Reopening Museums Toolkit

Museums play a critical role in society by contributing to dialogue and understanding between peoples and cultures, facilitating cohesion in communities. To ensure that museums maintain public trust, the following toolkit will provide information to help you adapt to the current requirements for reopening.

This toolkit is designed to help museums to reopen after the Covid-19 pandemic in a safe and effective manner. It is available to download or view from the South East Museum Development Programme website as a full document or as a series of fact sheets that you can use for the different parts of your organisation. For this reason, you may find repetition on some pages.

Please bear in mind that this document has been written to provide practical advice, but the authors are not legal or medical experts. Please obtain specialist advice if you require it.

While we will do our best to keep the information in this Toolkit up-to-date, we ask you to please check the latest Government advice while you develop your plans.

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Are you ready to reopen?   14/05/2020

The key question of this toolkit is whether, or not you are ready to reopen.

Reopening is unlikely to be straightforward for many museums, and may require obtaining specialist advice, additional funds and rethinking how you operate both physically and virtually.

The goal is to get back to business both safely and efficiently. The safety of your staff, volunteers and visitors is your first duty as an organisation. You may have to make hard choices about reopening if you feel that you cannot make the workplace as safe as you need to.

The safety of your collection will also be a concern, and depending on your organisation, you may not have the flexibility to ensure that collections are free from risk of cross-contamination.

Questions to ask yourself

- Is it possible to reopen?
- Can you ensure the safety of your workforce?
- Have you taken advice from your Health and Safety representative (if you have one) or another specialist?
- Is it safe to open to visitors?
- Will you damage your reputation if you reopen too early and don't get everything right?
- Have you done a thorough risk assessment?
- Is there flexibility to make adaptations in your museum to support new ways of working?
- Have you spoken to your team? Do they have concerns about returning to work?
- Is there anyone available to open the doors? Are your staff or volunteers in the shielding groups?
- Do you need to investigate alternative ways of operating and working?
- Would it make more sense to wait until you have more resources at your disposal before reopening?
- How do you want to physically present your museum on reopening to build public trust and confidence in visiting?
- Have you considered how your staff, volunteers and visitors can access your site? Will they need to use public or private transport?
- What communications messages do you need to put out there to build confidence and capture the public mood?
- Do you have the funds to reopen? Will you have to pay for additional things before you welcome back visitors – such as deep cleaning and personal protective equipment (PPE)?

- Have you done a cost versus benefits analysis of the possibility of opening?
- If reopening is not a possibility for you right now, what do you need to put into place to make it possible later on?
- Can you offer virtual or remote content if physical re-opening is not a possibility right now?

"You probably don't think about how important they [museums]
are in your daily life, but when you really think about it,
you remember how important they are."
Canterbury, Public perceptions of - and attitudes to - the purposes of museums in society,
A report prepared by BritainThinks for Museums Association, March 2013,
https://www.museumsassociation.org/download?id=954916

Resources

Latest information from the Government
https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus

The Government's recovery strategy
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/our-plan-to-rebuild-the-uk-governments-covid-19-recovery-strategy

Statement from Museums Association
https://www.museumsassociation.org/news/04052020-reopening-the-museum-sector-ma-statement

Everything you need to know about risk assessments
https://mdem.org.uk/more-information/useful-resources/creating-safe-environment/#.XrPy30nsbv8

Risk Assessment template
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Example Risk Assessment
Appendix 7

Coronavirus (COVID-19): advice for employers and employees
https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus

Health and Safety advice
https://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/workplace/facilities.htm

Preparing to return to work
https://www.tuc.org.uk/research-analysis/reports/preparing-return-work-outside-home-trade-union-approach

A strategy primer for museums
https://www.museumnext.com/article/post-covid-balancing-act-a-strategy-primer-for-museums/

What others are doing to prepare
https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/application/files/8915/8859/1908/Resources_for_planning_for_post_Covid_re-opening_003.pdf

Visit England Kitemark
https://www.visitbritain.org/new-industry-standard-development-response-covid-19

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Reopening Museums Toolkit

Staffing

12/06/2020

Reopening your museum will rely first and foremost on your most important assets – the people who keep your organisation running.

For your Front of House team, there may be concerns about the face-to-face nature of their roles, physical contact and the anxieties they have around the virus. Mental health and wellbeing may become more of a priority for your organisation when considering visitor interactions, and social distancing in offices or stores. You may be requiring heightened vigilance from your staff, as well as dealing with the worries of your visitors.

Staff are likely to need a degree of 'retraining', especially if they have been off for longer than 12 weeks. You may need to arrange a day or two for people to come in and remind themselves of procedures (such as how the till works, what the fire evacuation procedure is, IT logins, etc). This may need to be spread out over several days if social distancing is still in place. You may also want to limit exposure to different groups of staff/volunteers and institute a buddy system so that people are only exposed to the same individuals.

Questions to ask yourself

- How many staff are you realistically going to be working with (some staff might not return immediately, be part of the shielding group or have underlying health conditions or caring responsibilities)?
- What is the museum's policy on staff not wanting to return to work when requested (for whatever reason)?
- How will you communicate with your staff to understand their concerns around contact and potential exposure? How will you find out what would make them feel safer at work?
- How will you address additional mental health or wellbeing anxieties?
- Will you require personal protective equipment (PPE) for your staff or visitors?
- How can you adapt your Front of House and back office facilities to encourage social distancing?
- Can some staff continue to work from home?
- Will you need more hand washing facilities?
- Will you need to investigate costings and practicalities for social distancing measures? These might include screens at pay points, signage and zone markings on the floor.
- Will your staff need to use public transport to access your site? Can the risks of this be mitigated?
- Have you considered the legal implications of reopening? Will you be able to guarantee that you have made reasonable and effective health and safety changes to protect your staff?

- Have you investigated costings and practicalities for more regular and more thorough cleaning?
- Will your staff need training on additional hygiene practices?
- Have you done a comprehensive risk assessment for returning staff to ensure they will be safe?

"The museum we closed will not be the museum we reopen."
https://www.aam-us.org/2020/04/27/the-museum-we-closed-will-not-be-the-museum-we-reopen/

Resources

Government guidance for people who work in or run offices, contact centres and similar indoor environments.
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/offices-and-contact-centres

Health and Safety advice
https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/social-distancing-coronavirus.htm

Government guidance for businesses
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/guidance-for-employers-and-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19

Gov't guidance for social distancing in a range of workplace scenarios
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-food-businesses/guidance-for-food-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19

Risk Assessment template
Appendix 4

General information on reopening museums in America
https://www.aam-us.org/2020/04/29/how-to-get-ready-to-open-the-doors/

Workers' Rights
https://unitetheunion.org/campaigns/coronavirus-covid-19-advice/

Reopening Museums Toolkit

Volunteers 12/06/2020

With many volunteers finding themselves in the community-shielding group, reopening is likely to be a challenge for museums who rely heavily on volunteer support.

For many volunteers, there will be concerns about the face-to-face nature of their roles, physical contact and the anxieties they have around the virus. Mental health and wellbeing may become more of a priority for your organisation when considering visitor interactions, and social distancing in offices or stores. For shielded volunteers, health concerns and medical treatment will be a big worry and could lead to volunteers stepping away from their roles.

Providing a sense of belonging, community and purpose for volunteers is an important aspect of museum work. Volunteers are likely to need a degree of 'retraining', especially if they have been away for longer than 12 weeks. It may be prudent to arrange a day or two for people to come in and remind themselves of procedures (such as fire evacuation procedures and any additional hygiene requirements of their role, etc). This may need to be spread out over several days if social distancing is still in place. You may want to limit exposure to different groups of staff/volunteers, as well instituting a buddy system where people are only exposed to the same individuals.

There is also an opportunity for museums to grow their volunteer base. Many people have got involved with volunteering in their local community during this crisis. They have been keen 'to do their bit' by helping the NHS or delivering food. As those opportunities reduce, now is a good time to promote volunteering at your museum, particularly if there is a way to offer flexible, short-term, community-focused projects. For example, what about a museum garden that needs a bit of tending to become a space for older visitors to enjoy, or a painting job on a picnic shelter?

Questions to ask yourself

- How many volunteers are you realistically going to be working with (some volunteers may not wish to return, be part of the shielding group or have underlying health conditions or caring responsibilities)?
- How will you communicate with your volunteers to understand their concerns around contact and potential exposure? How will you find out what would make them feel safer and limit their exposure?
- How will you address additional mental health or wellbeing anxieties?
- Will you require personal protective equipment (PPE) for your volunteers?
- Can your volunteers assist in the manufacture of personal protective equipment as a remote task? These will not be medical grade, but may offer some reassurance.
- Will your volunteers need training on additional hygiene practices, and will they have responsibilities in that area?

- How can your museum offer a sense of belonging, community and purpose to volunteers who are able to come in, and also to those who can't?
- Have you considered the legal implications of reopening? Will you be able to guarantee that you have made reasonable and effective health and safety changes to protect your volunteers?
- Are there remote opportunities for volunteers who wish to remain involved but cannot physically be present?
- Will your volunteers need to use public transport to access your site? Can the risks of this be mitigated?
- Have you done a comprehensive risk assessment for returning volunteers to ensure they will be safe?
- How can you tap into the increase of volunteers mobilised by the pandemic? Can you list your organisation on a website to let volunteers know they can support their communities through their local museums?
- Is there an opportunity to recruit some new volunteers?
- Can you support your volunteers with weekly phone catch ups where needed, or Zoom meetings if they can't physically be on site? Volunteers could deliver short talks about the remote work they have completed.
- Can you plan how to retain your volunteers who are shielding and won't be able to return for a while?
- If you are planning to reopen with timed ticketing, you could consider offering a formal set tour using a specific route formulated with input from your guides.

"I think it's really important in times of crisis, when people are doing something positive it does make you feel a little bit calmer and more in control.
It certainly does me."
Sali Hughes, https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-51908023

Resources

Government guidance for people who work in or run offices, contact centres and similar indoor environments.
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/offices-and-contact-centres

Volunteering resources
https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/coronavirus/involving-volunteers

How to make a face mask (not medical grade)
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html

Volunteering services online
https://www.ncvo.org.uk/ncvo-volunteering

Blog about why people volunteer, with links to *Time Well Spent* research
https://blogs.ncvo.org.uk/2019/01/25/time-well-spent-what-weve-learned-about-the-volunteer-experience/

Risk Assessment template
Appendix 4

Places to advertise volunteering opportunities
https://www.ncvo.org.uk/ncvo-volunteering/i-want-to-volunteer
https://www.furlonteer.com/?mc_cid=91efa87ddb&mc_eid=3d9f7c5f08

Succession and recovery planning   14/05/2020

Before you open your doors, you may want to consider succession and recovery planning. You may already have a plan in place. You may not have considered one before. Whilst a plan is crucial for any kind of setback, it is even more important in uncertain times. The current situation is changing rapidly, so even a rough plan can help you think ahead for problems such as a lack of staff or volunteers (including Trustees) who may no longer be able to (or wish to) work at the museum.

Questions to ask yourself

- Do you have a Succession or Recovery Plan, or an interim Forward Plan?
- If you have a plan, is it up to date and relevant?
- Have you considered your staff and volunteers, changes in government guidelines and the risks of uncertainty?
- Have you considered other local museums and organisations you could form partnerships with? Are there people in your area you could work with to share information, support each other and reassure your communities?
- Have you considered unforeseen risks that may present themselves later?
- Do you have an emergency list of contacts to get things organised if you need to work fast?

"By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail."
Benjamin Franklin

Resources

Interim Forward Plan
Appendix 2

Succession planning framework
https://southeastmuseums.org/resource-library/succession-planning/

Succession Plan template
https://collectionstrust.org.uk/resource/succession-planning-framework/

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Audiences 14/05/2020

You may already have a good idea of who your museum's usual audiences are, but this demographic information may no longer be as relevant after reopening. The current lockdown situation is unique. A lot depends on how safe and financially secure people feel before they start visiting museums again.

It is likely that international visitors will be slower to return to the UK, but local families may be more interested in visiting museums than previously. Large segments of audiences also fall into shielded groups, so access needs will have to be supported in new ways.

Data gathered from Twitter has indicated that some visitors would feel more comfortable accessing heritage through outdoor and open-air venues as social distancing is much easier to achieve in that space. Museums should look at the outdoor aspects their sites and consider how these areas can be better used.

Research commissioned by the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (ALVA) in April 2020 suggests that visitors to tourist attractions:

- o Are more comfortable with the idea of visiting open-air sites and country parks.
- o Will avoid places which they perceive to be crowded or where there might be queues.
- o Will expect pre-booking options and social distancing measures.
- o Will expect staff to be visibly cleaning spaces and enforcing social distancing.
- o Will wait until they see others visit a tourist attraction before venturing out themselves.
- o The over-55s are the keenest to visit, but they also have the highest expectations of social distancing and good hygiene.
- o Londoners and the under 35s are the least likely to visit tourist attractions anytime soon.
- o Visitors want to know what safety measures you have in place before they visit and see them actively enforced during their visit.

Questions to ask yourself

- ● Who will your returning audiences be?
- ● How can you best reach these audiences to tell them you are open again?
- ● Will you need to change how you manage your visitors using traffic flow systems or timed ticketing arrangements?
- ● What should your museum be physically offering (or not offering/keeping closed) to build public confidence in visiting?

- Will your visitors need to use public transport to access your site? Can the risks of this be mitigated? Do you need to provide more advice ahead of visits?
- What messages do you need to put out to help build public confidence and show your museum in a positive light?
- What does engagement look like for audiences still isolating after lockdown lifts and prior to vaccine?
- Have you considered the legal implications of reopening? Will you be able to guarantee that you have made reasonable and effective health and safety changes to protect your audiences?
- Some research has suggested that the public may be worried about crowded venues. How will you reassure them about your social distancing measures and crowd management?
- Can you investigate how you might open your grounds or outdoor spaces for small scale exhibitions or engagement work? What staffing would you need? Will you make charge for access? Will you need additional support?
- How will you use outdoor spaces to manage queues or provide content in open-air spaces? What happens when it rains?
- How can you provide engagement to shielded audiences?
- Have you done a comprehensive risk assessment for returning visitors to ensure they will be safe?

"A visit to a museum is a search for beauty, truth, and meaning in our lives. Go to museums as often as you can."
Maira Kalman, *https://joyofmuseums.com/quotes-about-museums/*

Resources

Market Prospects for ALVA Members when the pandemic abates
Appendix 1

ALVA Attractions Recovery Tracker
https://www.aim-museums.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/ALVA-attractions-recovery-tracker-wave-1.pdf

Marketing

12/06/2020

This fact sheet was prepared by freelance arts consultant Jo Finn, who spoke with marketing peers about how they are approaching their communications after lockdown.

Over the past four months museums have rightly been focused on keeping staff and visitors safe as well as addressing their financial concerns. But as the UK lockdown begins to ease, and museums prepare for reopening, the focus is starting to shift towards how to encourage visitors to return.

Covid-19 continues to create enormous challenges and compromises for our sector but there are opportunities to be explored and embraced when we reopen. This is unknown territory for all of us and ideas-sharing and learning from the approaches of museums around the world is likely to offer the most guidance.

Messaging balancing act

Getting the messaging right will be crucial, and regular sentiment scanning will help assess the mood of your audiences. Marketing messages are likely to be a balancing act between:

- Reassurance that your museum is safe to visit.
- Extending a heartfelt and warm welcome back.
- Being sensitive towards people's personal experiences of the pandemic (which could include personal health/loss of loved ones/financial hardship etc).
- Addressing your commercial drivers for income generation (e.g. donation requests/ticket sales).
- Managing expectations of the limited visitor experience due to social distancing and reduced facilities. Some museums are producing videos to show the new experience rather than relying on the written word.
- Demonstrating the role of museums in providing 'cultural nourishment' and escapism.

Where possible, coordinate with other venues locally to establish consistent messaging around queuing and distancing measures, etc. This could be part of a wider collaborative conversation about promoting your region as a 'staycation destination'.

Audit your comms channels first

Prior to making any reopening announcements carry out an audit of your messaging across all channels (online, in-venue, print collateral, etc) to identify what will need

updating. It is also worth testing your messaging with your various audience groups before 'going live' to check that it resonates with an appropriate tone.

You may wish to avoid using images of the venue looking busy when you reopen, being mindful of people's nervousness and showing that social distancing is possible. Something else to consider when auditing your channels. Will new photography be required?

Prepare an FAQ

Address common coronavirus-related queries with an FAQ on your website. This can also be referred to when responding to social media posts and press enquiries and will be a useful resource for FOH staff when visitors begin to return. Questions could include:

- When are you reopening?
- Will it be safe?
- Do I have to wear a mask?
- What will I be able to see?
- Will the toilets/café/shop be open?

Don't over-sanitise your comms

Whilst we have a responsibility to ensure that what we are communicating follows current government guidelines, you can still retain your own tone of voice. Go back to your first principles, brand values and vision and ensure they are central to all your comms including functional signage.

There is a risk of over-sanitising the visitor experience and putting people off with long lists of dos and don'ts. We are all experienced at social distancing and the 2m rule now and don't need to be constantly reminded. Remember your role in offering escapism.

Think about your audience segments

What will your visitor profile look like when you reopen? It may be some time before you welcome back schools, groups and overseas audiences. Identify the low-hanging fruit. Your new visitor demographic may be limited to individuals, couples and families from the local area in the first instance.

Talk to your audiences (including staff and volunteers). Find out what they have they missed and gauge their appetite for returning. You can address the concerns of your various audience groups with clear, nuanced and considered messaging.

Consider local nervousness about attracting visitors to the area and increasing the risk of Covid-19 spread. It will be important to get buy-in from this audience as travel continues to be restricted and staycations become the norm.

Don't neglect harder to reach audiences. Will new forms of outreach be needed in the absence of a schools' programme, etc? What are the opportunities here?

Lead generation opportunities

Are you ticketing entry in order to manage capacity with timed slots? Are you set up for online booking? Online ticketing will provide you with opportunities for data capture and lead generation. Think through marketing permissions and GDPR to future-proof new lists.

Flexibility and back to basics marketing

The vast majority of museums will be operating with reduced or zero marketing budget after lockdown and therefore the emphasis will be on owned (your website, email marketing and social media channels) and earned channels (press and 3rd party advocacy).

Any paid activity is likely to be digital first (which is more agile and offers more flexibility to ramp up and down as required). Use your analytics and evaluate what digital activity is successfully driving conversions and engagement. Adapt your digital approach accordingly.

Be mindful that there may be a glut of marketing activity as venues start to re-open. How will you have cut-through? Your usual channels might not work in the short-term and reopening offers an opportunity to go back to basics and rethink your marketing approach. Reflect on your vision and your USPs, revisit your brand values and your tone of voice, segment your audiences and target your messaging offer to attract visitors who are most likely to come back.

"The risk is that the messaging will blend into one, with overuse of phrases such as "We're Open!", "Welcome Back!" and so on. This might be the time for innovative marketers to really shine."
Market Prospects for ALVA Members when the pandemic, David Edwards (Scattered Clouds), 2020

Resources

The Arts Marketing Association (AMA) has published 'Resources to Support you Through Coronavirus
https://www.a-m-a.co.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-resources/

Museum Next has a range of marketing articles including tips on analytics, social media, and email marketing.
https://www.museumnext.com/article/category/marketing/

The Association of Independent Museums (AIM) has a new Marketing Success Guide.
https://www.aim-museums.co.uk/new-marketing-success-guide-published/

Network with peers at Museum Hour 8-9pm every Monday on Twitter
https://twitter.com/museumhour?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor

Upskill in digital marketing with free Google training courses
https://learndigital.withgoogle.com/digitalgarage/course/digital-marketing?ds_kid=43700053482823638&gclid=Cj0KCQjwz4z3BRCgARIsAES_OVcG5KsRnEneNy6bs9V_OwOD9H0gl-xdde3u9ZlZ9ZMnzj4CYrUa9v4aAiySEALw_wcB

Belfast City Council Tourism, Culture and Arts Unit: Marketing and Audience Development Toolkit for Arts and Heritage Organisation
https://southeastmuseums.org/resource-library/belfast-audience-toolkit/

Marketing-related guidance for charities from National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)
https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/studyzone/@@search?search=marketing

Marketing Planning – Where to Start from Museums Galleries Scotland
https://www.museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk/advice/raising-your-profile/marketing-planning-where-to-start/

Audience Finder – free access to national audience data, enabling cultural organisations to understand, compare and apply audience insight – from The Audience Agency
https://audiencefinder.org/

Audience Spectrum –segments the UK population by their attitudes towards culture, and by what they like to see and do into 10 different profiles – from The Audience Agency
https://www.theaudienceagency.org/audience-spectrum

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Reopening Museums Toolkit

Access and Disability Inclusion   14/05/2020

Accessibility can be problematic for some of your staff and volunteers when your museum reopens. For those audiences who find it difficult to physically visit your museum, or are part of a shielded group, alternative methods should be used to reach them virtually.

One of the biggest changes to our daily lives since the outbreak of Covid-19 is our use of technology and remote/virtual working. Digital meeting platforms have seen a surge in popularity and the internet has played a massive role in digital engagement – from Twitter to virtual tours.

Questions to ask yourself

- What can you do to reach out to audiences in a non-contact way? Do you have loan boxes or virtual resources available online?
- Is your marketing accessible? What safety and access features do you need to highlight? Where are the closest Changing Places toilets and other important facilities that are not on-site?
- Do you need to implement stricter hygiene protocols, and will you need training for your staff and volunteers on this?
- What strengths can you gain from an improved virtual presence, and how can that become more accessible?
- Do you have a plan for what you want to achieve virtually?
- Do you have the technological or specialist skills you need? How much time can you devote to it? Do you need support to get the best result?
- Can you access a specialist for advice and tips?
- Does your collection allow for photography and can you use what you have already digitised?
- Do you have someone on your team who is good at social media?

"Once the social distancing measures reduce, it is going to be a privilege to return to a new normal. Many disabled people and their families are going to have to continue to 'shield' themselves.
Museums must remember them in our new operational models."
James Brandon, Diversity and Inclusion Manager, Tate Galleries

Resources

Free online conferencing tools
https://www.uctoday.com/collaboration/video-conferencing/covid-19-ultimate-guide-to-free-video-conferencing-collaboration/

Digital support
https://mdem.org.uk/digital-resources-for-museums-in-relation-to-coronavirus/#.XqrWxWhKiyJ

A case study on virtual access from National Paralympic Heritage Trust
https://www.paralympicheritage.org.uk/

Virtual Museum by Hastings Museum
https://www.facebook.com/hastingsmuseum

Virtual tour example from the Postal Museum
https://www.postalmuseum.org/make-a-connection/mail-rail-from-home/?gclid=Cj0KCQjw7qn1BRDqARIsAKMbHDbWCr1rlMukI8Phas0dQH9CAIMZ2xJOqHWeTeFE8WQcfeBkH1sp8PQaAmF9EALw_wcB

Podcasting from Culture 24
https://digitalpathways.weareculture24.org.uk/tag/one-by-one/?full_list=true

Livestreaming
https://www.slideshare.net/AlecWard/introduction-to-live-streaming

Free digital surgeries from Digital Culture Network (DCN)
https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/developing-digital-culture/digital-culture-network (to arrange please email: digitalnetwork@artscouncil.org.uk)

Helpful information on working virtually from Digital Culture Network (DCN)
https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/digital-culture-network/resources-support-events#section-1

Digital social media
https://www.musedcn.org.uk/2018/06/07/how-to-be-more-accessible-on-social-media-snapchat-vimeo/
General resources from Disability Collaborative Network
https://www.musedcn.org.uk/

Digital planning and development
www.embed.org.uk

Partnership working
https://www.musedcn.org.uk/2020/04/23/news-a-unique-partnership-for-the-heritage-and-cultural-sector/

Schools, Learning and SEND*

14/05/2020

There may be a delay in the return of school visits to museums. Schools will be catching up with pupils for many weeks after their return to school, and their plans for this academic year and next will be in disarray. Once they do start to book visits again, schools are likely to also require specific risks assessments or assurances from museums that hygiene, cleaning and social distancing standards meet those set out for schools.

For students who are in SEND education, those who have additional access needs, or are part of a shielded group, you may need to adopt different methods to work with them.

It is also likely to be a long time before informal learning programmes, such as talks and tours, craft activities and object handling sessions can happen at your museum. There may be alternative ways to deliver this part of your programme. For example, you could provide craft activities to complete at home or invite visitors to take part in an online talk.

You may need to reduce the number of hands-on and interactive resources you have available in the museum and introduce more regular cleaning. Some visitors could also be reluctant to use audio guides after reopening.

Coach tours and group bookings are unlikely to restart until 2021as uncertainty about demand and the lead-in time required to plan them will make organisers cautious.

*special educational needs and disability

Questions to ask yourself

- What can you do to reach out to schools in a non-contact way? Do you have loan boxes or virtual teaching resources online available?
- If you are able to provide webinars or online videos for schools, have you considered what format this may take? Will you feature an expert, interactive content, or formal lessons? Have you considered working with classes to help them build their own museums in their schools, or teaching students how to collect oral histories?
- Will you provide an opportunity for viewers to make a donation on your online offer?
- How are you marketing to schools? What safety features do you need to highlight?
- Do you need to implement stricter hygiene protocols, and will you need training for your staff and volunteers on this?

- How can you adapt your informal learning activities for smaller groups of people, meeting the social distancing needs?
- Is there a way technology can help? For example, can you replace face-to-face guided tours with a downloadable recording that people can access on a Smart phone?
- What non-contact resources do you have available for SEND and shielded groups?
- What strengths can you gain from an improved virtual presence, and how can that become more accessible?

"Learning is at the heart of our museums and heritage attractions…
its impact in our society is wide-reaching and incredibly valuable."
GEM, https://gem.org.uk/our-work/value-of-heritage-education/

Resources

Learning resources
https://gem.org.uk/resource/

Digital Culture Network (DCN) - delivering online webinars and talks
https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/digital-culture-network/resources-support-events#section-1

Collections Trust - cleaning collections
https://collectionstrust.org.uk/resource/covid-19-cleaning-historic-surfaces/

Guidance for educators from Group for Education in Museums (GEM)
https://gem.org.uk/gem-covid-19-guidance-for-educators/

South East Museum Development's SEND Toolkit (March 2018)
https://southeastmuseums.org/special-schools-and-museum-toolkit/

Reaching new audiences and inspiration for your online work
https://www.mylearning.org/

Tips on creating resource boxes and other learning sessions
http://sharemuseumseast.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Developing-Learning-Programmes-In-Museums.pdf

Tips for developing online learning resources for schools
https://www.e2bn.org/cms/newsletter/e-safety-and-online-learning

Tips for developing loan boxes
Appendix 10

Finance
14/05/2020

Financial concerns are at the forefront of all our minds right now – from the grant-awarding bodies down to individual visitors coming to your museum.

It is important to know exactly how much money you need to survive in both the current situation and in variations of it as things change. There are many avenues for emergency funding out there, but not all museums will qualify.

When planning for reopening consider the benefits and the costs, as well as what you may need to fundraise for in the recovery phase. Consider whether reopening the museum is your best way forward. If the footfall is much reduced with no group visits and limited numbers of tourists, then your income may not cover your outgoings, especially if you have extra staff and cleaning costs. Plan carefully before reopening. You could consider opening at reduced hours/days or limiting access to different areas of your museum.

Before reopening, ask yourself whether you should take a few weeks to focus on virtual programming, collections care and maintenance, fundraising or online income generation. You could also consider just opening for exclusive, 'members only' visits for the first month.

Questions to ask yourself

- Have you looked at your projected costs and potential income, and worked out if there is a shortfall?
- Have you done a cost vs. benefits analysis of the possibility of opening?
- Have you plotted your cash flow for the next 6 to 12 months?
- Have you explored the various emergency funding avenues?
- Are you able to generate income online through your website, donations, or an online shop?
- Do you have a strategy to deal with income generation and any potential mitigation from the closure period?
- Have you considered philanthropic giving, from the smaller scale (such as 'sponsor an object for a month') to the larger scale (such as major donors)?
- If you operate a membership scheme, give some thought to how it might operate now and when you reopen.
- Are you offering to refund or extend existing memberships at present?
- Is there a way to thank loyal members when you reopen?
- Consider reviewing your membership scheme so that is less reliant on special offers and is more about being part of a community.

Resources

British Retail Consortium guidance on re-opening
https://brc.org.uk/news/corporate-affairs/social-distancing-in-retail-stores-and-warehouses/

South East Museum Development's online income generation guidance
https://southeastmuseums.org/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance/resources-hub/

Strategic thinking for arts and cultural organisations about how to use your data to maximise income:
https://culturalenterprises.org.uk/blog/academy/tips-for-ticketed-attractions-placing-crm-at-the-heart-of-your-reboot/

Help for businesses:
https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/financial-support-for-businesses-during-coronavirus-covid-19

Covid-19 Small Business Grants and Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grants
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-business-support-grant-funding-guidance-for-businesses

Government Bounce Back Loans: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-bounce-back-loans-to-launch-today

Example of a small museum shop online:
https://shop.pendonmuseum.com/

VAT Deferrals:
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/deferral-of-vat-payments-due-to-coronavirus-covid-19

Retail guides for smaller museums:
https://southeastmuseums.org/resource-library/effective-retail-guilfoyle/

Example Cash Flow Graphs:
Appendix 5

Example Cash Flow Headings:
Appendix 6

Social Distancing

12/06/2020

Social distancing has become a part of our lives in a big way and has infiltrated all aspects of our society. Museums will need to adapt to the requirements of social distancing for staff and volunteers and to reassure visitors that museums are a safe place to be. This is new to most of us, and guidance is needed to ensure that we can manage traffic flow, understand requirements and get the right signage in place. Social distancing may lead to a drop in the volume of visitors (some estimate 60%), and it is important that we adapt our venues as best as we can to entice visitors back to museums.

Questions to ask yourself

- Most museums (but not all) have a small degree of flexibility in terms of layout. How can you think about the space you have (both inside and out) to manage the flow of visitors?
- If your space is small or narrow, will you need physical barriers to separate people - such as Perspex screens?
- How can you manage queues if you need to restrict the number of people in one space at a time? Is there signage you require? Can you make use of the queueing space to engage with your audience?
- Will you need screens to shield your workers on reception desks, or will you need to re-position your reception area?
- Will you need personal protective equipment (PPE) for your staff/volunteers? If so, where will you source this from?
- Will you need to restrict the number of workers in the building at any one time to keep the risk of contact low?
- Will your staff and volunteers need training on social distancing? Will they need to enforce the rules, and if so, how strict will this need to be to encourage public confidence?
- Will you need to stagger working shifts to reduce the amount of people in the museum?
- Can you introduce a one-way system to help with the flow of visitor, and provide floor markings to help visitors maintain social distancing?
- Will you need to make changes to your office, store and rest spaces?
- Where can you get floor or wall signage? Is this cost effective or can it be done in-house?
- Do you need a specialist consultant to advise you? Can you get a grant to support you with this?
- Do you need to change your opening hours to help you make the process easier?
- If you have a café or refreshment area, can you reopen your café as a takeaway facility?
- Have you considered how to manage traffic flow in toilets and wash station areas? Will you need additional signage, a maximum number allowed into

each facility, cones to direct people and hands-free methods of opening doors, etc?
- What are the practicalities of your café running a takeaway service and what could you include on the menu?
- For reopening as an eat-in café, how do you plan to lay out your tables, maintaining a two-metre gap? You may have to reduce the number of covers you can serve.
- Can you plan for cleaning tables between customers, and perhaps include signage to let diners know this?
- Think about a reduced menu, with pre-packaged snacks to reduce food preparation requirements and therefore number of staff in the kitchen.

"Stay alert, control the virus, save lives."
https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus

Resources

Government advice on social distancing
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others

Guidance for people who work in or run shops, branches, stores or similar environments.
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/shops-and-branches

Government guidance for social distancing in a range of workplace scenarios
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-food-businesses/guidance-for-food-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19

Workplace advice from Unison
https://www.unison.org.uk/coronavirus-rights-work/social-distancing-workplace/

Hygiene
12/06/2020

Hygiene is paramount at this moment in time. Staff and volunteers will need clear guidance about when they should stay at home, as well as when they can come back into work, and what changes they will need to make. You may need to adjust working practices and work surfaces to make it easier to clean. You may need to add more facilities, like wash stations, to your site to keep hygiene levels high. For site First Aiders, it is especially important that they should wear gloves for treating all casualties and be prepared for more illnesses presenting in the workplace.

You may want to think about the following measures:

- Consider a deep clean of your building before reopening – it's very unlikely any virus traces will still be around, but a clean building will inspire confidence in staff and visitors.
- Surfaces which are touched regularly by people should be cleaned frequently with a detergent and a disinfectant (which must to be left to dry to be effective). Clean door handles, chair arms, kettle handles, light switches and sink taps in this way. Depending on the frequency of use, you may want to clean hourly – and ensure that your visitors can see this happening around them for extra reassurance.
- Clean toilets and café areas thoroughly and much more frequently to build public trust and keep the risk of contagion low.
- Ensure soap, hand sanitiser and paper towels are available in all staff and public toilets.
- Obtain good supplies of soap, cleaning chemicals, nitrile gloves and hand sanitiser. Deliveries may take time, so ensure you order early.
- Interactives and laminates that are handled by visitors or used by school groups will also need regular cleaning with disinfectant. Take particular care with digital interactives and audio guides.
- You may want to reduce the number of handling interactives you have available.
- If you find it difficult to access personal protective equipment (PPE) and hand sanitisers, you may need to delay opening, or come up with more creative solutions. Simple soap and water remains the most effective way to remove the virus from hands. Consider how you can integrate low cost mobile or static washing stations into your venue. You may also want to consider partnering with other local museums or sites to buy personal protective equipment together.
- With regards to museum toilets, have you considered the number of touch points in your toilets? Some museums have introduced sensor technology around flushing, soap/water dispensing and door opening. These, however, are potentially costly interventions and may be beyond the means of many museums.

- Consider creating social distancing by limiting occupancy, reducing facilities in service and increasing cleaning regimes. The additional resource to manage this may require extra funds, so consider grant funding here. If your museum already suffers from inadequate toilet provision, you may want to clearly signpost visitors to the closest external facilities – and even test these to make sure they are socially distanced and cleaned regularly. Do include this information in your marketing material so visitors can plan accordingly.
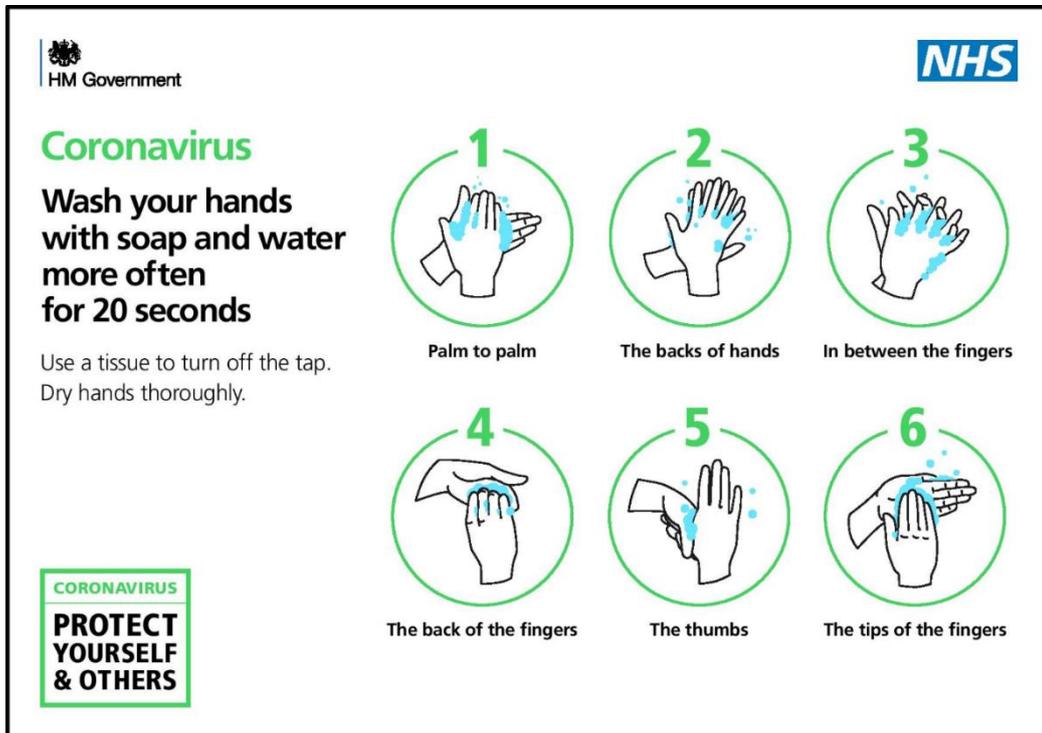
"Around the world museums are developing solutions for opening their sites with social distancing restrictions in place, one area where the solutions are not necessarily as evident are museum toilets. These areas within the buildings have often been designed to make maximum use of the smallest footprint, usually contain only one entry/exit point and probably contain the highest density of touch points within the whole museum. The challenge may also increase within the range of accessible toilet provision where the touch points are greater in number."
Ben Melham, Mortice Consulting, @ museumtoilets, 2020

Questions to ask yourself

- Do your staff/volunteers or visitors need personal protective equipment (PPE) to come into the museum? What level of equipment will you need? Not all protective equipment has the same safety level, and you may find that you have different requirements for different roles.
- Do you have enough hand washing stations in both the staff and volunteer areas, and the public areas of the museum?
- Can you organise for your usual cleaners to change their hours – can they clean during public hours to reassure your visitors?
- Do you need to change or amend your cleaning contracts?
- If you have interactives in the museum, can these be cleaned more regularly? Do you trust your visitors to clean them? Or do you need to remove them or replace them for a short time?
- If you are a 'hands-on' museum where visitors are likely to be repeatedly and sequentially touching the same artefacts, is there a way you can replicate the experience with hygiene in mind? Do visitors need to wear gloves? Do museum objects need to be rotated to limit the likelihood of cross-contaminations? Can you use objects made of materials which do not support the virus for as long?
- Consider reserving a separate room (if you have space available) to quarantine anyone (staff or visitors) who become ill. For museums with limited space, how about asking people to sit in their cars whilst they wait for help?
- Have you considered how to manage traffic flow in toilets and wash station areas? Will you need additional signage, a maximum number allowed into each facility, cones to direct people and hands-free methods of opening doors?
- Have you checked the small print? Some companies are offering to supply hygiene and personal protective equipment, but the small print indicates you may have to sign up to a costly contract, sometimes over years, and wait for

long periods of time to receive any stock. Be cautious – if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

"Hygiene is two-thirds of health."
Lebanese proverb

Resources

Materials and contamination
https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200317-covid-19-how-long-does-the-coronavirus-last-on-surfaces

How to make a face mask (not medical grade)
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html

Government guidelines on decontaminating public spaces during Covid-19
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings

Current guidance from the Resuscitation Council for First Aiders
https://www.resus.org.uk/media/statements/resuscitation-council-uk-statements-on-covid-19-coronavirus-cpr-and-resuscitation/covid-community/

Sample of personal protective equipment suppliers
https://www.screwfix.com/help/disruption/
https://www.seton.co.uk/
https://www.consortiumeducation.com/
https://www.theportsmouthdistillery.com/product/hand-sanitizer-70-alcohol-500ml/

Providers of historical carbolic soap
https://carbolicsoap.com/
https://www.jupitersoaps.co.uk/

Personal Protective Equipment and Cleaning Suppliers
Appendix 8

Hygiene for cafés and catering stations   12/06/2020

Hygiene has always been important consideration in the delivery of catering services at museums.

Staff and volunteers who work in cafés or catering stations will already be familiar with health and safety in relation to food, and this will give them a big advantage in adapting to new hygiene measures. However, staff and volunteers will still need clear guidance about when they should stay at home as well as when they can come back into work. You may need to adjust working practices and changes work surfaces to make them easier to clean. You will probably need to add more facilities to your site to keep hygiene levels high.

Research commissioned by the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (ALVA) into visitor attitudes to returning to heritage sites suggests that although visitors may be keen to visit sites, they are uncomfortable about indoor cafés. 51% of people would not feel safe using a café at a visitor attraction and this rises to 61% for those over 55. People felt more confident about takeaway options and kiosks, especially with pre-packaged foods. They would also like the option to bring their own food and drink.

You may want to think about the following measures:

- Consider a deep clean of your catering areas before reopening – it's very unlikely any virus traces will still be around, but a clean building will inspire confidence in staff and visitors.
- Surfaces which are touched regularly by people should be cleaned frequently with a detergent and a disinfectant (which must to be left to dry to be effective). Clean door handles, chair arms, kettle handles, light switches, sink taps and any kitchen equipment in this way. Depending on the frequency of use, you may want to clean hourly – and ensure that your visitors can see this happening around them for extra reassurance.
- Clean and be seen to clean café areas thoroughly and much more frequently to build public trust and keep the risk of contagion low.
- Obtain good supplies of soap, cleaning chemicals, nitrile gloves and hand sanitiser. Deliveries may take time, so ensure you order early.
- If you find it difficult to access personal protective equipment and hand sanitisers, you may need to wait to open, or come up with more creative solutions. Simple soap and water is still the most effective way to remove the virus from hands. Consider how you can integrate low cost mobile or static washing stations into your café.
- Ensure soap, hand sanitiser and paper towels are provided in all staff and public wash stations. You may need to provide more of these as customers will want to wash their hands before eating.

- Ensure you are following social distancing, crowd control and minimising unnecessary contact. Put floor markers down to manage queues and provide additional signage.

Questions to ask yourself

- Do your staff/volunteers or visitors need personal protective equipment (PPE) to provide catering or take away services? What level of equipment will you need? Not all protective equipment has the same safety level, and you may find that you have different requirements for different roles.
- Do you have enough hand washing stations throughout the staff and volunteer areas and the café areas open to the public? Diners may require a washing station before and after they eat/collect food.
- Can your tables be cleaned more regularly?
- What training and personal protective equipment will your staff and volunteers need?
- For re-opening as an eat-in café, plan how you could lay out your tables, maintaining that two-meter gap. You may have to reduce the number of covers you can serve.
- Would stools or chairs without arms be more hygienic than chairs with arms?
- Do you need to think about waited tables and self-service to remove risks? Can you reopen your café as a takeaway facility?
- Can you look into the practicalities of running a takeaway and what you could include on the menu?
- You might want to think about a reduced menu, with pre-packaged snacks. These will be more popular with visitors and reduce the number of staff required in the kitchen.
- Can you plan for cleaning tables between customers, and perhaps include signage to let diners know this?
- What will you do about self-service options such as ice cream freezers, drinks fridges, and hot drink machines?
- Can you set aside an area for visitors to eat their own food? Could you provide cleaning materials so visitors can clean a table before they eat?
- What will your policy be on reusable cups and how will you share that message with visitors?
- Are you set up for contactless payments in your café?
- If you decide not to reopen your café straight away, could your shop sell some pre-packaged snacks?
- Have you considered how to manage traffic flow in toilets and wash station areas? Will you need additional signage, a maximum number allowed into each facility, cones to direct people and hands-free methods of opening doors?

"*Cafes are returning, but as less convivial places with bigger gaps between tables and patrons discouraged from lingering.*"
New Statesman, May 2020,
https://www.newstatesman.com/world/europe/2020/05/germany-lockdown-schools-opening-bundesliga-coronavirus-wave

Resources

Government guidance for people who work in or run restaurants offering takeaway or delivery services.
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/restaurants-offering-takeaway-or-delivery

Government guidelines on decontaminating public spaces during Covid-19
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings

How to make a face mask (not medical grade)
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html

Hospitality guidance on social distancing
https://www.hospitalitynet.org/opinion/4098099.html

Government café guidance
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-food-businesses/guidance-for-food-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19

Food health and safety
https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/food-hygiene-for-your-business

BBC article on reusable cup bans before lockdown
https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-51767092

Selecting the right personal protective equipment
https://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/ppe.htm

Sample of personal protective equipment suppliers
https://www.screwfix.com/help/disruption/
https://www.seton.co.uk/
https://www.consortiumeducation.com/
https://www.theportsmouthdistillery.com/product/hand-sanitizer-70-alcohol-500ml/

Personal Protective Equipment and Cleaning Suppliers
Appendix 8

Reopening Museums Toolkit

Collections 14/05/2020

Whilst primary concerns may be about people during this pandemic, collections also have a role to play in preventing the spread of disease.

Historic surfaces and museum objects may need to be cleaned or redisplayed to prevent cross-contamination.

Museum objects on open display that are regularly touched may need to be covered to prevent touching, rather than subjected to regular cleaning.

Handling collections may need to be rethought and you might find the need for hand sanitiser in your galleries.

Questions to ask yourself

- Have you kept in touch with your lenders and any museums you are currently loaning material to? You may want to check in and confirm arrangements with donors.
- Have you been able to check the condition of your objects prior to opening?
- You might want to survey your galleries to identify objects/historic surfaces at risk of spreading disease and take steps to mitigate the risk.
- Do your visitors need access to gloves or hand sanitiser?
- Do handling collections need to be put away or dealt with in a more hygienic way?

"Don't be complacent; hazards will not just go away and ignoring them could result in serious illness or injury."
Hazards in Museum Collections, SHARE East

Resources

Clearing historic surfaces guidance from Collections Trust
https://collectionstrust.org.uk/resource/covid-19-cleaning-historic-surfaces/

South East Museum Development Collections at Risk Grant Scheme
https://southeastmuseums.org/grants/collections-at-risk-grants/

Advice on collections care prepared by conservation consultants Spencer & Fry
https://southeastmuseums.org/resource-library/collections-care-guidance-during-the-covid-19-crisis/

Hazards in collections (e-learning) from Museum of London
https://hazardsincollections.org.uk/

Hazards in Museums: A Collections Care Guide from ShareEast
http://sharemuseumseast.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/How-To-Guide-Hazards.pdf

Conservation and care of collections during the Coronavirus pandemic from Collections Trust
https://collectionstrust.org.uk/resource/conservation-and-care-of-collections-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/

Collection care in lockdown - things to consider from Collections Trust
https://collectionstrust.org.uk/resource/collection-care-in-lockdown-things-to-consider/

Assess and manage risk in collections care from Collections Trust
https://collectionstrust.org.uk/resource/assess-and-manage-risk-in-collections-care/

Caring for Heritage Collections during the Covid-19 Pandemic
Appendix 9

Security   14/05/2020

There are a number of measures required for the safe reopening of businesses. Museums must ensure that social distancing, which will continue for some time even after lockdown has been lifted, can be implemented safely and responsibly.

Specialists estimate that it will take businesses about 3 or 4 weeks to prepare their sites for reopening. This includes establishing clear guidance on the use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Public Health England has said that one of greatest factors to consider is that the public will not only want to be safe as they return to leisure businesses, but they will want to *feel* safe.

The Health and Safety Executive has also added that museums should undertake comprehensive health and safety checks on all aspects of their businesses, as many sites have been unoccupied for several weeks.

Periodic security checks on your museum and its collections can be considered 'essential work'. One needs to have the Museum Director/Manager/Trustee write a letter granting a named member of staff permission to check on the security of the building and collection during lockdown.

The key to the successful recovery of this sector is building and maintaining customer confidence. Museums should only reopen when they feel it is safe and responsible to do so.

If your museum has been shut for over a month, you should undertake safety checks and cleaning measures, as well as reviewing and updating risk assessments.

Questions to ask yourself

- Have you checked the security of your premises prior to re-opening?
- Have you checked your alarms are working?
- Have you carried out a thorough health and safety risk assessment to ensure it is safe to open?
- Have you contacted your insurers to keep them informed?
- Have you communicated with your team to ensure they feel safe?
- Do you need additional support or facilities for people to access emergency services if required?

"This was the single most famous property theft outside war time."
Noah Charney on the theft of the Mona Lisa by Vincenzo Peruggia, 1911
https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-25241576

Resources

Keeping your collections safe during lock down from South East Museum Development Programme (SEMDP)
https://southeastmuseums.org/resource-library/keeping-your-buildings-and-collections-safe-during-the-covid-19-crisis/

Government advice on financial support for businesses
https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/financial-support-for-businesses-during-coronavirus-covid-19

Arts Council England's advice on meeting security and environmental requirements for the Government Indemnity Scheme (GIS)
https://collectionstrust.org.uk/resource/gis-advice-on-meeting-security-and-environmental-conditions/

Security checklist from South East Museum Development Programme (SEMDP) Appendix 3

Legionella risks during the coronavirus outbreak 29/05/2020

Legionnaires' disease is a type of pneumonia which can cause serious illness in persons who are susceptible such as those over 50 years, smokers, and those with underlying health conditions.

The disease is caused by the growth of Legionella in building water systems which are not adequately managed. Closure of buildings, parts of buildings or their restricted use, can increase the risk for Legionella growth in water systems and associated equipment including evaporative air conditioning systems and other equipment if they are not managed adequately. [1]

If your building was closed or has reduced occupancy during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, water system stagnation can occur due to lack of use, increasing the risks of Legionnaires' disease.

You should review your **risk assessment** and manage the legionella risks when you:

- reinstate a water system or start using it again
- restart some types of air conditioning units

If the water system is still used regularly, maintain the appropriate measures to prevent legionella growth.[2]

Questions to ask yourself

- Has your building been closed or had reduced occupancy during the coronavirus outbreak?   If so, water system stagnation can occur due to lack of use, increasing the risks of Legionnaires' Disease.
- Have you reviewed your Legionella risk assessment?   You will have to document how you will protect staff, visitors and others from Legionella growth when your site is re-opened.
- Have you checked your local Council's and national guidelines about Legionella?
- Do you need expert advice? Get advice from an experienced water treatment advisor, public health or environmental health authorities.
- Was your water system drained before closing the premises during lockdown? The procedures you will need to follow to safely flush and restart your water system and air conditioning system varies depending on how your systems were managed during closure. For information on safely flushing and

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[1] [ESGLI Guidance for Managing Legionella in Building Water Systems during the Covid-19 Pandemic](#), 2020
[2] [HSE advice on the risks of legionella during Covid-19 outbreak, 2020](#)

restarting your water system, please download the full guidance on managing Legionella in building water systems created by the European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (ESGLI).

- Do you need to get the water tested for Legionella? If so, this can take several weeks due to high demand.
- If you are going to flush water systems that haven't been used for several weeks, ensure you have the correct personal protective equipment to protect you from aerosols.

Resources

Really helpful guidance on managing Legionella in building water systems during the Covid-19 pandemic
https://www.escmid.org/fileadmin/src/media/PDFs/3Research_Projects/ESGLI/ESGLI_GUIDANCE_FOR_MANAGING_LEGIONELLA_IN_BUILDING_WATER_SYSTEMS_DURING_THE_COVID-19_PANDEMIC_20200418_v02.00.pdf

UK government's guidance on Legionnaires' Disease during Covid-19 pandemic
https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/legionnaires-disease-guidance-data-and-analysis

Health and Safety Executive's advice on Legionella risks during Covid-19 outbreak
https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/legionella-risks-during-coronavirus-outbreak.htm

Health and Safety Executive's advice on Legionella risks in the workplace
https://www.hse.gov.uk/legionnaires/workplace-risks.htm

Legionella control and mothballed buildings
https://www.urisk.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/HSE-HSG274-Part-2.pdf
https://labmonline.co.uk/news/legionella-risk-warning-at-unoccupied-buildings-due-to-coronavirus/