

Frequently Asked Questions about the reopening of Glasgow's libraries

Updated Wednesday 12 August 2020

Why aren't you reopening all libraries?

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.

We're initially prioritising venues and facilities that support childcare and education to help maintain vital services in local communities and to support the city's recovery from the impact of coronavirus in the longer-term. 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're 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.

When will you be reopening other libraries 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.

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.

When will The Mitchell Library reopen to the public?

We will continue to work with Glasgow City Council to review and prioritise which venues and services we can restart or reopen and when, and we will share more information as soon as possible.

Why are your facilities only starting to reopen to the public from August?

As venues have been closed for several months, we have to plan their reopening in line with the Scottish Government's guidance. Adapting the venues that we are reopening to meet social distancing requirements will take time and we have a responsibility to get it right from the outset. We are also creating new operating practices which prioritise the health and wellbeing of our staff and customers.

This means that we can't just simply reopen our doors: we need to undertake risk assessments, test key building systems, install public sanitizer stations and screens where appropriate, deliver revised hygiene and safety training to our staff, implement new booking systems, and engage with our trade unions.

Which libraries will open in August?

Ibrox, Shettleston and Pollokshaws Libraries will reopen on Tuesday 11 August. Partick Library will reopen on Tuesday 25 August.

When will other libraries re-open?

Easterhouse, Drumchapel and Gorbals libraries will reopen w/c Monday 31 August. Possilpark, Bridgeton and Royston libraries will reopen w/c Monday 5 October.

Will you operate normal opening hours?

No – we will be operating reduced opening hours for all libraries at this time. All open libraries will operate the same opening hours:

Day	Opening Times
Monday	Closed
Tuesday	2pm – 7pm
Wednesday	11am – 4pm
Thursday	11am – 4pm
Friday	11am – 4pm
Saturday	Closed
Sunday	Closed

What cleaning procedures will you have in place when libraries 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. Before reopening, all staff will undertake revised training to ensure best practice.

Will I need to wear a face covering?

Yes – in line with the Scottish Government's guidance, we are asking visitors to wear a face covering to keep themselves and others safe when visiting our libraries. We recognise that some visitors have health conditions, disabilities or other factors that prevent them from wearing a face covering. The Scottish Government has published [guidance on the use of suitable face coverings and exemptions](#).

Will I have to queue to visit the library?

Due to social distancing the number of visitors to the library will be restricted. Customers may have to queue to enter the library and we thank you for your patience.

Will I need to provide my contact details?

Yes – public health and government guidance for reopening public venues requires Glasgow Life to participate in the [Test and Protect](#) scheme. We will request your contact details when you visit our libraries and the information will be held securely for three weeks and then destroyed.

Will hand sanitiser be available?

Yes – we will have several mitigating measures in place in our venues when they reopen to minimise the spread of Covid-19. These will include physical distancing restrictions; booking systems and reduced capacities; Perspex screens at reception areas; one-way walking routes; the promotion of rigorous hand washing and the provision of hand sanitiser.

Will I be able to browse for books?

Yes – customers will be able to browse for books, but we ask that this is kept to a minimum. Due to social distancing much of the furniture has been removed so customers will not be able to stay in the library for long periods of time.

Will I be able to reserve a book online?

With only a few libraries reopening, customers will be unable to reserve books online at the moment. However, if you contact our reopened libraries directly and in advance of your visit then local arrangements may be possible.

Will books be quarantined?

Books will be quarantined for 72 hours before they are returned to the shelves for borrowing.

Will I be fined if I am late returning my books?

Any fines incurred during our closure and phased reopening periods will be waived until December 2020. An extension to that period may be reviewed later in the year.

Will I be able to access a PC?

Customers will be able to access PCs, however in line with current social distancing not all PCs will be in use. As we expect demand to be high, PC access will be limited to one hour per customer. Staff will clean the area and replace the keyboard between customers.

Will I be able to print or photocopy?

Staff will be able to help you with limited volume of printing or photocopying where possible.

Will regular events take place in the libraries you are reopening?

No – upon reopening, venues will be operating at reduced capacity and we'll be unable to offer the full timetable of services and events which were available pre-lockdown. Activities and timetables will be confirmed closer to the opening date of each venue, and these will be shared when available.

Will Bookbug take place?

Bookbug sessions will not be able to take place. However, we have weekly Bookbug sessions online every Wednesday at 10am for you to join in at home. For further details, visit: <https://www.glasgowlife.org.uk/event/1/bookbug-fun-online-with-glasgow-libraries>

Will there be access to Macmillan at Glasgow Libraries services?

There will be information points but no drop-in services. However, Macmillan are still providing support by phone on 0141 287 2903 or via email macmillan@glasgowlife.org.uk

Will I be able to use the self-scan kiosk?

Yes – staff will help customers to borrow and renew books using the self-scan kiosks where available.

Will any of your co-located services be available?

Universal Credit support will be available for pre-booked appointments. For more information, visit <https://glasgowlife.org.uk/universalcredit> or contact the team for free on 0808 169 9901.

Will newspapers and magazines be available to the public?

No – newspapers or magazines will not be available for the time being. However, we do offer eMagazines online here: <https://libcat.csghlasgow.org/web/arena/emagazines>

Will there be study spaces available?

There will be no study spaces available at the moment due to limited space as a result of social distancing requirements.

Will toilet facilities be available in reopened venues?

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

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

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

How long will these measures be in place?

The current measures are in line with Scottish Government guidelines and will enable us to accommodate and protect our staff and visitors. These measures may change as advice from the Scottish Government is updated.

Where can I find out more information?

We will provide regular updates through Glasgow Libraries' Twitter and Facebook social media channels as well as on the Glasgow Life website.

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 online at <https://forms.glasgowlife.org.uk/Pages/donate.aspx>.

Ends