

# Frequently Asked Questions about the reopening of Glasgow's museums

Thursday 9 July 2020

Glasgow Life has set out a phased approach to the reopening of some of the city's public buildings in response to phase three of the Scottish Government's route map. We have identified 61 venues and facilities which we are aiming to restart across four phases between July and October. Some of these will open to the public, while others will help to maintain essential city services, like childcare, in local communities.

As we prepare for a new way of living and working after Covid-19, our priority will be to ensure the facilities we reopen are safe for our staff and the public in the weeks and months ahead.

## Which venues and facilities are you reopening and when?

- View our list of [venues that are reopening to the public](#).
- View our list of [venues that are reopening for essential services](#).

These dates are based on the Scottish Government's route map. They are indicative and subject to change.

## Why aren't you reopening all of Glasgow's museums?

Like every charity, Glasgow Life has been hit hard by Covid-19. The complete shutdown of Glasgow's museums, libraries, community facilities, arts and sports venues for more than three months, together with the cancellation of most of the city's events and festivals this year, means the millions of pounds of income which supports our services has been wiped out.

Reopening venues is a complex process and requires careful planning. Current social distancing guidelines mean that a large proportion of our venues are unable to reopen safely, and we may need more staff than before to be working at the venues we are looking to reopen to ensure current restrictions are followed.

Even if social distancing measures are relaxed in future phases of the government's route-map, it's not an exaggeration to say that Glasgow Life is now facing the toughest financial period in its history. Assessing the significant costs associated with adapting our venues to meet social distancing requirements is something that we have to consider in the context of the future sustainability of some of our facilities.

However, the fundamental criteria that will inform which venues and services can restart will be the financial landscape that we will have to operate within for the foreseeable future without the level of income that we previously generated.

We are initially prioritising the most-visited museums in our care. Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum and the Riverside Museum welcomed more than three million visitors between them last year. Together they accounted for just over 75% of all Glasgow Museums visits in 2019, so it's vital we prepare to open these buildings first.

Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum and the Riverside Museum are the largest of our museums and can accommodate more people in a physically distanced environment. They are also accessible by all forms of transport, including walking. Both museums play a vital role in attracting people to Glasgow and prioritising their opening will support the city's recovery from the impact of coronavirus in the longer-term.

### **When will you be reopening other museums which aren't on your published list?**

Our financial and staffing constraints are unlike anything we've ever faced and mean we are not able to operate all of our venues and services just now; it's simply not possible.

Following this phased reopening between July and October, we will continue to work with Glasgow City Council to review and prioritise which venues and services we can restart or reopen and when, but it's highly unlikely that Glasgow Life will be able to return to anything like its normal service provision in the near future.

Although Glasgow City Council has agreed to support us financially during this difficult period, there are no easy solutions and we haven't got all the answers about what Glasgow Life's service provision will look like during or after this transitional period. We'll continue to keep in touch with our members and customers as and when any decisions on future service provision are made.

### **Why are museums not opening during the school holidays?**

We know how important our museums are to the people of Glasgow and we recognise the vital role they play in supporting our wellbeing and providing free access to art and culture for everyone. We also know that our audiences are keen to reconnect with our incredible and internationally recognised collections as soon as possible after lockdown and we're working to make that happen as quickly as we can.

However, our venues have been closed for several months and we have to plan their reopening in line with the Scottish Government's guidance. We have begun to adapt our venues to meet social distancing and hygiene requirements, but this will take time. We also have to deliver staff training and install a new booking system for visitors.

We are eager to welcome visitors back, but we have a duty to ensure people feel safe and confident to return. We plan to reopen with a reduced capacity to ensure the smooth operation of the new procedures we are putting in place. This way we can continue to provide an enjoyable visitor experience for all. In the meantime, we'll continue to connect digitally with our communities until our doors reopen.

### **Will I have to book to visit a museum?**

Yes – when our museums reopen those intending to visit will have to pre-book a date and time online. By pre-booking tickets you will help us to manage visitor numbers, reduce queuing and allow everyone to maintain physical distancing. Entry to our museums will remain free.

### **How do I book?**

We are currently working to finalise the process and we'll share details of how to reserve free tickets for a date and time to visit Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, the Riverside Museum and the Gallery of Modern Art nearer to reopening. Tickets will be released in batches to ensure everyone has an opportunity to book. This also allows procedures and capacity to be adjusted in accordance with the most up-to-date Scottish Government guidance.

### **How long will I be allowed in the museum?**

We are looking forward to seeing our galleries come alive with visitors again and we are working hard to ensure the visitor experience continues to exceed expectations, even in these unusual times. Visitors will be able to select a timeslot when booking a visit. We ask that people follow our signage on how to move through the museum and to be mindful of the many others who are keen to enjoy the same museum experience.

### **What cleaning procedures will you have in place when museums reopen?**

Buildings are being cleaned prior to opening to the public and we will have regular cleaning procedures in place which are appropriate to each venue.

**Will you provide customers with hand washing/sanitisation stations?**

Yes – hand sanitisation stations will be available in reopened venues, though we still advise visitors to follow current government guidelines and to wash their hands thoroughly and regularly with soap and water and/or hand sanitizer.

**Will toilet facilities be available in reopened venues?**

Yes – although, as with all areas in our facilities, social distancing measures will be in place.

**Do I need to wear a mask in venues?**

Current Scottish Government guidance advises face masks are worn in public places, but this is not mandatory. If this advice changes, we will follow government guidelines.

**Will café and retail facilities be available in venues which reopen?**

There will be no catering or retail (gift shop) facilities available in our venues when they reopen.

**How can I make a donation to help support Glasgow Life?**

As a charity, Glasgow Life is hugely grateful for the support it has received during the coronavirus pandemic, which has helped us to continue vital work in communities across the city during the most challenging of times. You can continue to help us by donating at <https://forms.glasgowlife.org.uk/Pages/donate.aspx>.

**Ends**