

COVID-19 Response Plan

Version 07

Published 06 October 2020



This document is a proposed operating model for eat:Festivals from August 2020 onwards.

Revisions from version 6 shown in green

This document should be read alongside our COVID-19 Risk Assessment form and together form our Covid-19 secure guidelines

We take health and safety very seriously.

This plan is based on the experiences of market managers that have kept their markets trading during the 2020 lockdown, both in the UK and overseas. It has been developed in line with guidance issued by Events Industry Forum, DCMS, NABMA, NCASS, AFO, High Street Task Force, Event Safety Alliance, MIA-UK as well as UK government and WHO.

Markets are part of the fabric of towns and cities across the UK. They are the starting point for many low-risk business start-ups and will have a major role to play in the aftermath of COVID-19. This has been recognised by central Government in their High Street Task Force document:

“Well planned markets support footfall in towns and should be considered anchors. The market location and operating hours may also be revised when new footfall patterns have developed during crisis stages.”

We know our events generate environmental and economic benefits by supporting family producers and farmers. We need to help their micro and small business stay afloat during this transition to the new normal for the sake of the local economic wellbeing and long terms visions of vibrant town centres.

The vast majority of our festivals operate 100% in the open air, which likely lowers the risk of spreading COVID-19. The nature of our town centre location means that social distancing can be easier than within an enclosed shop. We are thinking of this ‘new normal’ as an alternative open-air food supermarket, well stocked with fresh produce, essential food and some treats too.

Food markets have been classed as ‘essential’ since the start of the lockdown and we have altered our operating model to focus on local produce market elements and remove the activities that encourage dwell time. This pains us – we aim to promote town centres as the hub for local communities and encourage exploration. But we know we are working in different times and are adapting accordingly. We will continue to review and modify this operating model in line with government and WHO guidance.



This response plan is split into three sections that explain our steps to mitigate the risk of transmission:

- 1 Actions and steps for eat:Festivals and the town management
- 2 Actions and steps for traders/producers
- 3 Our communication plan to visitors

All of the proposed actions will be updated and reviewed as and when Government advice changes

Section 1 eat:Festivals and town management

Action 1 Stay informed about the local COVID-19 situation. Keep up to date about local COVID-19 activity including reviewing each area's Local Response Plan

Action 2 Review our risk assessments in line with our latest Local Response Plan

Action 3 We have applied for and been granted accreditation from Visit Britain: We're Good to Go

Action 4 Operations Manager role to encompass the Infection Mitigation Coordinator pre-event tasks and follow the guidance in Section 3 of the Event Safety Alliance Reopening Guide for practices for sick workers, volunteers and responding to confirmed cases of COVID-19

1.1 Common plan for public spaces

The Government's High Street Task Force [HSTF] advocate: *"Bring together all of those responsible for the management of publicly accessible space to work on a common plan for managing social distancing and movement through the area following government guidance. This will include the local authority, shopping centre management, and public transport operators. This will be vital for the safety of those using the town and avoiding conflicting advice."*



To begin this activity, we have mapped our stakeholders in each town:

	Licensing	Road closure	Parking	Street cleaning	Public transport	Other stakeholders
Portishead	North Somerset Council			eat:Festivals	First Bus	Portishead Marina Quays
Minehead	Somerset West & Taunton Deane	Somerset County Council	Somerset West & Taunton Deane	Somerset West & Taunton Deane	Buses of Somerset	Minehead BID Minehead Town Council
Wellington	Somerset West & Taunton Deane	Somerset County Council	Somerset West & Taunton Deane	Somerset West & Taunton Deane	Buses of Somerset	Wellington Town Council
Yeovil	South Somerset District Council (TENS)				Buses of Somerset	Yeovil Town Council
Weston-super-Mare	North Somerset Council		North Somerset Council	Weston BID	First Bus	Seafront & Events Team Winter Gardens
Nailsea	North Somerset Council	North Somerset Council	North Somerset Council	Nailsea Town Council	First Bus	Crown Glass Centre Management
Burnham-on-Sea	Sedgemoor District Council	Somerset County Council	Sedgemoor District Council	Sedgemoor District Council	Buses of Somerset	Burnham & Highbridge Town Council
Taunton	Somerset West & Taunton Deane	Somerset County Council	Somerset West & Taunton Deane		Buses of Somerset	St Mary Magdalene Church

Action 5 We are gathering information on the 'common plan for public spaces', from each stakeholder responsible for publicly accessible space, to find out what steps are been taken to manage social distancing and safe pedestrian movement through the area.

1.2 Public conveniences

We currently use a combination of public conveniences and hired portaloos.



6 We will understand from each stakeholder what the plan is for public conveniences including access and cleaning.

Somerset West & Taunton, North Somerset and Sedgemoor District Council – have a cleaning regime in place for their public toilets

We will not explicitly direct the public to toilets

7 We have reviewed our portaloos hire. NABMA Advice is to not have public toilets but restrict toilets to trader use only.

We will hire a loo specifically for traders

1.3 Keeping cleanliness standards high

8 We will gather information from each stakeholder about their plan for enhanced cleaning and sanitising of public space, to include but not limited to benches, bins and touchpoints, i.e. high touch points.

9 Although frequent hand washing is the most effective at killing coronavirus, it is not always possible to get to a hand wash facility. Where necessary we will provide hand sanitiser stations at main entry points, accessible for all. These will supplement those provided by stakeholders

10 We will provide more bins and ensure a central collection point in each town.

11 We will inform producers ahead of festival which local businesses are stocking sanitising materials.

1.4 Consistent Signage

“As is already required for Supermarkets, it is likely that Government Guidance on public areas will require signage to remind people with symptoms not to enter areas, to maintain social distancing, to offer opportunities for hand washing or sanitizing. Consistency of messaging on this will be important.” HSTF

Part of the communication process with our COVID-19 controls is to visually remind and inform customers and staff of the procedures you have identified for their safety and to break the chain of infection.

12 We will seek to understand what signage will be on display in each festival area. We will supplement this as necessary. We will consider reminders at key points e.g.: entry points for hand washing/using sanitiser, wearing masks, distancing etc.

Signage or reminders may be in the form of posters, information cards, copies of policies given to visitors and producers.

We will also identify whether any permissions or licences are required to install signage on footpaths.

Somerset West & Taunton – lots of onsite signage re: social distancing

North Somerset & Sedgemoor – little signage onsite re: social distancing

We will display a COVID-secure RA poster and the latest government issued “be aware” posters



13 We will provide additional distance markers – we will use tape, chalk or spray markings depending on weather conditions. These markers will also be used to mark queuing preferences for producers, one-way systems and service boxes.

1.5 Layout

Due to town centre location we cannot limit the access points without onerous and unwelcome infringements and changes.

14 We will review our pitch layouts in each town, increasing spaces between stalls and removing pinch points. We will enable queue management and describing this in the pre-event logistics pack for Producers.

15 We will audit the layout to identify activity hotspots: Reviewing the popular routes people take through the festival and identify potential problem areas. Many of the towns we operate in will need to introduce restrictions in vehicle movement through their centres to maintain social distancing, closing roads to traffic to widen pavements or introducing one-way walking routes (as in Supermarkets). We need to know what these restrictions are.

16 We will not book and promote the use of additional seating if that is not permitted. If we do have seating it will include any advised markings/displays to encourage social distancing

17 Where we have indoor venues, we will plan to follow this advice from NABMA, reviewing as necessary: *“Consider having one main entrance, where circumstances permit, and control access which is likely to mean the provision of extra staffing to manage the queuing and count numbers, Set an appropriate number of customers to be allowed in”* We will prop open doors and change our layouts to widen alleyways.

18 In any layout redesigns we will pay attention to the challenges this may present for people with diverse mobility needs.

1.6 Timing

It was common for retailers to offer restricted shopping times for NHS/essential workers/older people/vulnerable groups **at the start of the pandemic**. After reviewing the demographic profile of our towns, our current visitor statistics and practical management of this at other markets that have continue to trade we will not be implementing this.

1.7 Entertainment

The most recent DCMS guidance has given the green-light to limited forms of entertainment

19 We continue to review our community entertainment including walkabout entertainment, cookery classes, sponsor’s stalls etc to match government guidance

1.8 Stewarding

“To ensure public places are safe to visit may require a greater physical presence on the streets for cleaning and stewarding. Co-ordinate between existing Management organisations to identify how this best can be done.” HSTF

We currently hire trained professional stewards. We will continue to do this and adapt their remit to include giving social distancing advice.



20 We will brief SW Security Ltd. Re all safety aspects of this operating plan.

21 We have instructed our Stewards to actively intervene to promote social distancing, to challenge larger groups re: Rule of 6 and to remind people at entry points to sanitise hands

1.9 Tracing

We are monitoring government guidance on supporting tracing. At present open-air markets are NOT required to collect data on visitors

22 Following advice from North Somerset Council we will display event specific QR codes on our tables and around the site

1.10 Contingency plans

23 Each local authority we operate in has been tasked to develop a local contingency plan in the event of an infection outbreak in their area. We will follow all guidance relevant to our events.



Section 2 Traders

Extensive guidance has been issued to businesses under the umbrella of “COVID secure guidelines” by the UK government. This is the baseline that all our producers must adhere to. These action points for producers are in addition to any government guidance and are based on our observations at other markets.

We know who will be trading at our festivals in advance and trade with many of them at several events per year. We have a close working relationship with them and with our environmental health professionals.

As food and drink producers they already have high standards of hygiene and food safety, especially regarding cross contamination. Our producers and traders need to give customers reassurance that their practices and preparation areas are clean.

2.1 Hygiene – preparation

24 All traders to address external cleanliness e.g. counters, gazebos, prep surfaces etc. and have more frequent handwashing and cleaning down of surfaces. They will display prominent signage reminding staff to handwash and use a timer to remind of intervals.

25 All traders to follow EHO and latest government advice on use of face masks and gloves: this is especially important if traders wish to work within the 2m+ social distancing and they MUST have a mitigation in place i.e. screen or mask.

26 Sick employees should not attend work.

27 All traders to have completed a COVID-19 risk assessment – irrespective of size. Risk assessments to be provided to us before the festival and a digital and/or paper copy to be made available to the local EHO

2.2 Hygiene – point of sale

28 All traders to display latest ‘Working Safely During COVID-19’ poster from gov.uk. eat:Festivals will continue to produce and distribute information and reassurance material for our traders to display.

29 Traders to remove shared condiments from publicly accessible areas.

2.3 How to purchase

30 All traders to promote click and collect and/or online ordering prior to the festival.

31 All hot food and drinks are served for takeaway only

32 All traders to seek to minimise cash transactions by offering and promoting contactless card payments.

33 Training providers to be recommended to traders on social distancing and their responsibilities.

34 Traders to consider pre-packaging to enable faster service time.

35 The use of customers refillable containers is now permitted. Use of these and customers reusable bags is a choice for the trader to make.



2.4 Layout and pitch

36 Self-service to be removed: all traders who worked in this way to review their stall layout and to display stock behind the service desk or introduce sneeze screens and “no handling” policy.

37 Sneeze screens are mandatory where stock is unpackaged

38 We will make it explicit in our layouts the direction of queues. Traders to work with us to put out markings on road/pavement clearly indicating where visitors should stand. The trader should actively manage their queue direction, in line with instructions issued, to minimise impact on other traders in line with latest guidance on social distancing

39 Traders to have sides up on gazebos where they are adjacent to another trader

40 Traders to use chalk boards and a-boards to give visitors a menu of options so that approaches to the stall are minimised to interested customers rather than browsing

2.5 Licensed stalls

We vet, book and manage a small percentage of stalls that sell alcohol. This can be in the form of:

- a sample
- a drink in a “plastic” glass for immediate consumption
- bottles or cans for consumption later

All licensing guidance and law to be abided by including age verification, keeping a refusal log, not serving anyone drunk. In addition, guidance for the reopening of licensed premises issued by the UK Government must be adhered to

41 As was previously the case, samples are given to individual customers who the producer is engaging with. Samples to be served in single use [though these can be washed at a high temperature and reused] cup which is handed to the customer on a tray. Customer places used cup in a clearly labelled and often (hourly) emptied bin

42 Drinks can be sold for consumption on or off the premises following all guidance

2.6 Food and non-alcoholic sampling

43 As was previously the case, samples are given to individual customers who the producer is engaging with. Samples to be served in single use [though these can be washed at a high temperature and reused] cup or stick which is handed to the customer on a tray. Customer places used cup/stick in a clearly labelled and often (hourly) emptied bin

44 All traders to eliminate ‘free roaming sampling’ as this increases dwell time.



Section 3 Visitor messaging

We will provide an opportunity to buy produce from local producers in a well-run, safe environment. There have been multiple recommendations and guidelines issued to change public behaviour. We will amplify these to demonstrate best practice and support locally led activities.

We will share with potential visitors our plans for social distancing and safe practices.

We will utilise our website, social media channels, newsletters, signage and press releases in order that visitors can assess the risk of attending and behave in a suitably responsible and safe way, we will deliver the following messages our pre-publicity:

- 45 do cashless shopping by making contactless payments or click-and-collect with pre-ordering
- 46 guidance on using public transport
- 47 positive encouragement regarding wearing of facemasks.
- 48 “keep your market visit simple and short”
- 49 use the sanitiser stations provided
- 50 people should stay away if they are displaying symptoms or should be self-isolating
- 51 visitors should wash their purchases when they get home.

References:

NAMBA: A guide for market halls and social distancing V1 5 May 2020

High Street task force COVID-19 checklist for pre-recovery/recovery stages

WHO Key planning recommendations for mass gatherings in the context of COVID-19

Interim guidance Issued 29 May 2020

Event Safety Alliance “Reopening Guide” 11 May 2020

Event Industry Forum “Keeping workers and audiences safe during COVID-19” 11 July 2020

[Local Government Association Guidance on Outdoor events](#)

DCMS Guidance on Outdoor events issued 10 July 2020

MIA-UK “Roadmap to reopening and operating safely” V4

Working safely during coronavirus “The Visitor Economy” UK Government updated 1 October 2020

Working safely during coronavirus “Pubs, restaurants, bars and takeaway services” UK Government updated 1 October 2020

[Face Covering Legislation UK Government Updated 24 September 2020](#)

[Guidance for food businesses UK Government 5 October 2020](#)

HSE Working safely during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

Government shops reopening guides – Restaurants offering takeaway or delivery and Shops & branches

Site visits:

- Borough Market, London
- East Street Market, London
- Taunton Farmers’ Market
- Frome Farmers’ Market

- Wells Market
- Taunton Independent Market

Literature review including communications and marketing from farmers' markets across the USA, placemaking journals, Institute of Place Management and ITCM

