

Hair salon Buddies up to appointment-only system

The Covid-19 pandemic has given a city hairdressers the chance to cut with past traditions and switch to an appointment only-based app.

Buddies of Portobello, which has just celebrated 35 years in business, has done away with walk-ins and a queueing system as it prepares to open for business again on 15 July.

The move will help the Portobello High Street barbers and salon maintain Covid-19 compliant safety standards by minimising the number of people on the premises at any one time and keep staff and clients safe.

The hairdressers has been contacting clients through social media channels to advise them of the new system which can be accessed via their [Facebook](#) page and [Instagram account](#).

Owner Paul Turner said after the Setmore app system went live they were swamped with more than 500 bookings in the first few days but he said staff are delighted at the new procedure.

Paul said: "On a busy Saturday we can have 18 to 20 people queuing and now that we are living with coronavirus that is clearly a non-starter. Having that many people waiting also puts the staff under a bit of pressure, so changing to this new method will reduce staff stress levels and hopefully make it a much healthier environment for everyone.

"The appointment-only system also benefits our clients as it cuts out the frustration of trying to get a haircut at busier

periods, allowing for much better time management, both for them and for us as a business.

“The hairdressing sector and customer-facing businesses in general are now operating in a whole new environment and now is the time to embrace this change, which in a lot of ways is long overdue.”



Queuing no more at Buddies of Portobello with appointment only

post Covid-19

Clients are advised to bring with them their own face covering which must be worn when entering the salon and staff will wear PPE.

Paul said that for older clients, who may not be as tech-savvy as the younger generation, they will adopt a more relaxed approach and accept a face-to-face bookings, but will then ask those clients to return to Buddies at the appointed time.

He added: "We understand that not everyone has the latest smartphone or is familiar with tablets and laptops, so we can make allowances but still adhere to the appointment system.

"The queuing system is so outdated and one of the few pluses of Covid-19 will be that businesses like ours will adapt to this new world and hopefully will provide a better and more efficient service for our clients.

"It also means if we have a member of staff off ill or not able to work for some reason, we can rearrange their bookings and it avoids the scenario of having a very busy shop but not enough staff to cope with the demand.

"Portobello is a thriving, go-ahead community and we are sure our clients, old and new, will welcome this new approach and accept it is time we moved with the times to be able to offer them a superior service."