

COVID-19: Reopening of the marine industry in England

2 March 2021

Following the Prime Minister's announcement on Monday 22 February outlining the roadmap of when restrictions are likely to be eased across England, British Marine met with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to clarify the guidance specific to the leisure marine industry. Representatives from the Department for Transport, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, navigation authorities, and user groups from across the sector also took part in the meeting.

The following statement and matrix have been produced, and approved by Government, detailing how British Marine members should interpret the guidance:

On 22 February, the Prime Minister announced the Government's roadmap to cautiously ease lockdown restrictions in England. The design of the roadmap has been informed by the latest scientific evidence and seeks a balance between our key social and economic priorities, whilst preserving the health and safety of the country. The scientific evidence shows that opening too early or too quickly risks a further lockdown.

The approach focuses on data, not dates. Each step has a "no earlier than" date, 5 weeks later than the previous step, to allow time to assess the impact of the previous step and provide a week's notice before changes occur. The steps for easing restrictions will be taken at the same time across England in a national approach, in the absence of a significant regional disparity.

At each step the Government will make an assessment against the following four tests:

- The vaccine deployment programme continues successfully.*
- Evidence shows vaccines are sufficiently effective in reducing hospitalisations and deaths in those vaccinated.*
- Infection rates do not risk a surge in hospitalisations which would put unsustainable pressure on the NHS.*
- Our assessment of the risks is not fundamentally changed by new Variants of Concern.*

From 29 March, as part of the first step, Stay at Home restrictions will be lifted. The Government will continue to advise that people minimise travel up to and including Step 3. This means avoiding making unnecessary journeys, combining trips and avoiding travel at peak times where possible. People should avoid travelling further than is reasonably necessary to take part in their activity - for instance visiting shops or making use of services closer to home.

All references to permitted activities below assume that boats allow for social distancing rules to be adhered to. COVID-Secure guidance will also remain in place up to and including Step 3 (subject to a proposed review of social distancing rules ahead of Step 4).

Premises must not cater for groups larger than the legal limits at each step unless meeting the conditions for a permitted organised gathering. These will be reintroduced at Step 2 for outdoor gatherings and Step 3 for indoor gatherings. These gatherings or events must be operated by a business, charity, public body or similar organisation and can be organised subject to specific conditions: that they comply with COVID-Secure guidance including taking reasonable steps to limit the risk of transmission, complete a related risk assessment; and ensure that those attending do not

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mix beyond what is permitted by the social contact limits (unless another exemption exists, such as for organised sport or exercise, supervised activities for children or a significant life event).

ENGLAND ONLY	Step 1		Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
	8 th March	29 th March	No earlier than 12 th April	No earlier than 17 th May	No earlier than 21 st June
Hotel Boats	Not permitted.	Not permitted.	Self-contained accommodation (those that do not require shared use of bathing, entry/exit, catering or sleeping facilities) permitted. Use by single household only.	6 people / 2 households per booking *All holiday accommodation can be opened at Step 3 (subject to social contact limits). No legal restriction on the sharing of facilities if social contact rules adhered to. For example - any shared dormitory could only have 6 people/2 households.	No restrictions (subject to review).
Self Drive Day Hire	Permitted for the purpose of open air recreation in a public outdoor place (vessel must be open air). Single household/bubble only. Stay local and minimise time spent away from home.	6 people / 2 households per boat (if vessel is open air). Single household (if vessel is enclosed). *To note that the definition of indoor/outdoor is to be guided by legislation on smoke free premises. From the All Tiers regs: a place is indoors if it	Same as Step 1.	No restrictions (other than usual capacity of vessel, if open air). 6 people or 2 households per boat (if vessel is enclosed)	No restrictions. (subject to review).

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		would be considered to be enclosed, or substantially enclosed, for the purposes of section 2 of the Health Act 2006, under the Smoke-free (Premises & Enforcement) Regulations 2006			
Self Drive Holiday Hire	Not permitted.	Not permitted.	Single household / bubble per boat.	6 people / 2 households per boat.	No restrictions. (subject to review).
Skipped Boats	Not permitted.	<p>It is up to the discretion of each individual skipper whether your skipper boat may operate compliantly under each step. Skippers should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The social contact rules governing indoor and outdoor gathering which apply at each step. • Your ability to ensure appropriate social distancing between individuals/households at each step. <p>N.B. the skipper does not count towards Rule of 6 or 2 household limits.</p>			No restrictions, (subject to review).
Fixed Trading Boats	Takeaway only. Not including alcohol).	Takeaway only. Not including alcohol).	<p>Outdoor table service. 6 people / 2 households per booking.</p> <p>Takeaway alcohol permitted. Must follow COVID-Secure rules.</p>	<p>6 people / 2 households per booking indoors.</p> <p>Max. 30 people per booking outdoors <i>if vessel is open air and is COVID secure</i></p>	No restrictions, (subject to review).
Watersports Activity	Private watersports permitted for recreation on waterways	Outdoor watersports venues may open. Formal club activity	Outdoor attractions at waterparks and aqua parks may reopen.	Indoor attractions at waterparks and aqua parks may reopen.	No restrictions. (subject to review).

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	<p>accessible to the public. (2 people / 1 household).</p> <p>Stay local and minimise time spent away from home.</p> <p>(Subject to complying with restrictions around water sport facilities which remain closed with limited exceptions until 29 March)</p>	<p>can restart. Private groups of 6 people / 2 households.</p>		<p>Private groups of up to 30 outdoors.</p>	
<p>Private boats</p>	<p>Private boating (where vessel is open air) permitted for recreation on waterways accessible to the public. Single household / bubble per boat.</p> <p>Stay local and minimise time spent away from home.</p> <p>(Subject to complying with restrictions around water sport facilities)</p>	<p>Private boats for recreation (1 household for indoor boats & 6 people / 2 households for outdoor boats)</p> <p>Minimise travel (stay at home rules lifted). Overnight stays should not take place.</p>	<p>Same as step 1 plus guidance against overnight stays lifted (<i>single household bubble only</i>)</p> <p>Minimise travel</p>	<p>Same as step 2 with 6 people / 2 households for indoor boats, max. 30 for outdoor boats</p> <p>Minimise travel</p>	<p>No restrictions. (subject to review).</p>

British Marine is delighted that from 8 March all forms of watersports, including the use of privately-owned craft and self-drive day hire boats for single households, can go ahead in England (subject to local navigation and harbour authority guidance). Furthermore, it has been concluded that marinas can open from 8 March to allow recreational boating to take place and boat brokerage can open in line with non-essential retail from 12 April.

It is welcome news that outdoor recreation is again in the first wave of lockdown restrictions to be lifted. The physical and mental benefits of being on or near the water and the natural social distancing that all forms of boating and watersports offer will be invaluable this summer.

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Lesley Robinson, CEO of British Marine, notes; “This roadmap provides hope and reassurance, and I am pleased that the collaboration between Government, other user groups and ourselves has resulted in aligned guidance for marine businesses and participants. It is welcome news that parts of our industry should be able to re-open in time for the Easter holidays. I am cautiously optimistic about the months ahead, based on the assumption that, as the vaccine rollout accelerates, the phased easing of restrictions is achievable.”

Guidance for [Scotland](#), [Wales](#) and [Northern Ireland](#) differs, and British Marine remains engaged with Government on the individual plans set out by the devolved administrations.

Members can keep up to date with the latest information by visiting British Marine’s dedicated [Coronavirus hub](#).

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

About British Marine

British Marine (the trading name of British Marine Federation Limited) is the trade association for the UK leisure, superyacht and small commercial marine industry. It has over 1,500 members drawn from both seagoing and inland sectors and represents an industry which employs more than 38,700 people in the UK.

British Marine also owns and operates the Southampton International Boat Show (10 – 19 September 2021). For more information about the work of British Marine and how to join, please visit the website: www.britishmarine.co.uk, or follow British Marine on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#).

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