

Terms of Reference: Social Distancing Review

Context

1. Social distancing presents challenges for individuals and businesses and, as a result, it is important to lift restrictions as soon as it is possible to do so safely. Ahead of Step 4, as more is understood about the impact of vaccines on transmission and a far greater proportion of the population has been vaccinated, the Government has committed to review social distancing measures and other long-term measures that have been put in place to limit transmission.

Objective

2. The Government will conduct a review of social distancing and other measures to determine:
 - When and under what circumstances social distancing guidance can be lifted or amended
 - The implications of lifting social distancing for other measures, including face coverings and working from home guidance
3. The review will consider social distancing in public and business settings, and will also consider close personal contact between friends and family.

Timings

4. As set out in the *Covid-19 Response - Spring 2021*, published on 22 February 2021, the Government will complete the review ahead of Step 4, as more is understood about the impact of vaccines on transmission and a far greater proportion of the population has been vaccinated.
5. The Government will continually review the evidence of vaccine efficacy, including its impact on transmission. As soon as possible, and no later than Step 3, the Government will update its advice on social distancing between friends and family.

Governance

6. The review will be internal, reporting to the Prime Minister, and led by the Permanent Secretary of the COVID-19 Taskforce. The review panel will include science, health, business and economic experts.
7. The review will take into account the conclusions of other reviews that the government has committed to undertake including on the role of COVID status certification and the return of large events.