

# Reopening Guidance for Locality Members

Over the last few months we know that Covid-19 has forced many Locality members to close down their community buildings and services. As we move towards the easing of lockdown and organisations look to re-open, we thought it would be useful to provide a checklist of things you may want to consider when thinking about how to bring your building and services back into use. This guidance looks at 4 key areas – Buildings, Services, Staff and Operational Management – and includes space for your own notes.

This is a constantly changing situation with official Government guidance being updated regularly. It is important therefore to make sure any decisions about re-opening buildings and services are in line with current Government guidance which can be found [here](#). You can also access support and keep up to date with what official guidance might mean for your organisation via the Locality website [here](#).

Remember, even if the Government allows you to reopen a service or a building you do not have to do so. For many buildings and services it will be a judgement call for boards and staff about when it is safe and viable to reopen.

**Disclaimer** – Every organisation's circumstances are different therefore this is not a definitive list of things to do. There may be other actions not included here that you need to research and consider for your organisation.

## Buildings

Area	Key Considerations	Notes
<b>Risk Assessments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you conducted appropriate risk assessments for your building?</li> <li>• Have these risk assessments been informed by the relevant government guidance?</li> <li>• Who needs to input into the risk assessment process – board/trustees, senior team, staff, volunteers, services and building users?</li> <li>• Does the risk assessment compare the risks of staying closed vs. opening?</li> <li>• Will any changes you make impact on your insurance cover? Do you need to contact your insurers to discuss this?</li> <li>• Have you considered any necessary changes to emergency responses that may need to change due to Covid, e.g. someone being taken ill?</li> <li>• Look at what activities are essential for the organisation to function and which need to stay suspended. If activities are essential, how can they be carried out with appropriate social distancing?</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you shared risk assessments with any tenants in the building?</li> <li>• How will risk assessments and any new procedures be communicated to staff and building users?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Social Distancing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the minimum number of people you need to have in the building at any one time in order to carry our essential activities?</li> <li>• Is it possible to reopen the whole building, or will parts need to remain closed?</li> <li>• What are the high traffic areas in the building, e.g reception areas, that will need particular consideration?</li> <li>• Can you implement a one-way system to reduce contact? In particular consider the high traffic areas, entrance/exit points.</li> <li>• How can you minimise contact between staff, service users and other people coming into the building? For example, do you need to stagger staff start and finish times to reduce the number of people in the building, or make sure the same groups of people work together consistently where possible.</li> <li>• Do you need to reconfigure layouts of workspaces? If this is not possible can other spaces be repurposed temporarily?</li> <li>• Can you assign workstations to specific individuals? If not and workstations need to be shared ensure they are thoroughly cleaned after each use.</li> <li>• Have you clearly marked relevant 2m distances in public and shared spaces throughout the building, e.g. reception area, toilets, kitchen? Think about how people move through the spaces in your building, what are high traffic areas and pinch points.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider new meeting room capacities based on maintaining 2m distances.</li> <li>• How will visitors to the building be made aware of social distancing policies and actions they need to take while in the building? For example, will you need to produce signage? Can you assign a member of staff to “buddy” any visitors?</li> <li>• Do you need to amend any online information or booking systems to highlight new restrictions to external users?</li> <li>• Do you work with any groups who will need additional help and support to understand and comply with social distancing? How will you support compliance?</li> <li>• What will be your policies and procedures for dealing with anyone who refuses to comply with social distancing measures?</li> <li>• Are staff aware of all the new measures and are they empowered to enforce them?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Cleaning &amp; Hygiene</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the building need to be deep cleaned prior to opening? Can this be done by staff/volunteers or you need to bring in professional cleaning companies?</li> <li>• What are the high risk, high contact areas what will need additional regular cleaning?</li> <li>• Can you segregate toilets to reduce cross contamination, i.e. restricting use of different toilets throughout the building to certain groups?</li> <li>• Do you need to increase the frequency of cleaning throughout the building?</li> <li>• Can you ask staff and tenants to help, e.g. cleaning individual work stations before and after use, keeping communal areas clean after each use?</li> <li>• What are the key points throughout the building where you can place hygiene stations with hand</li> </ul>	

	<p>washing and/or sanitizer. As a minimum these should be places at the entrance and exit points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you able to leave internal doors (not fire doors) open throughout the building to improve ventilation and reduce contact with door handles.</li> <li>• Will staff and service users be required to wear face coverings while in the building? How will this be communicated/enforced?</li> </ul> <p><i>NB It is not a legal requirement to wear face coverings at moment however this may change, and also may be useful where social distancing is not always possible, particularly for higher risk groups such as the over 70s.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If required, will you provide masks etc for visitors to the building?</li> </ul>	
<b>Repurposing &amp; Adapting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What equipment do you need to support social distancing throughout the building, e.g. screens or dividers to reduce contact, signs and stickers to make users aware of appropriate distancing.</li> <li>• Do you need to change the use of some areas of the building, either because services cannot reopen or to help minimise contact between staff and user groups?</li> <li>• Can you offer space to other organisations who are providing ongoing support to the community?</li> </ul>	
<b>Useful Links</b>	<p>HSE – <a href="#">Working Safely During The Coronavirus Outbreak</a></p> <p>Gov.uk – <a href="#">Working Safely During Coronavirus including Sector Guidelines</a></p>	

## Services

Area	Key Considerations	Notes
<b>Reopening</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As part of your risk assessment identify what are the essential activities needed to keep the organisation running</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you developed a plan of services that need to be prioritised and opened straight away, and those that can remain closed for the moment?</li> <li>• Have you consulted with your community to see what services they want and/or need to access? Do these priorities align with yours? What are their worries and concerns?</li> <li>• What services are financially viable at the moment? Have you factored any additional costs associated with Covid-19 safety measures?</li> <li>• Are there any insurance or safeguarding implications to consider when changing how you deliver services, e.g. staff to service users ratios?</li> <li>• How will the quality of services be affected by reduced numbers of staff and users? If quality is reduced is there still value in reopening the service?</li> <li>• Would reopening services disadvantage any of the service users – for example, would switching a service from online to in person affect people who are shielding and unable to attend. How can any disadvantages be reduced?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Adapting</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can some services be moved to online delivery? Could this disadvantage some users who find it difficult to engage online?</li> <li>• Can you use existing platforms such as social media to keep in touch with users?</li> <li>• Where services need to be delivered in person, how can they be adapted to meet social distancing requirements?</li> <li>• Are you keeping in touch with funders and commissioners about how delivery may need to change?</li> <li>• How can you provide support to service users who have been directly affected by the Covid crisis through illness, bereavement, financial problems, mental health issues etc?</li> </ul>	

<b>Useful Links</b>	<p>My Community – <a href="#">Using Zoom To Create Online Communities</a></p> <p>My Community – <a href="#">Helping Your Community Stay Connected in Times of Crisis</a></p> <p>Digital SocEnt – <a href="#">Taking Services Online Virtual Workbook</a></p>	

**Staff**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Key Considerations</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Returning to Work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While government guidance is still to work from home where possible, which staff need to come back in and who can work remotely? Think about the minimum number of staff needed in the building to operate.</li> <li>• How are you helping staff to feel safe? Are you consulting or even co-designing your reopening with them?</li> <li>• Are you continually communicating with staff and providing opportunities for them to give feedback and share their concerns?</li> <li>• Will you need to adapt working hours or shift patterns to reduce the number of people in the building at any one time?</li> <li>• Can you introduce “fixed teams” or partnering for staff so that the same groups are consistently working together to reduce the number of people who come into contact?</li> <li>• Are you aware of and communicating with staff who may be unable to return to work due to being classed as clinically extremely vulnerable/clinically vulnerable?</li> <li>• Will staff face issues getting to work? Can support such as additional car parking, reimbursing petrol costs or cycle to work schemes help?</li> <li>• What contingency plans do you have in place to cover staff if they become ill, need to self isolate</li> </ul>	

	under track and trace programmes, if local lockdowns are enforced etc?	
<b>Supporting Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What reasonable adjustments can you make to help staff from clinically extremely vulnerable/clinically vulnerable groups to work under new safety measures, e.g working from home?</li> <li>• How can you support those who live with people from vulnerable groups, those who may struggle with child care or other caring commitments etc and who may be anxious about returning to work?</li> <li>• Are you keeping equality and diversity issues in mind – what is reasonable adjustments for some people might not work for others.</li> <li>• How will you keep in touch with staff who are working from home and help them to feel connected?</li> <li>• How will you support the mental wellbeing of all staff through the changes you will need to make?</li> </ul>	
<b>Useful Links</b>	<p>ACAS – <a href="#">Covid Advice for Employers and Employees</a></p> <p>NHS – <a href="#">Who Is At Higher Risk From Coronavirus</a></p> <p>Locality – <a href="#">Returning to Work Guidance (dated 27<sup>th</sup> May)</a></p>	

### Operational Management

If you have serious concerns about your organisation’s finances and sustainability, as a Locality member you can access free confidential advice through our Lifeboat programme. Contact [lifeboat@locality.org.uk](mailto:lifeboat@locality.org.uk)

Area	Key Consideration	Notes
<b>Finances</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you developed a medium term (6-12 month) cash flow forecast and a 12 month budget based on reduced building use and service delivery?</li> <li>• What additional costs are you likely to incur when reopening the building, e.g costs of equipment, additional cleaning?</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you are delivering services online, can they be monetised?</li> <li>• Are you keeping up to date with funders and how their priorities and programmes are changing?</li> </ul>	
<b>Business Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alongside a medium term cashflow, have you considered a 6-12 month action plan that maps out the re-opening of the building and services?</li> <li>• What new opportunities have come out of the Covid crisis?</li> <li>• Are there services that will no longer be needed?</li> <li>• What new partnerships have come out of the crisis, or may need to be developed?</li> </ul>	
<b>Closure of Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there services or parts of your organisation that are not going to reopen, either as they are no longer needed or no longer viable?</li> <li>• If no longer viable for you to run, can they be transferred to other organisations?</li> <li>• What are the implications for staff? Can job roles be changed or will the closure result in redundancies?</li> </ul>	
<b>Closure of Organisation</b>	<p>Before making the decision to close your organisations please do seek help and advice from the Locality Lifeboat support team. However, if you do feel like you need to take this decision –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you clear on the roles and responsibilities of your board?</li> <li>• Can services be transferred to other organisations rather than being lost altogether?</li> <li>• Are you aware of the costs of closure?</li> <li>• Which members of staff will be made redundant, and who will stay in post to be responsible for winding down the organisation?</li> <li>• What are the implications for your building – sale or ending lease?</li> </ul>	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will closure be communicated to the community, funders, commissioners and other stakeholders? Is your message consistent?</li> </ul>	
<b>Useful Links</b>	<a href="#">Locality – Resources for Community Organisations</a> <a href="#">Power to Change – Covid-19 Related Webinars</a>	

**Other Resources**

Gov.uk – [Additional Resources To Support Your Business During Coronavirus](#)

[Locality – Coronavirus Information and Support Hub – Regularly Updated](#)