

July 4th – is this freedom day?

Today there will be restaurants, cafes and pubs open. More life will return to town centres and village streets after the long hibernation.

Some businesses are very positive. They have worked hard to come up with compliant models for doing business, and are hopeful customers will return. They desperately need support so some cash flows through the tills to start paying some of the bills.

Others are worried. Some still are banned from opening at all. Some have permission but do not see how they can make their model work, given limitations of space in their premises and the demands of social distancing.

Today I would be interested to know the reactions of my readers to this partial relaxation. Will you hit the town to buy a coffee or have lunch out? Do you want to visit the pub? Will you eat or drink in doors, or opt for the garden choice if the weather allows?

The government is worried in case too many people rush to the centres and fail to keep some distance between them. The businesses are worried in case a cautious public stays away in large numbers, leaving the hospitality businesses with all the costs of their new set up and not enough revenue to justify it. It is your town or village centre we are talking about. Those who want to save them have to use them. Governments cannot subsidise them indefinitely to serve too few people.