



## **Music Festivals – COVID-19 Supplementary Guidance**

Version 1. 13<sup>th</sup> October 2020

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This COVID-19 Supplementary Guidance should be read in conjunction with the Events Industry Forum's (EIF) edition of The Purple Guide to Health, Safety and Welfare at Music and Other Events – The Purple Guide. This document has been produced by the festival industry working in collaboration with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) and Public Health England (PHE). These are operational planning considerations, to inform further work and planning on how festivals could take place in the future.

1.1. The main aim of this guidance is to assist all who work in and interact with the music festival sector to facilitate planning considerations and festival activities, when prudent to do so, based on an agreed framework that maximises consistency across the UK. Therefore, this guidance provides an initial and outline framework for the festival sector to consider at the current time and while operating in a COVID-19 context.

1.3 There are multiple variables concerning music festivals, including geographical location, size, number of attendees, audience demographic and site layout. Therefore, it is not possible to articulate a defined generic proposition now for how a traditional festival can operate in the future, for example during the summer of 2021.

1.4 All relevant matters in this guidance will need to be closely monitored as developments in clinical science, the law, government advice and guidance, and finally the wider understanding of COVID-19 evolves.

1.5 It is very much hoped that as the COVID-19 pandemic evolves and scientific evidence and preventative measures such as vaccines improve, the festival sector could again be able to deliver the amazing experiences craved and enjoyed by their loyal audiences. However, this continues to be a rapidly evolving and changing situation. This document is not intended to be prescriptive, rather it sets out key areas for consideration for festival organisers and its purpose is to support them and relevant stakeholders in the festival sector in taking a bespoke risk-assessed approach.

1.6 This supplemental guidance builds further on the EIF's recently published guidance for other outdoor events, which does not encompass large-scale popular music festivals. The focus of this EIF guidance is primarily on more diverse events such as air shows, carnivals, firework displays, literature fairs, outdoor theatres and performing arts. This guidance is called Keeping Workers and Audiences Safe during COVID-19 in the Outdoor Event Industry in England – [EIF](#).

1.7 The Sports Grounds Safety Authority (SGSA) recently published their own Supplementary Guidance to the Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds (Green Guide). Elements of their guidance for sports grounds may be useful for the music festival sector to consider – [SGSA Supplementary Guidance](#).

1.8 An absolute key consideration for the festival sector is Her Majesty's Government (HMG) position on the coronavirus situation. Matters relating to the legal position and the published advice and guidance will be hugely important, with public health measures such as social distancing policy a priority issue. It should be noted that these measures could be changed at any time according to the variable circumstances that exist when managing the COVID-19 situation. These need to be considered at the start of the planning cycle and reviewed regularly as they will impact on the risk assessment and mitigation.

1.9 Festival organisers will therefore have to remain agile in their thinking regarding issues such as social distancing when planning for and delivering their festivals. In particular, festival organisers will need to consider whether their festivals are indeed operationally feasible and economically viable under the existing or predicted social distancing guidelines at all. If they consider that they are viable, then festival organisers will also have to consider whether they are willing to proceed at their own risk when operating with a potential raft of new and additional COVID-19 safety measures potentially being required.

1.10 Many music festivals have a minimum planning timeline that commences 6-9 months in advance of the actual show delivery phase, so timeliness in decision making is the vital initial key to providing the best possible chance for festivals to function in the future.

1.11 This guidance is for the benefit and safety of all people at a festival, including but not limited to: staff, crew, contractors, performers, paying public attendees, and playing public attendees with accessibility requirements.

## **2. WHAT IS A FESTIVAL?**

2.1 Adopting the definition that the festival industry agreed with the Performing Right Society (PRS for Music) in a 2017 tariff negotiation, a festival can be defined as:

*“A single event offering a series of music performances or music and other entertainments which is marketed as a festival and is held at a predominantly outdoor site using temporary infrastructure which is:*

- (i) erected for the purposes of that festival*
- (ii) used mainly for the purposes of that festival*
- (iii) substantially dismantled after the festival.”*

2.2 It is also acknowledged that there are metropolitan, city-based festivals, which can similarly be defined as:

*“A single event offering a series of music performances or music and other entertainments, which is marketed as a festival and is held at two or more indoor venues or a combination of indoor and outdoor venues and sites, in both cases using temporary infrastructure which is:*

- (i) erected for the purposes of that festival*
- (ii) used mainly for the purposes of that festival*
- (iii) substantially dismantled after the festival.”*

2.3 Music festivals are creative places and vary greatly in so many different ways when compared to other outdoor events, in areas such as geographical location; size and capacity; live-work nature of the build/show/break phases; and shared close-quarter accommodation/catering/sanitation facilities, with all of these fairly unique characteristics needing careful consideration. They are traditionally places where the atmosphere is one of self-regulation with free movement and enjoyment within an environment where safety and security is delivered in a highly professional but discrete manner.

### **3. GLOBAL TO NATIONAL TO LOCAL**

3.1 Global advice and guidance can be obtained from the World Health Organization (WHO). Advice entitled “Key planning recommendations for mass gatherings in the context of COVID-19”, was published on 29 May 2020 – [WHO](#).

3.2 In this document, the WHO define mass gatherings as:

*“Events characterised by the concentration of people at a specific location for a specific purpose over a set period of time, that have the potential to strain the planning and response resources of the host country or community. Mass gatherings can include a single event or a combination of several events at different venues. There are a diverse range of mass gatherings such as sports, music/entertainment, religious events, large conferences and exhibitions, and others.”*

3.3 The WHO states that COVID-19 is predominantly transmitted from person to person through respiratory droplets and contact with contaminated surfaces, and the risk of

transmission appears to be proportional to the closeness (less than 1 metre), frequency and duration of the interaction between an infected individual and an individual who becomes infected. In the context of COVID-19, festivals are events that could amplify the transmission of coronavirus.

3.4 National guidance can be obtained from HMG – [HMG](#). Understandably there are gaps in knowledge concerning coronavirus. Advice and guidance is therefore constantly evolving and changing as more becomes known about it, its effect on the population, and developments in research. HMG could introduce new laws via legislation, rules, and advice and guidance on any relevant topic at any appropriate time.

3.5 HMG will continually be considering what laws, advice and guidance are necessary. Hence, for the first time, there is the potential for planned and dynamic regulation beyond the norm, not just at national but also at local level. A recent example of this is the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (No.3) Regulations 2020 – [HPR20\(3\)](#) – giving county, unitary and metropolitan councils powers to restrict access to, or close, individual premises or public outdoor places as well as prohibit certain events from taking place where there is a serious or imminent threat of transmission of the coronavirus. This may happen outside of the traditional licensing structures used for the delivery of the objectives under the Licensing Act 2003, and it is therefore essential that festival organisers are engaged across the spectrum of local authority departments and Safety Advisory Group (SAG) agencies.

3.6 To ensure consistency is applied regarding music festivals, it is strongly recommended that festival organisers, SAGs, local directors of public health and other industry parties keep up-to-date with all global, national and local developments regarding COVID-19 from the aspects highlighted in this guidance plus other official sources of information – see Other Useful Documents section.

## **4. CURRENT POSITION**

4.1 Outdoor events that are organised by businesses, charitable organisations, and public bodies can go ahead subject to certain conditions, including restrictions on persons/qualifying groups of persons mixing or mingling at such events, undertaking the required risk assessment and taking all reasonable steps to mitigate the risk of transmission of coronavirus, in light of the risk assessment and any government guidance. As noted above in paragraph 3.5, local authorities may also make directions in relation to events under certain conditions.

4.2 It is clear, therefore, that festivals can take place provided they comply with the legislative requirements. Recognising the potential benefits they bring for national and local recovery, there should be an inherent willingness from all partners to objectively facilitate future festivals taking place, where public health risks can be effectively mitigated.

4.3 Large festivals typically involve large crowds and unstructured movement of people, which would normally lead to high levels of contact between individuals and groups from different households. The duration and scale of events may also increase the level of social contact within an event and when attendees are travelling to and from events. Further

research is required on these specific risks and how they can be most effectively mitigated in the specific context of festivals.

4.4 Festivals are not restricted in terms of the number of attendees per se, but they should comply with their Premises Licence issued by local authorities under the Licensing Act 2003 and respond to the outcome of their own bespoke COVID-19 risk assessment and mitigations.

4.5 As many music festivals are annual events in nature and have a minimum planning timeline that commences 6-9 months in advance of the actual show phase, it is recommended that festival organisers liaise with their local authority and SAG at an early stage if they are about to embark on planning for their festival. By doing so, all parties can discuss issues of concern, and importantly ensure that they are working from the same agreed advice and guidance framework that should be consistently applied throughout the UK.

4.6 Most councils have SAGs that bring together the local authority with the emergency services and other relevant bodies who work collaboratively in an advisory manner with event organisers on their aspirations and plans. Given the current impact of COVID-19, it would be prudent for festival organisers and SAGs to ensure that from the very first meeting, a suitably senior person representing the local director of public health is a member of such a forum who should be in a position to provide the essential input from a COVID-19 specialist viewpoint. It should be noted that it would be quite appropriate for a festival organiser to contract a similarly qualified professional to advise the festival.

4.7 The majority of festivals would not have operated in 2020, so in the future, COVID-19-related safety measures and tactics, including those relating to social distancing, will be new, key features that will need consideration as to whether they are to be woven into the festival plans, if so, most likely for the first time. Festival organisers will need to be mindful that when refreshing any plans they should review and record their responsibilities for the licensed site plus any that are agreed outside of this, commonly known as 'Zone Ex' and/or the 'footprint' area of the festival, with a common example of this being car-parking fields.

4.8 The responsibilities of festival organisers should not be stretched further than is already the case into other new areas over which they have no legal authority or control. Where festival organisers already accept some responsibility for 'Zone Ex' and/or the 'footprint', then this should be specifically reviewed against the backdrop of COVID-19. Appropriate consultation with relevant stakeholders should be conducted as normal, such as transport companies, however, these external operators should remain responsible for their own areas.

4.9 It is reasonable to anticipate some substantial changes to official and industry-led guidance documents in circulation. Hence, it is the intention that this guidance will be refreshed on a monthly basis – see Review section.

## **5. AREAS TO MONITOR**

5.1 It is likely that, moving forward, everyone will have to significantly adapt and change approach whilst learning to live and operate with COVID-19. Festival organisers would be

well-served by monitoring COVID-19 developments that would affect their festival, if the circumstances surrounding various issues changed. Such issues that would be prudent to monitor are:

1. **HMG laws, rules and advice and guidance, in particular on public health policy including social distancing** – what new legislation is being considered/in place, what are the current rules, what is the current advice and guidance, what is the current position on physical social distancing, is this likely to change, if so to what new measure?
2. **Vaccine(s)** – has a vaccine been clinically approved, what is the timeline for production, is there a priority order for the physical administration to the population, what is the actual or likely public take-up, is there a secure technical platform that could be utilised for inoculation recording purposes (NHS or otherwise) so that festival organisers could dynamically assess the health status of an individual at site entry points if required?
3. **Testing** (in advance or at the entry point to the festival) – how is this evolving, how could festival organisers utilise this in their operational plans to maximise public safety, for how long before arrival at the festival is any test result permissible, how is this proven and processed dynamically at/by a festival if required, will any test be developed that detects COVID-19 in the early stages of incubation, what is the current position regarding the overall effectiveness of all elements of the testing system, how instantaneous are the results of tests, and how are any results securely managed?
4. **Symptomatic testing** (at the entry point of the festival) – how could this type of testing be speedily and accurately administered at a festival if required, is there an approved list of relevant equipment with standard operating procedures, what happens if a suspected case presents, who would undertake this function and manage the results?
5. **Antibody testing** – has a clinical model been devised to show if a person has antibody protection, if so does this create any antibody immunity within them, if so for how long, if any viable protection exists then how is this proven and processed dynamically at a festival?
6. **NHS Test and Trace** – how is this evolving, what is the view of the SAG on this aspect, how could festival organisers embrace this in their operational plans if required, what are their legal responsibilities under this HMG-led system?
7. **Mutation** – is COVID-19 changing, if so, how does this affect the medical-care model required, is the virus still as virulent or getting less threatening to human health?
8. **Population stratification** – what is the current understanding and what are the gaps in knowledge regarding systematic differences in sub populations such as ethnicity and age, what are the vulnerable groups, how should these issues be sensitively managed in a festival context?
9. **Treatment** – how are treatment methods evolving, how do advancements in this area affect the medical-care model required, are there any new measures that could be adopted on-site, if so, what kit, equipment and medicines could be required?

10. **International, national and local context** – after conducting a review, are there concerns regarding local transmission rates and local lockdown measures/history, are there any local community issues and where are attendees travelling from?

5.2 Many of these areas for monitoring understandably contain current gaps in knowledge on a national and local scale. They could materially affect a festival's terms and conditions, ticketing policy, GDPR responsibilities and insurance requirements, so all of these administrative and supporting elements should be constructed to enable flexibility to react to changes when they will inevitably occur.

## 6. RISK ASSESSMENT

6.1 Any decision to proceed with holding (or restricting, modifying, postponing, canceling) a music festival requires a rigorous COVID-19, legally compliant risk assessment that is bespoke to the festival. Such a risk assessment should be ongoing and continually reviewed in light of changes in HMG legislation, advice and guidance plus specific developments regarding COVID-19 – see 'Areas to Monitor' section.

6.2 It is the responsibility of festival organisers to produce such a risk assessment, and in line with the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (No. 2) 2020, this must satisfy the requirements of Regulation 3 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

To assist with risk assessment in the Covid-19 context, the WHO advises that risk assessments should be based on the following considerations:

### 6.3.1 Normative and epidemiological context in which the festival takes place

This relates to the regulations on public health and social measures to control the spread of COVID-19, which reflects the intensity of transmission at national and local levels. The WHO currently describes four transmission scenarios being:

- (i) No reported cases
- (ii) Sporadic cases
- (iii) Clusters of cases
- (iv) Community transmission.

A country or area can move from one transmission scenario to another, in either direction. Measures put in place to manage transmission could be hand-washing, respiratory etiquette, social distancing, movement restrictions, limitation of activities, and so on. If the country and/or local authority are implementing strict movement and social distancing measures aimed at decreasing transmission of COVID-19, then it is unlikely that festivals will be allowed to take place. However, where restrictive movements are being progressively

adjusted in response to evolving epidemiology, then the decision to proceed with a festival, and how to proceed, becomes highly relevant.

### 6.3.2 Evaluation of risk factors associated with the festival

The appraisal of the likelihood that the festival may contribute to the spread of COVID-19 and that the health services capacity may be exceeded by such spread. The context in which the festival takes place is key, with areas to evaluate being:

- (i) Characteristics of the festival (location, size, duration, crowd density and so on)
- (ii) Number and characteristics of the attendees (age, health status, international/national/local travel, and so on)
- (iii) Expected interactions among attendees during the festival (closeness, proximity, behaviour, and so on)
- (iv) Capacity of the health system nationally and locally to detect and manage cases of COVID-19 in terms of policies, resources and capacities.

### 6.3.3 Capacity to apply prevention and control measures

The ability to implement actions that can reduce the risks associated with the festival. Prevention and control measures aim to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission and may:

- (i) Modify the characteristics of the festival (venue size, attendees, facilities, duration, equipment, and so on)
- (ii) Focus on the capacity of the health system throughout the festival's timeline – planning/operational/post phases.

6.4 The overall risk associated with the festival is the outcome of a process that incorporates:

- (i) The risk of the amplified COVID-19 transmission associated with the festival and its expected burden on the health system
- (ii) The capacity of the festival organiser, SAG, and the local director of public health, to prevent and control such risks.

6.5 The WHO have produced a useful toolkit – “WHO Mass Gatherings COVID-19 Risk Assessment Tool” – [TOOLKIT](#). This toolkit has various components, such as:

- (i) Decision Tree
- (ii) Risk Evaluation
- (iii) Risk Mitigation
- (iv) Decision Matrix
- (v) Risk Communication



6.6 Festival organisers, SAGs, local directors of public health and other industry parties may find this toolkit beneficial when considering the way forward for any festival. If this toolkit is utilised, then the Decision Matrix may indeed indicate at an early stage whether a festival organiser feels it is operationally feasible and economically viable to deliver a festival, in particular in the planning phase timeframe. The SAG at some point in the initial stages may wish to consider whether it is safe to proceed in the current and predicted COVID-19 environment.

6.7 The WHO risk assessment approach may be best suited for larger music festivals, with smaller festivals retaining their own proven risk-assessment systems. The key factor is that the festival has an acceptable and bespoke COVID-19 risk assessment in place that is regularly reviewed and updated.

6.8 COVID-19 issues should not eclipse the festival's normal risk planning. Festival organisers should be mindful that COVID-19 could amplify normal and well-established risks. Staff resilience is one such area where festival organisers should consider the human resources implications carefully, with COVID-19 illness and the potential necessity to self-isolate at the forefront of their staffing planning assumptions.

6.9 There are a range of useful resources available on the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) website, including how to conduct a Covid-19 secure risk assessment in the [workplace](#).

## **7. HMG ROADMAP**

7.1 HMG published a five-stage 'roadmap' for reopening theatres, concert halls and other live music venues and events in June 2020.

7.2 The first two phases of the roadmap are: allowing physically distanced rehearsal and training with no audiences, and physically distanced performances for broadcast and recording purposes.

7.3 The third stage of the roadmap is allowing "performances outdoors with an audience, plus pilots for indoor performances with a limited-distance audience".

7.4 Stage four is "performances allowed indoors/outdoors (but with a limited, distanced audience)".

7.5 The fifth and final stage is "performances allowed indoors / outdoors (with a fuller audience indoors)".

7.6 Currently, a 'no earlier date' for stage 5 exists, which is essentially the full reopening of such venues. Festival organisers should therefore be aware of what the current stage of the roadmap is during the planning process. They should also consider whether and how specific risks associated with festivals can be addressed with limited (stages 3-4) or fuller audiences (stage 5). The risks and potential mitigations for festivals, and the expected level of attendee contact and interaction varies in different settings and venues. For example, a two-hour, seated gig in a music venue is quite different from a large, multi-day music festival.

7.7 The COVID-19 national and local context will need to be assessed by festival organisers with the relevant local authority and local director of public health, and if necessary, the SAG. Festival organisers should closely monitor government COVID-19 alert levels, both nationally and locally as they evolve.

## **8. HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE (HSE)**

8.1 Guidance provided by the Health and Safety Executive sets out what should be considered when preparing/updating a risk assessment in light of COVID-19, including arranging work areas, travel to/from work, talking to staff, protecting those at higher risk, moving around, common areas, good hygiene, and personal protective equipment (PPE) - HSE. This will feed into the decision as to whether a proposed music festival can take place.

## **9. LICENSING ACT 2003**

9.1 Festivals may apply for or have an existing Premises Licence under the Licensing Act 2003. This act has four objectives:

1. Prevention of Crime and Disorder
2. Public Safety
3. Prevention of Public Nuisance
4. Protection of Children from Harm

9.2 COVID-19 does not provide an additional basis for refusing an application for a licence, as any refusal must be based on one of the four objectives above. There is no specific public health objective, and public health is not captured by the public safety objective. Similarly, licence conditions must promote one of the four objectives, and therefore COVID-19-related conditions are unlikely to be included unless they link to one of these objectives.

## **10. EVENT MANAGEMENT PLAN**

10.1 The Event Management Plan (EMP) is the written document that a festival organiser compiles articulating how it will safely and operationally deliver the festival in line with the Licensing Act, the Premises Licence and any conditions attached to that, whilst also complying with relevant legislation.

10.2 Festival organisers will be well versed in managing risk and compiling comprehensive EMPs covering how their festival will professionally manage a wide variety of issues. EMPs vary in terms of layout and presentation, but broadly, an example of what they can cover is:

- Event management structure, roles and responsibilities

- Public Safety – policies, arrangements, accessibility, vulnerable groups, public information, specific safety plans, working practices, site rules
- Medical and Welfare – roles and responsibilities, capacities, facilities, resources, safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, SAG working protocols, mental health, substance misuse
- Sanitation – toilets, hand-washing, showers, locations, servicing, cleaning, storage, transportation, resources, environmental management, monitoring
- Security – security, stewarding, schedules, resources, identification, operations, roles and responsibilities, SAG working protocols, standards
- Crowd Management – size, dynamics, densities, queues, flows, ingress, egress, circulation, accessibility, vulnerable groups, management, resources
- Management – command/control/communication/co-ordination (C4) arrangements, event control, communications, SAG working practices, roles and responsibilities
- Alcohol – policy, bars, under 18s, management, designated premises supervisor (DPS)
- Campsites – tents, caravans, campervans, glamping, design, layout, densities, facilities, fire safety, accessibility, security, lighting, resources
- Community – liaison, communication, safety, traffic, resources, contact arrangements
- Crime – prevention activities, reduction initiatives, fencing, CCTV, prohibited items, confiscation, search, lost & found property, drugs, eviction, suspicious items, suspicious behaviour, emergency procedures
- Entertainment Venues – stages, temporary structures, capacities, operating times
- Fire – safety initiatives, fire stewarding, specialist resources, firework displays, inspections
- Major Incident Plan – strategy, command/control/communication/co-ordination, event control, communications, SAG working practices, scenarios, evacuation, structured closedown, rest centres, emergency procedures
- Noise – sound levels, operating times, exposure, resources, SAG working protocols, special effects, modelling, monitoring
- Site – design, layout, boundaries, resources, management, capacity, density
- Ticketing – policy, terms & conditions, accreditation, entry, accessibility, vulnerable groups, ticket categories
- Traders – standards, site rules, information packs, wholesalers, food safety, food hygiene, guidance, outlets, operations, SAG working protocols, safety
- Traffic – cars, coaches, private hire, shuttle busses, drop & collect, rail & ride, campervans, caravans, cyclists, ingress, egress, access routes, car parking, pedestrian safety, weather conditions, emergency procedures, SAG working protocols, capacities
- Environment monitoring plan covering before, during and after the proposed event
- Waste and Recycling – collection, storage, disposal, site-area requirements, management, resources
- Provision for the full clean-up of the area and for any remedial works arising from

any damage caused to public property, facilities or amenities associated with the event

- Water – sources, supplies, contingencies, testing, SAG working protocols, management, resources.

## **11. COVID-19 SAFETY MEASURES**

11.1 Ultimately, the music festival industry is principally defined by planning for and implementing mitigation of risk. This includes having health and safety arrangements in place to control risk; ensuring co-operation and co-ordination of all activities; providing people and, in particular, staff with relevant information on any risks; ensuring competent staff undertake all relevant roles with clear responsibilities; monitoring health and compliance issues; and constantly reviewing all safety arrangements. As such, festival organisers are already practically in a very good place to meet the challenges that COVID-19 bring to the festival sector.

11.2 So, festival organisers could be specifically expected to show how their plans intend to:

- ✓ Mitigate the risk of transmission in the vicinity of the event site – in line with their agreed responsibilities/agreed 'Zone Ex' and/or 'footprint'
- ✓ Mitigate the risk of infected people entering the festival
- ✓ Mitigate the risk of transmission between attendees and staff
- ✓ Mitigate the risk of onward transmission post-festival – in line with their agreed responsibilities/agreed 'Zone Ex' and/or 'footprint'.

11.3 Hence there could well be an expectation that festival organisers embrace the NHS Test and Trace system and other HMG initiatives in their policies and procedures. If this is required, then how they intend to do this should be discussed at SAG level, and agreements reached then articulated in the EMP. Festival organisers will also be expected to update all mandatory requirements into their plans when changes are introduced. Festival organisers could find themselves dealing with ongoing post-festival matters, potentially for the first time, so they should ensure this possibility is taken into account.

11.4 The EMP should also be adjusted so that all relevant COVID-19 safety measures and tactics are implemented where appropriate. Any adjustments should ensure that the festival is COVID-19 secure. Event organisers and SAG members will be familiar with the content of the EMP either through the experience of running the festival in the past or through the application process for a new festival. Following on from the bespoke COVID-19 risk assessment, all festival organisers could be expected to show how COVID-19 is a 'golden thread' running through its plans. How this is presented can be agreed with the licensing authority and/or SAG. Some licensing authorities and/or SAGs will prefer all safety measures and tactics to be fully embedded in revised plans, others may prefer addendums to existing plans, so the new approaches are absolutely clear and distinct from the norm.

11.5 Festival organisers will have many other considerations such as PPE provision and use; additional hand-washing requirements; enhanced cleaning regimes and so on that will all be related to COVID-19 safety initiatives and which are fairly straightforward to deliver. In many cases, some of these additional initiatives and measures could quite rightly be self-managed by the attending public, so as to release some of the responsibility and cost burdens from the shoulders of the festival. Examples of this approach would include the public attendees bringing their own reusable and recyclable face coverings and bringing their own hand sanitiser of a suitable quality.

11.6 Over time, many festivals have established their own following and culture. Festival organisers could consider making relevant adjustments to their standard terms and conditions for ticket holders, in particular surrounding COVID-19 expectations and standards of behaviour, in order to positively influence behavioural and cultural change of their traditional audience. Festival organisers would also be well advised to consider similar adjustments to their standard terms and conditions of contract with regular crew members, contractors and suppliers.

11.7 Festival organisers will therefore have a raft of safety measures and tactics to consider, and where appropriate implement for their festival. Following on from their bespoke COVID-19 risk assessment that will show that the elimination of the threat is not possible, festival organisers should create a mitigation checklist of initiatives that they will need to consider. Assuming all parties have the same situational awareness then, as a guide, these considerations could be grouped into the following key themes:

### **11.A Medical and Welfare Arrangements**

- Do responsible medical and welfare staff understand the:
  - Nature of COVID-19 and its threat and risk to human health?
  - Known and likely transmission dynamics?
  - Clinical signs and symptoms?
  - Asymptomatic cases?
  - Definitions of suspected/probable/confirmed cases?
  - Contacts and contact tracing principles (NHS Test and Trace)?
  - Vulnerable population groups?
  - Testing options – if available?
  - Treatment options?
- Have all medical and welfare staff been appropriately trained, exercised, briefed and familiarised on the festival's COVID-19 medical plans?
- Does the festival organiser have access to a trained professional/consultant to advise on all COVID-19 matters, such as testing and immunity status issues?
- Is there a need to increase the medical facilities available?
- What are the vulnerable groups and how are these going to be managed?
- Are there triage arrangements to identify suspected COVID-19 patients and separate treatment areas for potential COVID-19 patients and those with other ailments?
- What is the festival's policy for managing patients with suspected or proven COVID-19, as the majority may be advised to return home and self-isolate for an appropriate period, with hospital admission possibly appropriate for those who may be severely affected, if so, how will all of this be managed?

- What are the temporary quarantine arrangements, including the provision of mobile isolation units and isolation rooms, for those waiting to leave site?
- Are clear protocols surrounding roles, responsibilities and management in existence with all agencies regarding COVID-19 plans, in particular the reliance on off-site public service health capabilities, including the transportation arrangements to any external facilities?
- Are there suitable and sufficient stockpiles of readily available PPE – including suitable and sufficient masks, gloves, gowns, specialist equipment, hand sanitiser and working protocols?
- Are there sufficient stockpiles of other essential equipment and supplies, in line with the current treatment procedures at that time?
- Are other bulk staff briefed, prepared and available to support response arrangements, such as first-aiders and volunteer stewards?

### **11.B Command, Control, Communication and Coordination**

- Do key stakeholders and partners, such as the SAG membership, have complete oversight of all plans for the festival, and is there an agreed and robust mechanism for reviewing all arrangements in a timely manner, not only in the planning phase but most importantly during the show phase?
- Does an agreed protocol exist for the permission, review, modification, restriction, postponement or cancellation of the festival?
- Is there a clear and defined strategic/tactical/operational command structure for all parties in the traditional festivals' lifecycle of the build/show/break phases?
- In addition to the normal senior safety and security roles, has a COVID-19 Emergency Response Manager or similar dedicated role been considered, and if necessary appointed by the festival organiser into the command structure with a clearly understood remit regarding role and responsibility?
- Have all scenarios for a major incident or emergency regarding COVID-19 risks been woven into the Major Incident Plan, for example new evacuation/structured closedown procedures?
- Has the command team agreed the festival's public communications strategy, in particular surrounding possible exposure to COVID-19 prior to the festival, whilst on-site, safety messages around site, pre-scripted safety messages regarding what the festival is doing to protect attendees and so on?
- Are there designated lead media persons from all agencies, have they agreed all necessary protocols and messages, have they been exercised?
- Have the public attendees been fully advised on all relevant matters so as to make a personal and informed decision on whether they are to attend or otherwise?
- Is there robust succession planning in all key roles to ensure resilience and continuity of safety delivery by all departments in the eventuality of key staff being compromised through potential exposure to COVID-19?
- What is the local capacity for service delivery to the festival from the SAG membership?

### **11.C Response Plans**

- Have all plans been reviewed and contingency arrangements enhanced where appropriate?
- What are the human resources resilience revisions and enhancements?
- Is additional equipment required above the norm, such as extra response vehicles due to new cleaning and sanitising regimes?
- How is the incident response to COVID-19 cases going to be managed and delivered?
- Have the adjusted emergency procedures, including evacuation, been briefed to the staff that will be responsible at the time?
- Has an effective exercising and testing regime on various scenarios been established where appropriate with the SAG?

### **11.D Specific Mitigation Measures**

How are the best practice steps that can be taken by festival organisers and attendees to limit spread and transmission of COVID-19 going to be implemented:

- Personal Responsibility – guidelines to all attendees on their behaviour regarding what they should do to maximise the safest festival experience for all?
- Physical Social Distancing – guidelines and plans, who is going to implement, how is this achieved for all the staff and the audience?
- Hand Washing and Hygiene – hand sanitiser and alcohol rubs/gels, paper towels with lidded bins, soap canisters, additional hand-washing and hand-sanitising stations throughout the site, enhanced arrangements for changing rooms and washrooms?
- Respiratory Etiquette – tissues and waste-disposal arrangements?
- Face Coverings – worn at all times by all public attendees and front-of-house staff, how will they be advised of this and how will it be implemented?
- PPE – including sufficient masks, gloves, hand sanitiser for all bulk staff and contractors in conjunction with their own working practices?
- Screens – where deployed and why?
- Cleaning and Disinfecting – appropriate cleaning materials, disinfectants, floor coverings, enhanced cleaning practices in key communal areas such as frequently touched areas, toilets and showers, revision of cleaning schedules, fogging of key offices, dressing room and toilet cleaning protocols, how is this all delivered?
- Bars, Food Traders, Retail and Merchandise Protocols – are safer protocols being adopted such as drinks and beverages collected to order, drinks sold in single-use recyclable containers with drink hawkers roaming the site?
- Contactless Payments – site-wide or in designated areas/outlets only?
- Kit and Equipment – are procedures in place to limit, as far as practicable, the sharing of equipment?
- All front-of-house staff to wear face coverings?
- Revised back-of-house considerations, in particular the technical production adjustments, arrangements for touring staff and artists, plus live-work arrangements for long-term staff?
- Artists, performers and all suppliers to submit COVID-19 specific documentation in advance according to the agreed protocols for the festival?

### **11.E Security**

- Is there enough resilience in the human resources plan and is this reflected in the deployment schedules?
- What are the revised and agreed security search protocols that minimise the risks to public attendees and the security staff?
- Is social media to be monitored in order to quash/dispel myths and rumours that may cause alarm, plus provide the ability to respond to legitimate concerns on all relevant platforms?
- Will there be additional security staff in key areas?
- Is there a robust eviction policy linked to the festival's terms and conditions?
- Does appropriate signage and messaging exist on-site to assist the site security and safety arrangements?
- What are the staff protection arrangements relating to deliberate and malicious acts to spread COVID-19, such as through spitting?

#### **11.F Site Adjustments**

- What are the site layout changes that maximise and facilitate physical social distancing if required?
- Have these changes been assessed/modelled through on several scenarios to ascertain the best solution?
- Is there an increased demand for the provision of more space to maximise opportunities for physical social distancing?
- What are the scenario-planning considerations that vary capacity adjustments in line with the bespoke COVID-19 risk assessment and mitigation checklist?
- Are camping space requirements different, and if so, what is the new rationale and calculation for densities?
- Are additional facilities such as toilets required to avoid crowd congestion around these essential sanitation facilities, if so, what is the impact on the site space?
- Are there suitably located and sized facilities to enable social distancing for car parking, taxis, drop offs, coach arrivals, and so on?
- What is the requirement for the provision of designated areas for specific activities?
- What is the communication mechanism to brief key suppliers on preventative measures and delivery/site working arrangements?

#### **11.G Crowd Considerations**

- What is the current understanding regarding population stratification (systematic differences in sub populations)?
- What is the number of public attendees and their assessed level of shared social identity?
- What is the assessed norm, audience profile, dynamics, densities, flows, proximities and behaviour?
- What is the likely compliance to legislation, rules and advice and guidance?
- How are issues, such as losing inhibition, going to be assessed and managed?
- What changes to normal mitigation need to be made to recognise issues of COVID-19 transmission?



- What are the specific ingress and egress plans and how are they designed and controlled in a way that supports elements including testing and physical social distancing, remembering that this is likely to extend ingress and egress timings?
- Are designated queueing systems in place for initial entry/re-entry, at all bars, at traders' stalls, at facilities such as toilets and information points?
- How is social distancing and other public health policies and regulations going to be monitored and enforced across the whole site at all times?
- Are additional designated viewing areas, or means of separating groups, that facilitate social distancing required?
- Should artist booking and briefing consider discouraging specific crowd behaviour, in particular, anything that could increase the risk of extraction of audience members by pit staff?
- Is it necessary to enlarge the depth pit areas to main stages and consider additional training and PPE for close-contact roles such as audience extraction?

#### **11.H Accreditation and Ticketing Strategy**

- Is there a refined ticketing and accreditation strategy?
- What are the considerations for international, national and local travel plans plus potential restrictions to arrival and departure profiles?
- If necessary, how are methods to record the attendee health status, including procedures for recording existing health conditions, going to be managed, is there a defined need for a pre-festival health questionnaire or declaration?
- Are the terms and conditions linked to the COVID-19 safety measures and tactics deployed?
- What are the testing/symptomatic testing systems and how are these incorporated into wider festival arrangements, such as terms and conditions, GDPR and insurance considerations?
- How will the refund/resale policy and ticket terms and conditions be adapted for potential issues and restrictions such as a local lockdown?
- Are the ticketing and passes procedures overtly linked to the NHS Test and Trace system (or similar) with terms and conditions of ticket sale and workers contracts suitably adapted?
- Is a proven and secure accreditation control system in place, does this need to be adapted for COVID-19 measures and be enhanced?
- Is there an ability to trace and isolate contacts?
- What are the predicted accessibility requirements and adjustments that are necessary, in particular, for any vulnerable groups?
- Have relevant transportation adjustments been made, including procedures for recording the travel history to site?
- Are there designated pre-, during and post-festival staff to process COVID-19 queries, such as for contacts/track and trace, and so on?

11.8 The above mitigation checklist is intended to prompt thoughts and considerations in this important area. Following on from their own bespoke COVID-19 risk assessment and after reviewing the existing EMP, festival organisers will be able to compile their own mitigation checklist that can be formally reviewed in the planning phase at SAG level.

11.9 Festival organisers will need to ensure that suitable consideration is also given, not only to the audience, but also to all other categories of attendees – such as performers, staff, crew and contractors that make up the full capacity of the festival. This will be particularly applicable in the build, show and break phases of the festival when hundreds, if not thousands, of workers could be on the festival site, working closely within the local environment.

11.10 A key consideration for festival organisers will be the safety of those workers who, due to the nature of their role, will need from time to time to operate at close quarters, such as a security guard dealing with a confrontation. The EIF guidance for other outdoor events covers these issues in greater detail – [EIF](#).

11.11 The festival industry has been greatly impacted by the effect of the coronavirus situation. Festival organisers will need to be satisfied that its usual supply routes of kit, equipment and human resources are still intact. Some companies may not have survived the impact of COVID-19 and as a lot of staff are self-employed freelancers then many may have left the industry to gain employment on a longer-term basis in a different sector. Due to this, festival organisers should seek surety of contractors, staffing and procurement elements at an early stage in the planning phase.

11.12 Additionally, festival organisers should seek to ensure, and where necessary rebuild, continuity of knowledge regarding the safe operation of the festival, since the loss of key operators reduces operational and local knowledge.

11.13 Festival organisers need to continue to meet their obligations as service providers according to the Equality Act 2010. They should fully embrace the ‘Seven Inclusive Principles for Arts & Cultural Organisations’ guidance paper that was published in September 2020 and co-produced with the live music and outdoor event accessibility charity Attitude is Everything. [Seven Principles for Arts & Cultural Organisations \(Working Safely through COVID-19\)](#).

## **12. CONCLUSION**

12.1 The COVID-19 pandemic is the result of the emergence of a new coronavirus that has spread around the world. Most people do not have immunity.

12.2 In March 2020, the WHO declared a global pandemic – a worldwide spread of a new disease. During this month, the NHS also declared a national major incident regarding the coronavirus outbreak, this is still in place today. The world and the UK are therefore in the grip of an ongoing pandemic on a major incident scale that has significant implications for all sectors of society.

12.3 The successful licensing and management of festivals will require a collegiate approach by the festival management team, the licensing authority, the responsible authorities, all other SAG partners, plus community and interest groups. This is uncharted territory where only genuine collaborative approaches will bring the safest and best results for all.

12.4 In this context, festival organisers, plus SAGs, local directors of public health and other industry parties, will have a lot to consider in relation to the festival(s) they plan to produce. It is strongly advised that they consider the following process:

1. Assess the global, national and local COVID-19 situation
2. Assess the current COVID-19 situation for the festival and what the future may hold
3. Constantly review the Areas to Monitor section in this guidance where developments in clinical science and other national initiatives may prove beneficial, or otherwise
4. Conduct a rigorous and bespoke COVID-19 risk assessment for the festival followed by the production of a mitigation checklist
5. Determine whether producing the festival is operationally feasible and economically viable, in particular regarding any social distancing guidelines in place/likely to be in place
6. At the outset, liaise with the local authority and SAG for the area in which the festival takes place
7. If planning to deliver the festival, then where necessary cement a 'golden thread' of COVID-19 safety measures and tactics into all relevant areas of the EMP, preferably in a manner agreed with the licensing authority and the SAG in advance
8. Operationally mitigate, as far as is reasonably practicable, the transmission of coronavirus and infected people entering the festival site
9. Remain agile, adaptable, flexible and positive during the 6-9 month planning phase leading up to the show phase
10. After the festival is successfully delivered, then capture the key debrief issues and lessons learnt to share with the festival industry for the benefit of all

12.5 As stated in the introduction, this guidance provides an initial and outline framework for the festival sector to consider at the current time. Key to music festivals being able to flourish again will be the ongoing constructive and effective partnership working at all levels by all in the festival sector. In the near future, developments in the Areas to Monitor section will dynamically emerge and it is hoped that these will then become key enablers for festivals to operate safely again in the future.

12.6 If all in the festival sector collectively work from this new platform, then the best possible proposition for festivals to reignite is going to be firmly established. Hence, the festival industry now warmly invites all agencies at a national level to contribute as soon as possible to the monthly iterations of this guidance moving forward.

## **13. OTHER USEFUL DOCUMENTS**

13.1 Official documentation referenced in the supplementary guidance:

- HMG Guidance on coronavirus (GOV.UK)

- [The Purple Guide](#) (The Purple Guide to Health, Safety and Welfare at Music and Other Events)
- [EIF Outdoor events guidance](#). Keeping workers and audiences safe during COVID-19.
- [DCMS Performing Arts Guidance](#) (Working safely during Coronavirus- Guidance for people in Performing Arts COVID-19 in the Outdoor Event Industry in England)
- [SGSA Supplementary Guidance](#) (Sports Grounds Safety Authority Supplementary Guidance to the Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds, published July 2020)
- [WHO](#) (Key planning recommendations for mass gatherings in the context of COVID-19, published May 2020)
- [Seven Principles for Arts & Cultural Organisations](#) (Working Safely through COVID-19, published September 2020)

## **14 PUBLICATION**

14.1 This guidance has been produced by the festival industry working in collaboration with DCMS and PHE.

14.2 This guidance is available on the [Purple Guide website](#).

## **15. REVIEW**

15.1 It is recommended that this music festival COVID-19 Supplementary Guidance is reviewed and updated each month, version controlled, and republished as appropriate.

15.2 Webinars could be held in the future in order to facilitate wider understanding and shape the guidance further.

## **16. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

16.1 This document has been developed by a coalition of industry bodies including the Association of Independent Festivals (AIF), the Association of Festival Organisers (AFO), the Events Industry Forum (EIF), LIVE (Live Music Industry Events and Entertainment) and Attitude is Everything. The festivals working group also includes the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) and Public Health England (PHE) who provided input on the development of the guidance. Special thanks to the AIF Ops Group for leading on this working draft.