

Open letter to persons organising and/or participating in public gatherings

The MPS strongly advises people not to attend any large gathering, for the protection of yourselves and others. We are still in the middle of a global pandemic.

Please be advised that you may also be at risk of committing a criminal offence. Under the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Steps) (England) Regulations 2021 no person may participate in a gathering of more than 6 people outdoors, unless certain exemptions apply.

There is an exemption for a protest event, the organiser having carried out a full risk assessment and taken all steps to limit the transmission of the virus. Other exemptions apply to gatherings that are necessary for the purposes of work, providing emergency assistance or escaping the risk of harm. This open letter does not contain all the provisions.

To find the Regulations, look on line at www.legislation.gov.uk.

If you attend a gathering that breaches the Regulations, you may be committing an offence, which is punishable by a fine. In certain circumstances, if you hold a gathering of over 30 persons and you do not meet the requirements of the Regulations you might be committing a different offence, which is also punishable by a fine. It is also an offence to encourage others to unlawfully participate in a gathering (contrary to s44 or 45 of the Serious Crime Act 2007). Police officers will take appropriate enforcement action where necessary.

It is your responsibility to check the current position and ensure you are not committing an offence by being involved in a gathering. We urge anyone arranging a large gathering to inform your local police.

We all need to continue to do our part to prevent the spread of the virus.

MPS Commander Public Order.