

## Proposals will allow Berlin D2 to open again, while keeping pubs like Grogans closed

**250 Dublin pubs closed for 252 days, including iconic venues like Grogans, McDaid's and O'Donoghues**

### **Government guidelines recognise restaurants, food pubs and wet pubs as "controlled environments"**

New proposals to keep wet pubs closed in December while restaurants reopen will see Berlin D2 trading again while the likes of Grogans remains closed, according to the Licensed Vintners Association (LVA).

Following media reports suggesting that the Government plan on keeping 'wet' pubs shut, the LVA cited the recent report from the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA), which shows there is no evidence that 'wet' pubs pose a greater risk than restaurants.

Berlin D2 operates on a restaurant licence, which allowed it to reopen during the summer. Grogans on the other hand has now been shut by the Government restrictions for 252 consecutive days since the middle of March.

Approximately 250 'wet' pubs in Dublin have kept closed during that period, including iconic venues such as Grogans, McDaid's and O'Donoghues on Merrion Row. While other 'wet' pubs across Ireland were only open for just over 2 weeks across the eight months since the crisis began.

The LVA notes that the Government guidelines for restaurants, food pubs and wet pubs recognises all these premises as "controlled environments". All these venues share the same Government guidelines relating to:

- Social/ physical distancing requirements.
- Lengths of stay.
- Use of PPE and sanitiser.
- Table service only.
- No counter service.

"The HIQA report doesn't show any evidence that 'wet' pubs pose a greater risk than restaurants, while the Government's own guidelines acknowledge wet pubs and restaurants as being "controlled environments"," said Donall O'Keefe, Chief Executive of the LVA. "The Government's guidelines even have the same regulations in place for restaurants and wet pubs – the same social distancing, the same lengths of stay, the same use of PPE and the same provision for table service only.

"Yet if current media reports are to be believed then the Government is gearing up to punish the pubs that have remained closed for the last eight months. "How is it fair that the Government seems intent on allowing the likes of Berlin D2 to trade, while keeping venues that have been impeccable during this crisis like Grogans closed?"

"If the Government adopt this approach, what they are saying is that they don't trust publicans, pub staff or pub goes to follow the guidelines. It will be a formal indication from Government that they think of pubs as 'lesser'. Such an approach would strike us as a very obvious and discriminatory restraint of trade position if it were to be adopted by the Government. It is also a position that the pub trade can never accept," Mr. O'Keefe concluded.