



Statement on Covid-19 as the pheasant season starts

Leading shooting, rural organisations and charities are reminding the shooting community of the importance of following the law and government guidance to ensure shoots are conducted in a COVID-safe manner.

The exemption in England that allows shooting to take place alongside other sports and physical activity, legally requires shoots to undertake a health and safety risk assessment and take all reasonable measures to limit the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

In Scotland shooting is viewed as an organised outdoor tourism activity and specific industry guidance has been prepared, which covers a wide range of measures required to comply with Scottish Government requirements.

Those attending shoots must ensure they follow COVID safe guidance and avoid any actions that could place shooting's exemption at risk.

A spokesperson for the organisations said: "We have demonstrated that shooting can operate in a COVID-safe way, but need to ensure that as a community everyone abides by the law and the relevant guidance in order to keep shooting and its many participants safe this season. The hard work that has got us to this place with government could be undone by the failure of just one shoot to comply with the legal requirements that are now in place.

"The considerable economic and social importance of shooting to rural communities must not be underestimated, and as the pheasant season is about to start, we must all work together to ensure that there is no threat to the successful continuation of our sport".

Laws in response to Covid-19 are complex and continually changing. Some of what has been guidance previously has now become law. National restrictions differ for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. There are also local restrictions in many areas which vary in their legal impacts. Shoots and their participants must keep up to date with, and abide by, legislation which impacts shooting as well as associated services such as catering and accommodation. Ignorance of the law is no excuse. Those breaching coronavirus regulations face fines and put their shotgun and firearm certificates at risk. Up to date guidance issued by the SLC organisations can be found [here](#).