

**Oxfordshire County Council  
New Road  
Oxford OX1 1ND**

**Ansaf Azhar  
Director of Public Health**

**For the attention of all Parish  
and Town Councils**

**5 October 2020**

Dear colleague,

We are writing to ask for your help in ensuring that local events are managed in a COVID-safe way in order to suppress the spread of coronavirus in Oxfordshire.

As you will be aware, COVID-19 cases are rising rapidly across the country. Oxfordshire is mirroring this national trend: in the seven days up to 25 September, there were 128 new confirmed cases and the county is now at a yellow alert status.

The Government has recently announced a range of additional measures in an effort to suppress the virus. Some of these new restrictions affect events and gatherings. For example, the 'rule of six' prohibits people from gathering in a group of more than six, whether indoors or outdoors, unless covered by an exemption. Further information on social contact rules, social distancing and the exemptions that exist can be found in this [Government guidance on meeting with others safely](#).

We understand the importance of local events in improving the wellbeing of residents and supporting the local economy. Where possible, we want to encourage these events to continue, provided they take place in a COVID-safe way.

In Oxfordshire the city and district councils each have a Safety Advisory Group, where multi-agency partners work together to review documentation and ensure event organisers run large events in a safe way. Smaller events which are run at a local level are not submitted to these groups, and so this is where we are asking for your help.

Please find attached to this letter a COVID-19 checklist, which our Safety Advisory Groups use with event organisers to ensure that large events are safe for those attending. Using this checklist helps identify any elements of an event that may need to be adapted or any issues that need to be addressed. We would be very grateful if you would provide a copy of this checklist to people who are organising events in your parish or town.

If you would like advice about an upcoming event you are planning, such as a fireworks display, Remembrance event or Christmas event, or if you have any concerns about an event that is running in your parish or town, then please do contact your local Safety Advisory Group at [events@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:events@southandvale.gov.uk). We would also be grateful if you would notify the Safety Advisory Group about local events that are planned so that we have a more detailed picture of events taking place across the district. By working together in this way, we can help our community to stay safe.

Should you require any additional advice, then please contact Oxfordshire County Council's Emergency Planning team at [emergencyplanning@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:emergencyplanning@oxfordshire.gov.uk), who will do their best to assist you.

Thank you, once again, for your support and cooperation. We have seen significant increases in the spread of the virus across the UK in the past few weeks, and so your continued support in helping suppress the virus and reduce infection rates is of vital importance in the months ahead.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Azhar'.

Ansaf Azhar

**Director of Public Health**

*(Chair – Oxfordshire COVID-19 Health Protection Board)*