

# Government announces gyms and pools to reopen safely

The Government has outlined the measures that will allow outdoor pools to reopen from 11 July and indoor gyms, swimming pools and sports facilities to reopen from 25 July, ensuring millions of people can get back into more sport and fitness activities.

The [guidance](#), published by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, has been compiled with input from the trade body ukactive, the Sport and Recreation Alliance, Sport England and other sports bodies, and in consultation with Public Health England and the Health and Safety Executive.

It includes advice for providers of pool, gym and leisure facilities on cleaning, social distancing, and protection for staff to help venues get back up and running safely.

It also supports the re-opening of sports halls which are vital to the return of play for many sports, including badminton and volleyball. Guidance produced by National Governing Bodies will complement the government guidance and help ensure indoor sports can be played safely from July 25.

Venues must ensure they can enable customers, staff and volunteers to maintain social distancing before, during and after participation.

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

The reopening of gyms is the news millions across the country have been waiting for with many people desperate to jump on a spinning bike or dive into a pool.

Our comprehensive guidance will ensure gyms, pools and leisure centres have the support they need to reopen safely for their customers and staff.

Helping people return to gyms safely will also help the nation get match-fit to defeat this virus.

Measures set out in the guidance include:

- Limiting the number of people using the facility at any one time, for example by using a timed booking system;
- Reducing class sizes and allowing sufficient time between each class to avoid groups waiting outside during changeover;
- Ensuring an appropriate number of people are in a swimming pool at any one time;
- Spacing out equipment or taking some out of service to maintain social distancing;

- Enhanced cleaning and providing hand sanitizer throughout venues;
- Considering how the way people walk through their venue could be adjusted to reduce contact, with queue management or one-way systems;
- Ensuring adequate ventilation;
- Encouraging the use of outdoor spaces for individual, team or group activities, making sure to comply with the latest restrictions on public gatherings;
- Exercise or dance studios should have temporary floor markings where possible to help people stay distanced during classes;
- Customers and staff should be encouraged to shower and change at home wherever possible, although changing rooms will be available.

Today's announcement follows a recent visit by government, Sport England and public health officials, led by Deputy Chief Medical Officer Professor Jonathan Van-Tam, to a series of ukactive member sites. This allowed officials to see first-hand how the sector is preparing to reopen safely.

Leisure centres and indoor gyms, along with swimming pools and other indoor sports facilities, have been closed since Saturday 21 March as part of measures to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

Rules on exercise were initially relaxed from 14 May, to allow people greater access to local, outdoor physical activity. This allowed the public to go outside for unlimited exercise, alone or with their household, or one other person while adhering to social distancing rules. It also permitted outdoor sports facilities such as golf courses and tennis courts to reopen, with strict safety measures in place.

On 1 June the Government published guidance which allowed people to exercise outside with up to five others from different households, provided that strict social distancing guidelines were followed. This meant that people who play team sports could meet to train together and take part in conditioning or fitness sessions, although anything involving physical contact was not allowed. It allowed parents to accompany their children to coaching sessions carried out on a one to one basis or in small groups.

Outdoor gyms were permitted to reopen from 4 July while ensuring social distancing.

This latest guidance is part of the Government's carefully-designed package to ease the burdens of lockdown in a way that is expected to keep the R rate, the average number of secondary infections produced by 1 infected person, down. The phased approach is outlined in the Prime Minister's roadmap for easing lockdown. As the Prime Minister has always said, the Government keeps these measures under review, and will not hesitate to apply the handbrakes if required.

**ENDS**

**Notes to editors:**

- This guidance is for gyms, swimming pools and indoor sports facilities

in England. Those in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland should refer to guidance from the devolved administrations.

- Please also see the latest Government guidance for the public on the [phased return of sport and recreation](#), and guidance for [elite sport](#).
- In May, [Sport England's weekly survey](#) of 2,000 people found that going to the gym was the leisure activity most people were keen to return to post-lockdown.

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## [Sentencing of Human Rights Defenders in Turkey: UK and Canada statement](#)

On 3 July, the ex-head of Amnesty International in Turkey, Taner Kilic, was convicted of 'membership of a terrorist organisation' and sentenced to over six years in detention. At the same trial, Idil Eser, Özlem Dalkıran, and Günal Kurşun were sentenced to 25 months detention for 'assisting a terrorist organisation'. All four individuals are known human rights defenders who have worked to protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms in Turkey.

The United Kingdom, with our EU partners, and Canada first raised our concern over the detention of Mr Kilic in June 2017, followed by our concern over the detention on 5 July of the three remaining individuals, alongside seven other human rights defenders, who together were participating in a workshop on the island of Buyukada. We continued to raise our concerns throughout 2017 and 2018, including until Mr Kilic was released from pre-trial detention later that year.

As we said at the time, Mr Kilic's arrest came during a period of increased numbers of criminal proceedings against journalists, academics, human rights defenders, writers and lawyers in Turkey. Such detentions and prosecutions can create an environment in which Turkish civil society feels unable to act freely, and as such are unable to hold their government and authorities to account.

As we said in 2017, we have many shared commitments on the role of civil society organisations and human rights defenders, dating from Helsinki 1975 and including the 2008 Ministerial Declaration, also in Helsinki, on the Occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In that Declaration we, as OSCE participating States, recognised that "human rights are best respected in democratic societies, where decisions are taken with maximum transparency and broad participation. We support a pluralistic, civil society and encourage partnerships between different stakeholders in the promotion and protection of human rights."

As such we are concerned by the criminal sentences handed down to Taner Kilic, Idil Eser, Özlem Dalkıran and Günal Kurşun. We understand that all

four have the option to appeal. We will continue to follow their cases very closely.

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## [Four arrested in Midlands following people smuggling investigation](#)

News story

Four people have been arrested by Immigration Enforcement in connection with a people smuggling investigation as warrants were executed in Birmingham, Leicester, Telford and Coventry.



At approximately 6am today (8 July) officers from Immigration Enforcement's Criminal and Financial Investigation (CFI) team executed warrants at six addresses – two in Birmingham, two in Leicester and one in both Coventry and Telford.

The arrests relate to an investigation into attempts to smuggle people into the UK hidden in the rear storage area of vans. Between June and September, 2018, Border Force officers at the juxtaposed controls in northern France prevented three such attempts involving a total of 18 Iraqi nationals. The Iraqis were referred to the Police Aux Frontieres for their cases to be dealt with.

Minister for Immigration Compliance and the Courts Chris Philp said:

These arrests were made as part of an ongoing investigation into a suspected organised crime group involved in people smuggling. We believe that the arrests made today will have significantly disrupted the group's activities. "People smuggling is an abhorrent crime that treats migrants as human cargo to be profited from. We are determined to do all we can to dismantle the criminal networks involved in illegal immigration.

All those encountered were arrested on suspicion of conspiracy to assist unlawful immigration. They included a 37 year old man at Harold Street, Leicester; a 42 year old man at Althorp Close, Leicester; a 50 year old man at Wiseman Grove, Birmingham and a 39 year old man at Wealdstone in Telford.

The Immigration Enforcement investigation continues with the evidence gathered today.

Published 9 July 2020

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## [Joint statement of the international maritime virtual summit on crew changes](#)

### Government response

Governments from across the world express their appreciation to seafarers and pledge to urgently resolve issues that have arisen due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Our collective efforts to combat the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic have demonstrated the critical need to prioritise the continued functioning of global supply chains to ensure the resilience of our national economies, and the importance of facilitating the safe and efficient operation of the maritime transportation system, which moves over 80% of global trade.

Critical to this endeavour is the ability of shipping companies to continue conducting crew changes throughout the world, notwithstanding the restrictions applied by many national authorities in response to the pandemic.

We, as the representatives of governments attending the International

Maritime Summit on Crew Changes held on 9 July 2020 by the government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, are deeply concerned by the global crisis.

Specifically, those created by ongoing obstacles affecting ship's crew changes, the impact on the wellbeing of seafarers, and the impact that any failure by governments to resolve these issues will have on maritime transport, which must be permitted to continue to operate safely and efficiently throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Specifically, we acknowledge, as a matter of urgent concern:

- that the inability of ship operators worldwide to conduct ship's crew changes is the single most pressing maritime operational challenge to the safe and efficient movement of global trade
- at least 200,000 seafarers are estimated to require immediate repatriation, with many serving on extended crew contracts who are overdue to return home, in addition to a similar number of seafarers that urgently need to join their ships in order to allow the world's internationally trading vessels to continue to operate safely
- seafarers' tours of duty cannot continue to be extended and need to be kept to a duration of less than 12 months, as set out by the [Maritime Labour Convention \(MLC\) 2006](#), as amended – the global shipping industry estimates that, since March 2020, only about 25% of normal crew changes have taken place; apart from the humanitarian and crew welfare concerns, and issues of regulatory compliance, there is an increasing risk that fatigue and mental health issues could lead to serious maritime accidents
- the complexity of facilitating ship's crew changes, regardless of the seafarers' nationality, requires concerted action as well as access to commercial flights to the principal seafarer countries of origin and those countries where crew changes take place
- that the health and wellbeing of seafarers is paramount and is inextricably linked to the continuing safety and efficiency of ship operations
- that the uncertainty around a possible second wave of COVID-19 underscores the need for swift actions without further delay to allow crew changes and to avoid further consequences to the already fragile global supply chain, which relies on goods transported by ships
- that the lessons learned during the COVID-19 outbreak be used to create international protocols in partnership with the maritime industry and the regulatory agencies, to provide practical instruments to facilitate shipping operations and enable seafarers to perform their essential role, in case of a future global pandemic

We therefore recognise the importance of the pledges set out below and, as a matter of urgency, to:

1. Encourage all International Maritime Organization (IMO) states to designate seafarers as "key workers" providing an essential service, to facilitate a safe and unhindered movement for embarking or disembarking a vessel.

2. Consider the legal possibilities for accepting internationally recognised documentation, such as [International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers certificate](#), the [International Labour Organization \(ILO\) Seafarers' Identity Document \(ILO 185\)](#) and a letter by the seafarers' company, carried by seafarers as evidence of their status as key workers, and purpose of their travel and movement for crew changes.
3. Engage, nationally, multilaterally and bilaterally, in discussions about implementation, to the maximum extent possible, as appropriate to the circumstances that may prevail nationally or locally, of the [recommended framework of protocols for ensuring safe ship crew changes and travel during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#), circulated to IMO member states as Circular Letter No.4204/Add.14 on 5 May 2020.
4. Review, working in conjunction with our health, immigration and other relevant ministries, agencies and authorities, the necessity of any restrictions that may continue to apply, at national and/or local level, to the movement and travel of seafarers for the purpose of conducting ships' crew changes. This includes the possibility of allowing exemptions from quarantine or similar restrictions in accordance with relevant international rules or health regulatory guidelines.
5. Consider, in liaison with our relevant ministries and authorities, including those responsible for immigration, temporary measures including (where possible under relevant law) the possibility of waivers, exemptions or other relaxations from any visa or documentary requirements that might normally apply to seafarers.
6. Explore, in cooperation with the International Civil Aviation Organization and the aviation industry, ways of increasing access, as soon as possible, to commercial flights to and from the principal countries of origin of seafarers and the airports in reasonable proximity to those seaports where crew changes are effected.
7. Urge all IMO members to take any necessary measures, within their area of jurisdiction, to ensure seafarers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic enjoy safe crew changes as well as repatriation to their home countries or to their place of ordinary residence.

We express our deepest appreciation to the world's seafarers who have continued tirelessly to operate ships and move trade throughout this global crisis, and pledge to take forward these actions at this summit with the urgency and resolve needed by the situation.

Together, we can avert the global crisis that is unfolding at sea and play our part in helping the world defeat the coronavirus (COVID-19).

The governments of:

- United Kingdom
- Denmark
- Germany
- Greece
- Indonesia
- Netherlands
- Norway

- Philippines
- Saudi Arabia
- Singapore
- United Arab Emirates
- United States of America

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**Called-in decision: land At Purley Baptist Church, 1 Russell Hill Road, 1-4 Russell Hill Parade, 2-12 Brighton Road, Purley Hall and 1-9 Banstead Road, Purley (ref: 3174139 – 9 July 2020)**

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