

Monumental day for hospitality – LVA

“Many glasses will be raised throughout the country in celebration this weekend”

The Licensed Vintners Association (LVA) has described the decision to scrap all restrictions on hospitality from 6am on Saturday 22nd January as a “monumental day for all of hospitality”.

Hospitality has been operating under significant restrictions for a total of 678 days, since pubs and late night venues closed their doors at the outset of the pandemic on 15th March 2020.

Reacting to the news, Donall O’Keeffe, Chief Executive of the LVA said, “This is a monumental day for all of hospitality. Overall the feelings of joy, relief and excitement are permeating throughout the sector. We are delighted this has all happened so quickly, the speed with which things have progressed this week has been amazing. Some in the sector were worried this day may never come.

“This is a special moment but it needs to be said this wouldn’t have been possible if it were not for the unbelievable effort put in by our health service and all our front line workers throughout the pandemic. They have done the truly hard and difficult work that has allowed the country to reach this point. We have also been very lucky to have seen such a tremendous vaccine rollout and all involved in all these activities deserve the thanks of everyone in hospitality and the rest of the nation.

“While this is a day that we have been waiting a very long time for and we are unbelievably excited to get our doors fully open again, after 678 days of full or partial closure our industry is going to take time to recover. We have not had anywhere near normal trading for more than 22 months now and businesses throughout the hospitality sector will need a little more assistance to get them back on their feet.

“We would like to see the Government maintain the supports they have been providing for the coming months. We are also seeking the waiving of the upfront Special Exemption Order fees required for late night venues during their initial period of reopening.

“For now we are just excited to see hospitality return and start getting back to normality. We can’t wait to see towns and cities around Ireland thriving again well into the night and the full return of Ireland’s world famous hospitality. We are also really looking forward to seeing our customers at bar counters once more.

“We have no doubt that many glasses will be raised throughout the country in celebration this weekend,” Mr. O’Keeffe concluded.