



# Professional Association of Self-Caterers UK COVID GUIDELINES NEWSLETTER 18 December 2020 Issue 39

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## WEEKLY NEWSLETTER GUIDELINES

The following guidelines need to apply as PASC UK has limited resources.

- Paid members will receive telephone support
- Paid members will receive priority email support
- Free Newsletter subscriptions will receive email support where possible, subjects that are commonly asked will be answered in the weekly newsletter
- Anyone passing on information taken from this newsletter must credit PASC UK with a link to the website [www.pascuk.co.uk](http://www.pascuk.co.uk)

Since Lockdown 1 came into effect we have dealt with over 63,000 emails, and thousands of calls during the crisis and we thank you all for your patience during these unprecedented times.

However, it still remains the case that the vast majority of emails and calls relate to the information provided in the newsletters and the updates on Facebook, **so please read the newsletter and follow on Facebook**, and check the links out before calling and emailing. We are really stretched as this crisis continues. Thanks for your co-operation.

## PASC UK SOCIAL MEDIA

**Please follow PASC on Twitter @PascUK  
Please on Facebook @pascukltd**

**It is really important to follow PASC UK on Facebook and Twitter. This is not a vanity project, this is the quickest way to get news to you during the week, which is then consolidated in the newsletter that is written on Friday.**

### **ESPECIALLY OVER THE CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR PERIOD.**

Even though we are into the tenth month of this terrible crisis new developments are happening daily, and sometimes hourly.

It is also true to say that, the more of you that do follow us on Social Media, then the more effective we can be. Please it only takes a second, and if everyone who received this free newsletter did so, we would have thousands of followers and a much louder voice. Thanks.

## CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR COVERAGE

PASC UK will only actually close on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Boxing day. And then again on New Year's Eve and New Years day. We would though be grateful if enquiries were only of a time

critical nature of the next couple of weeks. Bear in mind Government will close and responses to our calls and emails to them will be 'out of office' for much of this period. If your question or input is not time critical, please put that in the header of the email and we will attend to as soon as we can.

## COMMENTARY

First of all, we would like to wish each and every one of you the best possible Christmas and New Year. This year has been absolute rubbish, and all of our focus is now on the future to see what part we can all play in getting our sector open and trading safely as soon as possible.

We had wanted to send you a witty e-card, until we saw how much it would cost. With the large database the sums were huge, so we are making a donation to our local Hospiscare. Normally we would run a fund-raising dinner for them, here at Higher Wiscombe, but that has not been possible. We'll get a picture of a socially distanced cheque handover for you.

So, here's a free card. Got it from a great free image library called [www.pxhere.com](http://www.pxhere.com) Lots of great images, especially useful for social media on here.



The massive change in Tier Levels in England is the biggest change of the week. Wales has announced a 4 Tier System and are finalising what looks like a really hard clampdown from December 28<sup>th</sup> and in Scotland we are being told Hogmanay is cancelled.

These are grim times, and it looks like lockdowns will remain the choice of Governments until they can find something else.

We mentioned last week what that something else might be, that is to test guests before they enter, they're clear, in they come, they're not, then off home and self-isolate. It is the only way we are going to get open quickly. We have got Covid prepped accommodation ready and waiting and must keep working hard to maintain these standards.

We are working on this in collaboration with others and work on this will carry on throughout Christmas. To give you examples have a look at these two links, one for care homes and one for schools. If they can do it in these high-risk areas imagine the possibilities? Any scheme needs to be workable for even the smallest business.

[https://www.aoc.co.uk/sites/default/files/Schools\\_Colleges\\_Testing%20Handbook\\_FINAL%20Dec%202020.pdf?dm\\_i=26BG,768RQ,W9YT99,T1VZH,1](https://www.aoc.co.uk/sites/default/files/Schools_Colleges_Testing%20Handbook_FINAL%20Dec%202020.pdf?dm_i=26BG,768RQ,W9YT99,T1VZH,1)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-lateral-flow-testing-of-visitors-in-care-homes>

We continue to maintain our spirits here thank to the increasing numbers of you that are reporting getting the Grants, deducted by insurers, paid back to you, this has been really timely for those that suffered this outrage, and thank you again for the kind words.

We will also be working on a much-improved website over the Christmas and New Year period. Work on this was originally planned for March April 2020, but Covid put paid to that.

We will also be making some major partnership announcements in the New Year that will enable us to lobby and support you better. Watch this space.

What has slipped has been the setting of a date for the Cancellations Policies webinar. This just proved a step too far before Christmas and will now take place as early as we can organise it in the New Year.

Signing off for now and hoping that each and every one of you can have some kind of break and try and recharge for the year ahead. We wish you well and thank you for your support in 2020.

## **URGENT SURVEY ON CONTINUED VAT CUT, OPEN TO 2400 FRIDAY 18 DECEMBER**

PASC UK is a committed supporter of the Cut Tourism VAT Campaign. We are very lucky to have as a Member of our Board, Graham Wason, who founded the campaign in 2011. Graham has taken the lead on this campaign once more ably supported by the likes of UK Hospitality, The Tourism Alliance, SW Tourism Alliance, PASC UK and many, many more.

[Background for those that are new to the campaign.....](#)

The Cut Tourism VAT (CTV) Campaign was set up to lobby for the rate of VAT applying to UK tourism and hospitality to be reduced from 20% to 5%. This would end the sector's competitive disadvantage compared to other European countries, all of which (excluding Denmark) apply reduced rates to visitor accommodation, and most do so to attractions and meals out also.

In July 2020, taking on board the case that the CTV Campaign has made over many years, the Chancellor cut VAT to 5% on tourism and hospitality as an emergency measure to counter the effects of Covid-19.

This reduction is due to be reversed in April 2021. The case being put forward by the CTV Campaign is that VAT at 5% on tourism and hospitality is good for the UK Government and British people in the long term as well as short, and therefore the reduction should not be reversed.

<http://www.cuttourismvat.co.uk>

To assess the validity of this case, the CTV Campaign, together with the Tourism Alliance and UK Hospitality, is asking sector operators to participate in this short survey, which should take no more than 5 to 10 minutes to complete. All responses will be treated as confidential and the identity of individual respondents will not be revealed. Please fill in the short survey here.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9CHZNCQ>

**Responses are required please by end-of-business on FRIDAY 18th DECEMBER.**

## **NEXT NEWSLETTER AND COMMS OVER XMAS AND NEW YEAR**

The next PASC UK newsletter will come out on the 8<sup>th</sup> January. Until then ALL updates will be on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/pascukltd>

Currently at PASC UK, we rely on two people to help get the communications out. One manages the distribution of the newsletter and one puts up the newsletters and papers on the website. Both are away over the break.

We will be using the time over the break to move ahead with the new website, which will allow us to do both these functions, at a moment's notice, from the PASC UK office. We have wanted to get to this throughout the crisis but just have not had the time to spend on a website upgrade. The break will help speed this process. More on the website in January.

## **CJRS AND LOAN SCHEMES EXTENDED**

The Government has announced that the extension of both the furlough scheme and the various loan schemes.

- The furlough scheme has been extended until the end of April 2021 with the government continuing to contribute 80% towards wages and businesses contributing 20% of wages plus NI and Pension contributions
- The loan schemes, including Bounce Back loans and CBILS will be extended until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

The Chancellor has also announced that the Budget will take place on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chancellor-extends-furlough-and-loan-schemes>

## UPDATED CHRISTMAS BUBBLE INFORMATION, ENGLAND

As a result of the Tier Changes and pressure to discourage travel over the bubble period the guidance has been updated. This has caused concern for many of you already as in this updated guidance....

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-a-christmas-bubble-with-friends-and-family/making-a-christmas-bubble-with-friends-and-family#travel-and-overnight-stays-with-your-christmas-bubble>

.....it says you can..... If necessary, you can stay in private rented accommodation with members of your household, or your Christmas bubble. And omits short term holiday lets.

But in this one, updated at the same time.....

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-for-the-christmas-period#travel-within-the-uk>

.....it says (in the Travel in the UK section). If necessary, you can stay in private rented accommodation such as **short-term holiday lets** with members of your household, or your Christmas bubble.

So, anyone challenging you, send them the second one.

## ENGLAND TIER LEVELS AND CHRISTMAS BUBBLE UPDATE

Lots of Tier Changes this week. In short, most of Southern England, including London is in Tier 3. This will have caused tens of thousands of cancellations across our sector.

Devastating news at such late notice.

### Phase 1

#### London and parts of Essex and Hertfordshire to move to tier 3 restrictions

In a statement to the House of Commons, Health Secretary Matt Hancock stated that London and parts of Essex and Hertfordshire will move into tier 3: Very High alert. The first formal review of tiers will take place on Wednesday 16 December, but due to a sharp rise in cases these areas will move to tier 3 from 00.01 on Wednesday 16 December. These areas include:

- All 32 boroughs plus the City of London.
- Local authorities in Hertfordshire: Broxbourne, Hertsmere, Three Rivers, Watford.
- Local authorities in Essex: Basildon, Braintree, Brentwood, Castle Point, Chelmsford, Epping Forest, Harlow, Maldon, Rochford, Southend-on-Sea, Thurrock.

This was effective from 00.01 Wednesday 16 December.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/sharp-rise-in-coronavirus-numbers-and-a-new-variant>

## Phase 2

First the very limited good news.

Bristol and North Somerset move down to **Tier 2** at 00.01 Saturday 19 December.

Herefordshire will move into **Tier 1** at 00.01 Saturday 19 December.

Then the bad news.....

These all enter **Tier 3** from 00.01 Saturday 19 December.

- Bedfordshire
- Buckinghamshire
- Berkshire
- Peterborough
- The whole of Hertfordshire
- Surrey, except Waverley
- Hastings and Rother
- Portsmouth, Gosport and Havant

Full list of local restrictions by area:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/full-list-of-local-restriction-tiers-by-area>

Full details here for Christmas rules:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/hotels-and-other-guest-accommodation>

And details of Christmas Bubbles:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-a-christmas-bubble-with-friends-and-family/making-a-christmas-bubble-with-friends-and-family#if-you-are-clinically-extremely-vulnerable>

And the Postcode Checker:

<https://www.gov.uk/find-coronavirus-local-restrictions>

If you are in **Tier 1** at Christmas.

You can take a booking for any dates across the Xmas period.

This can be for a Rules of Six booking if they come from Tier 1 or one household if they come from Tier 2.

The only dates that Tier 3 should travel are between the 23<sup>rd</sup> December and the 27<sup>th</sup> December and only form the bubble for the 23<sup>rd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup>. So, for four nights only.

You can only have three households staying overnight for the nights of the 23<sup>rd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> inclusive. However, it is possible to have one household come and stay in advance of the other two households if they are from Tier 1 or 2 and stay afterwards.

#### If you are in Tier 2 at Christmas.

You can take a booking for any dates across the Xmas period.

This can only be for single household if they come from Tiers 1 and 2.

The only dates that Tier 3 should travel are between the 23<sup>rd</sup> December and 27<sup>th</sup> December and only form the bubble for the 23<sup>rd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup>. So, for four nights only.

You can only have three households staying overnight for the nights of the 23<sup>rd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> inclusive. So, it is possible to have a household come and stay in advance of the other two households if they are from Tier 1 or 2 and stay afterwards.

#### If you are in Tier 3 at Christmas.

You can only take bookings for the 23<sup>rd</sup> December – 27<sup>th</sup> December across the Xmas period. The Four nights of the 23<sup>rd</sup> to the 26<sup>th</sup> December inclusive.

You can have three households staying overnight for the nights of the 23<sup>rd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> inclusive.

You are closed for the remaining Festive Season including New year except for exempted guests.

The only dates that Tier 3 should travel are between the 23<sup>rd</sup> December and the 27<sup>th</sup> December and only form the bubble for the 23<sup>rd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup>.

The dates of the 22<sup>nd</sup> December and the 28<sup>th</sup> December apply to hotels, b & b's, guest houses etc. But NOT self-catering. This is because these cannot have bookings for the Christmas Bubble of three households, they are only allowed bookings for one household over the 23<sup>rd</sup> December to the 27<sup>th</sup> December.

They can take bookings for the extra nights to facilitate people forming a bubble away from the hotel, or b & b or guest house from the 23<sup>rd</sup> to the 27<sup>th</sup> December with local family.

The real confusion here is about what is covered by law and what is covered as guidance.

- The applicable group sizes and the Christmas Bubble Dates are Law.
- The Travel guidance is just that. Guidance. It says you 'should avoid travel' from or into Tier 3.

An increasing number of you are unwilling to take Tier 3 guests, and we are getting many stories of Tier 3 guests who are unwilling to cancel holidays booked.

A few FAQ's on this:

1/ Can you cancel a guest who is coming from Tier 3?

The Guidance is clear, they should not travel. If we cancel any guest booking, including these we must give a full refund. We can legitimately cancel a guest coming from Tier 3, bar the Christmas Bubble dates, when they are allowed to travel as per the above dates. No court in the land is going to prosecute any of you for doing this.

2/ Do we need to refund the guest if they wish to cancel, and now fall under Tier 3?

This is less clear, the Government suggests that refunds or deferrals at the guest choice is the answer, but this too is Guidance, not law, just because it is written on a Government Website does not make it so. Each business should determine it's own policy from its T's and C's on a case by case basis. Remembering of course that we are in the hospitality business.

Pitfalls of having harsh and possibly unfair cancellation terms under these circumstances could lead to pressure on social media, and possibly chargebacks if the guest paid by credit card. If you take a hard line, make sure that you have all your T's and C's lined up.

3/ If we take Tier 3 Guests outside the permitted Christmas Bubble, what are the downsides?

There is a slight insurance risk, as covered in previous newsletters. It is health Guidance that they should not travel, and we are obliged to follow this guidance as part of our insurance policies. The risk is very small, when did any of us last have a public liability claim for example? However, it is a small risk.

Your local community may take a dim view of us accepting Tier 3 guests at any time, including the Christmas Bubble. They should follow their own Tier 3 rules whilst with you, but 90% of them will not, so you'll have London accents in your pub, and it will be you that let them come and stay.

If you have a complex of more than one cottage, guests in one unit from Tiers 1 or 2 will quite probably feel unhappy about the 'guests from Tier 3'. We have already had examples of guests from lower Tiers asking for refunds whilst in holiday as there were Tier 3 guest in cottages nearby sharing facilities.

## UPDATED TIER POSTERS ENGLAND

As mentioned in previous newsletters these posters are subject to change, so always download from the website itself.

The Posters with the rules and restrictions that apply in Tier level have been updated to incorporate all the new changes. As mentioned previously, these are an excellent quick reference guide for keeping both staff and customers aware of the rules in their area.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tier-posters-medium-high-and-very-high>

## CORONAVIRUS TIER 1

# MEDIUM ALERT

[gov.uk/coronavirus](https://gov.uk/coronavirus)

**Around 1 in 3 people with Covid-19 have no symptoms** so will be spreading the virus without realising. We must all take action to protect each other and our hospital capacity.

<p><b>MEETING FRIENDS AND FAMILY</b> </p> <p>Maximum of six indoors or outdoors, apart from with members of a single household or support bubble.</p>	<p><b>BARS, PUBS AND RESTAURANTS</b> </p> <p>Venues must be table service only. They must stop taking orders at 10pm and must close by 11pm.</p>	<p><b>RETAIL</b> </p> <p>Open.</p>	<p><b>WORK AND BUSINESS</b> </p> <p>Everyone who can work from home should do so.</p>
<p><b>EDUCATION</b> </p> <p>Early years settings, schools, colleges and universities open. Childcare, other supervised activities for children, and childcare bubbles permitted.</p>	<p><b>INDOOR LEISURE</b> </p> <p>Open.</p>	<p><b>ACCOMMODATION</b> </p> <p>Open.</p>	<p><b>PERSONAL CARE</b> </p> <p>Open.</p>
<p><b>OVERNIGHT STAYS</b> </p> <p>Permitted with household, support bubble, or up to 6 people.</p>	<p><b>WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS</b> </p> <p>15 guests for weddings, civil partnerships, wedding receptions and wakes; 30 for funerals.</p>	<p><b>ENTERTAINMENT</b> </p> <p>Open.</p>	<p><b>PLACES OF WORSHIP</b> </p> <p>Open, but cannot interact with more than six people.</p>
<p><b>TRAVELLING</b> </p> <p>Walk or cycle if possible, plan ahead and avoid busy times and routes on public transport. Avoid car sharing with those outside of your household or support bubble. Avoid travelling into a Tier 3 area, other than where necessary such as for work or education. Further exemptions apply.</p>	<p><b>EXERCISE</b> </p> <p>Classes and organised adult sport can take place outdoors, but must follow the rule of six indoors. Organised activities for elite athletes, under-18s and disabled people can continue.</p>	<p><b>RESIDENTIAL CARE</b> </p> <p>COVID-secure arrangements such as substantial screens, visiting pods, and window visits. As an interim measure, indoor visits in the absence of testing will be limited to two people from a Tier 1 area with with social distancing, no physical contact, PPE use and good hand hygiene observed at all times. Where testing is available, it should be used.</p>	<p><b>LARGE EVENTS</b> </p> <p>Sport, live performances and business meetings limited to 50% capacity or 4000 people outdoors (whichever is lower) and 50% capacity or 1000 people indoors (whichever is lower)</p>

For support and more information visit:  
[gov.uk/coronavirus](https://gov.uk/coronavirus)





# CORONAVIRUS TIER 2

# HIGH ALERT

[gov.uk/coronavirus](https://gov.uk/coronavirus)

**Around 1 in 3 people with Covid-19 have no symptoms** so will be spreading the virus without realising. We must all take action to protect each other and our hospital capacity.

<b>MEETING FRIENDS AND FAMILY</b> 	<b>BARS, PUBS AND RESTAURANTS</b> 	<b>RETAIL</b> 	<b>WORK AND BUSINESS</b> 
<p>No mixing of households indoors, apart from support bubbles. Maximum of six outdoors.</p>	<p>Pubs and bars must close, unless operating as restaurants. Hospitality venues can only serve alcohol with substantial meals. Venues must stop taking orders at 10pm and must close by 11pm.</p>	<p>Open.</p>	<p>Everyone who can work from home should do so.</p>
<b>EDUCATION</b> 	<b>INDOOR LEISURE</b> 	<b>ACCOMMODATION</b> 	<b>PERSONAL CARE</b> 
<p>Early years settings, schools, colleges and universities open. Childcare, other supervised activities for children, and childcare bubbles permitted.</p>	<p>Open.</p>	<p>Open.</p>	<p>Open.</p>
<b>OVERNIGHT STAYS</b> 	<b>WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS</b> 	<b>ENTERTAINMENT</b> 	<b>PLACES OF WORSHIP</b> 
<p>Permitted with household or support bubble.</p>	<p>15 guests for weddings, civil partnerships, wedding receptions and wakes; 30 for funerals.</p>	<p>Open.</p>	<p>Open, but cannot interact with anyone outside household or support bubble.</p>
<b>TRAVELLING</b> 	<b>EXERCISE</b> 	<b>RESIDENTIAL CARE</b> 	<b>LARGE EVENTS</b> 
<p>Reduce the number of journeys you make and walk or cycle if possible. Avoid busy times and routes on public transport. Avoid car sharing with those outside of your household or support bubble. Avoid entering a Tier 3 area, other than where necessary such as for work or education. Further exemptions apply.</p>	<p>Classes and organised adult sport can take place outdoors, but cannot take place indoors if there is any interaction between people from different households. Organised activities for elite athletes, under-18s and disabled people can continue.</p>	<p>COVID-secure arrangements such as substantial screens, visiting pods, and window visits. Outdoor/airtight visits only (rollout of rapid testing will enable indoor visits including contact).</p>	<p>Sport, live performances and business meetings limited to 50% capacity or 2000 people outdoors (whichever is lower) and 50% capacity or 1000 people indoors (whichever is lower)</p>

For support and more information visit:  
[gov.uk/coronavirus](https://gov.uk/coronavirus)



HANDS



FACE



SPACE

# CORONAVIRUS TIER 3

# VERY HIGH ALERT

[gov.uk/coronavirus](https://gov.uk/coronavirus)

**Around 1 in 3 people with Covid-19 have no symptoms** so will be spreading the virus without realising. We must all take action to protect each other and our hospital capacity.

<p><b>MEETING FRIENDS AND FAMILY</b> </p> <p>No mixing of households indoors, or most outdoor places, apart from support bubbles. Maximum of six in some outdoor public spaces (e.g. parks, public gardens).</p>	<p><b>BARS, PUBS AND RESTAURANTS</b> </p> <p>Hospitality is closed, with the exception of sales by takeaway, drive-through or delivery.</p>	<p><b>RETAIL</b> </p> <p>Open.</p>	<p><b>WORK AND BUSINESS</b> </p> <p>Everyone who can work from home should do so.</p>
<p><b>EDUCATION</b> </p> <p>Early years settings, schools, colleges and universities open. Childcare, other supervised activities for children, and childcare bubbles permitted.</p>	<p><b>INDOOR LEISURE</b> </p> <p>Open. Group activities and classes should not take place.</p>	<p><b>ACCOMMODATION</b> </p> <p>Closed (with limited exceptions)</p>	<p><b>PERSONAL CARE</b> </p> <p>Open.</p>
<p><b>OVERNIGHT STAYS</b> </p> <p>We advise against overnight stays other than with household or support bubble.</p>	<p><b>WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS</b> </p> <p>15 guests for weddings, civil partnerships and wakes; 30 for funerals. Wedding receptions not permitted.</p>	<p><b>ENTERTAINMENT</b> </p> <p>Indoor venues closed.</p>	<p><b>PLACES OF WORSHIP</b> </p> <p>Open, but cannot interact with anyone outside household or support bubble.</p>
<p><b>TRAVELLING</b> </p> <p>Avoid travelling outside your area, other than where necessary such as for work or education. Further exemptions apply. Reduce the number of journeys where possible. Plan ahead and avoid busy times and routes on public transport. Avoid car sharing with those outside of your household or support bubble.</p>	<p><b>EXERCISE</b> </p> <p>Classes and organised adult sport can take place outdoors, but people should avoid higher-risk contact activity. Group exercise activities and sports indoors should not take place, unless with your household or bubble. Organised activities for elite athletes, under-18s and disabled people can continue.</p>	<p><b>RESIDENTIAL CARE</b> </p> <p>COVID-secure arrangements such as substantial screens, visiting pods, and window visits. Outdoor/airtight visits only (rollout of rapid testing will enable indoor visits including contact).</p>	<p><b>LARGE EVENTS</b> </p> <p>Events should not take place. Drive-in events permitted.</p>

For support and more information visit:  
[gov.uk/coronavirus](https://gov.uk/coronavirus)



## SCOTLAND CHRISTMAS BUBBLE UPDATE

No further changes to previous updates, except as in England the advice is don't mix if you can possibly avoid it.

## WALES CHRISTMAS BUBBLE AND TIER UPDATE

No change..... It still says....

Staying overnight in holiday accommodation for the Christmas Bubble 23-27... one household only

You can stay in a hotel or other forms of holiday accommodation such as holiday rental accommodation during the Christmas period, but in Wales you can only do this with people you live with (or someone who is with you to provide care for a vulnerable person).

<https://gov.wales/making-christmas-bubble-friends-and-family>

Seems a bit bizarre that you can stay overnight in a private house with another household, which could be utterly squalid, but you cannot stay as two households in Covid prepared holiday accommodation.

For everyone in Wales there will be a Four Tier System.

### Higher-Level Restrictions Announced for Wales

The First Minister has announced that Higher-level restrictions will come into force to control rapidly accelerating coronavirus rates across Wales. The new restrictions will apply to all of Wales and are:

- All non-essential retail, including close contact services and all leisure and fitness centres will close at the end of trading on Christmas Eve.
- All hospitality premises will close from 6pm on Christmas Day.
- Tighter restrictions on household mixing, staying-at-home, holiday accommodation and travel will apply from December 28, after the five-day Christmas period.
- The tighter restrictions includes people only being able to meet as two households plus an additional single person household in Wales over the festive period.

<https://gov.wales/higher-level-restrictions-come-force-control-coronavirus>

## GRANTS UPDATE ENGLAND

### A brief update.

There are two strands of Grants available in England that may benefit Members. If you are on the Council Tax list, then read about the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG). If you are on the Business Rates list, then read about the Local Restrictions Support Grants. (LRS)G The latter comes in two forms, Open and Closed.

The **LRS)G Open** Grant is available to businesses in Tier 2 and 3 local restrictions since 1 August 2020 and the 5 November 2020 and for the period after Lockdown 2 and has been severely impacted because of the local restrictions.

This Grant is not automatic for self-catering. Both Northumberland and Devon (and late last night Lancashire) businesses reporting not being able to access this Grant. We continue to push for this to be addressed through all available channels.

Councils can make this call because there is a discretionary element to this Grant. Those affected must contact their local Councillors and complain about this, many of you are and this could well mean a rethink.

If any other areas are being turned down for this Grant LRS Open, for the period you were/are in Tier 2, let us know at [chair@pascuk.co.uk](mailto:chair@pascuk.co.uk)

The **LRS Closed Grant Local** covers two periods, if you were closed due to Local Restrictions from the 9<sup>th</sup> September to Lockdown 2 and then post Lockdown 2 (Tier 3) all of you that are Business Rates should have been able to successfully claim on this for the above periods.

The **LRS Closed Addendum** Grant was open to all Business Rates businesses (including agents that have premises) amongst you for Lockdown 2 and there should have been no problems claiming.

### **The Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG)**

This is the one for you if you are on Council Tax. We are hearing that those Councils and Billing Authorities that have opened this Grant are currently under-whelmed, so get onto your local Councils and Billing Authorities websites and check the local eligibility criteria and if possible, get a claim in.

The ARG Grant criteria are decided by local councils and Billing Authorities. As a result, many of these Grants are not open yet.

A short piece of guidance on eligibility for the ARG has been published which stated that Local councils have the freedom to determine the eligibility criteria for these grants. However, the government expects the funding to help those businesses which – while not legally forced to close – are nonetheless severely impacted by the restrictions.

This could include:

- businesses which supply the retail, hospitality, and leisure sectors
- businesses in the events sector
- business required to close but which do not pay business rates

Each local Council or Billing Authority will set the final eligibility criteria and amounts that can be claimed. As with the Discretionary Grants earlier in the crisis some will support tourism businesses better than others according to local priorities. You will have to check your local websites for information and eligibility criteria and priorities as set by Local Government.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-if-youre-eligible-for-the-coronavirus-additional-restrictions-grant>

### **THE LOCAL RESTRICTIONS SUPPORT GRANT (LRS) FUNDING AMOUNTS**

These amounts have been set by the Treasury:

- For properties with a rateable value of £15k or under, grants to be £1,334 per month, or £667 per two weeks;
- For properties with a rateable value of between £15k-£51k grants to be £2,000 per month, or £1,000 per two weeks;
- For properties with a rateable value of £51k or over grants to be £3,000 per month, or £1,500 per two weeks.

## THE ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS GRANT (ARG) FUNDING AMOUNTS

Local Authorities can determine how much funding to provide to businesses from the ARG funding provided, and exactly which businesses to target.

This inevitably means that this Grant will be a Postcode Lottery as there is not enough in the fund to give all businesses a Grant. Familiarise yourself with your local scheme (check your Local Council or Billing Authority website) and get ready to apply the moment the funds open.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-restrictions-support-grants-lrsg-and-additional-restrictions-grant-arg-guidance-for-local-authorities#history>

## GRANTS UPDATE SCOTLAND

Some funding will be announced in Scotland for self-catering in Scotland, either today, Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December or Monday 21<sup>st</sup> December. The first place the information will be available will be on our colleagues website at the ASSC (Association of Self-Caterers Scotland)

Read the Scottish Government's press release:

<https://www.gov.scot/news/new-gbp-185-million-package-for-business/>

Latest update is here:

<https://www.assc.co.uk/financial-support-for-tourism/>

And a link to the ASSC page where the details will be available:

<https://www.assc.co.uk/blog/>

## GRANTS UPDATE WALES

Grants for Hospitality Businesses were announced last week and many of you have reported already having the Grants. It appears that if you were eligible before (although as with all Postcode lotteries, this is not always the case) if you got one before you get this one automatically.

Therefore, if you have heard nothing, use the eligibility checker below and get onto your Council website asap.

Please let us have any feedback about how you get on, particularly if you are refused and reasons given to aid lobbying. Send to [chair@pascuk.co.uk](mailto:chair@pascuk.co.uk)

<https://businesswales.gov.wales/coronavirus-advice/>

<https://gov.wales/eligibility-checker-hospitality-leisure-and-tourism-fund-goes-live>

## MAINTAINING COVID STANDARDS

As said in the commentary we are providing Covid secure hospitality and we have to maintain standards to continue to pressure Government to let us trade more sustainably.

A very visible way of doing this is to use these schemes to display your Covid protocols.

### Quality in Tourism's Safe, Clean and Legal Scheme:

This is the Gold Standard for Covid accreditation and involves a fully trained assessor supporting offline and in person, helping you complete a risk assessment and deliver a best in practise standard, every property is checked. Recognised as the most robust scheme from Which? magazine, Safe, Clean & Legal evolved with the support of Environmental Health Officers; it covers the whole hospitality and tourism industry and will put both you and your clients mind at rest.

To find out more: <https://www.qualityintourism.com/quality-assessment/safe-clean-and-legal>

### AA Covid Confident:

The AA COVID CONFIDENT scheme is FREE and open to all hospitality establishments that pass the AA's stringent criteria, including: hotels; restaurants; pubs; B&Bs and guest accommodation; camping, glamping and holiday parks; self-catering accommodation; hostels; serviced apartments; attractions; and golf courses. The scheme is free to establishments. <https://www.ratedtrips.com/aa-covid-confident>

### Good to Go Standard:

The Good to Go standard initiative is a FREE self-certification scheme developed by VisitEngland in partnership with VisitScotland, VisitWales and Tourism Northern Ireland. It is directly linked to national and sector specific public health and safety guidelines and aims to give confidence to businesses, visitors and communities of high standards of compliance and hygiene in tourism establishments. It will operate through an online portal, backed up by process checks and supported by a call-centre facility to answer more detailed questions from businesses.

England - <https://goodtogo.visitbritain.com/your-business-good-to-go-england>

This is how we display ours at Higher Wiscombe.  
<https://www.higherwiscombe.com/covid-confident/>

## CMA MOVES IT SIGHTS TO AIRLINES AND TRAVEL COMPANIES

The CMA has broadened its campaign to include airlines and travel agents, with one company, Love Holidays having to refund 44,000 customers. They are being given until the end of March 2021.

Airlines that refused refunds during lockdown 2 have also fallen foul and will be investigated.

[https://www.travelmole.com/news\\_feature.php?c=setreg&region=2&m\\_id=r\\_r\\_rvdm&w\\_id=38393&news\\_id=2045443](https://www.travelmole.com/news_feature.php?c=setreg&region=2&m_id=r_r_rvdm&w_id=38393&news_id=2045443)









# COVID-19 early outbreak management

## Hotels and other guest accommodation

### Who should use this information?

Owners and managers of establishments providing accommodation and other services for travellers and tourists e.g. hotels, bed and breakfasts (B&Bs) and holiday lets. This information provides key steps to quickly identify and contain any potential COVID-19 outbreak. If you are concerned about other possible health issues then you should follow your existing processes.

For England only.

### What you can do to manage a possible outbreak

#### Confirm

If you are informed about a case or cases, check whether they have had a test (**Box 1**). <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>

If tested negative and are well, they can return to work.

If tested positive, they must isolate for 10 days from the day they were tested. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

#### Contacts

Identify any close contacts of the case when confirmed using **Box 2**.

Remember, contact might occur in a car if car-sharing or in staffrooms on breaks. Talk to the case and make a full list. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person>

#### Check

Check your workspace. Refer to [www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19). This has practical steps to take and explains how you must carry out a COVID-19 risk assessment for your organisation.

#### Call

Call your local PHE Health Protection Team but only if you need additional advice or support.

There are some circumstances when the PHE HPT would like you to call them (see **Box 3**). <https://www.gov.uk/health-protection-team>

## Box 1. Symptoms check list

The main symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are:



a high temperature – hot to touch on your chest or back (no need to measure your temperature)



a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours



a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means that it is different to normal

## Box 2. Identifying contacts

A 'contact' is a person who has been close to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 anytime from 2 days before the person was symptomatic up to 10 days from onset of symptoms. For example, a contact in the work-place can be:

- a person who has had face-to-face contact (within 1 metre), with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, including:
  - being coughed on
  - having a face-to-face conversation within 1 metre
  - having physical contact, or
  - contact within 1 metre for one minute or longer without face-to-face contact
- a person who has been within 2 metres of someone who has tested positive for more than 15 minutes
- a person who has travelled in a small vehicle with someone who has tested positive or in a large vehicle or plane near someone who has tested positive

The only exception is if the person was trained-in and wearing appropriate personal protective equipment.

## Box 3. When to call your local Health Protection Team

- number of cases exceeds 5 within 14 days
- you've taken the action outlined but are still seeing more cases
- you're thinking you might need to close because of the number of people affected
- somebody in your workplace has been admitted to hospital; You're getting significant interest from local media

### To access more information refer to the guidance below or search the titles on GOV.UK:

- [guidance for contacts of people with confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection who do not live with the person](#)
- [COVID-19: cleaning in non-healthcare settings](#)
- [coronavirus \(COVID-19\): safer travel guidance for passengers](#)
- [working safely during coronavirus - guidance for people who work in or run hotels and other guest accommodation](#)
- [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) advice for accommodation providers](#)
- [working safely during coronavirus - the visitor economy](#)
- [guidance for DCMS sectors in relation to coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

Should any of you need them.....

Here's a link to the Food and Drink Card

<https://coronavirusresources.phe.gov.uk/reporting-an-outbreak/resources/Food-Drink-Action-Cards/>

Here's a link to the attractions and entertainment venues card

<https://coronavirusresources.phe.gov.uk/reporting-an-outbreak/resources/small-and-large-gatherings-workplace-action-cards/>

Here's a link to the travel sector card

<https://coronavirusresources.phe.gov.uk/reporting-an-outbreak/resources/Travel-Action-Cards/>

## WORK IN PROGRESS SECTION

### WIP. ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING AT SELF-CATERING PROPERTIES PAPER

Getting lots of great feedback and input into this. Please keep it coming. We already have some great stuff but more always useful. We would like to try and complete over the Christmas/New Year period, so, please, if you have any feedback at all on this send it in. Thanks.

- Grants that may be available
- Good and bad EV maps to be featured on
- Any safety legislation that any of you have come across
- Any data on how much a charge actually costs
- Any issues anyone has come across with insurance
- Anything else you think is relevant

We will of course be doing our own research, but it would speed up the process if any of you have any information to share. Send to [chair@pascuk.co.uk](mailto:chair@pascuk.co.uk)

### WIP. IHT RELIEF FOR SELF-CATERING PROPERTIES

We got a lot of feedback on this subject so asking anyone who has an interest in this topic, or who may be in the process of challenging HMRC on IHT Relief this to please get in touch.

We have some Members who are at an advanced stage on this and it would be brilliant if we tried to coordinate where applicable. All responses in confidence to [chair@pascuk.co.uk](mailto:chair@pascuk.co.uk)

### WIP.CHARGEBACKS

A Chargebacks paper will follow the Cancellations paper. This is for two reasons, one, you have to have fair Terms and conditions to defend chargebacks, and second, getting the Chargeback policies from the Credit Card providers is proving very difficult.

If anyone has any updated feedback or information in this subject, please send it in to [chair@pascuk.co.uk](mailto:chair@pascuk.co.uk)

### WIP. BUSINESS RATES

An update on the next steps with the Valuation Office will appear in the next Newsletter

- Will cover next Revaluation
- Getting the PASC UK discounts for units of 1-3.

## PAT TESTING?

Lots of questions about this, what is the law, how often do we have to do it etc?

As we have all got used to during the Covid crisis it's as clear as mud when you look at the guidance and FAQ's.

Basically, it does not state how frequently you should do it, nor that you should keep a copy of the testing. Completely bonkers.

So why should you even think about it?

- 1/ We have a moral and legal responsibility to do our best to keep our guests safe.
- 2/ As it's HSE guidance we are obliged to follow it to maintain insurance
- 3/ If you look around it doesn't cost much
- 4/ New equipment does not need testing, a visual check when installing is sufficient

This is what it actually says...

### Is Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) Compulsory?

No. The law simply requires an employer to ensure that their electrical equipment is maintained in order to prevent danger. It does not say how this should be done or how often. Employers should take a risk-based approach, considering the type of equipment and what it is being used for. If it is used regularly and moved a lot e.g. a floor cleaner or a kettle, testing (along with visual checks) can be an important part of an effective maintenance regime giving employers confidence that they are doing what is necessary to help them meet their legal duties. HSE provides guidance on how to maintain equipment including the use of PAT.

We do it each year at Higher Wiscombe. We use the same contractor each year. He sits in the garage with the testing equipment, and each portable appliance is brought in turn. For us, it is bedside light's, toasters, kettles, microwaves and food mixers.

For 3 cottages, 16 bedrooms it takes a morning.

Why do we do it each year? Because every year at least one or two items are faulty, they don't look faulty, but they are. We keep the records; our contractor keeps a record. If we had any kind of insurance claim, we can present these instantly.

Making PAT testing a part of your Risk Assessment and updated annually would be good practice.

PAT - Portable appliance testing FAQs:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/faq-portable-appliance-testing.htm>

Maintaining portable electric equipment in low-risk environments -

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg236.pdf>

## **CANCELLATIONS POLICY PAPER**

The Cancellations Paper (Draft 1) is now complete and can be downloaded from the website at <https://www.pascuk.co.uk/covid-19>

(Just a note, if you have the Avast anti-spam system it does not like the PASC UK website. We can assure you that the site is not insecure, but to make it as easy as possible for you, and you have the Avast system, please email [chair@pascuk.co.uk](mailto:chair@pascuk.co.uk) and put Cancellations in the subject line and we'll email you a copy).

Please have a read and let us have your feedback on it, we will then update the paper, and republish. This will be followed by a Webinar with a Q and A.

Once again huge thanks to Beth Bailey and Nick Clayson at Premier Cottages, Robert Kennedy at SuperControl for their contributions and Lorna Handyside and Linda Winstanley the ace proof-readers. ☺

## **UPDATED PROTOCOLS**

The work to update the Cleaning Protocols is complete. These are available on the website at <https://www.pascuk.co.uk/standards>

(Just a note, if you have the Avast anti-spam system it does not like the PASC UK website. We can assure you that the site is not insecure, but to make it as easy as possible for you, and you have the Avast system, please email [chair@pascuk.co.uk](mailto:chair@pascuk.co.uk) and put Protocols in the subject line and we'll email you a copy).

The revision has a short section at the beginning of the main protocols in green that highlights changes, the Christmas decorations addendum is also included

If you have any questions arising from these, or have any suggestions for future changes, please let us know by contacting [chair@pascuk.co.uk](mailto:chair@pascuk.co.uk)

## **ONLINE TOOL FOR FINDING GOVERNMENT SUPPORT**

The online tool for finding out what support is available for your businesses has been updated to reflect recent changes:

<https://www.gov.uk/business-coronavirus-support-finder>

## **UPDATED PASC UK MEMBERS LOGO**



We have had some feedback that the logo does not actually say 'Professional Association of Self-Caterers' on it. Good point. We have had it modified and it is now available. Please only display if you are a fully paid up Member. You can get a copy by sending an email to [admin@pascuk.co.uk](mailto:admin@pascuk.co.uk)  
Thanks.

## PASC UK AWARDS

There will be a further delay in finalising these. We haven't had any time to look at this this week. Further nominations welcome. We will try to do this over Christmas as a bit of fun. Goodness knows we need some, further suggestions to [chair@pascuk.co.uk](mailto:chair@pascuk.co.uk)

## SUPPORT LOBBYING BY JOINING PASC UK

There is a huge amount of work and lobbying to do to help support you all in the self-catering sector. We haven't directly asked before, however if we are to fight on so many fronts, we simply need more funds. There are thousands of you that have had the benefit of this newsletter and the lobbying done on behalf of the sector.

We are now asking that as many of you as possible join PASC UK.

The fight is on so many fronts, and we get much better results when we engage proper legal advice, proper PR firms to assist with campaigns such as the #justpayit (which we will shortly need to run again, more on that later) and Memberships to other organisations that provide common lobbying, information feeds and support.

Membership fees are as follows: All per annum.

- Single cottage £70
- 2 – 4 Units £125
- 5 – 10 Units £200
- 11 + Units £300

For companies like cleaning firms, or industry support companies, Associate Membership is £200.

Members get telephone support and priority email support.

You can join here, simple form, takes 2 mins, and we'll send an invoice, payable by BACS.

<https://www.pascuk.co.uk/copy-of-become-a-member-1>

## MEMBER RENEWALS

Huge favour to ask of regulars, when you get your renewal through please pay it. The logistics of chasing waste hugely valuable time that could be spent doing far more useful things for all. If you don't want to renew, all you have to do is say so.

## PASC UK CLOSING AT WEEKENDS

PASC UK is now closed at the weekends for phone and email. We have a self-catering business as well to run and manage through all the same issues that you all have. Many thanks.

## ABOUT PASC UK

PASC UK was formed three years ago. It had three principle objectives at that time. The over-riding purpose of PASC UK is to help make your business more profitable.

- 1/ Reduce Business Rates for self-catering
- 2/ Lobby for a 'level playing field', where all accommodation providers had to operate under the same rules, (think the 350,000 AirBnB properties). So that all have the same proportionate costs and regulations to operate under.
- 3/ Recover the right to Inheritance Tax Relief for legitimate business operating under FHL (Furnished Holiday Lettings rules).

And more.... See [www.pascuk.co.uk](http://www.pascuk.co.uk)

In January 2019, PASC UK succeeded in negotiating a reduction in Business Rates of up to 35% for most self-caterers in England and Wales. Despite a tortuous year with getting the Valuation Office to apply the new system, in January 2020 they switched the system to manual for Self-Caterers, (SCAT-131) and we now hear daily of Members getting great reductions and refunds. Guides on how to Check your Business Rates are available to Members.

After years of lobbying, giving evidence to all Party Parliamentary Groups and working with all the other major accommodation associations in the UK, we had finally got HMG to agree to a roundtable on how to regulate the short-term accommodation sector. Our approach has been one of keeping the sector 'safe and legal'. This meeting has been delayed by the COVID-19 outbreak but will be high on the agenda post the virus restrictions being lifted.

We were also making good progress in our representations to HMG about the reinstatement of Inheritance Tax Relief to FHL businesses provided they complied with a basic business criteria. This is also on hold whilst we all deal with the COVID-19 challenge but will be picked up as soon as practicable.

And much more....

Wishing each and every one of you all the best during these trying times, and please Stay Safe.

Best regards

Alistair Handyside MBE  
Executive Chair  
The Professional Association of Self-Caterers UK

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07771 678028



## DISCLAIMER

We are in completely uncharted territory here, and any suggestions that we make are merely that and you should carefully consider your own business policies, and if necessary, consult with your Professional Advisors. PASC is your lobbying Association, not a legal service. In addition, please be very wary of some of the advice given on internet communities, blogs and social media. There appear to be thousands of experts out there where my understanding is that there are very few.

To that end, any information you get from any source you must double check. I will always try and put the actual link to the information in the newsletters so that you can read and assess yourselves. These are unprecedented times, please take exceptional care.