

Craig y Nos Castle Weddings and the Coronavirus

Update 11/03/2020 09.00 hrs

“Keep Calm & Carry On”

Currently all weddings are going ahead as planned. The message until the Government says otherwise, is that weddings can carry on as normal. The message from the Government for the moment is very much, Keep Calm and Carry On.

While infections are currently on the rise in the UK, South Wales is reasonably unaffected. But this will probably change. Like you, we are watching the news and keeping ourselves informed, day to day.

Weddings versus ‘Large Public Gatherings’

Large public gatherings and sporting events may be cancelled, or held ‘behind closed doors’. In any large group you do not know who may be infected. Weddings on the other hand involve relatively small gatherings of people, who know each other. You have a bit more control and may be able to avoid inviting people who are contagious. However there is an incubation period when people can be infectious without any symptoms.

Ask Guests with Symptoms to ‘Self-Isolate’

At a wedding you, the wedding couple, are the organiser. You can control who is invited. As a venue we suggest you contact all your guests to ask if any guests have symptoms, to let you know. In line with Government advice, guests who have any symptoms should stay at home. This is in line with Government advice for citizens with symptoms to self-isolate.

The Government is saying even if you have mild symptoms (as the majority of those infected will), you should self-isolate, as you are still contagious.

Even if none of your guests have symptoms, you may feel it is best to exclude any guests over the age of 60 with underlying health problems, for their own safety. You may also wish to avoid inviting any guests who have recently travelled to areas known to have a high rate of infection. However the areas ‘with infection’ are increasing daily.

Reductions in Guest Numbers; your Contractual Guarantees and Minimum Number Requirements

The absence of some guests from your wedding may affect your guest numbers. This may bring you below the minimum number for your wedding package and / or cause you not to meet your

'accommodation use' guarantee. Please discuss any reductions in guest numbers with your wedding planner. Should your numbers drop below the guaranteed level in your wedding contract, there may be a small charge in accordance with the terms. However it is our policy to be as flexible and fair as possible in this regard, given the national situation.

Possible Government Interventions & Outcomes

The situation is fast moving, changing daily. China appears to have slowed its rate of infection while in Europe, new cases are doubling every few days. China seems to be over its peak within 3 months, using strict quarantine measures. Should the UK opt to quarantine sections of the country, this could prevent a few weddings from going ahead over a period of several weeks. For weddings still able to go ahead, a number of guests may be unable to attend, if they are not allowed to travel.

Should the virus spread, as various scenarios suggest, it may affect a large percentage of the population over a set period of time, before the rate of infection slows. This suggests a 'bloc' of weddings within a period of say 4-5 weeks, during any peak in infection spread, *may need postponing*. When this period of peak infection will be, or even if it will happen in the UK, is unclear, but it is probable.

Meanwhile we are all reading the same news and will follow all current scientific / Government advice. If coronavirus makes it impossible for your wedding to take place, and postponement is 'outside your control' (as opposed to 'optional'), we *will* arrange free postponement to a later date.

Should it be necessary for you to move the date, it then becomes a question of when to move your wedding to. More on this below.

Postponements and Cancellations:

There are two types of postponement we anticipate occurring – of which, so far, none have occurred.

The first is 'Optional' where you choose to postpone to a later date, and pay the appropriate postponement fee. The second is 'Non-Optional', where you have no choice but to postpone. In the latter case we would not impose a financial charge for rebooking to any later date on the same terms.

'Optional Postponements' will be charged for according to your contractual terms. Your wedding planner will advise you what these are (or please refer to your copy of your wedding contract). You should also check the terms of postponement / cancellation for your various wedding suppliers, e.g. DJ, florist, photographer, Registrar etc., as their terms may also influence your choices.

As above, any postponements mandated by Government intervention and advice will not be subject to a charge. Other wedding suppliers may not take the same stance. Our advice for now is to do nothing about postponing, until you know you have 'no option', as none of us know what is going to happen or when, and you could get the timing wrong.

Outright cancellation will be subject to our terms of cancellation. This is because while we may not be able to host your wedding on your wedding date, if the Government quarantines parts of the country etc., we will still be able to host your wedding **at some future date**. On the basis we can still hold your wedding at some future point, any cancellations will be subject to our standard cancellation terms unless national law supercedes this. The question will then be, when to postpone to?

Period of Postponement:

Remember 'Optional Postponements' will involve a charge in accordance with our terms. 'Non-Optional' postponements will involve NO transfer charge.

Postponement one year ahead into 2021 is currently possible as we do not have too many dates booked in 2021. There was a surge in demand for 2020 due to the year being the first in a new decade. 2021 was looking much quieter, which means postponement into a similar date for the 2021 year will be possible, subject to availability.

Postponement by a few weeks or months will only be possible if you choose a midweek date. Only midweek dates are available up to end October 2020, as all weekends are booked until November.

Should you postpone your wedding?

Whether you postpone your wedding depends whether or not your guests are free to attend and are reasonably safe in doing so. As of today, our advice is to wait and watch the news, as no one knows what is going to happen, or when. By rushing any decision now, you could postpone into a period when it is not possible to hold your wedding, from a date when it is still possible to hold your wedding.

We are not experts so we cannot advise you. We therefore feel it is best to follow the advice of the experts. The Government's medical experts and advisers will determine if, when and for how long, the free movement of people should be restricted and this in turn will determine if and when events need to be cancelled.

If you 'opt' to postpone, ahead of Government imposed restrictions or advice, you will incur fees. You will certainly lose deposits with various suppliers. But if you are 'obliged' to postpone by Government action or advice, most wedding suppliers will probably not seek to enforce their contractual terms.

The Government's current strategy is 'contain and delay', hoping for the summer to come along when the virus should die down in warmer weather. A warm spring could slow the rate of infection and mean that Summer weddings are unaffected. Come the summer we may even wonder what all the fuss was about!

But we cannot be complacent and it is possible the virus will pick up again in the winter. Longer term a new flu vaccine will come along but we read in the papers that a vaccine is a year off. So if a vaccine is not developed in time for weddings this winter, we could be looking at the same uncertainty in October/ November that we face now. This means if you were to postpone, you might be better to think about summer 2021, rather than November 2020.

Or you might take the view that the virus will have peaked in a few weeks and you may feel by November it will be all over, and so if you *have to* postpone your date, you'd move to November or December.

Instalment Plans & Wedding Insurance.

We may wish to encourage instalment payments for delayed weddings. Normally we prefer to take payment a few days before the wedding, so our income falls in the same month as the event. But with weddings being postponed it may suit both parties to set up an instalment plan for the balance of the cost of the wedding to be paid over a period of time leading up to the postponed date. This will balance our cash flow and spread the cost of your wedding over more months.

If you opt for an instalment plan, you will be making more advance payments to the venue ahead of your wedding and may wish to buy insurance. We recommend you take out wedding insurance to cover you in the event the venue is unable to service your wedding for whatever reason (though coronavirus is likely to be excluded now). John Lewis provide wedding insurance.

New Couples Booking Weddings in 2020, 2021 and beyond.

We are taking bookings as normal for Last Minute Weddings to end March 2021, and for regular wedding packages on any available date. Should you opt to postpone your wedding date, the standard postponement terms will apply. Should national events 'force' the postponement of your wedding for reasons completely outside your control, we will be flexible and fair with the moving of dates at no cost, in accordance with Government Policy and advice and subject to availability.