

## Social Business Wales Guidance Note: Navigating Future Lockdowns

**In a nutshell:** The national lockdown in March was unprecedented for us all on a personal and professional level. For businesses and business leaders having to adapt and react over night to how they could navigate their way through the unknown, lockdown meant big decisions and challenges. Whether your business continued operating, reduced trading, pivoted or hibernated – the lessons learnt during that period will equip you and guide you in future local or national lockdowns.

With predicted increases in cases and further Covid outbreaks, it is inevitable that there will be further lockdowns ahead, be it on a local or national basis. Having a lockdown plan in place and ready to use during any future lockdowns will enable your social business to navigate through it and mitigate the disruption. The start – stop nature of a lockdown will provide a road bump, or diversion on your route to recovery, but including it in your risk planning and having well thought out contingencies in place will make it a smoother journey than before for your staff, customers and social business as whole.

### Consider:

- Think about how you operated during the national lockdown in March. Analyse what worked well and what didn't.
- Consider if you were to go into lockdown again - what would you do differently with the gift of hindsight?
- How would you operate your social business in another lockdown? Think about the following:

### PRODUCTS / SERVICES:

- What products or services would you or could you deliver in another lockdown?
- Think about the services you offered at the start of the year, during lockdown and after? Are there any new, different or hybrid products or services that you could deliver during a new lockdown?
- Could you pivot or diversify what you deliver?
- Did demand for your service/product change during lockdown?
- How will you deliver your product/service if there are limitations upon where you can operate?

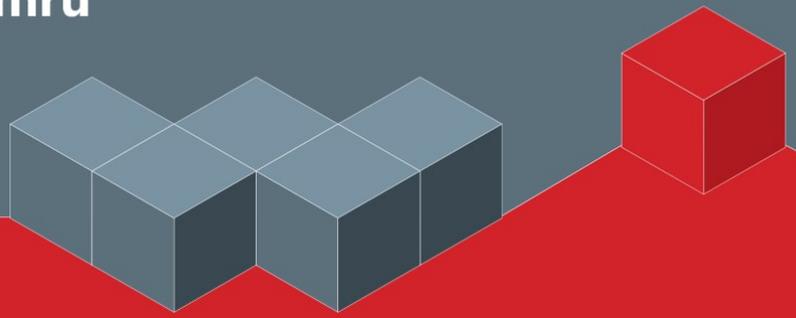


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### RESOURCES:

- How many staff would you need to operate during another lockdown?
- Will you have staff available or will there be caring responsibilities or shielding to consider? How will you satisfy the staffing levels needed?
- Consider staff engagement and the importance of communication with staff during challenging times to have greater staff buy in and engagement. <https://www.hrzone.com/lead/future/is-your-business-prepared-for-the-potential-of-another-lockdown>
- Get staff feedback - ask employees and volunteers for their suggestions on how you can operate during another lockdown and how they can do things differently or help.
- What resources and support would you need to be able to operate effectively?

### PREMISES:

- Would you operate from your premises or deliver remotely?
- Will customers and staff feel safe coming to your premises?
- Will customers and staff still be able to come to your premises?
- What restrictions would you face and are there ways to mitigate them?
- Will you need to make any additional modifications or change opening hours?
- Check your insurances will cover any changes to operation.

### FINANCES:

- How might another lockdown affect your finances?
- Analyse how your income and expenditure might change using forecasting and stress testing to develop or adjust your cashflow forecast. <https://businesswales.gov.wales/starting-up/managing-your-finances/cashflow-forecast#guides-tabs--0>
- Calculate if you have sufficient cash / income available to cover your overheads and operating expenses to continue trading?
- Consider using reserves as a cash injection to boost your income? Or contact your bank to discuss overdraft facilities or short-term borrowing. Contact current funders to find out if they can offer any additional support.
- Contact suppliers to discuss extending payment term and chase any outstanding invoices.
- Identify if you have a shortfall and research if there are external support schemes you can access such as loans and grants.

### COMMUNICATION:

- Plan how you will engage with staff and customers during another lockdown.
- Ask your staff and customers for feedback on how they think you could adapt during lockdown.
- Make sure you regularly update your website and social media with details of any changes to services and operating hours.
- Remind your customers/stakeholders you are still here and can support them during the new lockdown.
- Tell your story, use social media and your website as a tool,

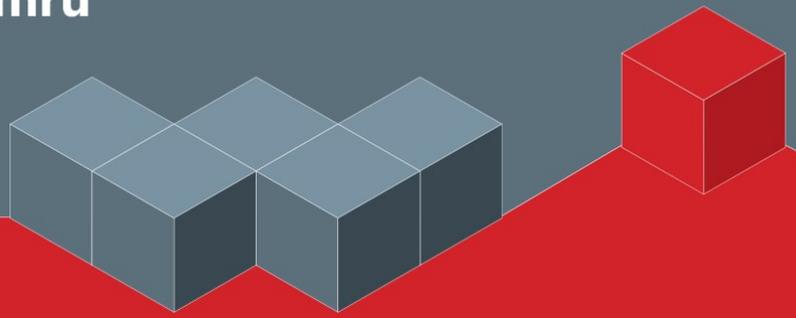


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highlighting what differences your social business makes to the community and its service users / customers as discussed in a previous edition of this guide <https://wales.coop/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Journey-To-Reopening-Stage-2-v1.pdf>

- Adjust or revise any communication plans you have in place to reflect the changes. It might be helpful to include a lockdown section, which will guide you of what and how to communicate if you enter back into a lockdown. <https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/campaigns/communications/communications-strategy>
- Keep regularly updated of any changes or announcements by government that will impact upon how you operate. <https://gov.wales/local-lockdown>
- Check your local authority's website for guidance on any local lock downs and the implications for businesses within that patch. Each area may differ and you may have to adapt how you operate across different areas if you have premises/operations within more than one local authority area.
- If local or national lockdowns are announced check latest guidance from HSE and government and update your risk assessments accordingly. Remember to communicate these changes and any added safety precautions to your staff members and customers.
- Communicating what safety precautions you are taking can improve consumer confidence.

### Action Points:

- Review how you operated during the last lockdown period. Analyse what worked well and what didn't.
- Develop a lock down plan which will detail how you will operate during another lockdown. It should consider the what, where and how. What you will offer, where you will offer it and how you will offer it in terms of staffing and resources needed.
- Calculate how a lockdown will affect your finances and identify any shortfalls in income.
- Research financial support available including specialist schemes and funding options.
- If you do go into local or national lockdown keep regularly updated of any changes or announcements by government that will impact upon how you operate.
- Update your risk assessments accordingly.
- Communicate with your staff, keep them involved in the decision-making process and engage them in any changes.
- Ensure your social media and website are regularly updated and reflect any changes to operation.
- Review or revise your communication plan.



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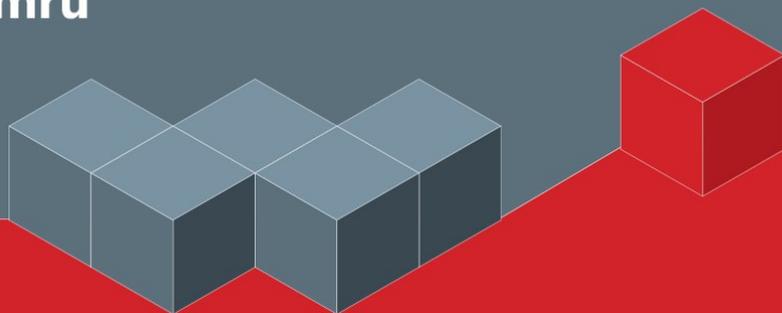
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Checklist:	Completed	Date	By	Planned review date
Review how you operated during the last lock-down.				
Develop a lock down plan.				
Communicate changes to staff & customers.				
Identify any shortfalls in income & research/ apply for financial support.				
Keep up to date on any local or regional lock-downs and restrictions.				

### Useful Links & Resources:

**Welsh Government:** <https://gov.wales/coronavirus>

For detail of local measures visit: <https://gov.wales/local-lockdown>

Guidance for employers: <https://gov.wales/business-and-employers-coronavirus>

**Health & Safety Executive:** [https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/index.htm?](https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/index.htm?utm_source=hse.gov.uk&utm_medium=refferal&utm_campaign=coronavirus&utm_term=banner-2&utm_content=home-page-banner)

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**Sources Of Funding:** Third sector Resilience Fund – Phase 2, operated by WCVA <https://wcva.cymru/funding/social-investment-cymru/third-sector-resilience-fund-for-wales/>

Further sources of funding can be found here: <https://funding.cymru/> and

<https://www.goodfinance.org.uk/covid-19-resource-hub-charities-social-enterprises>

**Stripping your cashflow guidance note:** <https://wales.coop/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/COVID-19-guidance-note-Stripping-Back-Your-Cashflow-Eng-v4.pdf>

**Social Business Wales' Covid-19 hub:** <https://wales.coop/covid-19-hub/>

And useful guides to re-opening your social business: <https://wales.coop/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Journey-To-Reopening-Stage-1-v1.1-final-eng.pdf>

<https://wales.coop/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Journey-To-Reopening-Stage-2-v1.pdf>



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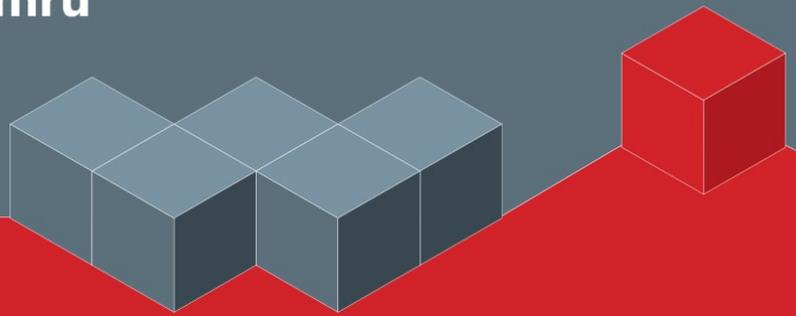
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**Preparing for another lockdown:** <https://www.businessgrowthhub.com/coronavirus/resources/2020/07/preparing-your-business-for-a-new-lockdown-what-you-need-to-know>

For further support and to talk to one of our Business Advisers give us a call on 0300 111 5050 or e-mail [sbwenquiries@wales.coop](mailto:sbwenquiries@wales.coop) and we can arrange a call back.



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