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Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

# Tourism & Hospitality Re-opening Guide

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June 2020



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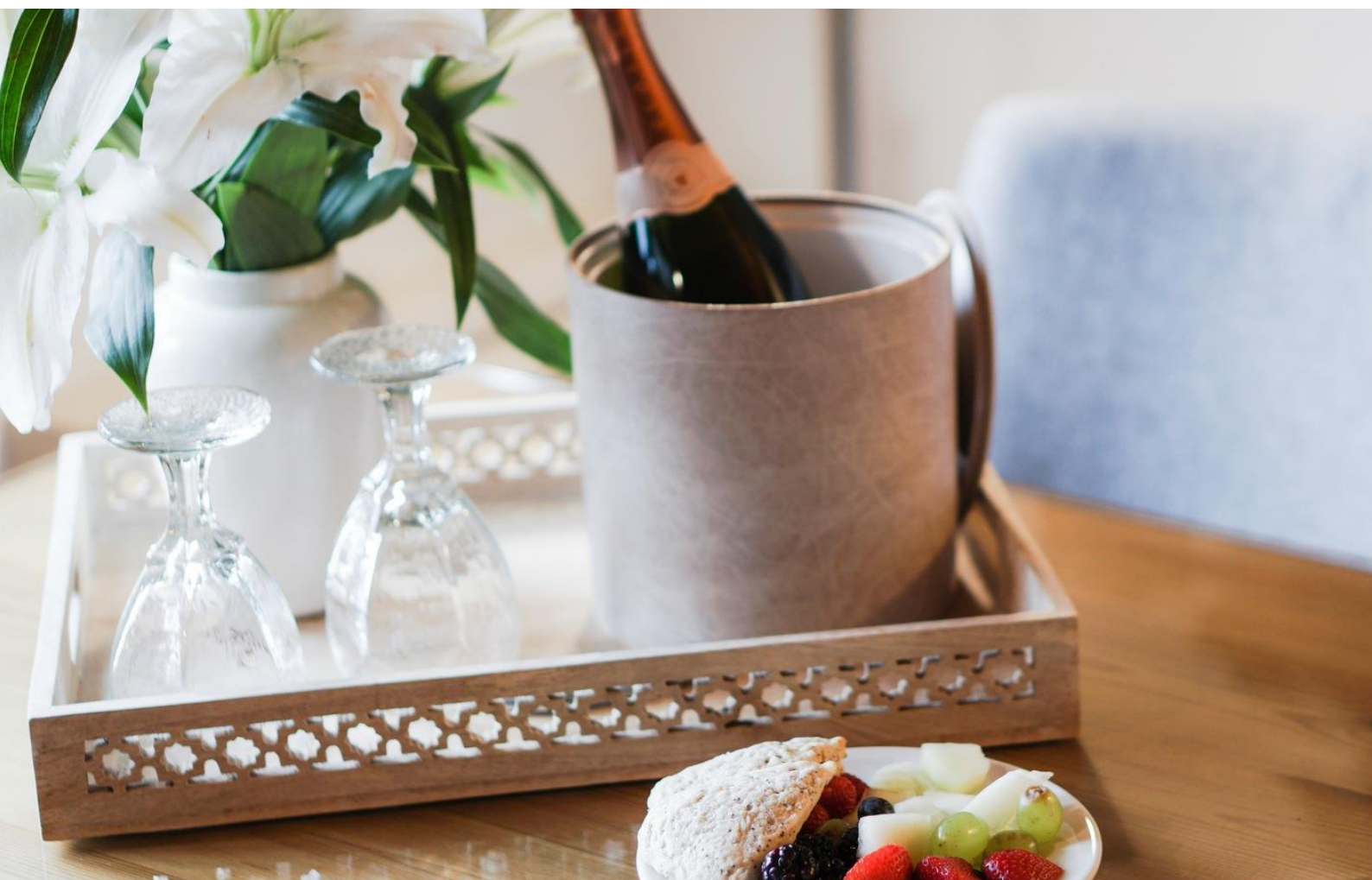
# Re-opening your venue in Tunbridge Wells

We understand this is yet another worryingly uncertain time for the hospitality sector, whether your business is able to re-open on 4 July or not, and we would like to be here to help you re-open confidently.

We have been listening to the market, attending industry webinars and reading white papers, reports and regulations on your behalf. This booklet has the steps required of you to re-open in the safest way currently possible.

One matter re-occurs in discussion: we cannot guarantee anyone's total safety from catching Coronavirus, and the suggestion is we shouldn't try to promise total safety. What we can promise as an industry is reassurance that we are doing everything we can to earn confidence and trust in clientele. We can do this by communicating in advance the procedures we have put in place to engender visiting with confidence.

Businesses that can and cannot open from 4 July are on the [government website](#).



# The steps you need to take

1. All employers should carry out a COVID-19 risk assessment. This will determine whether you can open safely in the first place.
2. If you have fewer than 5 workers, or are self-employed, you don't have to write anything down as part of your risk assessment. [Risk assessment templates](#) are available from the Health & Safety Executive.
3. Share the risk assessment with your workforce and if possible with your customers.
4. Set up increased cleaning (including hand washing) regimes.
5. Set up steps to lower risk when working between 1 metre and 2 metres e.g. visors, screens, working side by side – these should be in your risk assessment. NB. Everyone working in close proximity for an extended period of time must wear a visor.
6. Limiting numbers within your business space – reviewing entrances, smoking areas and other pinch points to come up with alternative options. Also consider queue management and pre-booking.
7. Above all work with your neighbours and local organisations to support each other.

## Other considerations:

*“...venues should ensure that steps are taken to avoid people needing to unduly raise their voices to each other. This includes - but is not limited to - refraining from playing music or broadcasts that may encourage shouting, including if played at a volume that makes normal conversation difficult.”*

Data protection regulations (GDPR) come in to play with the collection of customer data. Treat it securely and confidentially and ensure destruction is undertaken.

*“The opening up of the economy following the COVID-19 outbreak is being supported by NHS Test and Trace. You should assist this service by keeping a temporary record of your customers and visitors for 21 days, in a way that is manageable for your business, and assist NHS Test and Trace with requests for that data if needed. This could help contain clusters or outbreaks. Many businesses that take bookings already have systems for recording their customers and visitors – including restaurants, hotels, and hair salons. If you do not already do this, you should do so to help fight the virus.”*

The information above has been taken from the [Visitor Economy guidance](#) on the government website. It also provides a list of links to sector organisations such as



UKHospitality, Association of Leading Visitor Attractions, the British Beer and Pub association as well as other specialist accommodation groups.

Sector specific guidance for working safely can be found at the following links on the government website:

- [Heritage attractions](#)
- [Hotels and other guest accommodation](#)
- [Restaurants, pubs, bars, takeaways](#)

Photo: Finchcocks





# The market

- 36% of public surveyed feel confident in taking a domestic short break in July/August, 62% in September/October and 71% in November/December.
- Key message - Don't discount yet. The market is prepared to pay the same price as before – there is a feeling that we are all in the same boat and need to help each other. Some tours/gardens sold out.
- 'Perceptions of crowds and whether an attraction is able to maintain social distancing is the current key determinant of a quick return' states TripAdvisor\*.
- Lots of interest in visiting big country parks and gardens as well as camping, caravanning and self catering.

Credit: Hole Park





# Your strategy

- Prepare to be able to adapt as the guidelines change or are even reversed. Have your business continuity plan ready.
- Consider using flexible pricing and extended opening hours for visitors who want to come outside peak hours which will help to manage visitor flow if possible.
- Think about how to secure some economic benefits from the footfall in outdoor spaces where possible.
- Encourage people to stay longer and spend more - otherwise the Winter will be very challenging.
- Gift shops normally target retail collateral at the overseas market but going forward businesses need to consider how domestic audiences could be encouraged to buy for themselves or for overseas friends – Anne Boleyn Christmas decoration, anyone?
- Could your business consider other uses for large outdoor spaces such as drive in cinemas?
- Many of our cultural institutions and attractions are recognised and supported by people and businesses from near and far. Keep in touch with your regulars and where other organisations have been successful in securing donations through crowd-funding perhaps this is something you could try.

Source: Visit Kent

Jeremy's Home Store

Lush



# Health and safety

We have compiled some advice below from a range of sources such as Environmental Health, HSE, the Government and Visit Kent.

- Water checks/property checks – avoid [more contamination issues](#) by flushing through your water system. [The South East Water website](#) has instructions on how to complete this.
- Check ventilation levels and air conditioning systems are in good order.
- Detailed [new cleaning procedures for specific sectors](#) are available on the government website under section 5 of each page. Remove any items that are unnecessary, wedge open doors (practise what you will do in the event of a fire), minimise shared handling of items such as glasses, keys, condiments etc. There is also guidance for [cleaning](#) where a suspected case has visited the site.
- Droplets are the biggest source of spread so screens should be used as often as possible. They are also taken into account as a mitigating factor in the Test & Trace documentation as 'limited contact'. Tourism South East has shared information that polycarbonate screens are better quality than Perspex which scratches easily.
- Visit England has launched the [We're Good To Go](#) new industry standard and supporting mark which means businesses in the sector can demonstrate that they are adhering to respective Government and public health guidance, have carried out a COVID-19 risk assessment and check they have the required processes in place. This scheme is free to join and to obtain the mark businesses must complete a self-assessment through the [Visit Britain](#) online platform including a check-list confirming they have put the necessary processes in place, before receiving certification and the 'We're Good To Go' mark for display in their premises and online.
- [Guidelines for laundry in hotels](#)
- Before staff return, re-integrate and re-educate them to talk about any worries and update them on the situation and what to expect. Staff and teams should be rotated ensuring staff groups remain consistent.
- Hotels should consider online check in (via mobile phones) and breakfast options could be grab and go, room or table service.
- Menus could be projected onto walls or on your website and allow diners to access via free wi-fi.



- Businesses could consider bringing in portaloos as a way to manage toilet queues, with a one-in-one-out system, or potentially a traffic light system for other toilets when they are vacant.
- Consider temperature checking guests when they enter your business?

Council guidance on pubs, beer gardens and open space to avoid noise nuisance is contained in an [addendum](#) at the end of this document.

Photo: Cranbrook Windmill



# Communicating with clientele

- Clear consistent messaging for visitors will also be absolutely key in order to provide confidence before and during arrival. The Visit England kitemark, [‘We’re Good To Go’](#) will be a vital part of this reassurance – see previous page.
- Manage worries: talk to customers, (and suppliers) about how things will be different. Share your risk assessment notices visibly, on your website, social media, in your window. Visit Britain is getting a charter mark ready so this might help with reassuring your clients and providing you with the basics of what to do.
- Make sure hygiene routines are visible. Restoring consumer (and corporate) confidence has to be the highest priority for tourism businesses so active ‘policing’ of visitors and visible cleaning of sites will be paramount.
- Help to keep communities safe and encourage use of open spaces safely and responsibly: Respect, Protect, Enjoy.
- Visit Kent has a new campaign to encourage confidence and spend using the strapline Secret Garden of England. It will be a hyper local campaign directed at those in a 2 hour drives.
- Businesses should consider recording pre-visit videos to show site cleaning and how visitors will be managed which should also be shown to visitors upon arrival (if possible) - [check out this example from Hever Castle](#).
- Take an honest approach about what you can and cannot provide.
- When re-opening – consideration should be given to asking a local hero to open tourism businesses e.g. doctor, nurse, care home manager etc (and then promote this on social media).

The Poacher and Partridge

The Beacon





# Visitor management

- Door staff - controlling entry into a licensed premise is an SIA Licensable activity. If employing door supervisors, you need to check the correct badge is being used and the badge is valid (check on the register at [sia.homeoffice.gov.uk](https://sia.homeoffice.gov.uk)) and that the person has insurance. A copy of their insurance document should be given to you.
- Consider marquees outside buildings, tables and chairs on pavements. Here is the [TWBC application process for putting out dining furniture](#) on the street because you need to apply to TWBC Planning and to KCC.
- Customers could place orders for food and drinks via Whatsapp, a dedicated app or by phone as only table service is allowed – no going up to the bar.
- Consider using a platform such as Eventbrite (free) to manage timed ticketed slots
- Hybrid events (with virtual and physical attendees) will help with sustainability and to manage visitors.
- Think about other activities for guests that could be made exclusive, private and bookable.

Thanks to Visit Kent for these ideas which have come from their expertise and round table discussions.





# Recommended resources

Free VisitEngland business recovery webinar programme for the Tourism sector – the first one is on 30 June. [Register to join](#) online.

[Visit Kent Business](#) is very useful for the latest government regulations and exists to support the Kent tourism sector.

\*Trip Advisor has written a paper with the results of their research using their website. Entitled [Beyond Covid19: The Road to Recovery for the Travel Industry](#) there are more ideas to help you recover your business towards the end of the report.

If you have had to diversify your offer then you may be interested in looking at the [Experience project](#) (EU funded) which is providing business support to get new products launched. TWBC is part funding this to support the tourism sector.

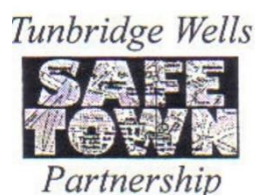
Don't forget, many people will be very keen to get out of the house and celebrate missed milestones with family and friend groups.

Please keep in touch and [sign up to our business e-bulletin for the Tourism sector](#). If you have any queries please email: [businesscovid19@tunbridgewells.gov.uk](mailto:businesscovid19@tunbridgewells.gov.uk)

Photographer David Hodgkinson unless otherwise stated. All images copyrighted







## Council guidance on Pubs, Beer Gardens and Open Space to avoid noise nuisance

The Coronavirus epidemic has had a major impact in many areas of commercial activity but none more so than restrictions on the entertainment industry including public houses.

This guidance document is issued jointly by the Environmental Protection Team and Tunbridge Wells Safe Town Partnership to assist licensed premises in thinking about noise issues as they prepare to re-open.

The councils Environmental Protection Team is keen to support licensed premises and to give advice on methods to minimise noise impact on residents. However they also have a duty to protect neighbouring residents from unacceptable noise. Operators of licensed premises need to be mindful that they have residents living near to them who will be getting up early for work or who have been shielded. This is particularly important in the use of outside premises and where doors and windows that are normally closed are being left open to help ventilation.

Licensed premises should develop a Noise Management Plan (NMP) in addition to the Risk Assessment for protecting residents and staff using the facilities. The noise management plan should look at issues such as,

- Times of operation of outdoor space. The time of operation of beer gardens and outside areas should be considerate of potential for nuisance.
- Each premises is different and may suit different operation but in a closely residential area 23:00 hours is likely to be the latest outside space should be used by large numbers without causing complaints.

- Staff training and procedures for dealing with noise issues.
- Supervision and management of customers outside to prevent excessive noise.
- Use of signage in outdoor spaces.
- Communication with residents – leaflet dropping and provision of an emergency contact number should issues arise.
- Restrictions on outdoor entertainment such as music.
- Lighting issues – Lights not causing issues of excessive illumination or glare to residents. Lights should be mains operated as generators could cause noise issues.
- Flexibility – issues may arise that could cause disturbances so it is imperative that NMP's are flexible enough to incorporate rapid change and develop with experience and the practicalities that become apparent in operation.

If complaints are received to the Environmental Protection Team about noise from a licensed premises, they will contact you to discuss the complaint and what could be done to reduce noise levels. While every effort will be made to find an agreeable solution this may include needing to reduce the use of the outside space. Ultimately if it is necessary the Environmental Protection Team will take formal action in the form of a license review or service of an abatement notice.

If you own or manage a licensed premises and are considering using the open space differently from how you operated prior to the lockdown please use the guidance above to consider the potential impact on neighbours. If you have done this and would like further help, please contact the Environmental Health Admin Team

Telephone 01892 602450

Email [EHAdmin@midkent.gov.uk](mailto:EHAdmin@midkent.gov.uk)