

## Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council

### Outdoor Events Statement

The government has announced the roadmap for lifting the lockdown over the next few months. The government's Spring 2021 Roadmap is a four-step plan aiming to ease lockdown restrictions across England.

**It is important to remember that each stage is dependent on the success of the previous stage so these dates are to be used as guidelines only and are not a guarantee that the stage will happen on that date. It takes around four weeks for the data to show the impact of easing restrictions and the government will provide a week's notice to the public and businesses ahead of any further changes. Therefore, there is at least five weeks between each step in the Roadmap**

**Indicative dates for each step of the Roadmap are:**

Government Roadmap			Redditch and Bromsgrove Council Event Application Processing
1.	Step 1a	From 8 <sup>th</sup> March	NO EVENTS
	Step 1b	From 29 <sup>th</sup> March	NO EVENTS
2.	Step 2	From 12 <sup>th</sup> April	NO EVENTS
3.	Step 3	No Earlier than 17 <sup>th</sup> May	EVENT APPLICATIONS SUBJECT TO GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE
4.	Step 4	No Earlier than 21 <sup>st</sup> June	EVENT APPLICATIONS SUBJECT TO GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

Before moving from one step to the next, the government will review the latest available data on the impact of the previous step against four tests. The tests are:

1. The vaccine deployment programme continues successfully.
2. Evidence shows vaccines are sufficiently effective in reducing hospitalisations and deaths in those vaccinated.
3. Infection rates do not risk a surge in hospitalisations which would put unsustainable pressure on the NHS.
4. The government's assessment of the risks is not fundamentally changed by new Variants of Concern.

**The indicative dates for each step are subject to change if the four tests are not met.**

**Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) and Redditch Borough Council (RBC) have reviewed the events programme for Bromsgrove and Redditch and decided that no events are going to be permitted to take place before 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021.**

As part of our application process we will consider each individual outdoor activity and event application that can happen after the 17<sup>th</sup> May (stage 3 of the Government's Road Map), following more information and data from the outcomes of the first two stages (as detailed above). Decisions will be made on a case by case basis with consideration given to both the risks and the mitigations in place as well as the economic and social benefits that events offer to local communities.

**Please note the council will have the right to cancel any event at any time should it be deemed necessary and proportionate**

We understand these are challenging times and we want to support events and event organisers as we face uncertain times around the future of events.

Although there is hope of normality with the vaccination and the direction of the roadmap, Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Council has to consider public health and its safety. The impact of running events will have on our vital services as well as the time it takes for us to process applications.

We hold regular meetings with Public Health colleagues and closely monitor government updates. When restrictions change, we'll review the guidance and update the events information.

Our intention is that outdoor events can commence from Step 3, subject to meeting the Government's COVID-secure requirements including social distancing and the 4 tests have been met.

Event organisers will need to adhere to the relevant Government COVID-secure guidance and evidence this within their application.

**Events that are not able to commence from Step 3 include those where, and not limited to:**

1. People are likely to congregate in one area for the duration of the event. Eg, festivals and carnivals
2. People are likely to enter or leave the venue in large numbers at a similar time.

If an event falls into this category, event organisers should approach the Events team to look at identifying whether any adjustments to the format of the event can be made to enable the event to go ahead. This may include the use of barriers to ensure that attendees maintain an appropriate distance and controlled access.

## **Decision Making**

To assist in determining if the proposed event is allowed, Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council will take into consideration the permitted events at each stage and the ability of event organisers to control the staggered arrival and departure of attendees, as well as the flow and dispersal across the event site of customers within their permitted groups to ensure that large numbers of people do not congregate in any one area of the site. All events will be subject to the Council's SAG (Safety Advisory Group) for advice and guidance.

In deciding whether an event is permitted, we will also consider factors such as but not limited to:

- Is there a risk to local population health, taking into account local trends in the prevalence of coronavirus?
- Is the event permitted at the relevant Step of the Roadmap?
- Has the event organiser carried out a comprehensive risk assessment?
- Has the event organiser taken into account the relevant COVID-secure guidance?
- Can/will all mitigations be operated effectively?
- What will be the impact on the local area and other adjacent areas?
- Has the event organiser engaged appropriately with neighbouring communities and businesses, transport operators and local police to assess and mitigate risks arising from pressure on local and public transport?
- Has the event organiser considered the impact of increased footfall on the surrounding area and infrastructure (for example, queue management and crowding outside of a venue)?
- Will attendees be primarily local, or will there be additional risk factors created by attracting a national or international audience for the event?
- Has the event organiser successfully run their event in line with COVID-secure guidance previously? This could be within the Redditch and Bromsgrove Councils area or successful events in other local authority areas.

Through conversations with the event organiser and a review of their Risk Assessment, Redditch and Bromsgrove Councils will need to satisfy themselves that the event organiser has put in place reasonable mitigations to:

- limiting numbers to take account of the space of a venue
- implementing effective infection prevention and control measures and routines
- ensure social distancing between customers, performers or exhibitors, and staff
- ensure that customers attend in groups of up to 6 people from different households, or a group of two households (unless an exemption applies or unless the government guidance has changed) and that groups can be kept separate within the event
- ensure cleanliness in all areas with a focus on touch points and key areas and drawing up cleaning schedules in advance
- robustly log customer data or use of QR coded system for everyone who attends the event for the purposes of NHS Test and Trace
- ensure they communicate how customers can travel safely to venues in advance of the event, according to the safer travel guidance
- consideration and mitigation measures to manage activity outside the event location eg. queuing and crowds.

Organised events will be considered unless they pose a threat to public health that cannot be mitigated, provided that they follow relevant guidance and adhere to all legal requirements. If the Redditch and Bromsgrove Councils or SAG (Safety Advisory Group) are concerned about an event, we will discuss those concerns with the event organiser at the earliest possible opportunity to consider whether any mitigations could be put in place to alleviate risks such as:

- reducing the number of attendees to allow full social distancing and minimise any burden on local transport systems
- staggering entry times with other venues and taking steps to avoid queues building up in surrounding areas
- arranging one-way travel routes between transport hubs and venues

### **Legal powers to prohibit or restrict an event**

Where an event poses a risk to public health or in the event of a local spike in coronavirus cases, Redditch and Bromsgrove Councils can consider prohibiting, restricting or imposing conditions in respect of venues, events or outdoor public places using the powers available

in The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (No. 3) Regulations 2020. These powers should only be used if the event, venue or gathering in an outdoor public place poses a serious and imminent threat to public health that cannot be mitigated in conversation with the event organiser.

Any such decision must be both necessary and proportionate. If an event organiser, the owner or occupier of the premise where the event is held or any other person involved in hosting the event goes against such a direction, they can be issued with a fixed penalty notice (FPN) by a police officer, police community support officer or other designated person.

If, by attending a particular event or gathering, an individual is contravening the regulations that have been put in place to control the spread of coronavirus, police officers and PCSOs have the power under The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Steps) (England) Regulations 2021 to direct individuals to leave a location or remove them from that location. This can have the overall effect of shutting down the event if all attendees are dispersed. Individuals deemed to be attending an illegal gathering can be issued with a fixed penalty notice, and organisers of an illegal event with more than 30 attendees could potentially be issued with a £10,000 FPN.

Event organisers could also be issued with fines if they have contravened other business-related regulations of the The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Steps) (England) Regulations 2021: these FPNs would be primarily issued by local authority enforcement officers, but can also be issued by police officers, Police Community Support Officers or an individual designated by Redditch and Bromsgrove Council or Secretary of State.