



A Guide for Community Buildings – Life After Lockdown

As we approach the next phase of the Coronavirus pandemic and start to see the lockdown restrictions eased, now is a good time to start planning for the new normal.

In this guide we will look at what trustees can do now towards recovery planning and start to consider what measures will need to be in place for a safe reopening when services can be delivered once again.

Scenario planning

This is a good way to assess how your organisation will cope in a variety of situations. It will help trustees to make informed decisions when planning for the future by working through the best- and worst-case scenarios and developing an action plan.

It's useful to run through as many scenarios as possible, looking at the potential risks and categorising them as low, medium and high, to get a good understanding of how the future could look and identify trigger points when key decisions need to be made.

For those risks that are identified as medium and high, it's important to consider measures that could help to reduce the risk where possible.

For example:

- **What if your organisation cannot reopen for several more months?**
- **What if you can't meet the needs of your user groups and comply with the Health Protection Regulations?**
- **How will that impact your financial situation?**
- **What can you do now to reduce costs and maximise cash available to help cover essential bills?**
- **Have you accessed all the funding support available to you to boost your available cash?**

Below are 3 key headings to help you get started...

Financial Planning

- Do you know your financial situation both in the short term and longer term and what factors will affect this?
- Have you received all the funding you are entitled to, to support your organisation during this period?
- Do you have staff? If so, how, and when will they be able to return?

- Do you have a contingency plan if your users aren't coming back or reducing their services?
- How will a reduction in your income impact your financial situation?
- Have you considered adapting your services to meet a new need and generate income?

Risk Management

- Have you considered what you need to put in place to provide a safe space for people to use?
- E.g. How will you ensure social distancing, provide enough hand sanitiser and other infection control measures like a deep cleaning routine?
- What additional costs might you need to cover to maintain these infection control measures?
- What financial risks might you face if you have to reduce services or limit numbers?

Community Engagement

- Have you continued to engage with your users during the lockdown?
- Understanding how your users are feeling about returning to your organisation and using your services will help inform how you move forward.
- For example, are some of your users older and in the shielded category, so will be self-isolating?
- What information have you given your local community about your situation? Do they know you are thinking about how to reopen safely?
- How will your volunteers be affected if they are older and aren't able to return?
- Do you have new volunteers looking for opportunities?

Further guidance and tools can be found here:

[NCVO Scenario Planning](#)

[Charity Commission Managing Financial Difficulties caused by Coronavirus](#)

Further Support Available

As Community Buildings work through the many questions they face at this time, Durham Community Action is here to offer information, advice and support.

Our friendly staff at Durham Community Action are currently remotely working from home but we are still here to provide information, advice and guidance so don't hesitate to get in touch

Email: info@durhamcommunityaction.org.uk

Website: www.durhamcommunityaction.org.uk

