



21st May 2020

An open letter to the pub sector

Dear licensee/publican/proprietor/manager,

The British Institute of Innkeeping (BII), the British Beer & Pub Association (BBPA) and UKHospitality are working closely together with Government to ensure our pubs can reopen safely at the earliest opportunity. We have all directly fed back our members' concerns, questions and suggestions on how to ensure the safety of their customers and teams are also balanced alongside the essential business support that will be required. Our combined approach has been to advocate a standards led approach for our industry for the whole of the UK. We have identified the following three key principles and procedures as we look towards a gradual re-opening of pubs, in order to play our part in the national economic recovery;

1. A phased approach determined by the specified social distancing guidelines
2. Industry-developed operational protocols and advice
3. Continued and enhanced support for closed businesses (furlough, rents, financing) and tapered support for businesses able to partially open that are initially loss making

Last Friday we delivered our first joint draft protocols to the Government, whose taskforce will be developing the formal requirements for the reopening of our pubs. This document has been welcomed and we are confident will form the basis of the final Government requirements. That said, as you are all aware, there continues to be an active debate around the specific measures that will be required in our pubs. We expect this debate to continue at pace taking into account the measures adopted by other countries and sectors – and factors will change.

We are very conscious that this is an extremely uncertain period of time and we know, from speaking to many of you, that there is a real drive to action the necessary changes that may ultimately need to be in place to meet key requirements. A key purpose of this letter is to outline the areas where we believe additional measures may be beneficial, though not necessarily mandatory, such as:

Managing your teams:

- Return to work interviews to assess risks; pre-existing conditions, household risks, current symptoms
- Briefing staff on return to work; new Covid-19 specific requirements, awareness of symptoms in themselves & household members plus a reminder on the existing requirements of health & safety, food hygiene & licensing conditions

Protecting your teams:

- Specific plans for key areas; Kitchens, public bar, dining areas, cellars & outdoor areas
- Managing minimum distance with others
- Cleaning and hygiene management

Protecting your customers:

- Site specific plan for front and back of house; identifying risks and mitigating actions
- Assess the flow of staff & customers in the pub, plan to reduce or eliminate clear pinch points; cashless payment, ordering and serving processes, etc
- Maintaining maximum numbers in key areas across the pub
- Advising customers of access restrictions, distance regulations and new processes in place
- Regular cleaning of high throughput areas

The exact mandatory requirements and guidance from Government are expected to be produced within the next couple of weeks and will be subject to a period of consultation. We understand that many of you are already planning changes to your businesses, based upon specific distancing expectations in line with current Government guidelines. We believe these are still under review and would caution against longer term and costly changes to pub environments at this time that may be unnecessary if areas such as distancing measures changed within the consultation period

The British Institute of Innkeeping (BII), the British Beer & Pub Association (BBPA) and UKHospitality are fully committed to sharing the Government requirements at the earliest opportunity, helping pubs implement the required actions and sharing best practice wherever possible.

Yours sincerely,



Steven Alton, CEO, BII



Emma McClarkin, Chief Executive, BBPA



Kate Nicholls, CEO, UKHospitality