

SGS COVID-19 Planning Guidance for Garden Openers

Re-opening Gardens during Phase 2: 15 July

Overview

The Scottish Government has set out guidance for Tourism, including our charity, to be able to reopen from 15 July, during Phase 2 transition out of Lockdown. This guidance sets out the key public health measures that will need to be taken to allow safe reopening, including:

- Establishing **physical distancing taking account of organisational capacity, queue management, signage and markings**
- **Enhanced hand hygiene** measures and cleaning practice
- Advice on **workforce planning**
- **Guidance for customers/visitors** to ensure they know how to plan ahead and engage safely with the tourism and hospitality sector

This document summarises this guidance and advice as relevant to our opening during this Phase. Links to the relevant documents are listed at the end of this paper.

Before opening your garden again, you will need to **conduct a risk assessment** to be sure that you consider what will be needed to provide a safe opening. This particularly pertains to assuring physical distancing and hygiene and also, that you are prepared and have considered things that might go wrong. SGS will provide you with a summary of requirements to help make this easier. Also note, that we expect garden visiting to be much more low-key than normal and with a number of adaptations.

Our physical SGS office remains closed. The government will provide further information about reopening later in July. We have some staff working remotely but are not working at full capacity just now. As such, we can offer support but will not be able to send out any materials. We hope your local District Volunteers can help with their own inventory of supplies. But we will provide guidance and materials you can print at home (or your DO can prepare) to advertise your opening. We can prepare signs to use within your garden to manage distancing, hygiene, flow of movement. We will also inform the public through our website and social media about our openings and the relevant changes they should expect.

Following is guidance to help you plan for your opening. Thinking through these questions will help you to formulate a risk assessment for your opening (and you can write this down on the SGS COVID-19 Risk Assessment Template if you find this helpful).

Decide your garden's capacity to ensure the 2m physical distancing

- How long should you allow for visitors to get around your garden?
- Would you allow visitors to stop and have a picnic? Considering this will help you decide an allowance time for a visit to your garden.
- Please consider what you can offer in the way of parking, as this may influence how many you can comfortably have in your garden.

Decide your type of opening

- If opening by arrangement, use capacity (above) to guide your appointments
- If opening over a range of dates, decide if it is likely your number of visitors will exceed your capacity. You will need a booking system if this is the case, and please let the office know this so we can help you decide the best system.

- If you will be opening on a specific day(s), you will need a booking system, limiting the number of visitors into timeslots which work with your decisions about capacity. This could be online with Eventbrite, or it could be done through local sign-ups. You might want to consider extending your normal opening times to be more accommodating to visitors. If you have requested this type of opening, we will be in touch to help plan a booking process.

Consider your opening features

- Admission should be by exact change only, into a bucket, and as such it might be best to list your admission as a suggested donation. Speak to your District Organiser if you do not have a suitable container. And see guidance late in the paper regarding counting money.
- Sadly, it won't be appropriate to offer teas this year, at least under the current guidance. Instead, you might wish to offer picnic space to your visitors.
- Plant sales will need to be laid out to allow distancing, hand-sanitiser near-by, exact change buckets, recommended donations
- The Scottish Government is due to offer further guidance about toilets, but for now it's best to not provide toilet facilities to your visitors. You may want to provide toilets for your volunteer helpers, and we will share the government guidance as soon as it is available.

Also please note that, at least initially in July, our approach to promotion of our openings will be more low-key than normal. We want to avoid any opening experiencing crowding. Once we have a little experience in how everyone is managing opening and visiting, we'll re-evaluate.

Info SGS Will Provide to the Public through the Website and Social Media

See guidance document - **SGS COVID-19 Guidance for our Visitors**

Preparing your garden for opening

- **Extra helpers** - Decide how many helpers you will need, as you may need extra to help manage distancing. We suggest you have your helpers wear the SGS hi-vis vests, if available.
- **Queue Management** for physical distancing:
 - Consider how many people you can accommodate to wait in an entry queue (if relevant) to stand 2M apart? Consider this from parking to admission. We will provide signs to remind visitors of physical distancing, and you may want to place markers in key areas.
 - Decide what you will do if potential crowding occurs and be sure you plan ways to avoid this.
 - Are there any local traffic or street management plans in place that you must consider?
- **Managing flow** of volunteers and visitors to avoid crowding and maintain distancing
 - Consider crunch points, and how you would manage these. Can you create a one-way system? SGS arrows and One-Way signs can help.
- **Hygiene:**
 - Provide bucket or container for admission donations for exact change only. Please do not handle the money and don't provide change. You should place a sign by the bucket stating the admission amount.
 - Provide hand sanitiser at admission point for visitors, with a sign reminding visitors to maintain good hygiene. (Note that the cost of hand sanitiser can be deducted as an expense).
 - Provide hand sanitiser and/or washing facilities for volunteer helpers.
 - Identify surfaces that might need regular cleaning (before, during and/or after your opening) Please do what you can to remove situations for touching surfaces – such as leaving doors and gates open.

- Consider whether you need additional waste facilities.
- If you are offering Plants for Sale, place these in an open area where distancing can easily be followed. Pre-price your plants, and then offer an exact change bucket.
- **Signage** - Prepare signage needed to manage your opening (SGS will provide basic signs you can print at home and edit as needed):
 - Posters to advertise your opening will include relevant special information
 - Social distancing reminder signs for key areas
 - Hygiene reminder signs for key areas, such as at the entrance and plant sale
 - Admission charge signage, requesting exact change
 - Signage to help manage flow through garden (arrows, one-way, do not enter, entrance, exit)
 - Plant sale signage for exact change

Managing your open day

- For your actual opening day, work with your local SGS committee so that one of their volunteers can be in attendance.
- Complete regular cleaning of key surfaces, as appropriate
- Additional measures
 - Be clear on actions you must take if you encounter an incidence, or suspected incidence of COVID-19 in your premises.
 - Also consider what to do in the case of an accident (non-COVID) requiring attention

After your opening

- Please be sure to clean all appropriate surfaces.
- Counting the money: Wait a few days after your opening to count your admissions, and any plant sales. Use good hygiene while counting. Consider placing the money into containers/bags after counting and using banking counting facilities where available.

If you need any further assistance, please contact Hazel at hazel@scotlandsgardens.org.

Key Links and Papers (with last update date)

- Coronavirus (COVID-19): tourism and hospitality sector guidance (18 June)
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-tourism-and-hospitality-sector-guidance/>
- Sector Guidance for tourism and hospitality – checklist (18 June)
<file:///Users/terril/Downloads/Tourism+and+hospitality+businesses+checklist,+18+June+2020.pdf>
- Guidance for retail, tourism and hospitality customers (19 June)
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-consumers/>
- Updated Route map for Phases 2 and 3 (24 June)
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-scotlands-route-map-indicative-dates-remainder-phase-2-early-phase-3/pages/1/>
- VisitScotland Advice <https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/advice/coronavirus-recovery/preparing-to-open#GOVT>
- Information about the Virus from NHSinform: <https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19>
- Guidance about Use of Toilets (27 June): <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-public-and-customer-toilets-guidance/pages/overview/>

For further information, please see the following links to suggested risk assessments provided by the Health & Safety Executive and our insurer, Lycetts:

- <https://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/index.htm>
- <https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/assets/docs/working-safely-guide.pdf>
- <https://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/risk-assessment-template-and-examples.htm>
- <https://www.lycetts.co.uk/insights/free-covid-19-return-to-work-risk-assessment-guide/>

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