID-19 risk assessments and make some decisions on how to proceed. It may also be helpful to consult with user groups on the extent to which you intend to relax those restrictions which are no longer a legal requirement.

Further information

Please refer to <https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19> for further information and links to official guidance on COVID-19.