

We welcome the Welsh Government's commitment to continue to have an open dialogue about the roadmap out of lockdown. We aim to support the phased reopening of public leisure, culture and sport by providing insights on the position of Welsh trusts, identifying and proposing solutions, and by working closely with partners like the Arts Council of Wales, Sport Wales, Welsh Sport Association, Swim Wales, Creu Cymru, Welsh Local Government Association, and the Chief Culture and Leisure Operators Association. Public leisure and sport is managed by trusts in 50% of Welsh local authorities. In five Welsh local authorities, trusts manage public culture, primarily libraries, theatres and arts venues.

### Measures needed to move forward through the traffic light phases

A strategy for long-term support and related measures will be needed to support the community sport, leisure, and culture infrastructure. There is significant worry about the economic viability of reopening our local leisure, culture, and sport facilities, even when it is safe to do so from a public health perspective, because:

- I. Social distancing will limit the number of people being able to engage in the sport, leisure, or cultural activity, therefore limiting the possibility to generate levels of income for those activities to be viable.
- II. Public confidence is currently low. This is demonstrated by insights from [this week's](#) BVA-BDRC Covid-19 Tracking Consumer Sentiment on the Impact of Covid-19: consumers would take, on average, five months to return to a gym-based activity, and five and a half months before returning to a museum or gallery. Similarly, according to the [Indigo](#) 'After The Interval' survey results, 41% of audiences would not consider booking for [theatre] events for at least four months.
- III. Immediate and increased costs for enhanced cleaning and safety protocols, and re-mobilisation costs including staff re-training and support.

Considering this, Community Leisure Wales members agreed the following measures to be crucial:

- Ensure that local authorities are properly financially resourced so they can support their leisure, sport, and culture partners, potentially through ring fenced funding, in the immediate and long-term.
- Develop a national campaign to build public confidence and raise realistic expectations about engaging with newly reopened businesses and public spaces.
- Clarity on an expected timeline for reopening, appreciating that exact dates will be influenced by advice from public health, as currently there is uncertainty about the way forward for Wales compared to the other home nations. There are too many variables, and therefore scenarios, for reopening that make business continuity planning challenging.
- Announce dates for reopening at least two weeks in advance. Organisations need at least two weeks to carry out health and safety checks and resulting actions, and three weeks for business preparation, including ensuring staff are supported and training is refreshed to meet guidelines.
- Clarity about the guidelines and protocols that will be in place when leisure, sport and cultural venues and activities can reopen.
- Build on guidelines and protocols from (inter)national expert advice that have been published already, notably from the sport and leisure sector, where EuropeActive published [Recommended Practices for Operating Under Covid-19](#) and ukactive published a [Framework for re-opening of gym, leisure centre and wider fitness industry during social distancing](#).
- Establish advisory groups on the phased reopening of cultural activities and facilities. We are involved in the advisory groups established by the Welsh Sport Association and Sport Wales to advise on reopening sport and leisure activities and facilities. However, there are currently no such groups known to us from a cultural perspective. We work closely with Creu Cymru who represent the theatre and arts venues across Wales, and whose perspectives we believe are crucial to the safe and viable reopening of the theatre and arts sector in Wales and would be keen to work collaboratively to input into any such groups.

### Note on the position of Welsh leisure and culture trusts

Since our note on April 24 to the Welsh Government and partners, our updated insights collected last week indicate that the position of leisure and culture trusts has not changed, despite the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme being extended until October. That means that a third of Welsh trusts will reach an "insecure" position within six months (by September 2020); 44% will reach this position within the next six to nine months. In nine to twelve months, 77% of Welsh trusts will have become "non viable" or be in an "insecure" position. If they were to be no longer a going concern, or if they open too soon for it to be financially viable, the entire community infrastructure for leisure, sport and culture will collapse. It will then significantly restrict local authorities' capacity to meet their statutory duties under the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.