

COVID 19- Q&A

What is happening at the Centre of Wellbeing?

As of 24th August 2020 we remain in phase 3 of the Scottish Government's route map. Guidelines state that offices cannot reopen until phase 4 and that even in phase 4 organisations should continue to support staff to work at home as much as possible.

This means that, at present, the Centre remains closed to everyone except a small number of staff required to maintain the building and a small number of Supported Living staff who are working in the community.

Our priority is to keep everyone safe. We are following Scottish Government advice closely and keeping in touch with both Thistle staff and the Thistle community to ensure we are operating safely and meeting people's needs as best we can. Practitioners are offering remote support and have set up online Tai Chi classes every Tuesday. We are working hard behind the scenes to plan for a safe return.

Will the Thistle Gym be open on 31st August?

The Thistle Gym will not be reopening on 31st August.

However, following last week's announcements by the First Minister, we are looking closely at options for how the gym may be able to operate going forward. We know that the gym reopening is a priority for many people in our community.

In the meantime we have frozen gym memberships – suspending memberships from March until the Gym reopens – and will continue to keep our community updated of any changes.

Why will the Gym not be reopening at the same time as many other gyms?

The gym is one of numerous facilities within our Centre of Wellbeing and so options for reopening must take into account the use of the wider building. As a charity supporting people with long term health conditions and disabilities to live well, we must be confident in our ability to reopen in a way that is safe for all.

What will determine when and how the Centre of Wellbeing reopens?

There are a number of factors that will influence decisions around reopening, including:

- The current Scottish Government, NHS and Care Inspectorate guidelines
- Ensuring the safety of people who we support, particularly as many people have underlying health conditions
- The safety of our staff and all of those who use our building
- The practical measures we need to take such as reduced numbers, bookable sessions and additional safety measures to make us COVID Secure
- The unpredictability of the virus
- The time of year and the implications of winter illnesses

As such, we do not yet have a date for the reopening the Centre or the Thistle Gym.

How will the Centre of Wellbeing reopen?

When Scottish Government advice allows, we will see a gradual increase of staff in the Centre. However, we will continue to support the majority of office-based staff to work from home as much as possible.

We will use feedback from the staff and community consultation to determine the next steps.

What safety measures will be put in place when the Centre of Wellbeing reopens?

As we respond to the most recent guidelines and form our plan for reopening we will be carrying out risk assessments and looking at the following measures where appropriate:

- One way system for entering and exiting the building
- Enhanced cleaning throughout the day of “high touch” areas (door handles, switches, toilets, changing areas, kitchens, shared equipment etc.).
- Monitoring to support Track and Trace, so we are able to determine who is in the building, when and who with.
- Handwashing stations and hand sanitiser throughout the building.
- Reducing the numbers within the building and the maximum capacity within rooms/Gym
- Bookable sessions with reduced numbers and cleaning in-between sessions.
- Use of PPE where required.

When will the Centre of Wellbeing reopen to groups?

We do not have a date for group activities to resume in the Centre. We are carrying out risk assessments and following guidance closely. We will continue to keep you updated on this.

Could you run groups outside instead?

This is something we have looked at and will continue to assess. Whilst there are a number of challenges, such as making sure that everyone would have safe access to toilet facilities and planning for the unpredictable Scottish weather we are hopeful that we will be able to have some groups start soon.

Could you run activities in the Garden Suite?

The Garden Suite is a separate building but subject to the same guidance as the Centre. Therefore, we cannot open it for use at this time.

Who can I contact if I need further information?

For information on the building please contact 0131 661 3366 and the Facilities team will be happy to assist you.

For information about:

- Health and Wellbeing support, contact Emma Hollands emma.hollands@thistle.org.uk
- Online Tai Chi classes, contact reception reception@thistle.org.uk