



The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
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22 March 2021

Prime Minister

### **The Impact of Covid on Weddings**

Like us, we are sure that you will have been contacted by constituents who have suffered emotionally and financially thanks to the impact that Covid has had on their weddings. Wedding venues, florists, photographers, dress makers, caterers, and the happy couples themselves, have found the last year incredibly difficult. We are all looking forward to weddings being able to restart in line with your roadmap out of lockdown, but are concerned that without proper focus from all involved, there will be further problems and yet more distress ahead.

There has been considerable confusion as to whether dedicated wedding venues could even open to host weddings from 12 April. This was caused by the guidance, published on 16 March, over three weeks after your statement on 22 February, which stated that Covid compliant weddings could be held in places of worship, public buildings, locations and outdoor settings that are already permitted to open. But, as licensed wedding venues – which host around 70% of all weddings in England – do not fall into any of these categories, they were faced with having to cancel or postpone all weddings planned between 12 April and 17 May.

This uncertainty was totally unnecessary and has caused significant anguish. The operators of many wedding venues and those planning to get married are still having to speculate about the future. We urge you to ensure a proper focus on this most important part of our society, which employs 400,000 people directly and in the supply chain.

Wedding venues have not been able to benefit from much of the support offered to others, including the reduction in VAT to 5% (which will only apply as and when they can make sales), Eat Out to Help Out, many of the early business rate holidays (most properties have rateable values in excess of £51,000) and, in many cases, furlough. This is also true for many businesses in the supply chain.

We would ask that you consider allowing more than 30 guests after 17 May, depending on the size of the venue. Many can accommodate hundreds of guests and so could easily and safely manage more than 30 guests in a socially distanced way. Venues would also be willing to use testing and vaccine certificates to allow more people to attend. This approach could be the difference between survival or failure for venues that are determined to act responsibly and comply fully with all rules and regulations that apply.

Your leadership is crucial to provide the economic and emotional certainty the 400,000 thousand people working to create so many happy events need.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours ever

Rt Hon Karen Bradley MP	Rt Hon Esther McVey MP
Edward Timpson CBE MP	Neil Parish MP
Rt Hon Philip Dunne MP	Philip Davies MP
Tim Loughton MP	Steve Brine MP
Stephen McPartland MP	Mary Robinson MP
Caroline Ansell MP	Rt Hon Iain Duncan Smith MP
Jason McCartney MP	Andrew Rosindell MP
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