

BEF update: further lockdown easing from 17 May across the UK

Monday 17 May heralds a number of changes across the United Kingdom as lockdown continues to ease across England, Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland. Vaccination rates continue at pace while case numbers are on the decline, but government leaders continue to urge caution as we begin to mix in greater numbers and in indoor spaces.

The changes in each country are as follows:

England

From Monday, the country will enter [Step three](#) of the government's lockdown roadmap which will facilitate the following:

- Gatherings permitted indoors of up to six people or two households – children of any age count in these numbers.
- Organised sport and physical activity can take place indoors with no limit on numbers but within NGB guidance in place. [Sport England](#) recommends allowing 100sq ft per person (10ft x 10ft space) to provide a maximum capacity. In equestrian arena terms, this would permit up to 114 people in a 20 x 60 metre indoor school.
- Up to 30 people can gather outdoors, while organised sport can take place in any numbers, subject to sport specific guidance.
- Overnight stays are permitted, including hotels, hostels, B&Bs and private homes but must be used within the number limits of up to six people or two households. This includes horseboxes.
- Indoor hospitality is now permitted so pubs, bars, cafes and restaurants can provide table service to groups of up to six or two households.
- Spectators permitted at sporting events but within social distancing and gathering limits – groups of 30 outdoors/six people or two households indoors. Indoors there's no set limit on total numbers but restrictions must be aligned with ventilation rates as per venue – but no more than 1,000 indoors at any venue. Spectators at equestrian shows are down to organisers' discretion in line with their member body, and a ticketing procedure and full covid protocols should be in place.
- Travel abroad permitted under the [traffic light system](#) with green list countries not requiring quarantine on return.
- Competitors at British Dressage and British Showjumping competitions in England will now be permitted to bring a group of six (including rider, groom, owner, family, etc.) to shows. They must stay in their 'bubble' and not mix with others. British Eventing competitions will be allowing a rider plus four supporters.

Next review: 21 June

What you can currently do:

[\(COVID-19\) Coronavirus restrictions: what you can and cannot do - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Guidance from Monday: [\(COVID-19\) Coronavirus restrictions: what you can and cannot do - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Northern Ireland

- Outdoor sports now permitted

The next changes are planned for 24 May, subject to a review on 20 May, and the following is expected to be introduced:

- Indoor hospitality reopening
- Indoor group exercise permitted
- Some indoor mixing of households in private homes
- Accommodation can open such as B&Bs and hotels.

What you can currently do –

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) regulations guidance: what the restrictions mean for you | nidirect](#)

Scotland

As of Monday, mainland Scotland moves to [Level 2](#) and some islands move to [Level 1](#) while Moray and Glasgow will remain at [Level 3](#). This will mean the following for residents in Level 2 areas:

- Up to six people from three households can socialise indoors, including private homes and overnight stays (under 12s not included in numbers)
- Up to eight people from eight households can meet outdoors (under 12s not included in numbers)
- No social distancing required between families and friends in homes and private gardens
- Sporting participant numbers in place for the levels:
 - Level 3 – bubbles of 30 with a maximum of 200 participants per day
 - Level 2 – bubbles of up to 50 with a maximum of 500 participants per day
 - Level 1 – bubbles of up to 100 with a maximum of 1,000 participants per day
- Venues should calculate their numbers based on the Scottish Government guidance on the [opening of sport and leisure facilities](#) and their own risk assessments.
- Up to 100 spectators allowed to attend indoor events, 250 outdoor or 500 with seating when run under Scottish Government event guidance and requirements.
- Events running under SGB/club 'Return to Play' guidance, including equestrian, will not be permitted spectators at present.
- Travel permitted anywhere in Scotland in Levels 0, 1 or 2 but you must not enter a Level 3 or 4 area unless for a permitted reason.
- Travel abroad permitted under the [traffic light system](#) as in place in England with green list countries not requiring quarantine on return.

Next review: 7 June

What you can currently do –

[Coronavirus in Scotland - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

Guidance from Monday in areas moving to Level 2 - [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) protection levels: what you can do - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

horsescotland guidance – [Covid-19 | Horsescotland](#)

Wales

All of Wales will move to [Alert Level 2](#) from Monday which brings the following relaxation in restrictions:

- Gatherings indoor of up to six people or two households in hospitality settings such as pubs, cafes and restaurants. Any members of the group who do not live together or aren't in bubbles are required to maintain two metre social distancing. Children under 11 are not included in the numbers.
- No meetings indoors at private homes other than with those you live with or in your extended household.
- Organised group activities for adults are permitted indoor for up to 30 people or 50 people outdoors.
- All holiday accommodation can open for overnight stays, including horse lorries at shows/training.
- Travel abroad permitted under the [traffic light system](#) as in place in England with green list countries not requiring quarantine on return. Those arriving back from green list countries will be required to book and pay for a PCR COVID test on their return and are encouraged to use lateral flow tests in the following weeks.

Next review – early June with a view to move to level 1.

What you can currently do – [Alert level 3: summary | GOV.WALES](#)

Guidance from Monday - [Alert level 2: summary | GOV.WALES](#)

British Equestrian Chief Executive Jim Eyre commented; “Things are certainly moving in a positive direction and Monday brings us ever closer normality. I must stress that we all continue to exercise caution, not be complacent and act responsibly in line with the protocols in place from government, member bodies and venues – we’re not out of the woods just yet. These documents are the key to safely enjoying our horses, activities, sports and livelihoods. However, if we continue to work together, we can look forward to a great British equestrian summer.”

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