

Guidance for Playing Pétanque in Wales Under COVID-19 Restrictions

Version 1.1

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BOOK



PLAY



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PART 1

Introduction

The Welsh Government (2020) in their document Leading Wales out of the coronavirus pandemic provide a framework comprising three Pillars, these are:

1. Measures and evidence
2. Principles to evaluate changes to the restrictions
3. Public health response

This document will focus on Pillar 2 concerning the sport of Pétanque in Wales and provides information on how the Welsh Pétanque Association (WPA) working with the Welsh Sports Association (WSA) and Sports Wales (SW) can provide detailed information to allow the early reintegration of the sport into the social fabric.

Pétanque

The sport of Pétanque is one of the many minority sports played in Wales and the other nations comprising the United Kingdom (UK). Players are attached to local clubs that have set-up their playing areas, under various agreements, in diverse facilities ranging from Council-owned Leisure facilities, Sports Clubs (e.g. Bowls Clubs & Rugby Clubs) and/or Public Houses.

The membership is dominated by pensioners for whom Pétanque is often the only form of weekly exercise. Pétanque clubs also provide and fulfil an important social function in tackling loneliness and isolation for some of the older members of our communities and therefore plays an important part in maintaining their overall wellbeing.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic is having a significant impact on the Welsh Pétanque Clubs and their members. The COVID-19 pandemic has a direct short-term financial impact, but could potentially have a long-term impact on the playing infrastructure of the sport.

Pillar 2 Responses

The Welsh Government will continue to review the current restrictions and consider the options for relaxing them safely. To enable the current restrictions on the playing of Pétanque to be relaxed, the seven principles defined by the Welsh Government (2020a) have been considered and the WPA's responses recorded.

Principle 1

In Wales the sport of Pétanque is played only outdoors; therefore easing the restrictions and allowing the sport, will have a minimum effect on the spread of the virus, as has been shown with other outdoor sports that can be practised on an individual basis or played on a 1:1 basis.



However, guidance from the WPA will be required to cover all aspects of the Pétanque playing experience, from arrival, to play and for completion of the game. Players will be required to comply with the rules on social distancing throughout. Some temporary provisions concerning the Rules of Petanque will also be necessary to ensure safe play (see Part 3: Play). While each playing facility will need to adapt its procedures to ensure compliance with government restrictions.

Principle 2

As previously mentioned the sport plays an important social function and improves the wellbeing of players and a resumption of play will support this.

The measures set out by the WPA (See Parts 2 and 3, below) together with all play being outdoors, can be classified as at the low end of the risk for further infection, but cannot preclude the potential.

Article 17 of the Official Rules of the Sport of Petanque states that:

"The opponents must remain beyond the jack or behind the player and, in both cases, to the side with regard to the direction of play and at a distance of at least 2 metres one from the other."

The WPA has produced written guidance for clubs (Part 2, below) concerning the provision of playing areas to its members and ensuring that the appropriate permissions and checks (safety and hygiene) have been undertaken. Also, the WPA has produced guidance for players (Part 3, below), which includes an infographic sheet (Safe Petanque Guideline) to support the guidance notes.

An integral part of reintroducing the sport is that lanes must be pre-booked by a player, which will allow for appropriate COVID-19 compliant cleaning of the facility before the next player.

Principle 3

The guidance set out in Part 2 below will ensure compliance. However, Clubs will be responsible for monitoring and ensuring that it and its members comply with Welsh Government legislation and follow the guidance provided by the WPA. Infractions will be the responsibility of the Club and if deemed necessary sanctions can be taken.

Principle 4

If the opening of the sport has unintended consequences, then the decision can be rapidly reversed with minimum impact on playing facilities and players. In the first instance, the onus will be on Clubs/playing facilities to identify the issues that require immediate action and inform the WPA.



However, should the directive be from the Welsh Government, then this will be acted upon immediately and communicated to all parties concerned.

The WPA has the facility to communicate individually with its members at short notice.

Principle 5

The sport of Pétanque does not have a high economic benefit to the Welsh economy, unlike the larger high profile sports, but to the facilities to which the clubs are associated they can play an important role in increasing their income through the following:

- Club Nights,
- Annual Club Competitions,
- Hosting National Championship and
- International Competitions.

Where International Competitions are hosted then the local economy will benefit through travel, hotels, bars and restaurants within Wales.

Principle 6

As previously discussed the membership is dominated by pensioners and has a high impact on social and psychological well-being, especially concerning mobility, sensory, emotional and intellectual aspects of health, and therefore can be considered as socially cohesive.

Principle 7

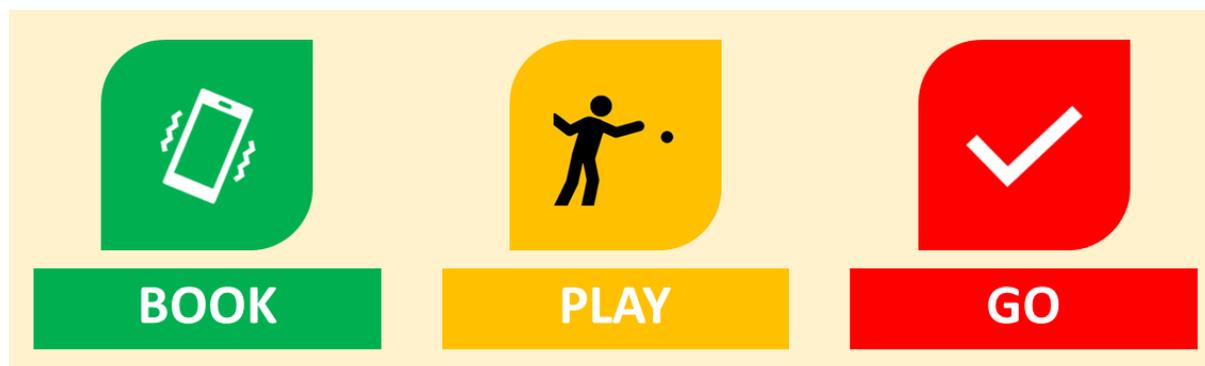
Allowing Pétanque to restart under the published guidance will not be to the detriment of vulnerable or marginalised individuals or groups, but will have a high positive impact in a sport where all players are deemed equal concerning diversity and/or ability.

The measure is consistent with the requirements of the Future Generations Act (Welsh Government, 2020c) and can provide opportunities for widening participation and a more inclusive society through the participation of this low-cost sport.



PART 2

Guidance for Clubs - Provision of Playing Areas.



General:

- Clubs are not required to open their playing area and should decide on what best suits the Club and its members.
- Clubs should check with their landlord, e.g. sports club, that they have permission to reopen the playing area.
- All Clubs should undertake a risk assessment and share it with their members before allowing players to return. The WPA's Risk Assessment Form can be found on the WPA website.
- Clubs should also check if any additional requirements, as set out in the COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings, need to be applied.
- Clubs are responsible for ensuring the Club and members comply with Welsh Government legislation and follow the guidance outlined in this document.
- Only the playing area should be opened. All other facilities, clubhouse, toilets etc, **MUST** remain closed.

Facilities:

- Clubs should ensure that all benches, seating and picnic tables within their facility are marked out of use.
- Clubs should ensure that all waste bins or ashtrays are either removed or marked out of use.
- Clubs must **NOT** provide any playing equipment, such as scoreboards, plastic circles, boules or any practice aids.
- Clubs should provide clear signage around their facility.
- Clubs must not organise any form of competition internally or with other clubs.
- Clubs should inform their members if their facility will open, the date when it will open and procedures for arranging to use the playing area.
- Clubs should make arrangements for players to book lanes for games and practice, start times should be staggered.
- Clubs should make arrangements for players to safely collect any personal equipment stored at their club for one time only.
- Clubs need to advise players on how to enter and exit the playing area and how to access lanes to ensure social distancing rules are maintained at all times.

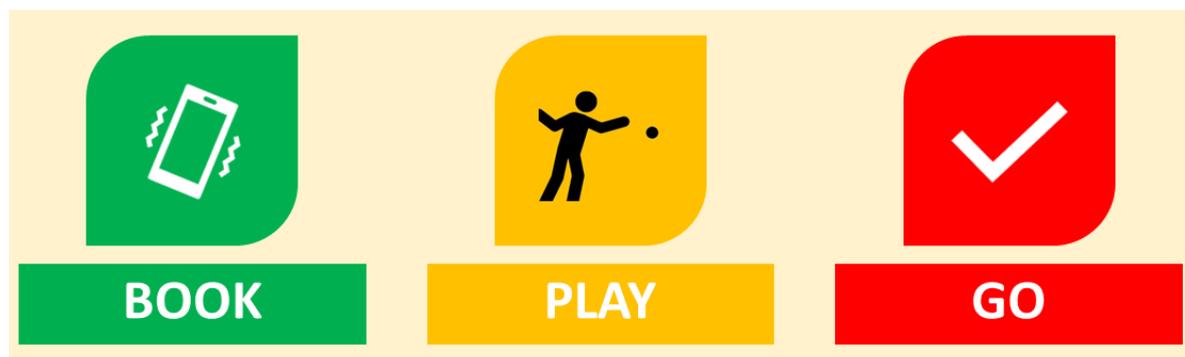


- Clubs must make it clear which lanes are in use for play and which ones are not to be used.
- Clubs should mark the playing area into lanes with a minimum width of 3m. Alternate lanes should only be used for playing e.g. lanes 1, 3, 5 or 2, 4, 6.
- Spectators are **NOT** allowed.
- Club meetings should be held virtually.
- All other WPA policies and procedures must be adhered to.



PART 3

Guidance for Players



General:

- Players who have COVID-19 symptoms, or are part of a household where someone has symptoms, should stay at home and follow NHS Wales guidance.
- No one who is self-isolating should attend the Club.
- Players who are shielding should not attend the Club.
- Players who are in a high-risk group should not attend the Club.
- Players should follow Welsh Government guidelines when travelling to the Club. For the post lockdown - **RED** phase (outdoor sports courts to open) they recommend playing locally avoiding public transport, therefore you are encouraged to walk or cycle to the venue. You may also travel within 5 miles of your home.
- Players must follow the advice for COVID-19 hygiene at all times.
- Additional information can be found on the Welsh Government Frequently Asked Questions webpage.

Play:

- Players should check if the Club is open and available for play.
- Players should only use the playing area and no other Club facilities.
- Players must **NOT** use any shared facilities, such as scoreboards, benches or seating, waste bins or ashtrays.
- Singles Play, Shooting Practice & Personal Coaching are allowed.
- Players are only allowed to practice or participate in informal games.
- Singles Play can only be played against one person from another household each day.
- Players must book lanes for games and practice in advance with their Club.
- Players must only use the lanes identified by their Club.
- Players must only use their boules and jack.
- Players must only use their equipment, e.g. tape measures.
- Players must not share any of their equipment, e.g. measures, with others.
- If an invalid jack is thrown, then the placed jack should be the one belonging to the opposing player or team.
- Players must **NOT** moisten their hands with saliva, e.g. blowing or licking, before taking a shot.



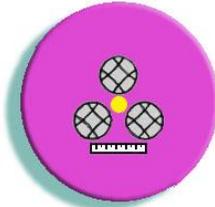
Player Welfare:

- Players should ensure social distancing (2 meters) requirements are adhered to at all times.
- Players should **NOT** shake hands or greet other players in a way that would require physical contact or be within 2 metres of each other.
- Players must bring their own hand sanitiser and use this throughout the match.
- Players' personal belongings should be kept separate from others.
- Players should **NOT** consume any food or drink in the playing area.
- Players may wear face masks if they wish to.
- Players should leave the playing area immediately after the conclusion of play.
- Players should ensure they wash their hands and ensure all equipment is cleaned and disinfected after returning home.



SAFE PETANQUE GUIDELINES

In order to guarantee everyone's safety and health, the Welsh Pétanque Association strongly recommends following the guidelines below. These guidelines apply to everyone who wishes to practice pétanque.



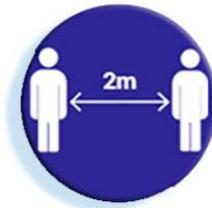
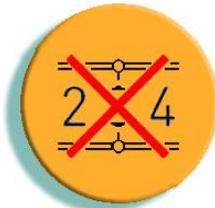
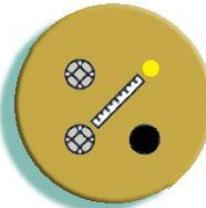
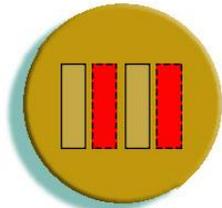
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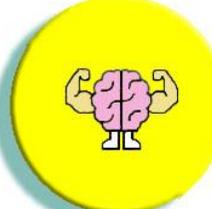
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1. Singles play, Shooting Practice & Personal Coaching.
2. Every player disinfects their equipment before and after use.
3. Disinfect your hands before and after playing.
4. Each player only uses their equipment and does not touch the other player's equipment.
5. Each player, when it is their turn, uses their jack.
6. A throwing circle is not used. The player who starts the game draws a circle on the surface with their foot.
7. Between two lanes that are played on, one lane must be left vacant.
8. Measuring is done by 1 person at a time; each player uses their measure.
9. Scoreboards must not be used.
10. At all times the distance of 2 meters between each other will be respected.
11. Players may wear a mask and follow the instructions for use.
12. No physical contact is permitted
13. It is not allowed to sit on benches, seating or use picnic tables.
14. After playing you go home immediately.
15. Everyone uses their common sense to ensure each other's safety.

Failure to follow all of the above guidelines is at your own risk. The Welsh Pétanque Association is at no time and under no circumstances responsible for infringements against these measures.



References

Welsh Government, (2020a). *unlocking-our-society-and-economy-continuing-the-conversation.pdf*. Available at: <<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-05/unlocking-our-society-and-economy-continuing-the-conversation.pdf>> [Accessed 4 Jun. 2020].

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