



Frequently Asked Questions

Socially Distancing within the Highway

This is a live document, which will be updated and refreshed as we work with communities and identify further issues. Relevant contact information is provided at the end of this document.

Key:

CC – Cornwall Council

T&PC – Town and Parish Council

LCC – Local Cornwall Councillor

CLO – Community Link Officer

H&EM – Highways and Environment Manager

TTRO – Temporary Traffic Regulation Order

Highways

Q – Can I mark the pavement outside of my shop to regulate queues?

A – Yes, temporary markings by means of tape, chalk or the like will be allowed. You should check that this action won't have a knock-on effect on adjacent premises and speak to your neighbours first. You should also make sure that there will still be sufficient safe room for other pedestrians to pass (and ensure that you provide appropriate disabled access). You do not require CC permission for this activity.

Q – What about crowding around seating areas/bus shelters etc., is there anything I can do here to encourage social distancing?

A – You may consider marking safe spaces on seats or benches using temporary tape as a reminder. Posters and small signs reminding people to stay 2m apart can also be used. We would encourage you to have a discussion with your T&PC, local community interest groups or business forums as appropriate to get a consensus on the best way forward. You do not require CC permission for this activity.

Q – Can I place general reminders in busy pedestrianised areas about social distancing?

A – Yes, signs (either “home-made” or in accordance with the traffic signs regulations) can be placed as reminders. You may wish to consider using these at gateway points to shopping areas or other high footfall areas. Of course, you should make sure that the action of placing signs doesn’t reduce the available space for pedestrians to keep apart or affect access to neighbouring premises. You should also be careful to place signs where they are not going to become a hazard to general users, or the disabled/partially sighted community. Again, have a discussion with local stakeholders as appropriate to get a consensus on the best way forward. You do not require CC permission for this activity.

Q – What if the pavement simply isn’t wide enough to allow for proper social distancing?

A – There are several options here. The first would be to remove all unnecessary street furniture such as A-Frames, displays, outside shops etc., to make sure that the full width of the pavement is available. If this doesn’t solve the problem, then perhaps consideration of a “one way” pedestrian pavement would work. This would consist of advisory signage and would not be enforceable, but may help. It may be that part of the road could be barriered off to create extra pavement width. This will require a contractor registered with Cornwall Council to provide and maintain and will also require a licence. Requests for this sort of measure would need to be locally agreed and supported, and be directed to your local H&EM or CLO, who, as with other requests of this nature, will liaise with the LCC and T&PC as appropriate.

Q – Can I block off taxi ranks or on street parking facilities to create more space?

A – This is more tricky. To be enforceable, you would need to have a TTRO (see below) to rescind the facility. If there is significant local support, it may be that

you could try using advisory signs as a first resort to deter people from using these spaces.

Q – What about significant measures, for example reducing speed limits, creating pedestrianised zones, or things like that?

A – The majority of these changes would need to be supported by a TTRO (see below), which is a legally enforceable order. It is suggested that you try some of the alternatives above as a first resort to see whether they work. If, however the community believe that a formal order is required, then it must be locally planned and agreed, before being brought forward to your H&EM or CLO. There must be strong consensus from the community that the measures are appropriate for the town, to avoid wasting public money on later removing the scheme due to opposition.

Q – Who is going to put social distancing signs at transport hubs such as rail, bus stations and car parks?

A – Cornwall Council and Transport Operators will put appropriate signage at the transport hubs but please contact us if you have a concern in your area relating to this.

Q – Can I cut back vegetation that is reducing the width of the pavement?

A - Where vegetation is reducing available safe width for pedestrians to pass, every effort should be taken locally to identify landowner responsible (usually the adjacent property owner). If unsuccessful, a formal approach can be registered online <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/transport-and-streets/roadshighways-and-pavements/highway-maintenance/verge-maintenance/reportissues-with-hedges-or-verges>

Q - How are temporary street closures enforced?

A - Any closures will need to be backed by a TTRO and signed off by our Legal Team. Once the TTRO is in place, Cornwall Council can enforce any parking issues, but the Police have an obligation and the power to enforce all moving traffic offences within the closure.

Q – What happens if a road closure scheme removes on-street parking?

A - The Council will be using emergency powers to close roads at the request of the towns and communities in recognition that this is to protect public health and create space for social distancing. This is in line with Government guidance. The Council will not manage the provision of or provide free car parking spaces in our car parks as part of this emergency response. For general queries regarding parking please contact Parking Services at team

parking@cornwall.gov.uk. If you don't have access to email or the Internet please call 0300 1234 222.

Q – Who do I contact if there is an issues with the temporary scheme?

A - For most localised issues, they can hopefully be resolved at a local level with the Town Council, or BID if your town has one. However, if they need involvement from Cornwall Council please contact your Community Liaison Officer in the first instance <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/CommunityNetworks> In the event that it is a safety and traffic management issue please direct to handew@cormacltd.co.uk (west) or hanhee@cormacltd.co.uk (east) where they will be dealt with by your town's Highways representative.

Towns should allow temporary schemes reasonable time to 'bed in' (unless there are safety critical issues that need addressing immediately), before considering changes, to ensure the best use of public money.

Q-What is a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO)

A - A Temporary Traffic Regulation Order is required to remove, alter, or permit regulated activities on the Highway. These include such things as parking restrictions, parking permissions, one way systems, pedestrianised zones and the like. The timescale to provide these orders has recently been reduced, thanks to government intervention, but the process to obtain remains complex and a maximum of up to five weeks would be required. It would be sensible therefore to limit requests for TTRO's to situations where they would be the only workable solution. If you are interested in discussing this, please contact your local H&EM.

Licensing

Q – Will I be able to place chairs and tables outside of my premises (café, restaurant, public house) to help with social distancing?

A – The Council supports use of outside areas, subject to risk assessments and obtaining appropriate licences and permissions, in order to support social distancing. You must ensure that any use of any outside area does not impact on the ability for normal pedestrian traffic to use the street while still complying with social distancing guidelines.

You will need to apply to Cornwall Council for a temporary pavement licence. Licences can be issued for a minimum of 3 months and will not be valid after 30 September 2021.

Please visit our webpages for more information:

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/advice-and-benefits/licences-and-street-trading/pavement-licensing/>

You will also need permission from the Council as land owner if you wish to use any other Council outdoor property such as open green space, car parks, harbours, piers etc.

All businesses will need to undertake a Covid risk assessment for their sites including any outside seating areas, which must include procedures involving regular clearing, cleaning and sanitising. National guidance has been issued on the controls businesses will need to consider in their risk assessment.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/restaurants-offering-takeaway-or-delivery>

Cornwall Council are also providing advice and support through webinars and our business regulatory support hub should you have any further queries.

<https://www.businessregulatorysupport.co.uk/>

If you are selling alcohol (for consumption on or off the premises) and or supplying late night refreshment (hot food or drink between 11pm and 5am the next day) then further licensing is required. If you already have a licence you need to ensure that it covers you to use any outside areas. If not, you may need to apply to vary the licence. The Council's Licensing Team can help you with the application or authorisation process including providing other regulatory support needed. Please contact licensing@cornwall.gov.uk for more information.

If selling alcohol for consumption off your premises then please advise customers if there is a Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO) in place which controls the drinking of alcohol in public places. These Orders remain in force and as such an authorised person can, where appropriate, seize the alcohol and pour it away.

Please also be aware, if you intend selling food and drink for takeaway or consumption outdoors, then you should introduce appropriate measures to ensure public areas in the vicinity of your business do not become littered with discarded takeaway containers by scheduling litter picking and providing waste bins. All waste should be disposed of by the business in line with existing commercial waste arrangements.

Q – I have a general COVID-19 concern, where can I find more information?

A - This document has been prepared to answer queries in relation to social distancing and the highway. If you have specific concerns related to COVID-19 please visit <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/public-health->

[cornwall/information-about-coronavirus-covid-19](https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/information-about-coronavirus-covid-19) or use one of the following contact methods T: 0300 1231 118 or E:covid19@cornwall.gov.uk

Contacts

For Highway & Environment Managers please contact one of the following email addresses –

Highway & Environment East handee@cormacltd.co.uk

Highway and Environment West handew@cormacltd.co.uk

West is covered by Adrian Drake, Rupert Spencer and Viv Bidgood with **East** covered by Oliver Jones, Paul Allen and Rachael Tatlow.

Licensing Team licensing@cornwall.gov.uk

Public transport enquiries transport@cornwall.gov.uk

Car park enquiries parking@cornwall.gov.uk

This document was last updated on 21 October 2020, when Cornwall was a ‘Tier 1’ area. It will be reviewed periodically to reflect any changes in guidance.