

THE OFFICIAL VOICE OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND FEDERATION OF CLUBS

Review Club

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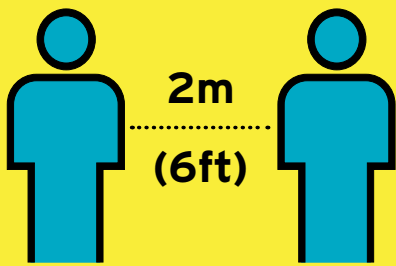
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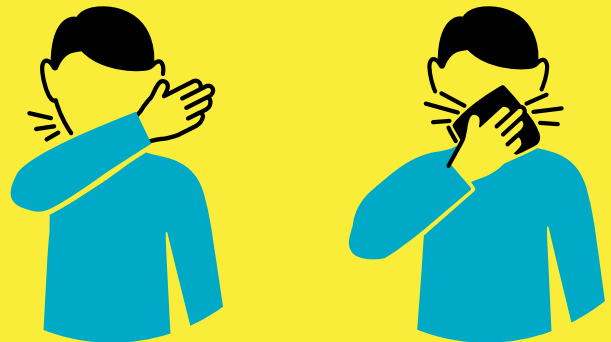
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Federation update



John Davidson, Chairman,
N.I. Federation of Clubs



Harry Beckinsale, Secretary,
N.I. Federation of Clubs

Cov-19 has prided unprecedented challenges for society, and the business community in general.

While the Westminster Government has continued to be supportive, the rather more cautious approach to relaxing requirements by the Legislative Assembly has been instrumental in leading us toward the pandemic exit door earlier than expected.

While retail outlets have been permitted to open, we must remain alert to the danger presented by Covid-19. Nevertheless people will become increasingly concerned about their livelihoods, more especially with media reports highlighting job losses across the country.

It is no secret that large scale job losses are anticipated. While we all hope this will not be the case it is difficult to see how it can be avoided.

Thankfully recent Assembly press announcements has included registered clubs, but sadly this was accomplished following some input by myself and the Federation Chairman in securing support from politicians. It seems that despite the immense

contribution that registered clubs make to sport and communities throughout the province, the sector appears to be ignored by the media.

The timing, with regards to the opening of the hospitality sector, which has been announced will see the hospitality sector opening its doors on 3rd July, is a positive step, and will hopefully be followed by relaxation on restrictions affecting the remaining outlets which do not serve food, but which nevertheless should be allowed to make a living and by so doing provide some security for employees.

We always suspected that Westminster would decide on an economic basis to come out of lock-down, and who can blame them, as it is our children who will pay for this in years to come. Unfortunately population size adds to the problem in mainland UK, and a second wave could be a disaster. We feel the Northern Ireland people have, in the main, acted very responsibly, which had led us to where we are today.

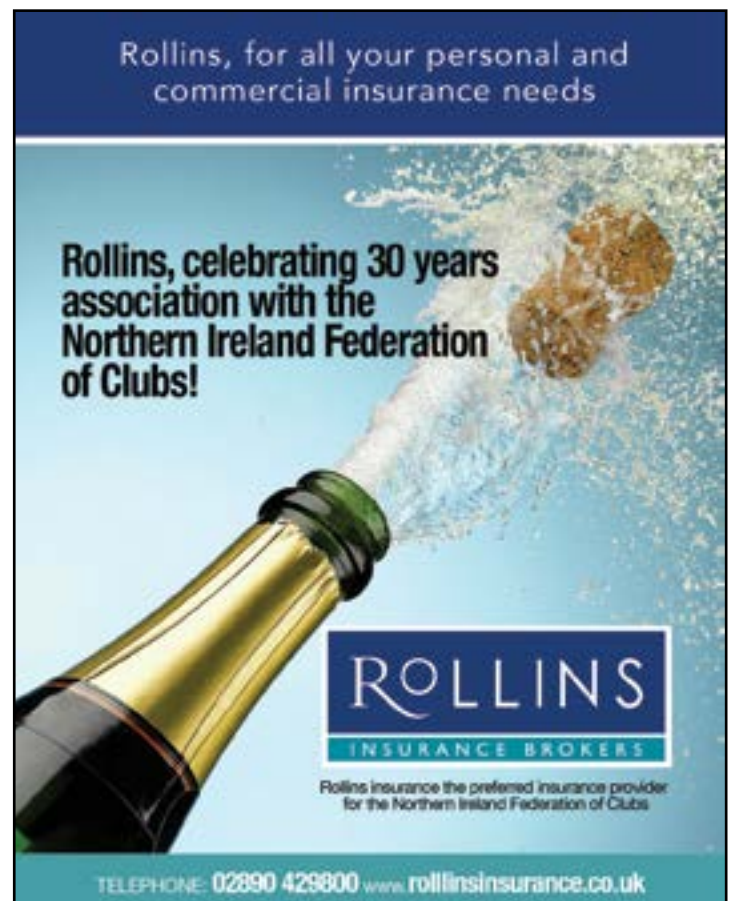
We wish to again register our thanks to local political

parties and also, importantly, to our trade suppliers who acted to support the sector with stock etc., which has been most reassuring, underlining the excellent relationships established.

The helpline facility and the Federation website continues

to provide Coronavirus information, as does the digital copy of Club Review available to open or download on the Federation website at www.nifederationofclubs.com

Please continue to take care and adhere to advice on Covid-19.



HSE warns of Legionella risks during COVID-19 shutdown

Our colleagues in mainland GB have informed us the Federation that The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) has issued a warning to people in control of premises which have experienced a Coronavirus-induced shutdown, in our case club premises, about the serious risks of legionella.

During your club's shutdown, water system stagnation can occur due to lack of use, increasing the risks of Legionnaires' disease.

The HSE states that clubs should review their risk assessment and manage the legionella risks to protect people when the water system

is reinstated or returned to use.

If the water system is still used regularly, maintain the appropriate measures to prevent legionella growth.

You can find out what Legionnaires' disease is, where it comes from, how people get it, and symptoms and treatment, by reading the guidance on the HSE's website: www.hse.gov.uk/



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Good news for clubs as gaming machine VAT case is settled

As many of you will know, the Federation have, from the outset, provided advice on the Linneweber 1 & 2 cases.

The following is the result of the well documented appeal, led by the Rank Organisation, which our members were advised to remain behind.

Linneweber 2 remains in place, however, the successful outcome of Linneweber 1 is welcomed.

Clubs who put in a valid appeal to HMRC six years ago during what is known as, 'The Linneweber Case', should now receive back the monies that they were forced to repay to HM Revenue and Customs six years ago.

Chris Haley, Managing Director of UK gaming machine firm, Dransfields, explains, "The Linneweber Case began in Germany, where under EU law, it was ruled unfair to have different VAT treatments between gaming machines sited in a casino and those sited in other locations. The ruling on fiscal neutrality stated that the treatment should be the same, and all machines should be exempt, or all machines should be taxable, regardless of location. The case of The Rank Group Plc concerned the application of VAT to certain gaming machines prior to 5th December 2005, was based on the fact that the income from them was being treated differently for VAT purposes. As a result of publicity around the case, many hundreds of clubs made claims worth thousands of pounds each which were then stood behind

The Rank Group plc lead case. While The Rank Group plc won the case initially, it then lost at Appeal, at which point HMRC reclaimed the monies previously paid out to clubs, as well as charging interest on this amount. This in itself was a controversial move as the case had yet to be finally settled. After Appeals and court hearings - including at the Supreme Court - the case has finally been ruled upon for the last time and HMRC should begin to pay taxpayers that had valid claims stood behind the lead Rank case. The amounts that clubs which put in a valid Appeal will receive back could be substantial, being the full amount claimed, the interest thereon and the interest that clubs paid to HMRC six years ago. HMRC should calculate and pay interest on that whole amount from the date they claimed the monies back, to the date that they make the repayment now. The repayments could not come at a more crucial time for clubs as they begin to open up and try to recover from the effects of the Coronavirus lockdown.

HMRC have now issued guidance on how to make repayment claims with the onus on the taxpayer to chase the claim (*rather than them paying out to all those with valid Appeals*). A lot of clubs used their accountants to calculate and submit the claim, so they will have the required information."

In that business brief HMRC set out that they now require to validate claims with claimants providing;

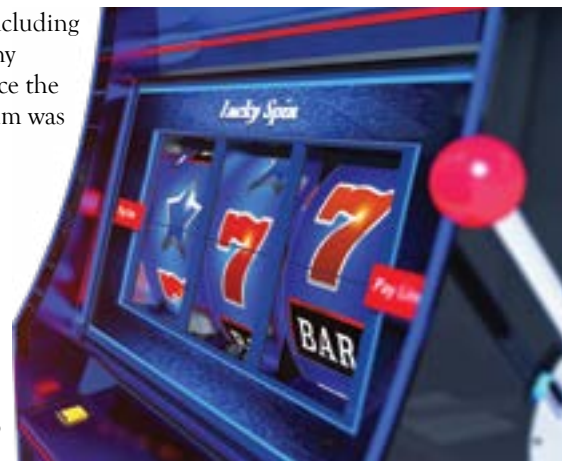
- the claimant name, postal address and VAT registration

number - including details of any changes since the original claim was made

- all related Tribunal reference numbers
- the total claim, broken down by reference to each VAT accounting period separately identifying output tax, input tax and the Tribunal reference number
- details of any input tax that is irrecoverable as a result of the claimants revised partial exemption position as applicable at the time of the claim - this should include the supporting partial exemption calculations, capital goods scheme calculations and confirmation of the partial exemption method in use
- the category of gaming machines operated in the period for when the claim was made

This may create a problem for clubs as those details may not be readily to hand, or the persons involved in the original claim and its follow up actions may no longer be active at the club, or as it is at least 6 years ago that Clubs submitting the documents they may no longer have these documents in their possession.

For details of how to claim visit: www.gov.uk/government/publications/revenue-and-customs-brief-5-2020-vat-treatment-on-fixed-odds-betting



[terminals-and-gaming-machines/revenue-and-customs-brief-5-2020-vat-treatment-on-fixed-odds-betting-terminals-and-gaming-machines](https://tinyurl.com/yakulta8) or use <https://tinyurl.com/yakulta8>

Clubs should be aware that it is believed that the current information requirements needed by HMRC are excessive and lobbying against HMRC will be conducted to reduce these document requirements. All that should be required is for each Club to note that it made a claim that was repaid, that HMRC have details on file (all documents sent to HMRC post 2000 (and probably earlier)) are scanned and kept on an 'electronic folder' and ask HMRC to make payment of the original claim submitted and evidenced or verified by HMRC at the time of the claim, together with interest on the whole sum plus return of the interest charged by HMRC in their protective assessment (and interest thereon). We will be asking HMRC to consider this approach and will update Clubs accordingly.

We will provide further updates as soon as possible.

Furlough Leave

Latest update on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

The Government (HMRC) have refreshed parts of their guidance on the scheme to incorporate the 'Flexible Furlough Scheme', which starts on 1st July. Flexible Furlough will allow employees to work part time for you and be paid for those hours, whilst remaining on furlough for the rest of their working week.

We have focused on the parts that are new or updated:

(1) Check if you can claim (now version 14 of their guide!):

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wage-costs-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>

You must keep records of how many hours your employees work and the number of hours they are furloughed.

When submitting a claim, you will need to be sure of the exact number of hours staff will have worked during the period you are claiming for. You should only claim when you actually know the number of hours your staff will be working during the claim period. If you claim in advance and the worker ends up working more hours than you have informed HMRC about and they are furloughed for less time, then you will end up receiving a higher furlough grant than you are entitled to. You will therefore have to pay part of the grant back to HMRC.

(2) Check which employees you can put on furlough:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wage-costs-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>

- Only employees that you have successfully claimed a previous grant for will be eligible under the scheme. This means they must have previously been furloughed for at least 3 consecutive weeks at any time between 1 March and 30 June 2020.
- The only exception to that is if you have a member of staff returning from maternity, paternity, adoption or shared parental leave after 10 June. Those staff can still be furloughed, even if for the first time, provided they were on the payroll on 19 March and you have already

furloughed other staff prior to the end of June (i.e. if you have made previous CJRS claims).

- If an employee has been furloughed before and starts a new furlough period before 1 July this furlough period must be for a minimum of 3 consecutive weeks – even if it ends before or after 1 July. For example, a previously furloughed employee can start a new furlough period on 15th June which would have to continue for at least 3 consecutive weeks ending on or after 5th July. After this the employee can then be flexibly furloughed for any period thereafter. However, after 1 July, employers cannot make

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claims that cross calendar months, so the employer will need to make a separate claim for the period up to 30 June.

- The number of employees you claim for in any single claim period starting from 1 July cannot exceed the maximum number of employees you claimed for under any claim ending by 30 June. For example, if an employer had previously submitted three claims in which the total number employees furloughed in each respective claim was 15, 25 and 60 employees, the maximum number of employees that employer could furlough in any single claim starting on or after 1 July would be 60. However, that does not include those that you are adding to furlough for the first time who are returning from maternity, paternity, adoption or shared parental leave - there is no limit on that number.

(3) Steps to take before calculating your claim:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/steps-to-take-before-calculating-your-claim-using-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>

- Claims for periods ending on or before 30 June 2020 must be made by 31 July 2020.
- There is no maximum length for claim periods that end on or before 30 June. However, claims for any periods starting before 1 July must end on or before 30 June. This is the case even where an employee furloughed in June continues to be furloughed full time in July. Separate claims will need to be submitted to cover the days in June and the days in July that you want to claim for, even if employees are furloughed for the whole period. This means that your claim periods may differ from the pay periods you use.
- From 1 July, the 3 week minimum period of furlough

has been removed. There is no minimum period but any claim through the portal must be for a minimum of a week (i.e. you can only put in up to four claims a month).

- Claim periods starting on or after 1 July must start and end within the same calendar month and must last at least 7 days unless you're claiming for the first few days or the last few days in a month. You can only claim for a period of fewer than 7 days if the period you are claiming for includes either the first or last day of the calendar month, and you have already claimed for the period ending immediately before it.
- As you can only make one claim for any period, you must include all your furloughed or flexibly furloughed employees in one claim even if you pay them at different times (say you have a difference in weekly and monthly paid staff). If you make more than one claim, your subsequent claim cannot overlap with any other claim that you make. Where employees have been furloughed or flexibly furloughed continuously (or both), the claim periods must follow on from each other with no gaps in between the dates.
- If your employee is flexibly furloughed, you will have to work out their usual hours and record the actual hours they work as well as their furloughed hours for each claim period.
- For fully furloughed employees (i.e. no work being carried out at all), you should work out the maximum wage amount as usual.
- There are two different calculations you can use to work out your employee's 'usual' hours, depending on whether they work fixed or

variable hours. The variable hours method should be used if your employee's pay normally depends on the number of hours they work, which would include employees who are paid for working overtime. To calculate the normal working hours for those with fixed hours/pay, you simply take the number of hours worked in the pay period before 19 March 2020. To calculate the normal working hours for those with variable pay, you take the higher of (a) the average number of hours worked in the tax year 2019 to 2020 or (b) the corresponding calendar period in the tax year 2019 to 2020. The guidance sets out the calculations that you should use.

- Having worked out the employee's usual hours, you can then claim for the difference between their usual hours and the actual hours worked, ie. for the number of hours that they were furloughed for.

(4) Calculate how much you should claim:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/calculate-how-much-you-can-claim-using-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>

This is new and sets out the steps to take for calculating.

This also confirms:

- From 1 August, the level of the grant will be slowly

reduced. No grant will be available for Class 1 employer NICs or pension contributions from 1 August although these contributions will remain payable by you as the employer.

- From September 1, you will also be asked to contribute towards the cost of your furloughed employees' wages to ensure they continue to receive at least 80% of their wages for the time they're on furlough.

(5) Claim for your employees' wages online:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wages-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>
This has been updated.

(6) Report a payment in PAYE RTI:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/reporting-payments-in-payee-real-time-information-from-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>

This has been updated.

(7) New and detailed examples of how to calculate those staff that you will place on flexible furlough:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/find-examples-to-help-you-work-out-80-of-your-employees-wages/example-of-a-full-calculation-for-an-employee-who-is-flexibly-furloughed>



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Questions & Answers



Q. In advance of re-opening, should we hold a full in person Committee Meeting?

A. Until the guidance is revised, Committee Meetings should be held remotely using emails, phone calls or video conferencing. Unless absolutely necessary, physical

Committee Meetings should not presently be taking place.

Q. Once we have re-opened, do we need to hold our AGM?

A. At some point an AGM will need to be held since the Members do need to undertake legal actions such as approving the accounts. If practical, the AGM should be held as soon as possible after re-opening but consideration will have to be given to the social distancing guidelines in place at the time.

Q. A member of our club insists that Minutes of committee meetings should be published on the club notice board. Is this correct?

A. This is not correct. In fact, I have always taken the view that it is not advisable to

publish committee Minutes. It may be that the member in question is a member of another club registered under the Friendly Societies Act, which is legally obliged to publish its committee Minutes. However, only a very small number of clubs are registered under this Act. As almost all clubs are registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act or are unincorporated associations, they are not subject to this requirement.

Q. How long does somebody have to be a member of the club before they can propose or second another member for the position of Committee member?

A. A club's rules do not usually place a restriction on the qualification of proposers and seconders. However, they do impose qualifications on the candidates themselves. Therefore any recently elected member may propose or second a candidate but most rules would prevent such a member standing as a candidate.

Q. We wish to remove the on-screen entertainment in the club as it is too expensive. However, we have a vocal minority of members who are intent on keeping the existing service. Could they call an SGM to reverse a Committee decision?

A. Whilst the rules do allow a special General Meeting to

be called by the members, it is fair to say that typically such items as opening hours and the provision of on-screen entertainment are left to the purview of the Committee. It is understandably difficult to run a club if such decisions are constantly being debated among the members with a view to holding an SGM every time a decision without universal approval is taken. Clubs which engage in this sort of activity ultimately find it difficult to find members who are willing to stand for the Committee.

If there is a section of the membership who are unhappy with the direction that the Committee is taking the club then we would recommend that such members stand for election onto the Committee at the next available opportunity. This is ultimately the most effective way for members to influence the running of the club.

To coin an old phrase "put up or shut up".

Always providing distancing wasn't an issue, an alternative for the unhappy Members would be to call an SGM (following the procedure laid out in the Club's Rule Book) and seek to remove the Committee from Office. If such a motion was successfully passed, this would lead to new elections where a Committee could be elected to reverse the decision to remove the system and elect a new Committee.

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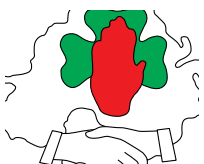
Removing a Committee is a recognised acceptable step for Club Members to take if a Committee makes a decision that they disagree with and the Members are perfectly entitled to take such action. I would, however, point out that the Members elect a Committee to run the Club and it would likely be difficult to elect future Committees if Club Members essentially wish to micromanage important decisions.

I do not think it would be permissible for the Members to call an SGM to simply overturn such a decision. The Rules state that the Committee will make management decisions, therefore an SGM where the Members seek to overturn a management decision would likely be considered to be a breach of the existing Club's Rules and therefore not valid.

Q. Our Rules state that 15 Members can sign a petition to call an SGM. This seems rather low. What do most Clubs do, have a set number or ask for a percentage of the Membership?

A. 15 Members to call an SGM is a bit lower than most Clubs. Most Clubs do not use a percentage but a set figure which is most often 30 Members. To change your current system would require a Rule change to be approved by the Members but assuming they are willing to agree to a revision of this rule then I would suggest that 30 Members to call an SGM would be considered normal.

If you have any questions you need answered for your club, then please send them to us at: info@nifederationofclubs.com



HMRC seeking new powers to investigate furlough fraud

Employers that think they may have accidentally misused the furlough scheme could be given a 30-day amnesty to admit their mistake under the draft bill to tackle furlough fraud, which is currently being fast-tracked through parliament.

The draft legislation will give HMRC the power to check grants made to employees through the job retention scheme have been used correctly to pay workers' wages, and to ensure employers have not been overpaid furlough reimbursement.

It would allow HMRC to reclaim through income tax assessments any furlough money overpaid to employers or not spent on wages as intended. And any organisation caught deliberately using furlough money for anything other than its intended purpose - so-called furlough fraud - would face a financial penalty.

"The penalty will only apply if the person fails to notify HMRC about the situation within 30 days," the draft bill says.

The bill would give HMRC the same powers to vet and reclaim payments made to self-employed individuals through the self-employed income support scheme.

The legislation, which is part of the finance bill 2020, could be passed as early as July.

Dawn Register, partner in tax dispute resolution at BDO,

said the bill was a sign that the government was "gearing up to tackle incorrect and fraudulent claims" made through the various coronavirus support schemes.

"For those where HMRC suspects fraud, we can expect serious investigations," Register said, noting that the draft legislation included powers to pursue company office holders where businesses became insolvent. She also expected HMRC to start following up on whistleblowing claims of furlough fraud, which appeared to be on the rise.

The government said it had received 1,868 such reports

as of the end of May - more than double the 795 reports received by the middle of the month - and independent whistleblowing organisations have also warned of an increase in calls relating to furlough fraud.

Not all misspent furlough money will have been a case of deliberate abuse, however, said Register. "For business owners, many of whom may have implemented claims in a rush at the start of lockdown, now is the time to check and double check the amounts are right," she said. "Making sure the paperwork is accurate and government guidelines are adhered to is key."

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Employers to start paying towards staff furlough scheme from August 2020

The government has outlined further details regarding the government job retention scheme (CJRS), which will require employers to contribute to employee costs from August 2020, while introducing extra flexibility from 1st July 2020.

The government will continue to pay 80% of employees wages, capped at £2,500 until October 2020, however, employers will need to start paying national insurance and pension contributions, representing 5% of employment costs, from August 2020.

Employers will be able to bring back furloughed employees part-time from July 2020 and

be responsible for paying this proportion of their wages.

Furthermore, from September 2020, the government will begin to phase out the furlough scheme by decreasing payments by 10% and decreasing the maximum payment by £313. Employers will then be able to claim 70% of employees wages, capped up to £2,187, representing 14% of employment costs.

From October 2020, the government will pay 60% of wages capped up to £1,875, a further decrease of £312, representing 13% of employment costs.



Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak.

The self-employment support scheme has also been extended to October 2020.

Rishi Sunak, chancellor of the exchequer, said, "Our top priority has always been to support people, protect jobs and businesses through this crisis. The furlough and self-employment schemes have been a lifeline for millions of people and businesses. We stood

behind Britain's businesses and workers as we came into this crisis and we stand behind them as we come through the other side.

"Now, as we begin to re-open our country and kickstart our economy, these schemes will adjust to ensure those who are able to work can do so while remaining amongst the most generous in the world."



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Be UV Aware this summer

This June, just as the UV levels normally hit their highest in Northern Ireland, the Public Health Agency (PHA) and Cancer Focus Northern Ireland are highlighting the importance of being UV aware to stay safe in the sun.

The organisations are encouraging the public to become more familiar with the UV index and what it means, stressing that care in the sun is vital even in cool, cloudy weather as well as on brighter, sunnier days.

Denise McCallion, Senior Health and Social Wellbeing Improvement Officer at the PHA, said: "Being active outdoors is good for our health. However, over-exposure to UV radiation can cause permanent damage to our skin and can increase the risk of skin cancer.

"The UV Index shows how much solar radiation is reaching us from the sun and how careful we need to be. The UV levels vary with the seasons and time of day, but when the UV index is three or more we need to protect our skin and eyes, so it's important to know what the UV index is going to be throughout the day.

"Greater awareness of the UV index and the need for sun safety, even in our changeable climate, will help you protect your skin and allow you to enjoy spending time outdoors safely."

Ian Young, who works as an Assistant Health and Safety Manager (construction) for the Northern Ireland Housing Executive in the Ballymena area, recently had surgery to remove skin cancer from his arm.

"Most of my working life has been indoors, though as a teenager I worked on a farm and I didn't use sun protection," he said.

Last June, Ian attended a sun safety awareness session at his workplace, which was provided by Cancer Focus NI.

"I'd been aware of a lesion on my arm and the training prompted me to contact my GP who saw me the following week. An appointment was made with the skin clinic in Antrim Area Hospital a few weeks later and at this session they decided to remove the lesion," he said.

"In October, I got confirmation the lesion was a basal cell carcinoma, the most common form of skin cancer.

"Now, I'm more aware, informed and motivated to take reasonable precautions to protect my skin from UV rays" he added.

Marbeth Ferguson, Skin Cancer Prevention Coordinator at Cancer Focus NI, said, "Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in Northern Ireland, accounting for over 31% of all cancers. About 4,210 people develop the disease each year and around 387 of these are malignant melanomas, the most serious kind.

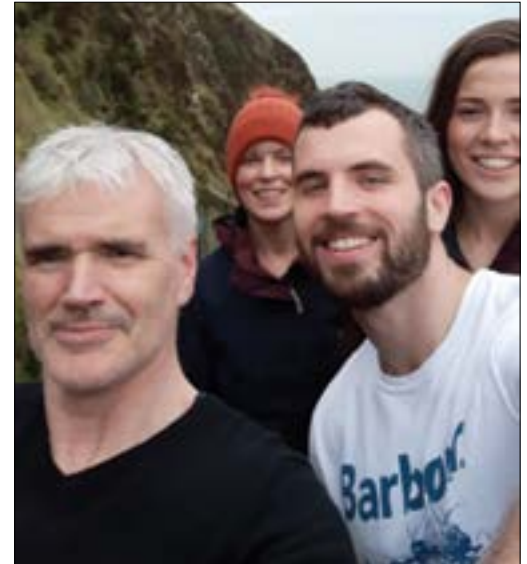
"There are a number of simple steps you can take to help protect against harmful UV rays and reduce your risk of skin cancer."

- Know the UV index and when the UV index is three or more, protect your skin and eyes;

- Seek shade when the UV rays are strongest between 11am and 3pm;
- Cover up in the sun with a long sleeved t-shirt and a broad brim hat;
- Wear sunglasses that have CE or British Standard Marks which carry a UV 400 label and offer 100%

- UV protection. This will ensure they provide adequate protection from both UVA and UVB;
- Sunglasses should fit your face well and relatively snugly so that light doesn't enter your eye from around the lens;
- Use sunscreen with a minimum of SPF 15 for UVB protection and UVA 4-stars.

You can find out what the UV index is for your area on the Met Office website at www.metoffice.gov.uk/uv



(L-R) Ian Young with his wife Lavinia, and son Steve Young and his fiancée Caroline McKenna



The most common form of skin cancer, basal cell carcinoma.

For more information and advice on how to protect your skin visit www.careinthesun.org/uv

To find out more about Workplace Health and Wellbeing download this guide www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/health-and-wellbeing-work-resource-guide

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(exclusive offer for NI Federation of Clubs members)

Hand Sanitisers: Due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, there has been a huge increase in demand for hand sanitiser. The Health and Safety Executive has guidance for employers who are providing hand sanitiser for their workers and others to use in their workplaces, and for existing and new manufacturers of hand sanitisers and surface disinfectants. We are pleased to announce that we can offer NI Federation of Clubs members an exclusive discount on Covex Hand Sanitisers.

Covex Gels specialise in the production and wholesale of hand sanitiser and are committed to producing only the highest quality hand sanitiser gel, with a 70% alcohol content ensuring it kills 99.99% of bacteria. The gels, with added Aloe Vera, are independently tested to BS EN 1276 standards, ensuring quality and reliability.

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Like a phoenix from the ashes



Nigel Blair, Belfast 89FM.

Hi there!

Can I begin by saying how good it is to return to my column in Club Review following the Covid-19 virus break.

It has been a period of extreme change for everyone, and a time of hardship for many. To this end I was pleased to find that clubs, being the 'Hub' of their community are preparing to re-open.

I offer my sincere condolences to the families and friends of those who sadly lost their lives due to the pandemic.

As we approach the time to reopen, it has to be said that it will not be as before, but will rather be in a manner to lessen the risk of spreading the virus. Such things as drinks served to a table outside the club rooms, may be the order of the day, as will the serving of alcohol with a meal.

I feel it appropriate to draw attention to a change I believe to be unnecessary. Apparently live entertainment may not be permitted!

Whilst I understand that a large stage presence of entertainers, may present the potential of attracting dancers to the floor in close proximity, I cannot agree there is any reason for a single entertainer or two piece, not to be engaged in preference to a juke box/background music.

Many of the club entertainers have many years of experience and have invested in instruments, sound equipment and transport.

The pandemic put a total stop to both performing and income with no likelihood of return in the near future. Whilst in lockdown I have had great admiration for those same entertainers who supply entertainment via social media free of charge, in order to uplift our spirits.

Most recently I was entertained by John Rafferty and his lockdown buddies, Barry Brent, Colin Harney and Colin Beckinsale and his Fiancee Sarah Louise, on the night shift, providing enjoyable entertainment and humour.

There are numerous entertainers, too many to mention, yet all worth our applause and perhaps those in a position to do so, could consider lobbying government to secure their return to do what they do and love best.

In the meantime, stay safe, and keep well, God Bless,
Nigel



Urgent care for stroke essential during coronavirus pandemic

The Public Health Agency (PHA) is reminding the public of the importance of seeking urgent medical care if they or someone else experiences any of the symptoms of stroke. Help is available for those who need medical attention throughout the pandemic. If not treated urgently, a person is at a higher risk of death or disability if they take a stroke than from COVID-19.

Dr Brid Farrell, Consultant in Public Health Medicine at the PHA, said, "Across Northern Ireland people are following the 'stay at home' advice, but we are concerned that many people are choosing to stay at home even when they need emergency care, out of fear of either contracting the virus or of adding additional stress to the health system at this time.

"There is strong evidence that stroke unit care followed by early supported discharge saves lives and reduces disability.

"Hospitals are safe and if you have an emergency, they are ready to care for you. They have the appropriate equipment, expertise, and protocols in place to help keep all patients safe - both those with COVID-19 and those without."

Stroke is the third most common cause of death and one of the main causes of adult onset disability in Northern Ireland, but early diagnosis improves the chances of a good recovery.

The PHA's FAST campaign raises public awareness of the signs and symptoms of stroke, and highlights actions to take if you think someone is having one, in an easy to remember way:

- **Face** - Has it fallen on one side?
- **Arms** - Can they raise them?
- **Speech** - Is it slurred?
- **Time** - If you notice any of these signs make the call, Dial 999

Dr Farrell continued, "Stroke is a 'brain attack', which happens when the blood supply to part of the brain is cut off and brain cells are damaged or die.

"A stroke is a medical emergency and requires immediate medical attention, so recognising a stroke and calling 999 is crucial.

"To be most effective, stroke treatments such as thrombolysis (clot dispersal) and thrombectomy (clot removal) are available for suitable patients early after the stroke has started and delays in seeking treatment can mean the patient will not be offered them.

"Many serious conditions such as stroke and heart attack can be successfully treated if patients receive care quickly - but could be devastating or fatal if treatment is delayed. Please do not delay seeking appropriate care out of fear of COVID-19. Please call 999 if you or someone else needs urgent medical attention. It could save a life."

For further information on visit www.pha.site/ActFAST



New Table Booking, Table Service and Click & Collect tools announced for the Hospitality Industry, from anyExcuse in partnership with Guinness

Free of charge to the Irish Hospitality Industry for a six-month period

anyExcuse, an online platform that connects the hospitality trade and brands with consumers, has announced the launch of new online tools that will help the industry welcome customers into their outlets in a safe and efficient way when they reopen. Guinness has partnered with anyExcuse to provide these user-friendly tools to the wider hospitality industry free of charge for a six-month period. Guinness has also made this service available to all trade across the island of Ireland, including Diageo and non-Diageo customers.

The Covid-19 crisis has affected many aspects of society and the hospitality industry has been severely impacted. Guinness is preparing for, and is dedicated to developing, new ways to support the industry as it reopens. The new tools from anyExcuse offer consumers in

Ireland one platform to support a new socialising experience. It also offers reassurance that outlets are taking appropriate measures to ensure safe, social distancing solutions are in place when they reopen.

What are the anyExcuse tools & how will they benefit the industry:

The below tools will help to implement new social distancing guidelines, ease costs for outlets and reassure consumers that the necessary precautions have been taken.

Table Bookings: Consumers can check availability and book in outlets;

- Consumers can secure a table in advance for their favourite outlet. This will eliminate the need for consumers to queue outside outlets and provide consumers with peace of mind when travelling to an outlet

- Consumers can pay a refundable deposit which protects outlets against no shows (it is an option for the outlet to include a deposit request)
- Allows outlets to manage capacity and gauge level of staff needed

Contactless Table Service:

Consumers can order and pay for food and drinks from their device while seated at their table;

- Facilitates social distancing for consumers
- Helps provide a safer workplace for staff (no dwell times at tables)
- Consumers can order online at their table
- Online menus will provide a hygienic, cost-efficient solution

Click and Collect Service:

Consumers can order online and collect from the outlet;

- Facilitates food and drinks

ordering service for outlets who wish to provide this service

- Easy to use for outlets and consumers; reduces the need for multiple phone calls to place orders
- Will reduce queues and allow outlets to better manage arrival of consumers for food collection

How will consumers know about anyExcuse?

Guinness and anyExcuse are promoting tools to consumers via a social media and a PR campaign from mid-June 2020.

How to sign-up:

Licensed trade can register with anyExcuse from Friday, 5th June 2020 at <http://business.anyexcuse.com/registerforfree/>

For more information contact your local Diageo rep or Tracey Keane at anyExcuse:
tracyk@anyexcuse.com

Down Royal Racecourse and Coalition Agency

The ultimate drive-in entertainment experience

7th – 8th August 2020

Tickets on sale from 10am Friday 12th June

Buckle up Belfast! Summer 2020 looks to have sadly been postponed until 2021 BUT the party goes on! Down Royal Racecourse are delighted to present CAR PARK PARTY, the UK's only LIVE touring event and first socially distanced and safe entertainment experience. CAR PARK PARTY is a 'drive-in' event bringing together world-renowned brands in comedy, karaoke and theatre and is coming to Down Royal for multiple shows across 2 days from Friday 7th August.

CAR PARK PARTY provides not just an evening, but a whole weekend to look forward to. Each day will hold a different fun-filled experience showcasing Car Park Comedy, Car Park Karaoke and Car Park Theatre, something for all of the family and friends to enjoy. On Friday evening the entertainment begins with a spectacular sing-along concert from the Massaoke Band bringing two performances with 'A Night At The Musicals' and 'Back To The Eighties'. Families are in for a treat during the daytime on Saturday when Horrible Histories: Barmy Britain brings live theatre to the car park whilst Saturday evening has the UK's top comedic talent, supplied by the world-famous Comedy Store round off festivities – all to be enjoyed from the comfort and safety of your own car.

Emma Meehan, Chief Executive of Down Royal Racecourse said, "We're delighted to be

partnering with Coalition Agency to bring CAR PARK PARTY to Northern Ireland. This ultimate drive-in experience is exactly what is needed to bring some much-needed entertainment into our lives following over two months of strict lockdown. With stringent social distancing and safety policies in place, and everything from music, comedy, karaoke and theatre, there's something for everyone to enjoy."

CAR PARK THEATRE in association with Horrible Histories Live On Stage

Based on the best-selling books written by Terry Deary and published by Scholastic, first launched in 2005 with the world premieres of Terrible Tudors & Vile Victorians. Since then the Birmingham Stage Company has produced eighteen different Horrible Histories live on stage, performing to over three million people in the UK, including the longest running children's show in West End history, with its record-breaking series Barmy Britain. Horrible Histories live on stage has also become a worldwide phenomenon, performing in Hong Kong, Singapore, Dubai, Qatar, Oman, Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, New Zealand and Australia, where it performed in the Concert Hall of the Sydney Opera House.

CAR PARK COMEDY in association with The Comedy Store



With nearly 40 years' experience in the business and as the premier name in comedy, The Comedy Store is renowned as a breeding ground for new talent and remains the place to see tomorrow's stars today. Eddie Izzard, John Bishop, Jimmy Carr, Rhod Gilbert and Sarah Millican, have all cut their comedy teeth with The Comedy Store. Car Park Comedy will showcase the brightest names in comedy today (*many of whom you will recognise from shows such as 8 Out of 10 Cats, Mock The Week & Have I Got News For You*), with two shows per location with a lorry-load of laughs guaranteed, putting smiles on faces in every car.

CAR PARK KARAOKE in association with The Massaoke Band

The idea is simple: a brilliant live band play the greatest anthems of all time with giant screens projecting lyrics,

reinventing the car sing-along so all the family can join in. The Massaoke Band bring the party wherever they play; they've had thousands singing along with them at shows including Glastonbury and Latitude Festivals, the Rugby World Cup and Fringe Festivals around the world, establishing The Massaoke Band as one of the most exhilarating live acts around.

7th-8th August - Down Royal Racecourse, Gravelhill Road, Lisburn BT27 5RW

There will be limited tickets for each show priced at £35 per car (£2.50 booking fee applies). So strap in and secure your space for the drive-in event of the summer! For more information visit downroyal.com

Tickets & T&C's are available at www.carparkparty.com

Father's Day thanks for ASH bracelets for Cancer Focus NI



ASH bassist, Mark Hamilton, is pictured with his dad Neil. The father and son team have now raised £7,000 for Cancer Focus NI.

ASH bassist Mark Hamilton said a big thank you on Father's Day to his dad who has been making popular guitar and bass string bracelets to raise funds for cash-strapped charity Cancer Focus Northern Ireland.

Mark and his dad Neil started the project a year ago and since then the coveted customised bangles have been snapped up by fans. The father and son team have now raised a much needed £7,000 for Cancer Focus NI. The charity has had to suspend many of its services for local cancer patients and their families and has furloughed most staff due to the coronavirus. The charity has also had to postpone its fundraising events, so donations are even more vital during the current crisis.

The latest batch of bracelets are from guitar and bass strings played during ASH's recent European tour, which was cancelled half-way through. Over the last year, Mark's dad has made hundreds of bangles as souvenirs from a host of the band's concerts played all over the world.

Mark said, "Thanks so much to all the ASH and Snow Patrol fans who have supported our #RockBangle project for Cancer Focus NI. So far we have raised around £7,000 and hope to sell more bracelets once our tour recommences, whenever that may be.

"Big gratitude also to Dad who's worked so hard on making these bangles in his wee shed, and Happy Father's Day to him from my lockdown home in Northumberland.

"Unfortunately, we cannot tour until the pandemic is over but

luckily we had a bunch of strings saved from the shows before the crisis postponed the rest of our tour. Hopefully it won't be too long before the world gets back to normal but until then stay safe and healthy everyone."

Mark donated the proceeds of the bracelets to Cancer Focus NI because of his mum Miriam who has now thankfully survived cancer three times. Miriam has received great support from Cancer Focus NI over the years. She is also one of the founder members of the charity's support group in Downpatrick, helping other women who've been diagnosed with cancer.

Mark, who sells the bangles on his social media channels, explained that making the bracelets is a team effort. "I weave and cut the strings to size and my dad solders the joints together making what was an ugly joint into something that resembles a metal pearl. They look nice, but raw and rustic. I want them to retain a bit of that rock 'n roll aesthetic."

Rosie Forsythe, Cancer Focus NI, said, "We can't thank Mark and his dad enough for all their hard work and generosity. Cancer Focus NI relies on donations for over 90% of our income. We've had to postpone our fundraising events and as a result our income has reduced to seriously low levels, so we are particularly grateful at this hugely challenging time."

If you would like to make a donation to the charity to help it survive to continue supporting local cancer patients and their families into the future, please visit www.cancerfocusni.org

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We're self-isolating in the same hospice bedroom

Marlyn Boal, 68, from Newtownards in Northern Ireland has stage four pancreatic spleen and liver cancer. Together with her daughter Jodie, 45, she's been isolating in her room at the Marie Curie Hospice, Belfast since mid-April, while she receives treatment for her symptoms.

Jodie said, "We hadn't been at a hospice before and it's not what I expected at all. I thought it would be stuffy and hospital like, but it's not at all."

Marlyn agrees. "I'm loving it - I love everything. There's not one thing you could fault. I'd never been to the hospice before and I didn't think it would be like this at all. It's the total opposite to what I imagine - I want to take everybody home with me!"

Marlyn's taken a positive approach to her situation ever since she was diagnosed in November 2018. "Since I was diagnosed, I've been living my life to the fullest. I'm happy with my lot - my kids and my life. I'm well-grounded now and all I needed to do is done."

Jodie added, "At the beginning it was really hard because of the shock factor and she still looked so well. But Mum had the attitude that 'it is what it is'. She's always had a great attitude and faces things head on. I think that's where we have all now got our strength from."

Jodie had been staying with her mum at home since the coronavirus outbreak to help with her care, so when they were given the option for her to stay at the hospice together, Jodie jumped at the chance. "There's no way I wouldn't be there and I'm grateful for the opportunity to be with her," she says. "I'm treated just as well as she is,

everyone has been so attentive to the whole family."

For Marlyn, having family around has been a real positive, too. "It's been brilliant and a reassurance to have my daughter being able to stay with me," she says. "All we do is laugh or sleep. It's been a beautiful journey."

"The nurses are keeping me as pain free as possible and you don't suffer at all, you can just "buzz" and they'll come to the room and give you whatever you need, and they talk everything through with you".

As part of a very close family, staying in touch with relatives is a really important part of each day in isolation for Marlyn and Jodie.

"We've always done everything together," says Jodie. "For a while, we were doing constant video calls, but it can be draining too, so we just do them when Mum's up to it."

Marlyn adds: "We've been able to cope with the changes and limits in communication and you just accept that. I have one child living with me, one doing my washing and ironing and one doing the shopping, so I can't complain!"

They also had a visit from Jodie's 26-year-old son who stood at the door to see them both from a safe distance. "We're now allowed to have one family member a day in for one hour", explains Jodie, "So they are doing it on a rota, and it has been working out well."

The hospice staff are doing everything they can to help to make being away from home that little bit easier.

"The food is just amazing, like restaurant quality," says Jodie.



Marlyn Boal pictured with her daughter, Jodie.

"I've got my own bed and they come in at night tea and toast - I don't know I'll be getting my jeans on! I can't fault anything, even down to the maintenance man."

Although Marlyn and Jodie can open the door to the garden and sit outside, they're unable to go anywhere, which can take its toll.

"I've had two emotional wobbles since being here," says Jodie. "It's obviously quite difficult as I can't leave at all - so it could be a bit of cabin fever."

"Part if it is that you never quite know what to expect. If Mum has had a bad day, sometimes you ask yourself, when is she going to get a break? It's trial and error with the pain medication, but it's pretty much sorted now."

"She's certainly a lot more comfortable since being at the hospice. It's very reassuring as it feels like it's the safest place for us right now. When she's discharged, I plan to go and stay with her at home."

"I haven't kissed my mum

since all of this, which has been difficult as we would be an affectionate family. From when this all started, we were knocking elbows - we're being so careful and doing damage limitation. It's hard not to give mum a kiss and a hug, but we know it's the right thing to do."

Marie Curie rely on public donations to support families like Marlyn and Jodie at end of life.

Donate today, online at: mariecurie.org.uk/emergency Text NURSE to 70633 to help us reach the families who need us. Texts cost £5 plus 1 standard rate message. 98% is received by Marie Curie. To unsubscribe text OUT to 78866. Thank you.

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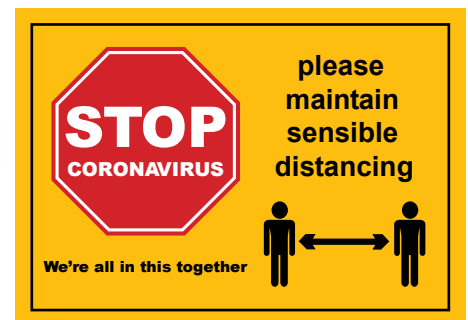
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