

Village halls

Coffee Mornings, Coffee Shops and Pop-up Cafés

Updated 26 April 2021

Introduction

Events involving the making and serving of tea and coffee are a common aspect of village hall life. This guidance looks at some particular issues that need consideration if such an event is to be held inside your hall.

However, you should read guidance this in conjunction with our other guidance documents on Risk Assessment, Physical Distancing and Cleaning. All are available on the Bavs website page [Guidance and Information for Village Halls](#).

Are these events allowed?

So long as you comply with the relevant guidance; and following a proper risk assessment, it is perfectly possible to run a coffee morning or coffee shop at your hall.

As such, you should be aware of and comply with the statutory guidance that applies to the hospitality sector. While a clever lawyer may be able to argue that a village hall was not a hospitality venue, any shortcomings in terms of safety may well reflect badly on the hall. As such, following the hospitality **statutory guidance** is the prudent approach.

What measures are required?

In addition to the physical distancing, cleaning and hygiene measures (e.g. hand sanitiser at entrances) that arise from your hall's COVID-19 risk assessment, you will need to consult with the organisers of such events to ensure the following:

- You must take **contact details** from all those attending, including time in and time out, as required by the **Test and Protect** service. It is not sufficient just to collect the details for the "group leader". You will need also to display a poster (downloadable from the Bavs website) explaining what this involves and why you are taking people's data. This is a statutory requirement in the hospitality sector.
- One metre **physical distancing** is allowed for hospitality but only when people are seated. However, you will need to provide sufficient room between tables for people

to move and maintain this distance. Also, the one metre exception only applies at the table area, so you must **clearly mark the boundary** between two and one metre zones. (*You may decide to simply stick with two metres throughout*). Where you can, take all reasonable measures to ensure spacing, including back to back and/or side to side arrangements between seated groups. If you have physical separators/screens, use these where necessary, and/or one-way systems.

- **Limits to households mixing** apply. Tables and chairs should be arranged so that people do not form (physically distanced) social groups of more than six people from a maximum of 2 households (although family members under 12 years are not counted). In other words, you must not enable people from one “group” to mix with another group. This is because in for any indoors social environment, household interaction is to be kept to a minimum.
- Taking account of physical distancing measures described above, you must display the **total capacity** (seated) for the event at the entrance. You should liaise with organisers, and agree a safe limit on numbers.
- To discourage people breaking physical distancing, **noise must be controlled**. As such, you must not play background music; and any televisions must be muted. If anyone starts to sing or shout this should be challenged.
- People must only **consume food and drink while seated**. Table service is mandatory, so you must not allow people to queue for items, even if physically distanced. Organisers will need to provide volunteers to act as table staff.

Face coverings

Face coverings are mandatory for everyone who enters the village hall. However, once seated in a hospitality setting to consume food or drink, they can be removed. However, they must be worn when moving about (e.g. to go to the toilet). It is also mandatory for face coverings to be worn by table staff, and anyone providing a “front of house” role.

Table cleanliness

When a social group leaves a table, you should wipe the table surface and chairs (arms) using a suitable disinfectant spray and disposable cloth/kitchen roll. You should also replace any unused cutlery, cups and other such items with fresh ones. Similarly, if you have provided any menus, leaflets, or information sheets; then any left behind must be discarded and replaced with fresh ones. Encouraging organisers to provide hand sanitiser at each table is a helpful measure.

Kitchens and food preparation areas

The application of good hygiene when preparing food and drink is nothing new; and this should be maintained. Indeed, effective and regular cleaning of food preparation and storage surfaces should continue while kitchen areas are in use. Disinfectant sprays and disposable wipes should be available for anyone preparing food and drink.

All kitchen users should practice good personal hygiene, washing their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water before handling food; and at regular intervals. Disposable gloves can be used, a fresh pair being required between food and non-food tasks.

Food should be prepared on the premises. You should not allow people to bring their own food and share this with others. This means you could supply, for example, pre-prepared cakes bought from a supermarket or bakery. However, home cooked produce is not permitted (in order to comply with the statutory hospitality guidance), unless it is entirely prepared on the premises. Likewise, tea and coffee must be made on the premises.

The hall's crockery and cutlery can be used for a hospitality event. After use, it should be cleaned with warm water, or in a dishwasher, using general purpose detergent; and dried thoroughly before being stored for re-use. As an alternative, you could ask hall users to bring their own disposable paper cups and plates.

All frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned before the facility is re-used by another group.

Toilet cleanliness and hygiene

You should not assume that pre-COVID-19 cleaning measures will be sufficient. The Scottish Government's guidance is set out in [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): opening public and customer toilets](#).

- Increase your cleaning frequency
- Use a disinfectant rather than detergent
- Pay extra attention to frequently touched areas
- Deploy and display an enhanced cleaning rota
- Reusable equipment should be replaced with disposable (i.e. replace fabric towels with paper ones)
- Cleaning materials should be available for customers to wipe down surfaces (e.g. if you have a baby change area)
- Ensure liquid soap, paper towels etc. are well-stocked; and that facilities are in working order.

- Apply physical distancing measures (one-way systems, capacity limits, physical barriers etc)
- Raise awareness of good hand hygiene by displaying posters.

Further reading

The guidance and statutory measures that apply to the hospitality sector is contained in the following document:

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): tourism and hospitality sector guidance](#)