

Draft Covid-19 Guidance for land managers/owners planning to re-open public toilets in parks

Updated 3rd June 2020

Introduction

These guidelines have been produced in response to the easing of lockdown restrictions, causing increased numbers of parks users and so leading to pressure and an enhanced need to re-open public toilets. It should be noted that public toilets can be open under current [government guidance](#), however the issues are complex due to the health and safety risks to both public and staff.

The first part of this document is intended to form the basis of signage/guidance for individuals using toilet facilities; the second part provides additional notes and information for land managers and owners.

Part 1

Guidance for using public toilets in parks and green spaces

COVID-19 – USING PUBLIC TOILETS (guidance / signage)

[add opening/closing times]

1. Avoid using the public toilet where possible.
2. Use at your own risk.
3. These facilities are cleaned/inspected [X] times a day or [throughout the day]. It is still essential that you follow the guidance given to keep yourself and others safe.
4. The toilets will be closed during cleaning.
5. You **must** maintain a safe distance of 2 metres from others when entering, waiting or leaving public toilets.
6. If on entry you are unable to maintain social distancing, please wait in the designated queuing area, keeping 2 metres apart from others and avoid blocking the entrance.
7. No more than X people [insert what is appropriate for the space] should be in the waiting area at one time.
8. Some cubicles may be closed for your safety – do not use if closed
9. Avoid touching surfaces where possible and do not touch your face.
10. **Before leaving the facility WASH YOUR HANDS** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and dry thoroughly.
11. Dispose of paper towels in the bins provided.
12. Please use and leave the facility as quickly as possible.
13. Wash your hands again when you get home.
14. Please respect our staff.

Thank you for helping us keep everyone safe.

[Add, if applicable] Other toilets are located at (insert) or this facility is closed for your safety, other toilets are located at (insert).

Notes:

- We assume that users have adhered to advice about not entering the park if they have coronavirus symptoms, so it is not included above
- To help overcrowding at one facility, direct users to other open public toilets in the park [if applicable]
- You may wish to direct users to links for government guidance on social distancing and staying safe outside of the home:

[Staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing](#)
[Staying-safe-outside-your-home](#)

Part 2

Notes to Land Managers/owners

On 25th May 2020, the government published new guidance [for providers of outdoor facilities on the phased return of sport and recreation England](#), which refers to toilets, we have included appropriate parts of this guidance in the advice below, as well as current [Covid-19 government guidance](#) regarding social distancing and hygiene. We advise you to read the new guidance.

1. Overall Planning

Develop an action plan for re-opening toilets safely, such as scheduling for:

- Any necessary safety/site inspections and adjustments/maintenance.
- Consider how you are managing risks – carry out Covid-19 risk assessments (RA) for staff and public [see HSE link below and examples of RA kindly provided by Bexley, we will provide other examples in due course].
- In light of the RA, develop a safe system of working and checklist for cleaning staff, this should cover: being properly equipped before leaving a work depot, revised cleaning and restocking methods and how to deal with hazards.
- Implementing new measures for social distancing and good hygiene, to prevent the spread of infection, you may want to consider the following:
 - Creating designated queuing areas (away from the entry point) with 2m line markers.
 - Close some or alternative cubicles.
 - Replace hand dryers (contact points) with paper towels, this may mean the provision of additional bins. [We know that at least one Borough decided against using paper towels as it was considered a fire hazard; Boroughs will need to weigh up the risks and likelihood of occurrence in their parks].
 - Provision of hand sanitiser dispensers outside toilets.
 - Enhanced cleaning, especially for busy areas and contact points.
- Approval for operational changes – such as new measures or new hours of opening or only opening when staff present.
- Staffing –additional staff requirements and staff rota's.
- PPE and other equipment requirements for staff.
- Develop clear and appropriate signage.
- Establish re-opening date based on above timescales.

- Communications and building public confidence: - let the public know what steps you have taken to manage risks and ensure public safety (i.e. enhanced cleaning, opening/closing hours etc.)
- Publish guidance for park users.

Site and Risk Management

- **Guidance**- Make signage as clear and visible as possible – promote on social media.
- **Social distancing** (see above)
- **Hours of opening** – consider if facilities will be open only when a member of staff is present, so that regular cleaning can take place [currently the practice in City of Westminster]; or shorten hours of opening.

- **Staff safety and care:**

- Staff should be fully briefed and understand new safe systems of working.
- Staff should be fully equipped before leaving a work depot and issued with appropriate and properly fitting PPE, equipment (including a fully charged radio) and materials etc. Use of a checklist is advisable.
- Staff should be issued with a letter of authority to travel (as frontline staff).
- Staff could work a split day shift (am or pm) with half hour gap so that they do not have contact and can travel off-peak.

- **Daily cleaning regime:**

New cleaning protocols should be put in place to limit coronavirus transmission in public places, this may include increased frequency of cleaning and enhanced cleaning for some areas, [please see useful links below for government guidance on cleaning in a non-healthcare settings]:

- The toilets must be cleaned and disinfected (with an appropriate solution) frequently, depending on the contractual arrangements/specification.
- Carry out enhanced cleaning for busy sites and for touch points in and near toilets.
- Close the facilities during cleaning. If this is not possible, provide staff with barriers to close off areas of the facility being cleaned.

Other useful links

[Covid-19 – Government guidance on closing certain businesses and venues in England](#)

[HSE Working Safely During Coronavirus Outbreak](#)

[Covid-19 – Government Guidance on Cleaning in Non-Healthcare Setting](#)

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