

# Sport pilots to be reduced in capacity to 1,000 people socially distanced

- All pilots with larger audiences will be reviewed in light of transmission rates and risk to decide if they are safe to go ahead
- Government will keep under review whether fans will be able to return to sports stadia from 1 October and if people can attend socially distanced business conferences and events
- Sports pilots will not be able to take place in areas that have high coronavirus incidence rates

The government is to reduce the number of people that can attend sporting events to pilot the safe return of spectators to 1,000 in light of the increase in the number of positive coronavirus cases.

While a number of successful pilots have already been held in football, rugby, cricket and snooker given the overall national Covid situation pilots will now be limited in number.

The change will come into effect from tomorrow for all sports pilots due to happen this month.

The government will also make a decision on whether fans can return to sports stadia socially distanced on 1 October and if people will be able to attend business conferences and events from that date.

Organised grassroots sport will be able to continue in a covid-secure way to help people stay fit and healthy. This includes organised team sports, Parkrun and exercise classes in gyms and leisure centres.

## **Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said:**

In light of increasing transmission rates, the Government is reviewing the proposed sports and business events pilots ahead of the 1 October and we will unfortunately need to scale some back.

We know fans and audiences are eager to return, and jobs depend on this too, so work continues around the clock on the moonshot project with the ambition of having audiences back much closer to normal by Christmas, if safe to do so.

The government announced the latest sporting events to pilot the safe return of spectators on 26 August and was clear that they would only take place if the latest scientific and medical advice allowed for them to proceed in a Covid-secure way.

Clear guidance has been produced in consultation with the Sports Ground Safety Authority to set out the strict measures that test events must follow

to limit the spread of coronavirus.

This includes upholding social distancing in queues, minimising the risk of any pinch points or crowding and recording people's data to assist NHS Test and Trace.

## **Notes to Editors**

The following test events are able to continue with an audience capped at no more than 1,000 people, subject to locations not having local prevalence concerns.

12 September, Dagenham – West Ham v Arsenal (Women's Super League Fixture)

12 September, Cambridge United v Carlisle United (EFL League Two)

27 September, Wembley – Non-League Finals Day (FA Vase and FA Trophy)

## **Rugby Union**

14 September – Gloucester v Harlequins

## **Horse Racing**

21 September – Warwick

24-26 September – Newmarket, Cambridgeshire

## **Cricket**

16 September – Yorkshire vs Durham (T20)

18 September – Lancashire vs Durham (T20)

18 September – Hampshire vs Surrey (T20)

19 September – Western Storm vs Sunrisers (Women's T20)

## **Basketball**

18 September, Eagles Community Arena, Newcastle

## **Speedway**

26 September, Foxhall Stadium, Ipswich