

# Dealing with the impact of COVID-19

## Guidance for our partners 17.03.20

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# Introduction

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- ❖ We have put together this short guide to help our partners access support and advice in terms of dealing with the initial impact of COVID-19 on your business
- ❖ We have included examples of how other businesses are communicating to their customers
- ❖ We have pulled together the information we have on the measures introduced by government as we have it and will update as new information is forthcoming
- ❖ We will be focusing on delivering ongoing marketing to promote Chester and Cheshire and have outlined how you can get involved
- ❖ For ongoing communication please join our Facebook Group ‘ Marketing Cheshire Partners’  
[www.facebook.com/groups/marketingcheshire](https://www.facebook.com/groups/marketingcheshire)

# Communicating to your customers



Be proactive – contact your customers, don't wait to hear from them



Be personable – talk about how important their loyalty is to you, in a tone of voice that is upbeat, friendly



Encourage postponements rather than cancellations wherever possible



Communicate regularly on social media and by email



Tell your customers what you have done to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 at your premises



Tell your customers what they can do in our local area, share our social media posts / use joint hashtags

# Best practice examples – social media



## Noughts and Crosses Pizzeria

13 March at 16:47 · 🌐

To our loyal customers,

What a week! Like you, we are left wondering what the future will hold, whether our parents and our children will be safe, how our community will be impacted, whether our restaurant and the jobs that we love can survive. We are doing all that we can to ensure our customers continue to enjoy our delicious food in the comfort of our restaurant - and for those who can't join us in person, we will be adding delivery slots so that you don't miss out. We appreciate all the support you have given us. Please, please continue to support all our local, small businesses wherever possible.

We also want to ensure that we give back to our community this time. If there is a need, we are hoping to arrange a lunchtime delivery slot, once a week, delivering pizzas free of charge to those who are elderly, house-bound and vulnerable. So if you know someone who is over 75, is self-isolating and is in need of additional support, please talk to us about how we can help.

Meanwhile, we are open this evening and all weekend – and we look to seeing your smiles as you gaze hungrily at the pizza of your choice!



## The Glynne Arms

8 mins · 🌐

Dear All,

Our office has been a hive of positive energy today and we are ready to let you know what we have planned to protect our customers and staff and to serve our community in the coming weeks.

First, the bad news. Our cafes are now closed for sit-in service until further notice. The Glynne Arms is also closed for all sit-in food and drink until further notice. We have taken this action to protect everyone in our community.

Now, the GOOD NEWS. Hawarden Estate Farm Shop will continue to serve shoppers and we have excellent quantities of meat, veg, dry goods, bread etc. We will continue to serve take away food, coffee, tea and everything else you expect from our cafe. Our Broughton outpost will serve take away food and drink only from today.

And as of tomorrow at 5pm The Glynne Arms will open as a butcher, bakery, grocer, take away (think sourdough pizzas, fish and chips etc) and off licence. We are working flat out to convert the pub into something new and exciting in the hope that we can be of value to the village in these strange times.



## Oneplanet Adventure

12 March at 12:13 · 🌐

\*\*\*\*Important notice relating to Coronavirus\*\*\*\*

The forest is a wonderful place to be at the moment, enjoying the fresh clean air and wide-open spaces. We know a big part of your experience is the warm welcome within the visitor centre itself so we're keen to ensure this remains a safe place to relax and socialise. We're asking for your support by paying close attention to the new guidelines we have in place to help safeguard the health and wellbeing of you and our staff:

The processes we have implemented follows and will continue to follow, guidelines issued by the government.

- All visitors are requested to thoroughly wash hands with the bio-soap provided in the public toilets before entering the visitor centre.
- Staff have been asked not to shake hands and to avoid any other physical contact. Please don't be offended, this is to help protect everyone.
- We also ask that if you do experience any of the symptoms of COVID-19, or if you have recently visited any of the affected areas within the last 2 weeks, seek advice by calling NHS111, but please do not visit Oneplanet Adventure.

As a small business, already affected by the recent storms, we would very much appreciate your cooperation on this matter.

We are monitoring government advise and will continue to act accordingly should the guidelines change.

# Best practice example - eshot

## *A message from Rowan & Sarah*

Ok, you beautiful creatures, be you artists, audiences, partners, vendors, volunteers or contractors. You keep us laughing, keep us fed, keep the lights on, give us goosebumps in these magical worlds we create. You make our world turn. And now we all find ourselves in unprecedented times. We are all in the grip of uncertainty, vulnerability and fear. We have no solid answers, we're as unsettled as you are, but we know some things for sure:

- Our events will go ahead if they possibly can. We support the artists, freelancers, creatives, vendors, contractors and volunteers that make them happen, and are painfully aware that their futures are on the line. Our door is open for discussion, honesty, support and kindness. Our aim is for everything to go ahead as planned, but if they can't, we will be looking at all and any options to support ourselves and our festival family as best we can.
- If difficult decisions need to be made in the upcoming weeks and months, and our festivals and events can't take place as planned, we will postpone tickets to 2021 or offer refunds if necessary. We are still seeing cancellations as a last resort, and are planning and plotting for all of our events to go ahead as planned. We would ask our wonderful audiences to hold your nerve, to keep buying tickets with the safety net of a secure refund plan in place. Our deeply held hope is that we'll be sitting in the sunshine this summer, looking back on these dark days, but rest assured we are planning for the alternative.
- Wild Rumpus is a force for good, and isn't going anywhere! As a non-profit organisation, we are robust and sustainable enough to weather this storm.

This industry we work in, the arts and festival sectors, is the most creative, innovative, incredible gang to be in. We couldn't feel luckier to be surrounded by the people who will seek out and realise the most imaginative ways to be kind, to gather communities together, to share the love and care that is at the heart of all we do. We don't have many answers, but in this new world we find ourselves in, rest assured we are seeking out and celebrating the beautiful, the charming, the radical and the bold ways ahead as we navigate these uncharted waters. Biggest of love, and care, and resolve to you all. If you're worried, if you're scared, if you're lonely, we're here.

# Responding to cancellations template

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Dear Mr and Mrs....

I am so sorry to hear that you have made this decision, and I completely understand your reasonings.

This entire situation is unprecedented and as the recent events surrounding the new Corona Virus/Covid-19 have rapidly unravelled, I have had to think long and hard about the very serious implications for all of us and potentially the future of our business.

It may not come as a surprise to you that you are not the only guests who are having second thoughts and would like to change their plans, some have paid their full balance and some have not, some have holiday insurance cover already in place which may pay out for them if a pre-existing health condition is included, and some have not.

Our own insurance policy is not covering this event.

I would love to be able to move your booking to another date later in the year, I am willing to hold your booking open for a year from now to be able to rebook.

I hope you will continue to visit and support us in the future, you would be very welcome as your patronage is extremely important to us.

With kind regards,



# Cheshire and Warrington Growth Hub

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- ❖ On behalf of Cheshire and Warrington LEP, we provide support and information to businesses.
- ❖ We will be providing the very latest guidance in relation to Covid-19 for your business. Please check [our website](#) for the latest updates.
- ❖ We are working with the three local authorities and government to ensure we provide the right support that businesses need at this time.
- ❖ We understand that some companies have a policy of no face-to-face meetings. We are currently offering businesses, telephone or video call meetings.
- ❖ Please contact the Growth Hub for any type of support needed for your business.
- ❖ [support@candwgrowthhub.co.uk](mailto:support@candwgrowthhub.co.uk) 03300 245007

# Government support for business

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**Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)** - SSP has been extended to cover employees who are self-isolating (or carers) in line with Government advice for up to two weeks. GP fit note will not be required & employees will be able to obtain an alternative by contacting NHS 111 online. Those not entitled to SSP (e.g. self-employed), claims for Universal Credit are being relaxed & available online / via phone.

SME Businesses will be able to reclaim SSP paid. Timescale for mechanism to be in place will be a few weeks. For more immediate support see 'Time to Pay' below.

**Business Interruption Loan Scheme** - Government will provide an 80% guarantee on loans or overdraft up to £5m. Businesses remain responsible for making repayments. Further details to be developed. Contact existing/prospective lender.

**HMRC / Tax – Time to Pay** - This is an existing scheme (i.e. available immediately). Businesses & self-employed experiencing financial problems & with current tax liabilities, should contact HMRC helpline 0800 0159 559.

**Temporary Business Rates Relief** – ALL Retail, leisure and hospitality businesses will get 100% business rates relief for the 20-21 year. Contact the Growth Hub.

**Business Grant Funding** - Rateable businesses will be able to access a cash grant of £25,000 per business. Smaller businesses will be able to access a cash grant of £10,000 per business. Process to claim unknown at present.



# Keeping informed - Useful links

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Government's COVID-19 Action Plan can be found here:

<http://gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-action-plan>

More information from government

<http://gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

NHS Online

<http://nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Business Rates (Cheshire East)

[https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/business/business\\_rates/business\\_rates.aspx](https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/business/business_rates/business_rates.aspx)

Business Rates (Cheshire West & Chester)

<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/business/business-rates/rate-relief.aspx>

Business Rates (Warrington)

<https://www.warrington.gov.uk/small-business-rates-relief>

HMRC Difficulties Paying Tax

<https://www.gov.uk/difficulties-paying-hmrc>

Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

<https://www.gov.uk/statutory-sick-pay>

# Keeping informed - Good industry twitter accounts to follow

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[www.twitter.com/bernarddonaghue](https://www.twitter.com/bernarddonaghue)

[www.twitter.com/ukhofficial](https://www.twitter.com/ukhofficial)

[www.twitter.com/ukhospkate](https://www.twitter.com/ukhospkate)

[www.twitter.com/visitenglandbiz](https://www.twitter.com/visitenglandbiz)

[www.twitter.com/mktgcheshire](https://www.twitter.com/mktgcheshire)

[www.twitter.com/caterertweets](https://www.twitter.com/caterertweets)

[www.twitter.com/cwbizhub](https://www.twitter.com/cwbizhub)

[www.twitter.com/dcms](https://www.twitter.com/dcms)

[www.twitter.com/huddlestonnigel](https://www.twitter.com/huddlestonnigel)

[www.twitter.com/beisgovuk](https://www.twitter.com/beisgovuk)

[www.twitter.com/10downingstreet](https://www.twitter.com/10downingstreet)

[www.twitter.com/uksciencechief](https://www.twitter.com/uksciencechief)

[www.twitter.com/companieshouse](https://www.twitter.com/companieshouse)

[www.twitter.com/businessgov](https://www.twitter.com/businessgov)

[www.twitter.com/tradegovuk](https://www.twitter.com/tradegovuk)

[www.twitter.com/CMO\\_england](https://www.twitter.com/CMO_england)

[www.twitter.com/Number10Press](https://www.twitter.com/Number10Press)

[www.twitter.com/MattHancock](https://www.twitter.com/MattHancock)

# Promoting our destination

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**We won't be stopping promoting our beautiful place! Communication is ongoing and will focus on the following;**

❖ Positive and beautiful images and messages about the destination during this period, so that we are still front of mind.

❖ If you are open during this time we will promote you, so please engage with it by sending us photos/videos and copy, using joint hashtags (#lovecheshire #ourcheshire #visiticheshire or #lovechester #ourchester #visitchester) and tagging us in your own posts;

[www.twitter.com/visiticheshire](http://www.twitter.com/visiticheshire)

<https://www.instagram.com/visitchesterandcheshire/>

[www.facebook.com/visiticheshire](http://www.facebook.com/visiticheshire)

❖ For businesses that are closed we will support with a 'virtual day out' promoting what is going on behind the scenes, telling your stories and keeping the customer engaged.

❖ All our communication channels are available to all Chester, Cheshire & Warrington businesses at this time

# Keep in touch

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- ❖ Tell us how you are doing - Ashley Shacklady  
[a.shacklady.@marketingcheshire.co.uk](mailto:a.shacklady.@marketingcheshire.co.uk)
- ❖ Support and advice for businesses – C&W Growth Hub  
[support@candwgrowthhub.co.uk](mailto:support@candwgrowthhub.co.uk)
- ❖ Updating the website – Philippa Meachin  
[p.meachin@marketingcheshire.co.uk](mailto:p.meachin@marketingcheshire.co.uk)
- ❖ Social Media / Marketing Campaigns - Ben McKeary  
[b.mckeary@marketingcheshire.co.uk](mailto:b.mckeary@marketingcheshire.co.uk)
- ❖ Business Tourism partner impact and support – Fiona Bebbington  
[f.Bebbington@marketingcheshire.co.uk](mailto:f.Bebbington@marketingcheshire.co.uk)