



The Coronavirus pandemic seems to be entering a new phase, with cases in the UK rising sharply but cases of serious illness much less prevalent. A situation that is leading to governments discussing plans to reduce and even remove restrictions over the next couple of months. Whilst this is very welcome news, for some it will of course also be cause for concern.

For Dhanakosa it means a new phase of actively managing our changing response to the pandemic as these circumstances shift, and as government advice begins to change. We are of course currently still awaiting details of the new advice and confirmation of the time-line but there are a few general points I would like to make. Firstly, to note that the time-line in Scotland is likely to be different to the time line in England, and it is of course the Scottish time line and guidance that we will be using when scheduling changes to our own infection control rules. The provisional schedule for easing to Level 0 means that we are able to book on a very small number of extra people for retreats in late July and early August. However, during this period all other control measures we have in place currently will stay in place. From 9<sup>th</sup> of August we are expecting further relaxation of controls, however as yet we do not have confirmation of exactly what these will be or when they will be implemented. We are currently anticipating some increase in numbers on retreats to be possible with some room sharing returning for retreats starting after this date, but we are not anticipating the removal of all infection control measures or a return to full capacity, even if the legal situation allows it. Instead, we will enter our own transitional phase and assess the situation as it unfolds. As soon as we have confirmation of a date from which we can make additional places available we will announce this on our web site and by e-mail to the mailing list.

As well as the huge impact the vaccination programme has had over the last few months, the availability of rapid lateral flow testing has also been a significant change. Rapid testing does have its limitations, but it does facilitate a significant increase in our ability to assess and manage risk. Rapid testing is an important part of our system at the current time and is likely to remain so for a while longer. If you don't agree with testing, or don't want to test for some other reason, please hold off booking your retreat until we have been able to drop this element of our management.

At the outset of the pandemic we made rapid changes to our cancellations policy to try and accommodate the unprecedented levels of disruption and respond more flexibly to individuals circumstances. At this end of the pandemic we are still experiencing exceptional volatility in bookings with significant numbers of late cancellations meaning that even though demand for retreat far exceeds the available places many retreats are running with empty spaces. It simply is not possible to fill spaces at the last minute even where there is a large waiting list. Whilst we recognise that life circumstances don't always go to plan, if you do need to cancel a retreat please do give us as much warning as possible. Not just for the sake of our own economic situation, but for the sake of other people who are desperate to get on retreat but who also may not be able to make last minute changes to their plans.

We now also have made changes to our cancellations and transfers policy to make it more flexible as we go forward into the post pandemic area and made changes to how we manage waiting lists to give us a better

chance of actually running retreats with all the limited places we have available filled. These changes will be published on our web site.

The retreats we have been able to run have gone very well. With those people who have been able to get on retreat expressing enormous gratitude for the opportunity in what has been an extremely difficult time. And our own team have very much felt that it has been worth the extra work in trying to make the retreat space available despite the difficulties in managing and maintaining a safe environment. We very much look forward to the situation becoming easier but recognise that there is still a journey for us all to go on as we move forward. We remain committed to doing so carefully, safely, and with as few barriers to participation in retreats as we can manage.

We look forward to seeing you all on retreat again soon.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nayaka', written in a cursive style.

Nayaka  
Centre Director