

Frances Martin

Executive Director of Economic
Growth & Neighbourhood Services
Reading Borough Council, Civic
Offices, Bridge St, Reading, RG1
2LU

Our Ref: 022908/LIC

Direct: 📞 [REDACTED]

E mail: [REDACTED]

24 June 2021

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Your contact is: **Robert Smalley, Licensing**

Dear Ms Gurung,

THE RED COW INN, 56 STAR ROAD, READING, RG4 5BE

I attended the above premises on 10/06/2021 to conduct a COVID compliance inspection, following concerns raised during my previous proactive visit to the premises on 18/04/2021 as well as to discuss a complaint that the Council had received pertaining to unauthorised licensable activities and public nuisance occurring in your garden on 16/05/2021.

My COVID compliance inspection did not highlight any major areas of concern, however, please note the following improvements that should be made:

1. It recommended that you increase the number of face covering signs, so that all entrances to the premises, including the garden, have a sign reminding customers that the wearing of face coverings is mandatory.
2. A pair of tables located in the right hand corner of the premises (as seen when entering via the front door) were less than 1m apart. Please ensure that you are compliant with the requirement to have a separation distance of 2 metres or 1 metre+ between tables. 1 metre+ means that tables can be 1m apart, however, there must be other steps taken to mitigate the risks of COVID-19 spreading (use of screens to separate tables, back to back seating, side by side seating etc).
3. Please ensure that your cleaning products comply with standards BS EN 13697/ 1276 & BS EN 14476. Furthermore, ensure that the cleaning products are applied to surfaces for their recommended contact time before wiping them off. This information can be found on the product's label.

Following a complaint received about unauthorised licensable activities and public nuisance taking place in the garden of your premises, I collected a USB thumb drive from you with CCTV footage that you had loaded onto it. This footage was recorded on 16/05/2021 from 2300hrs until 0000hrs. This footage clearly showed:

1. That the premises was in breach of COVID regulations in place at the time that required alcohol to be consumed while seated (The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Steps) (England) Regulations 2021 - Schedule 2, Part 2, Section 9, Subsection 4(b)).

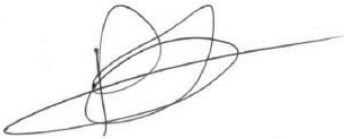
2. That the premises was in breach of COVID regulations in place at the time that required customers to remain with the group that they entered the premises with (The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Steps) (England) Regulations 2021 - Schedule 2, Part 1, Section 7, Subsection 1(a) & (b)).
3. That the premises was in breach of condition 3 on the premises licence under the heading 'Prevention of Public Nuisance'. This condition states that 'The external seating areas shall be cleared of patrons from 2300 hours and shall not be used between 2300 hours and 1000 hours.' The CCTV footage shows that all customers didn't leave the premises until 2342 hours. This is an offence under Section 136 of the Licensing Act 2003.
4. Members of staff were seen entering and leaving the area and interacting with customers. Following these interactions, no change in the customers' behaviour was witnessed.

The CCTV you provided provides evidence of breaches and this shall be retained on your premises record.

These matters are serious legal breaches, which could lead to formal action including financial penalties. In relation to the COVID breaches specifically, they are also conditions which could lead the virus to spread and cause an outbreak, which is a major concern. You must ensure that you operate in a covid secure way in full compliance with the regulations and the guidance available at the time.

Please contact highrisksettings.cv19@reading.gov.uk if you would like to discuss this email or require further support.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Robert Smalley
Licensing Enforcement Officer