

Christmas Market to continue despite Plan B Covid rules

Nottingham's outdoor Christmas Market will continue as usual despite the Government's Plan B Covid restrictions.

Nottingham City Council said the Old Market Square attraction will not be impacted despite a raft of new government measures to slow the [spread of the Omicron variant](#).

The changes include Covid passports for football stadiums, nightclubs and other venues where large groups gather.

A spokesperson for Nottingham City Council said: "There will be no impact of [Government's Plan B](#) on festive markets like ours in Nottingham.

"Our guidance remains consistent with what we've said from the outset. Wear a face covering if you can't socially distance. Take a lateral flow test before attending any event this Christmas where you will be at 'higher risk' of Covid.

"Don't attend any events if you have Covid-like symptoms. Get a PCR test."

Masks must be worn in more settings including cinemas, theatres and churches as measures are tightened in England in a bid to slow the spread of the latest coronavirus variant.

Tougher restrictions have been branded a "necessary evil" by a scientist advising the Government, who said the new approach "absolutely is not an overreaction".

Sports stadia are also included in regulations published on Thursday evening, but the Department of Health confirmed face coverings will only be mandatory in indoor areas.

Meanwhile, there are suggestions visitors in social care

settings will be limited to only three designated visitors as part of plans being considered by ministers.

There were a total of 817 confirmed cases of the Omicron variant in the UK as of Thursday, the UK Health Security Agency said.

It comes as Public Health Scotland urged people to cancel their Christmas parties, in a message contradicting PM Boris Johnson's suggestion that festive parties in England should still go ahead despite a call for workers to stay away from offices.

The Prime Minister has been embroiled in allegations of Number 10 failing to follow its own rules and hosting Christmas parties breaching Covid guidelines a year ago.

Despite the PM repeatedly denying anything happened, evidence to the contrary is mounting and an internal investigation is underway.

The PM previously told Parliament: "All guidance was followed completely during [sic] Number 10".



People browsing the Christmas market in Nottingham
(Image: PA)

Dr Nick Phin, Public Health Scotland' director of public health science, said revellers should delay their festive gatherings until another time to help in the effort to slow virus spread.

Professor John Edmunds, a member of the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (Sage), said cases of the variant will keep rising.

On restrictions, he told a Royal Society of Medicine briefing: "I think it's a necessary evil ... it's very damaging for parts of the economy, the hospitality sector, retail sector in particular – they're going to be affected.

"Unfortunately, we have to do it. The rate at which this virus is spreading is doubling every two or three days.

"Even though there's very few cases here now, and it seems

like an overreaction, it absolutely is not an overreaction.”

Health Secretary Sajid Javid has warned that the number of UK Omicron infections could hit one million by the end of the month.

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