**Keeping everyone safe**

There are still restrictions on groups meeting indoors and outdoors and guidance from the various governments in Britain & Ireland can be found at <https://www.mothersunion.org/sites/default/files/resources/public/Starting%20to%20meet%20together.docx>

But it’s more than just keeping to current Government guidance. Remember that some members may have been shielding for a long time and may still be cautious about mixing socially, even at a distance. We need to make sure that as Mothers' Union members start to gather together again, everyone can feel safe.

**Avoiding the spread of Covid-19**

Everyone can take steps to make meeting together safer. Many members will have received both their vaccine doses which reduce, but do not eliminate, the chances of catching Covid-19 or of passing it on.

Anyone with Covid-19 symptoms, however mild, or who is required to self-isolate for whatever reason, should stay at home and not invite visitors to their home or garden. If you have symptoms of Covid-19 you should arrange to have a PCR test.

**Social Distancing**

As social distancing requirements are relaxed in some areas of Britain & Ireland, it becomes more of a personal choice on whether to keep a distance from family and friends. Inevitably, those choices will be different, so it is important to make space for people to keep their distance if they wish.

While you may be allowed to hug your friends, please check to make sure they are comfortable with being hugged!

**Outdoors or indoors?**

Meeting outside allows Covid-19 particles to be blown away and less likely to be breathed in by another person.

If you are meeting indoors, make sure the space is well ventilated – open windows and doors to let in plenty of fresh air. The more fresh air that is brought inside, the quicker any airborne virus particles will be removed.

It is good practice to carry out your own risk assessment for meetings you organise, especially if you are using alternative premises or meeting outdoors. Don’t forget to think about weather related risks if meeting outside – whether that is shelter from strong sun or from rain. A risk assessment guide can be found at <https://www.mothersunion.org/sites/default/files/resources/public/Risk%20Assessment.docx>

**Keep members informed**

Do let members know what steps are being taken to keep them safe and give them the chance to express any concerns they may have about meeting together again, so these can be taken into consideration.