



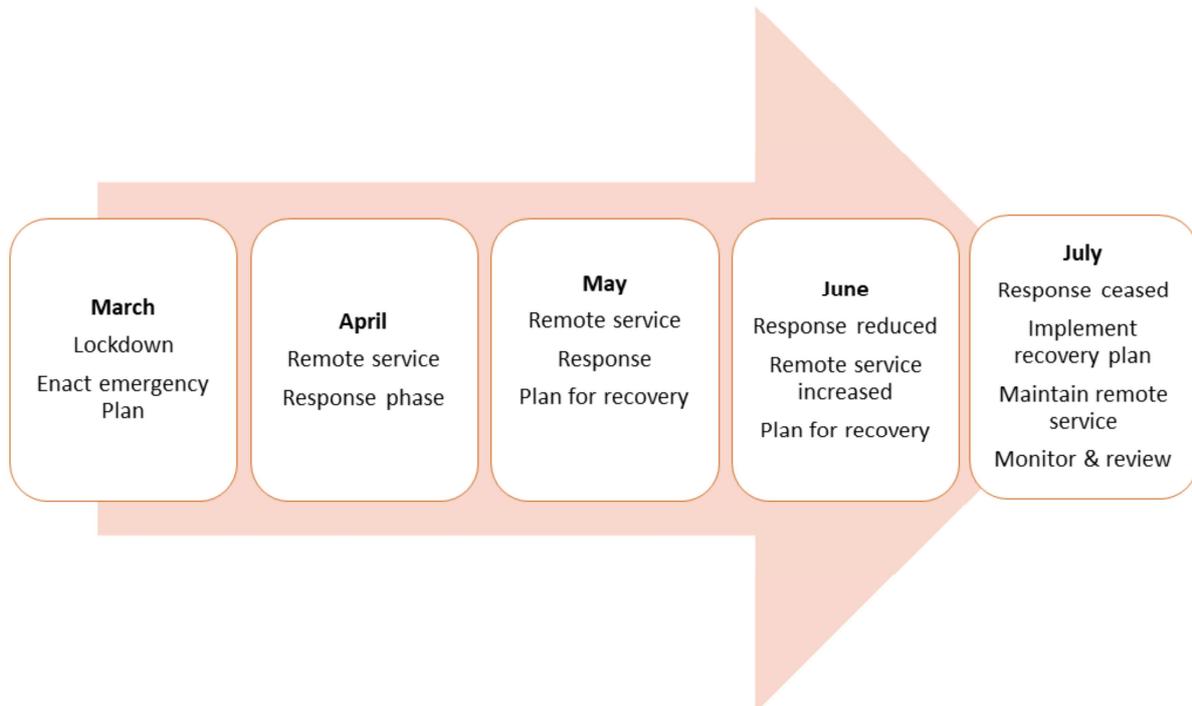
Staffordshire Archives & Heritage: From Lockdown to Recovery



Hi I am Joanna Terry and I am Head of Archives and Heritage for Staffordshire County Council. I am going to briefly talk about how we quickly locked down our service and have more slowly planned for it's recovery. First just a bit of background about the service. I am responsible for three different services:

- Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archive Service, a joint archive service with Stoke on Trent City Council. We are an accredited archive service and place of deposit.
- County Museum – the county's museum service which includes Museum Development. We are an accredited museum service.
- William Salt Library – a private library managed by a charitable trust delivered by the archive service. It holds the county's local studies collection as well as William Salt's original collection.

Lockdown to recovery



This is an overview of how we have moved through the phases of this current pandemic.

- Early March we were introducing hygiene measures, resurrecting plans from the swine flu and looking at Business Continuity elements in our emergency plan
- By mid March we had closed our exhibition and events, stopped onsite volunteering and were planning to close the service which we had done by Friday 20 March.
- Once lockdown was announced the focus was on getting all staff able to work from home. Fortunately the SCC drive towards smart working meant most staff had laptops or we could let them use ones that been for volunteers. Everyone was able to work from home by the end of March. We enacted the emergency plan and set up an emergency contact WhatsApp group.
- From April onwards 40% of the team were involved in the response mainly supporting vulnerable shielded category through food hubs and contact centre.
- During April we also established a remote service answering some enquiries and putting others on hold until staff returned to site. Essential checks on buildings and collections continued throughout.
- From April/May we increased our online offer with fun and interactive social media and established a remote volunteer offer.
- We started planning for recovery which was part of a corporate approach.
- In June the response was starting to reduce in line with reduced demand.
- Recovery plans increased apace and we gained the COVID-19 secure certificates which meant more staff could return. This in turn meant more remote orders and research could be fulfilled as more staff returned to site.
- At the end of June our recovery plan received corporate sign off and reopening date was agreed.
- Today we start implementing our phased recovery plan which we will monitor and review

Response to COVID-19

- Taken our physical offer and delivered an enhanced online offer via our social media platforms and our website.
- Ensured continuity of our core service offer:
 - **History**
 - **Collections**
 - **Activities**
 - **Information and support**
 - **Volunteers**



Almost all members of staff were able to work from home on projects which shared the history of Staffs & Stoke.

Many worked on converting paper catalogues to online increasing information in Gateway to the Past. We also completed essential checks on the collections, maintained a remote enquiry service and fulfilled some digital copy orders where we could access images. At Staffs RO enquiries were just 25% down.

We increased the number of digital activities on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram with quizzes such as Where on Your Doorstep to guess the location of an image, and provided more content for Staffordshire Day and VE Day in May and launched our You Tube channel.

We made a conscious decision to maintain contact with our volunteers and developed a Learning Room Blog where we shared guides to research and an online palaeography course.

At the same time 40% of our staff supported the Vulnerable Self Isolator Cell led by the Library and Arts Service. The small team at Stoke on Trent City Archives also played their part in supporting the response with one member of the team working on the contact centre helpline

The impact of this for the first quarter of the year is:

120% increase for Past Track visitor sessions

33% increase for our main website and Online Catalogue

89% increase for social media

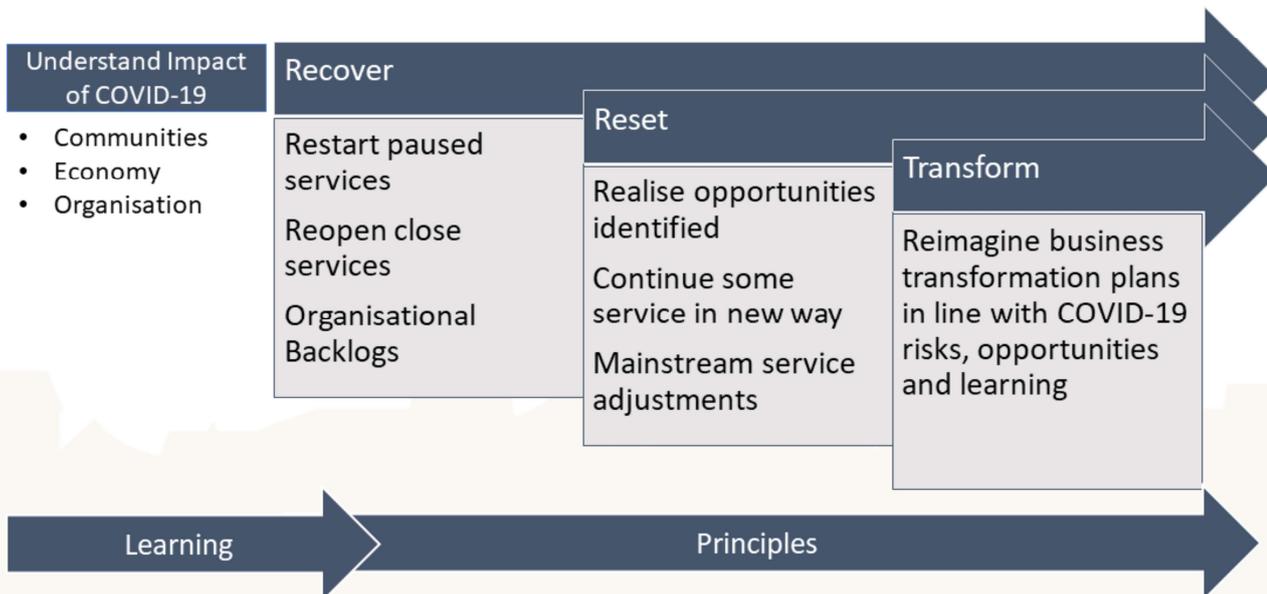
8,952 views of the newly launched tithe maps in the first month

YouTube views 857

45 volunteers are working remotely for us and have told us how much they valued this and that it helped divert them from the lockdown.

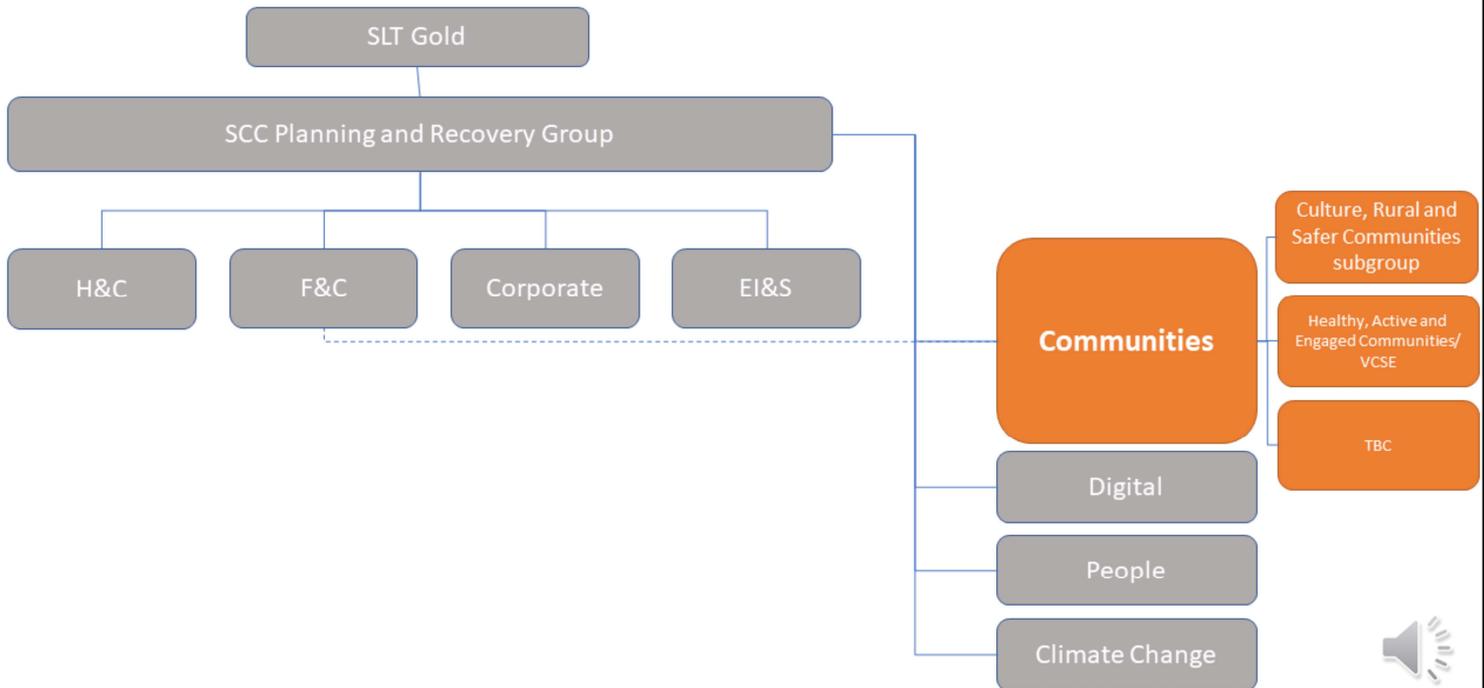
It was really important to us to keep a service offer going and increase the online impact. This also helped keep our profile up within our authority; important in ensuring you are at the forefront to recover your service and not at the end of a long list of buildings.

SCC Approach to Recovery



Staffordshire County Council's approach was to capture what we had learnt during COVID-19 and challenge services to think about what we would do differently. The approach recognised that some things would change for good and never return to how they were. A key impact has been the shift into home working which is set to continue.

Communities Recovery Governance



The governance for recovery of services was established in early May. The Senior Leadership had oversight of the whole process and a corporate planning and recovery group was led by our asst director, Janene Cox, and asst director for strategy and public health prevention. Each directorate had its own recovery group with our services in the Families and Communities directorate and the communities recovery group.

The library manager coordinated this group and I coordinated the sub group for Culture, Rural and Safer Communities which included our services.

We planned recovery at a high level sharing ideas, approaches and early recovery plans. We fed back concerns and issues to the communities group e.g. the need for a simple risk management template, guidance on risk assessments from our H&S team, and pleas for advice and support around what to do about public toilets!

Below the corporate subgroup was the Archive and Heritage Management team to which we added our premise manager who played a key role in the planning.

Questions, conversations and solutions

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1		Resumption of on-site services	PHASE 3				PHASE 2		
2		Questions raised	Further considerations/queries	Solutions	Staff required	Documents	Follow up	action	Julie's notes
3	Liaison with Community Recovery Team	Maintaining joined-up approach to resumption of services	We need to ensure that we are ready to resume services in line with other SCC services, and in a similar manner so the message to the public is clear; we still have some unique circumstances	Catherine Mann is leading on 'Community Recovery'. JT to be a member of this team and will feed back on policy/ actions	JT			Attend meetings and feed back into our own planning	
4		Provision of PPE and signage	Hand sanitiser and cleaning materials are being sourced centrally. Libraries led by CM are putting in order for screens and signage	Make list of our requirements for public and staff areas: assess what we require for staff areas: offices/tea room, entrances. Public areas: courtyard, entrance, toilets, RR, LARC	JON and PST	catalogues in 7.2.1		JT has ordered floor signage/screens through libraries. PST/JON to review further requirements	
5		Risk assessment required	Assume social distancing will continue	Mandatory and led by SCC+H&S team. Work through RR routines and see where they need modification	JON/TG		JT to email HS team	Complete risk assessment	Again I assume there will be an SCC generic risk assessment than can be adapted specifically for us. If nothing comes out soon from the Health & Safety team I can start to look at this.
6	Health and safety issues	Cleaning	This is likely to be reviewed by cleaning team. Do they need input from us?		JON/TG		JT to email Paul Bathew		I have not heard anything about changes to cleaning routines - except for cleaning desk tops and door handles more - I can check with Site Supervisor to see if they are likely to have a risk assessment in place for this.
7		Contractors and visitors (other than readers/volunteers)		Risk assessment already in place; must make booking with JON, gloves and hand sanitiser available	JON				
		How will social distancing be managed for staff in non-public areas	Will staff be allocated work areas that are any different to their current desks? How will tea room be used? How do we minimise traffic in corridors	See risk assessment - Work through office routines and see where they need modification. Allocation of working space. Some staff continue to work from home if necessary as RR now in use. Contact by	TG/JON	https://www.intra.staffordshire.gov.uk/businessplanning/Coronavirus/Social-		Allocation of working space; communication of risk assessment	Tea breaks/lunch breaks can be staggered with priority being given to public service staff.

Our early approach to recovery was to ask lots of questions for each phase of the recovery captured in a spreadsheet at the end of April. This included:

1. Public services in lockdown – which addressed setting up revised procedures to deal with remote enquiries and fulfil ones that did not require a visit to site
2. All remote services - Covered increasing remote services as staff were able to return to site. Simplified procedures, forms, and enabled them all to be completed remotely by staff. Moved to copying/scanning onsite then all other processes completed remotely.
3. Resumption of onsite services – this covered liaison with the Communities Recovery Group
 - Health and safety in offices, public spaces, and for volunteers
 - Communication with the public
 - Staffing the public service
 - Review public service routines
 - Training requirements - loss of key staff during lockdown

The spreadsheet idea came from CALGG group. One of the archivists on the service management team undertook to complete a detailed analysis talking to almost all staff asking what their concerns were, potential solutions, who was responsible and action required.

Service recovery plan

- Bottom up approach
- Detailed spreadsheet
- Written detailed plan
- High level recovery plan for corporate approval



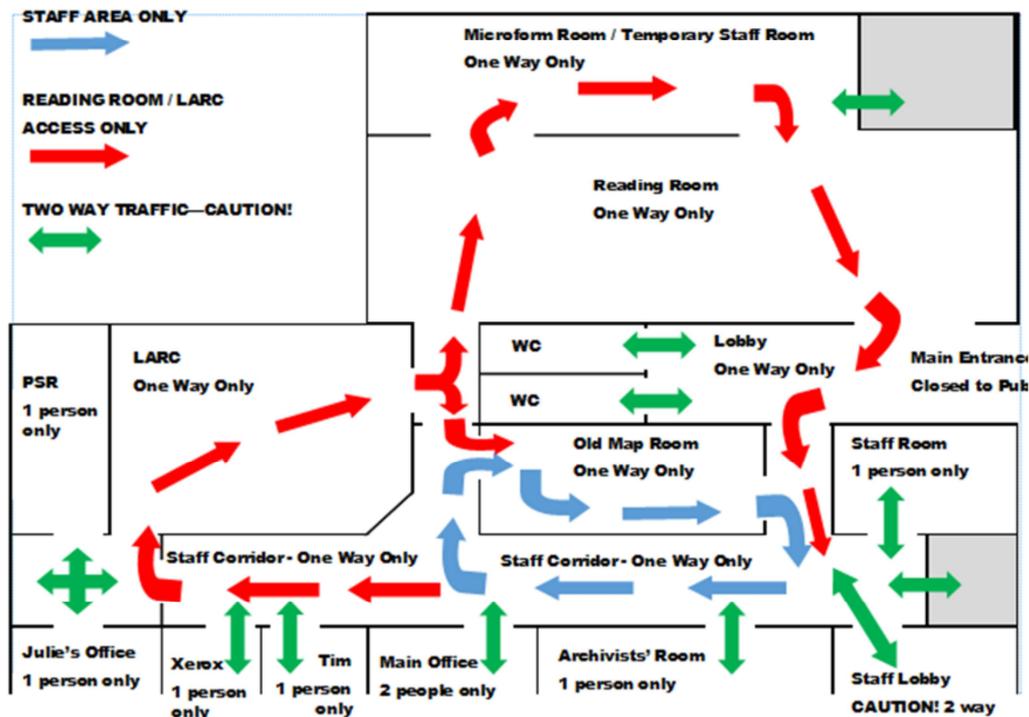
Taking a bottom up approach was helpful to build confidence and trust with staff. The feedback captured from the spreadsheet was then turned into a fairly detailed word document highlighting areas requiring decision.

Decision making rested with the Archive and Heritage Management Team including the Premise Manager. She was the first member of staff to regularly resume working on site to keep it safe and ensure contractors could continue visiting to carry out maintenance visits. She was also the key contact to liaise with the health and safety team feeding back to head of service, public services lead , museum service lead.

Approval of plans rested with the Corporate Recovery Group but also ensuring the Joint Archives Committee and William Salt Library Trust were consulted on key decisions. A major decision we took was not to reopen the William Salt Library. This was due to the small rooms in the listed building and loss of staff during the lockdown. A service restructure was put on hold and for three staff they decided to retire anyway. This meant a reduction in the public service team at both sites.

A high level recovery plan pulling out key issues and timeframe was submitted to the corporate recovery group and signed off in June.

Risk assessments



The County Council health and safety team provided a lot of support and guidance. We were able to get our buildings onto the lists to be visited and once a corporate risk assessment was issued in May we could adapt it to our own sites. A key requirement was to implement a one way route around our buildings where possible. We were able to do this at SRO but not at WSL or Museum. We are still encouraged to work from home where possible and had to submit occupancy returns so that numbers of staff on site are reduced.

We have an RA for each site which covers buildings and processes. Individual risk assessments have been completed if people fall into the clinical vulnerable or extremely clinically vulnerable group. These individuals are asked to work at home. Our H&S team issued our COVID-19 secure certificates in June.

They also gave us initial personal supplies of hand sanitiser and alcohol wipes. We ordered sneeze screens and a hand sanitiser station early on linking up with our library service.

The number of public seats have been reduced from 16 to 4 and for July there is no access to PCs or microform. Access to hard copy catalogues is by staff only.

Learning from others & testing



- CALGG, AWM, TNA, Libraries Connected
 - Pre-booking and original documents
 - Advance ordering and limits
 - Quarantine
 - PPE and hand sanitiser
 - Opening times
 - Air conditioning, RH/temp
 - Reader's tickets
 - Contact tracing
- Bringing staff back first



We referred to the checklist produced by the National Archives and guidance published by Libraries Connected and talked to colleagues in other services. Especially about toilets!

Talking to others was especially useful through the Chief Archivists in Local Government Group and Archives West Midlands. The CALGG listserv had many responses on the topic of reopening which I collated and identified the key issues for archive services. These themes were useful for discussion with Archives West Midlands at a workshop at the end of June.

There is almost complete consensus around advance booking and pre-ordering of documents and we have followed this route. Some of our staff wanted the option to do on demand production but we have agreed we will not do this to start. Our approach is to start quite tight and then relax procedures as we gain confidence and can ascertain demand.

Quarantine for books is again pretty consistent on 72 hours. We will implement this for local studies books but we are using 24 hours for paper and parchment. This was based on the advice of our conservator who had referred to Public Health England advice that the risk from books with a cardboard/paper cover is negligible after 24 hours.

Bringing our staff back to road test our procedures has meant we have been able to have meetings with them face to face and address issues that have cropped up and work out quite detailed processes and procedures. There have been regular updates from me by email during lockdown and these will continue as we start to open up.

Implementation and publicity

Roadmap to Reopening

Reopening Staffordshire Record Office safely during COVID-19

14 July 2020

Staffordshire
County Council



Welcome
back!



We have a few *simple* steps to make your visit a pleasant one...

If you don't have an appointment *please* call 01785-278379 to arrange one.

We've missed you! Please take your time and *say hello!*

Stay safe and well

If you or a member of your household feels unwell, *please stay at home.*

Please follow the *safety signs* in the Record Office.

Please *be patient* with our staff as we adapt to new ways of working.

You can also access our services online:
www.staffordshire.gov.uk/archives

@ArchandHeritage
StaffordshireArchivesandHeritage

Opening Schedule



Weeks beginning July 13th and July 20th

Tuesday and Thursday
10:00 a.m - 4:00 p.m

Weeks beginning July 27th and August 4th

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday
10:00 a.m - 4:00 p.m

Week beginning August 11th onwards

Normal opening hours resume

Stay Home If...

- You are **Feeling Unwell**
- You have an **Unwell Family Member** at home



What Will Change?

- Public access strictly by appointment only
- We can accommodate only four visitors each day
- William Salt Library's archives available through the SRO searchroom
- Documents must be ordered in advance



Telephone:
01785 278379
Email:
staffordshire.record.office@staffordshire.gov.uk

Online services

- Online catalogue
- Staffordshire Name Indexes
- Staffordshire Pasttrack
- Findmypast



Follow us on Facebook
([StaffordshireArchivesandHeritage](https://www.facebook.com/StaffordshireArchivesandHeritage))
or Twitter [@ArchandHeritage](https://twitter.com/ArchandHeritage)

Remote enquiries

Contact us for:

- Email enquiries
- Research orders
- Scanning and photography orders

Continuing Closures

- Stoke-on-Trent City Archives
- William Salt Library
- Lichfield History Access Point

What is not available at SRO

- Paper catalogue access
- PC access
- Browsing of local studies material

- Microfilm and fiche
- Talks and events
- Meeting room bookings

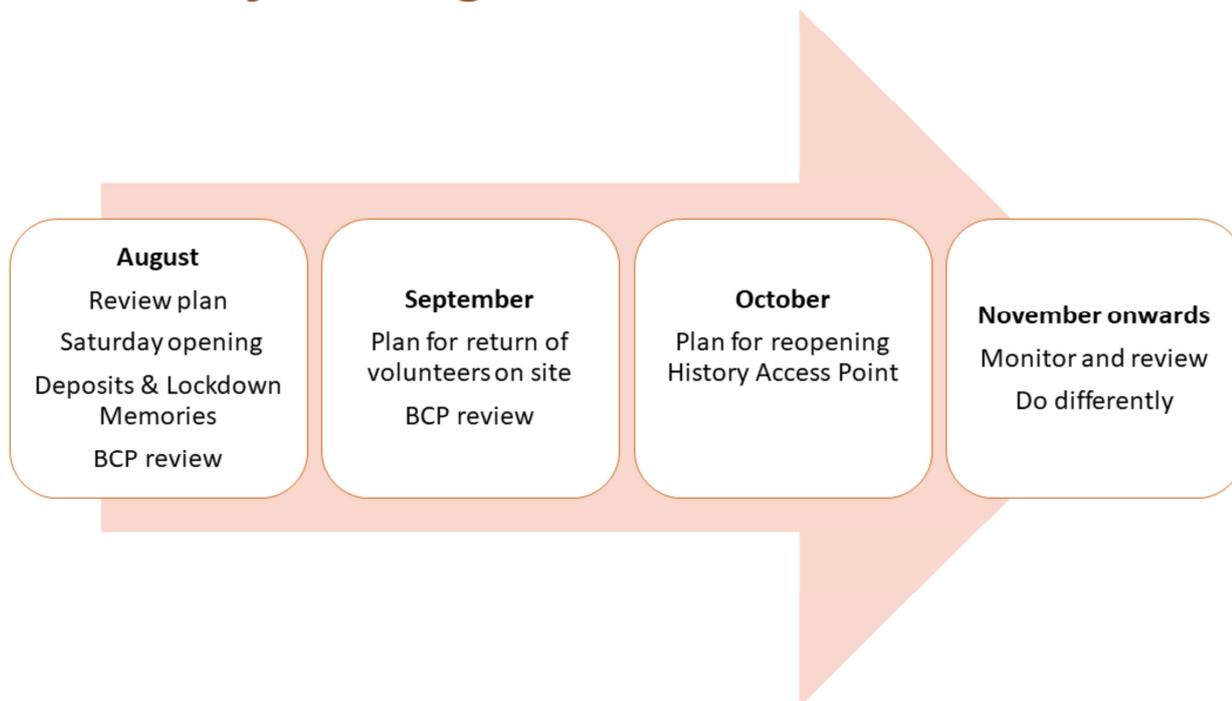
www.staffordshire.gov.uk/archives

We announced we were opening on Tuesday 7 July by issuing a press release at the same time as social media. We informed our key stakeholders shortly before the press release was issued. We used the same templates that our Library Service have used to publicise our approach. They helped us to adapt them and it ensures we have a similar approach which is clear, consistent whilst still being welcoming.

We are open to today for the first time in 17 weeks and have 3 readers in our searchroom. It feels like a big achievement and I am immensely proud of my team and grateful for their positive approach during a worrying time.

We intend to maintain our online offer and we are seeing an increasing number of remote copying orders. We will continue our remote volunteer offer for those 45 people who have kept going.

Recovery leading to transformation



The work hasn't finished though and we will be monitoring our processes closely and adapting them, especially if government guidance and our own local authority guidance should change for example around face coverings.

- August - monitor and review, start Sat opening. We have got our first deposit due so will also work out safe process for receipt and handling. We are also launching our Lockdown Memories project with archives, museum and libraries and arts to record how Staffordshire responded to the pandemic. We are going to review our Business Continuity Plan in case of a local outbreak and temporary closure of the service.
- September – we hope to be able to return our volunteers to site but will continue with remote volunteering
- October – we will be reopening the History Access Point in Lichfield but with a new offer to provide more exhibition space. We had consulted on use of the HAP in January. Using the survey results and impact of COVID-19 it will look different when we reopen.
- November onwards we will continue to monitor our procedures and revise as guidance changes or we respond to our own local circumstances.

This virus will be with us for some time. We have learnt a lot about ourselves and our service. It is clear we can do more online and we can all work from home. What remains to be seen is where future demand for our service will be. Will people come back? Will the remote demand continue? What can we do differently? I think that whether we like it or not our services will transform from what they were. What is key is that we learn from this and ensure our service is able to adapt to change and take opportunities which may arise. Thank you.