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This version supersedes earlier versions

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Dear Colleague

**Remembering in Safety and Dignity: Remembrance Sunday  
Events 2020**

I am writing to provide some advice and guidance on Remembrance Sunday events for November 2020, mindful that guidance is still awaited from national government which may supersede the contents of this letter.

**The Hertfordshire Approach**

Government asked every Council in Summer to create a Local Outbreak Plan, with an officer Board, called the Health Protection Board, overseen by a Board of elected members. In Hertfordshire the Elected Member Board is chaired by David Williams, Leader of the County Council, with Tim Hutchings the Executive Member for Public Health and Prevention as Deputy Chair, and comprises the leaders of the County Council, the District and Borough Councils and the Police and Crime Commissioner. The published outbreak plan can be found at this link [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/outbreakplan](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/outbreakplan) and is a live document. The Health Protection Board is a multi-agency board of partners working together to reduce and manage outbreaks of infection.

The Elected Member Board agreed the creation of a countywide approach to events, within the framework of legislation and guidance.

The Hertfordshire approach, overseen by the Health Protection Board in partnership with all relevant agencies is in short:

1. To enable events which are lawfully and safely planned to proceed lawfully and safely, and **event organisers must ensure** they are COVID-19 secure
2. To ensure that events can remain dignified while being safe
3. To use existing event notification systems to do this
4. To **require** everyone organising an event to undertake a suitable COVID risk assessment, to ensure that the event happens safely
5. Maintain social distancing and hygiene for all gatherings in accordance with current government guidance, to disrupt and prevent viral transmission
6. To work cooperatively with organisers, including (i) seeking to agree any necessary measures with organisers if possible, (ii) applying restrictions rather than prohibitions where practical, and (ii) using enforcement powers only where this is necessary.

## Public Acts of Remembrance

In line with this, it is our current intention to support local areas to enable some form of COVID-19 secure public act of remembrance to take place, where it is safe to do so and where government regulations still permit it. The principles to enable this to take place are:

1. The Health Protection Board and agencies will continue to do all we can to reduce and suppress spread of the virus, so while Hertfordshire is not under either any local or national restrictions, our working assumption is that public acts of remembrance compliant with the law and covid-secure principles can occur. More is said about this below.
2. If we enter national or local restrictions, such acts may become unlawful and it would be wise for organisers to have a plan B.
3. We recognise that this year, the time of remembrance will be even more poignant for our communities, and we should seek to be clear on what can be done safely, to facilitate this.

## The Law on events

The law in force at the time of writing states that you must not meet in a group of more than 6, indoors or outdoors, unless you have an exception.<sup>1</sup>

Outdoor events that are organised by businesses, charitable organisations, and public bodies, are not restricted to any number of attendees provided (i) they have carried out a thorough risk assessment, (ii) they have taken all reasonable steps to mitigate the risk of viral transmission, taking into account that risk assessment, in line with Covid-19 Secure guidance, and (iii) social distancing between different households or support bubbles, and between staff and performers, is maintained at all times. In particular, those operating venues or running events following COVID-19 Secure guidelines should take additional steps to ensure the safety of the public and prevent gatherings of more than six people taking place within that event.

Indoor events must comply with the regulations and the usual standards of risk assessment for their premises. For example, guidance for multi-purpose community venues can be found here.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-multi-purpose-community-facilities/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-multi-purpose-community-facilities>

Remembrance Sunday public acts of remembrance can be planned **PROVIDED THAT**

1. they are organised either by public bodies such as Town or Parish Councils or District or Borough Councils, Charities such as the Royal British Legion, or recognised places of worship.
2. They are properly risk assessed (see guiding principles attached)
3. In Hertfordshire they are notified to the District or Borough Council Safety Advisory Group (SAG) who will then pass details to their local Environmental Health Department in line with usual event notification processes. This notification from the event organiser should include a covid-secure risk assessment.

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<sup>1</sup> The police have powers to enforce these legal limits, including to issue fines (fixed penalty notices) of £200, doubling for further breaches up to a maximum of £6,400 and penalties on organisers up to £10,000.

The Police have power to enforce against events which do not meet these conditions and Local Authorities have powers to issue directions to events including prohibition, restriction or the imposition of specific steps.

## Events within the context of Public Worship

Events which take place within the context of public worship (i.e. a Remembrance event at the start of a public act of worship in a recognised place of worship or outdoors) or regular acts of worship which have a remembrance theme to them should follow the guidance on public worship.

- The relevant government guidance can be found here:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july>
- Each faith community nationally has issued its own guidance and this guidance should also be referred to.

## The steps to take for your event

You should continue as usual to provide your event notification form to your local council **with the addition of a covid risk assessment for the event.**

In order to help you do this I have provided a summary checklist of principles, and links to relevant documents and guidance in force at the time of writing, attached with this letter

I very much hope that we will not be in a situation of infection where events cannot take place safely. But in the event that the legislation changes or the levels of infection become so high that events are unlikely to happen safely, we will ensure we communicate with you.

Yours sincerely



**Jim McManus**  
**Director of Public Health**  
**For the Hertfordshire Health Protection Board**

# Remembering in Safety and Dignity: Guiding Principles for Remembrance Sunday Events



These principles are a summary and do not replace close reading of the latest government guidance or clear and proper risk assessment

1. All events to be lawful **MUST** be under the auspices of a recognised body as stated in the letter above. Events **MUST** have a suitable risk assessment, notified to the local Environmental Health Department.
  - a. Risk assessment tools can be found here:
    - i. The Health and Safety Executive guides for events are here but do not mention specifically COVID <https://www.hse.gov.uk/event-safety/getting-started.htm>
    - ii. Association of Events Organisers has a specific covid tool <https://www.aeo.org.uk/covid-19>
    - iii. World Health Organisation tools for covid assessments of gatherings are here <https://www.centerforhealthsecurity.org/our-work/publications/updated-who-covid-19-mass-gatherings-risk-assessment-tools>
    - iv. Hertfordshire's [Trading safely toolkit](#), includes risk assessment templates, checklists and questionnaires:
2. We do not know whether by November we will be in a situation of further national restrictions. All events should have a contingency plans and measures in place to communicate to potential attendees
3. People attending should be kept to a safe capacity. The more people attending, the greater the risk of incidents which will transmit the virus. In general the fewer attending the safer the event.
  - a. Processions if they must happen should be strictly limited to the wreath laying party, any processional party of clergy/musicians and as few others (veterans) as possible and must maintain social distancing measures.
  - b. People may line a route if suitably socially distanced and care is taken to avoid congestion before and after.

- c. Where many people who are highly vulnerable to serious illness with COVID are expected to attend, care should be taken to enable them to be segregated from the main parties.
  - d. Carers for them should be designated. The carer and vulnerable person must avoid physical interaction with people and surfaces as much as possible and sanitise their hands before and after attending.
4. All those attending should perform good hand hygiene (washing or sanitising) before and after attending. It is recommended that face coverings for those not speaking should be worn.
5. People who are symptomatic or who have tested positive or are otherwise self-isolating must not attend.
6. Where possible the details of those attending must be recorded for track and trace. The new regulations require venues such as community venues and community centres to display QR Codes but for places of worship this is optional.
  - a. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/venues-required-to-enforce-rule-of-6-nhs-qr-code-posters-and-contact-logs>
  - b. QR codes for display can be generated here:  
[https://www.gov.uk/create-coronavirus-qr-poster?gclid=CjwKCAjw\\_NX7BRA1EiwA2dpg0jIKUKdCy3nGLRhVDhZs0A054Fgan4tvwB7pCX8nCBu7dhhNuSstOxoC\\_4QQAxD\\_BwE](https://www.gov.uk/create-coronavirus-qr-poster?gclid=CjwKCAjw_NX7BRA1EiwA2dpg0jIKUKdCy3nGLRhVDhZs0A054Fgan4tvwB7pCX8nCBu7dhhNuSstOxoC_4QQAxD_BwE)
7. Participants should be socially distanced (2 metres as standard) between people
  - a. **Households, support bubbles and groups of no more than six may attend and may stand or sit together but they must not mix outside their own households/group.**
  - b. **There should be no physical contact between people in the processional party or wreath-laying party**

- c. Wreaths or other objects to be laid should be handled only by one person. If someone is laying wreaths in a line for others to pick up, everyone must sanitise their hands before and after handling wreaths
  - d. Flags and other objects like standards, processional items etc should only be handled by one person or where more than one person handles them should be sanitised at handover and those handling them should sanitise hands before and after handling.
8. Events inside buildings should require face coverings from all participants.
  9. The guidance on music and singing should be adhered to:
    - a. Performers (bands and choirs) are acceptable under guidance **provided** they adhere to the relevant guidance <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts>
    - b. There should be no congregational or audience singing.
  10. There should be no physical contact between participants (eg handshakes) unless they are within households or support groups.
  11. Ideally there should be no catering but if it is provided then this should be included in your risk assessment to ensure it is covid safe. Food and drink brought by attendees should not be shared. Hospitality safety guidance can be found here:  
<https://www.ukhospitality.org.uk/page/GuidesandToolkits>

**[ENDS]**

**Version 2.**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> October 2020**