

Pubs reopening a 'milestone moment' in recovery of country – LVA

LVA emphasises importance of pubs adhering to guidelines

Pubs reopening marks a 'milestone moment' in the recovery of the country, according to the Licensed Vintners Association (LVA). Pointing to the worldwide attention the closure of pubs received at the beginning of the Covid-19 crisis, the LVA believes that their reopening will be a signal that the country is on the road back to normality.

The LVA also reiterated the importance of pubs following the guidelines and providing a safe and comfortable environment for their customers and staff once they reopen.

Pubs were the first sector to close en masse across the country, with the majority of pubs shutting their doors on 15th March, a measure that was strongly supported by the LVA and its members to protect public health.

Pubs will have been closed for 105 days by the time the first pubs who serve food reopen this week. During that period of closure the vast majority of pubs had zero income and most of the 50,000 people employed in the industry were unable to work.

The LVA estimates almost 2 out of every 3 pubs in Dublin (approximately 450) will resume trading in the coming days. 'Wet pubs' or pubs that do not offer food are due to reopen in three weeks on the 20th July.

Many pubs have been undertaking extensive work in preparing their premises for reopening. This includes implementing social distancing between tables, closing off bar counters, installing hand sanitizer stations at entrance points and throughout pubs, instigating advance booking procedures, taking steps to collect the name and contact details for the lead member of each group, providing training to staff, creating menus that adhere to the guidelines, ensuring the compliance of their toilet areas as well as many other measures.

Speaking about the reopening, Donall O'Keeffe, Chief Executive of the LVA said, "This is a milestone moment in the reopening of the country as we begin to emerge from the Covid-19 crisis. The closure of the pubs in this country ahead of St. Patrick's Day made worldwide news. We were the first sector to collectively close across the country and by the time all pubs are able to trade again, we will be the last sector to fully reopen.

"With the public health situation improving, the reopening of pubs will be an indicator of Ireland's emergence from the lockdown. It will signal to the outside world that our country is beginning the journey back to normality and our economy is once again open for business.

"It is of the utmost importance that any pubs that are reopening this week ensure they are closely following the guidelines. We need to show that not only are the pubs open again, but that they will provide a safe and comfortable environment to their customers and staff.

"Each individual pub and publican must take responsibility to ensure the guidelines are strictly adhered to. There are understandable concerns amongst the public. We have no doubt it is the pubs which clearly demonstrate compliance with the guidelines and with protecting public health that will attract the most customers in the days and weeks ahead. We also know that any pubs that fail to comply with the guidelines will suffer serious reputational damage and rightly attract the attention of the authorities.

"It should be recognised that the vast majority of pubs that are reopening are putting a major effort into getting their premises ready for this new trading environment.

"Speaking to publicans across Dublin we understand there has been a strong interest from the public, with a significant level of customer bookings confirmed for the opening week. There is a demand out there for the reopening, it will now be up to each individual pub to make sure they provide an environment that maintains public confidence and allows them to continue to trade," Mr. O'Keeffe concluded.

