

# Securing Your Premises in the Event of a Short Term Closure

**In an emergency situation, asset owning clubs and organisations may find themselves needing to close their facilities and leave them empty for an unknown period of time. This checklist has been designed to help clubs and delivery organisations consider what actions they might need to take when facing this situation.**

## Special Note on the Coronavirus (Covid-19) as of 31/03/2020

If you have closed your facilities in response to the Government's advice regarding the Coronavirus pandemic, you may have already had to make a lot of difficult decisions quickly in order to respond to a rapidly changing set of circumstances.

This checklist is intended to support clubs and organisations by suggesting some factors to consider. It is understood that not all of these will apply to your particular club, organisation, facilities or the circumstances you are currently facing.

It is of utmost importance that your volunteers, staff, suppliers, members and customers are advised to not put themselves or others at risk at this time. The collective concern and focus is on protecting the safety and wellbeing of everyone across the sector. Sport England and National Governing Bodies of sport strongly

advise that everyone monitors and applies the Government's latest guidance, which is available here: [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

Please continue to actively consult and discuss any working practices with the relevant authorities and agencies and their advisers and carry out any work or tasks only where it is absolutely necessary, essential and/or safe.

Clubs and delivery organisations should keep accurate up-to-date building maintenance records and be aware of their statutory health and safety obligations. These should include details of key personnel, service providers, safety tests, operation and maintenance manuals, and legal, ownership, lending and insurance body information. These records should be kept in a safe and secure location under the control of a competent person(s) with standby access provision should the latter become unavailable.



## Risk Assessment:

- Conduct a risk assessment to help you consider any risks, issues and associated actions to mitigate them during this period. There are lots of things to consider like vandalism, attempted theft, weather damage, damage due to a lack of maintenance or faulty equipment or installations, data breaches etc.

## Insurance:

- Check what you're insured for (facility and equipment).
- Check the scope, terms and conditions of your insurance.
- Take appropriate action if required such as informing your insurance company of the temporary closure and ensuring the facilities are securely locked/alarmed to meet the conditions of your insurance.
- If your insurance policies include business interruption insurance, you may be able to claim for loss of income during the period of any unforeseen closures.

## Alarms & CCTV:

- Check your fire / smoke / intruder alarms are working properly before leaving the building.
- Check your CCTV is working.
- Ensure your alarm provider knows who to contact in the event of an emergency.

## Keyholders:

- Ensure there is more than one keyholder for the building and that their details are clearly displayed in a prominent place.

## Securing the building, kit & equipment:

- Check all doors, windows and other possible access points are in good condition and are locked.
- Ensure your security light is working.
- Consider if your property is at risk of being harmed or damaged while it is closed. Consider your options for electronic, physical and barrier security methods such as an intruder alarm system, CCTV, hoardings, fencing, barriers, shutters and boarding.

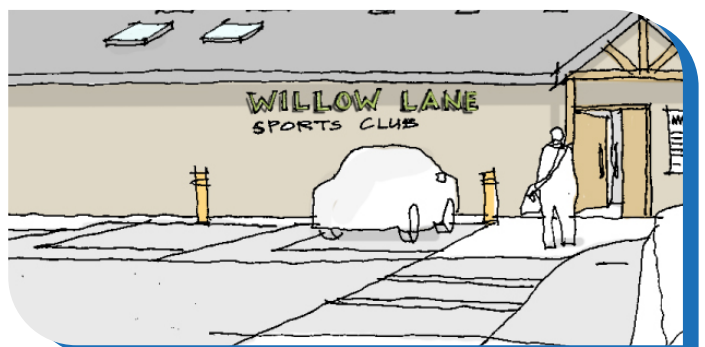
- Find a safe place to store your kit and equipment. You may want to loan club equipment to members/customers whilst your facility is shut to help them keep active. Make sure you keep a list of what members have borrowed to ensure all equipment is returned. Find a safe place to house any large grounds maintenance equipment, outdoor equipment and any vehicles, if required.
- Chain and lock all entrance gates and check your perimeter fencing is adequate with no signs of damage.

## Fuel, flammable liquids & perishable goods:

- Ideally, if you have flammable or hazardous liquids/chemicals on site relocate them and store them in a safe place. It is essential to follow all relevant regulations, manufacturer's, HSE and other guidance as well as your health and safety policy/procedures. Do not attempt to move or store any substances if the right equipment and suitably trained people are not available or it is not safe to do so.
- If relocation is not possible or practical then appropriate control measures, emergency procedures, signage and notifications should be put in place to alert people and emergency services to their presence as set out in [HSG51](#).

## Services, rent & rates:

- Consider whether you need to turn off or isolate any of the services to the building and contact your service providers if necessary (electricity, gas, water etc). If you are facing hardship you might want to try and negotiate deferred payments.
- Consider whether you need to empty and turn off any fridges, freezers, bar chillers and other portable electrical equipment like TVs, cookers, kitchen appliances and switched socket outlets.
- Be sure to examine any available options for payment holidays / payment deferrals and cancel any Direct Debits accordingly.



- ❑ If you rely on access to electronic data and you have a server and/or computers that are located within your facility (on-site server), you should back up all of your data and decide whether or not to relocate the equipment during the period of closure.
- ❑ Consider whether you need to operationalise / create a Disaster Recovery Plan/System.
- ❑ Consider moving your data files to a secure cloud based or off-site system.
- ❑ If you have volunteers or staff that need access to their email accounts, set them up with remote access.
- ❑ If volunteers or staff are accessing files/emails online, ask them to make sure their anti-virus software is up to date.

### Hard copy files:

- ❑ Consider whether you will need access to any hard copy files during the period of closure.
- ❑ Consider storing these files in an agreed safe place off-site if accessing your facility is likely to be problematic during the period of closure.
- ❑ Consider switching to online banking, if you are not already using it.

### Sensitive data/data protection:

- ❑ Consider the implications of hard and electronic files from a data protection perspective and ensure any confidential/personal data is secured safely.
- ❑ Make sure those storing/accessing data are aware of any relevant GDPR requirements and comply with them.
- ❑ Make sure your tax and financial records are easily accessible and stored safely.
- ❑ If you have cheque books / card readers / paying in books on site, you may wish to relocate them to move them to a secure, off-site location.

### Redirection of mail & phone calls:

- ❑ If you have a central email address for enquiries / club correspondence, set up remote access for a trusted volunteer/staff member to ensure you are not missing vital correspondence.
- ❑ If visiting the site to collect the mail is likely to be difficult, consider getting it redirected to a trusted person. If you have an off-site mailbox, remember to collect or redirect your mail.



- ❑ If the club has a phone number, consider redirecting calls to a trusted individual or leaving a message on the answer phone telling people how to get in touch with relevant individuals.

### Inventory & equipment loan:

- ❑ If you have an inventory for stock and equipment, try to update it.
- ❑ If you have moved or loaned out any items of kit/equipment/data, update/create an inventory detailing what is stored where and who has responsibility for it. This will enable you to access items as quickly as possible as soon as you need them.



## Inform your suppliers, sponsors, members/customers, staff & volunteers:

- Let your committee, members/customers and volunteers know about the planned closure and what this means for them.
- If other organisations hire/use your facilities, get in touch with them and let them know what it means for them too.
- If you have staff/volunteers that can work remotely, set out what you expect from them during this period including: roles, responsibilities, hours, payment, data protection and assessing risks. Be clear about how you will keep in touch.
- If you are expecting deliveries, you may wish to cancel or rearrange them. Contact your suppliers to let them know – check and refresh contact details and circulate them to key people.
- If you have any subscription packages (e.g. TV packages) contact the supplier to see if you can postpone these.
- Get in touch with your sponsors and any funding partners to tell them about your plans.

## Licenses:

- Check to see if closing your facility will impact on any operating licenses that you may have.

## Keeping in touch with your members/customers, staff, volunteers & sponsors:

- Keep in touch regularly via email, text, WhatsApp, newsletters, updates, social media – pick the channels that work best for your demographic. Enlist extra help from people who are well practiced with these forms of communications.
- If appropriate, send reminders about government advice and healthy working practices.

## Emergency services & neighbours:

- If appropriate, consider informing the emergency services community liaison officer or Neighbourhood Watch that your facilities will be empty so that they are aware.
- Notify your immediate neighbours that your facilities will be closing for an unknown period.
- If you have a security provider, ensure they are aware too.

## Notices & disclaimers – use of property/grounds at own risk:

- Consider putting up a notice to inform people of your temporary closure.
- Consider providing contact details for enquiries or in the event of an emergency.
- If there's a chance people may try and use your external facilities, you might want to put up a sign requesting them not to and stating that any use of the grounds are at their own risk.

## Maintaining essential areas/ playing surfaces:

- Consider if/how you can maintain your facilities and essential playing areas like natural turf pitches, greens etc. If you rely on external suppliers for this, contact them to determine what their plans are.
- Consider if/how you can keep any outdoor areas neat and tidy in readiness for reopening.
- If you can, and it safe to do so, ask someone to check on the facilities as required. Be sure to follow any Government guidelines on social distancing or isolation.

## See what financial support might be available:

- See if you are eligible for any financial support from Government or Local Authority schemes including grants, loans, rate relief, deferral of tax and salary protection schemes.
- Speak to your members/customers to ask if they are happy to continue paying any subscriptions or make donations if you are concerned about losing income.
- Consider starting a fundraising campaign.

## Make plans for re-opening:

- Make plans for your facilities re-opening so you can be all systems go when the time comes.
- Hold regular conversations with your committee, staff, volunteers, members/customers, suppliers, sponsors and funders about this.
- Consider whether you need to change your health and safety policies, normal and emergency operating procedures, cleaning and maintenance schedules, disaster recovery processes and agree the actions required to do this.
- Prepare or update your business continuity plans accordingly.

**Above all, make sure to be safe & follow the latest Government advice.**



## Useful links & template documents:

[Building Maintenance.](#)

[Risk Assessments.](#)

[Insurance.](#)

[Health and Safety Policy.](#)

[Data Protection and GDPR.](#)

[Sport England – Coronavirus Updates.](#)

[Government Coronavirus Advice.](#)

[Online Banking – Guide.](#)

## Links to Groundsmanship Guidance from Sport England:

[Groundsmanship.](#)

[Health & Safety.](#)

[Hazardous Substances Advice.](#)

[Lone Working Advice.](#)

[Sport England Training Modules.](#)

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