

## Overview of Tameside, Oldham, and Glossop Mind approach to exiting the lockdown

Over the last few weeks we have been developing our plans for how we will respond to the lifting of the lockdown and how we will start to support our colleagues to return to our offices and starting to see clients again on a face to face basis.

During lock down most of our workers have been able to work from home offering support, counselling, and wellbeing group activities over IT platforms. We have received great feedback from clients, and we envisage that this will remain as part of our new normal way of working. However, we are acutely aware that for some, this way of working is not effective or available. This is for several reasons including lack of access to IT and the lack of privacy to safely engage in one to one therapy and counselling. It appears this is more prevalent in our younger clients.

Therefore, our plan is to phase in an approach where the 'new norm' becomes natural, adopting physical safe distancing in line with the Government and Public Health England guidelines.

To help guide us in our planning, we agreed the following principles:

- Ensuring a safe working environment for staff and volunteers in offices
- Ensuring we can provide private confidential space for clients to use safely, with IT equipment provided. For example, clients can use a pre-set-up counselling room and then speak via IT/phone to a worker either working from home (in a confidential space) or from a separate counselling room.
- Working towards safely working with clients face to face whilst distancing - for example, peer support worker doing walk and talks from a distance.
- TOG Mind will balance the needs of the organisation with those of individual staff & volunteers
- TOG Mind will operate within the guidelines and recommended approaches of the relevant Governments throughout (this will include applying any circumstances in which specific age/demographic groups have restrictions lifted earlier than others, as well as supporting prolonged home working for staff with health conditions placing them at increased CV19 risk)
- TOG Mind will retain those aspects of current home working practice that have proven effective whilst balancing this with the needs of people requiring face to face services
- Any phased exits from lockdown will be done in such a way as to be easily reversed in the event of a subsequent lockdown

## Overarching approach:

To help us plan, we have used UK Government Covid Alert levels developed by the Joint Biosecurity Centre and the Government's recovery plan:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/our-plan-to-rebuild-the-uk-governments-covid-19-recovery-strategy/our-plan-to-rebuild-the-uk-governments-covid-19-recovery-strategy#our-approach-a-phased-recovery>

TOG Mind delivers mental health and wellbeing services and it is predicted that the impact of lockdown – of isolation, vulnerability, fear, anxiety and loss among other things - will result in a spike of demand for Mental Health Services. Therefore, TOG Mind will be following the advice given to those classed as key services.

COVID Alert Level	Level 5 Critical	Level 4 Severe	Level 3 Substantial	Level 2 Moderate	Level 1 Safe
Description	Full strict lockdown, NHS is overwhelmed	NHS is stretched but coping. Lockdown	Virus is in circulation. Partial lockdown in place	Low levels of virus transmission. Social distancing measures reduced further	Restrictions are fully lifted as treatment or vaccine becomes available
TOG Mind office	Postal and emergency access; individual use if not able to work from home and work is classed as essential (risked assessed)	Postal and emergency access; individual use if not able to work from home and work is classed as essential (risked assessed)	Phased opening of offices, with strict social distancing measures. Majority of organisation works remotely	As restrictions ease further, more staff will be able to return to the office	Office functions with no restrictions
TOG Mind client work	All services (group and one to one) offered via phone or Zoom. Additional services of phone wellbeing check ins	All services offered via phone or Zoom. Additional services of phone wellbeing check ins	Limited space available for clients to use private space and TOG Mind IT equipment to engage in phone or Zoom therapy	Face to face via safe distancing. Counselling and one to ones to be deliver from group room where 2 metres distance can be easily adhered to (Only when people cannot engage in phone or online from	All client work functions with no restrictions

				either their home or our private counselling space). Peer support (Buddy/Befriending) outdoors distancing walking contact	
--	--	--	--	---	--

### Level 3 and 2

Below we have provided more detail on the initial phases which we expect to take place during level 3 (or equivalent). During this period, we will be doing a phased approach to returning to the offices. This will be the gradual introduction of a few workers, with a view to developing a new norm of working with safe physical distancing. We aim to embed this before we re-introduce any members of the public to the building. It is expected that most colleagues that return to the offices will be those who can walk, drive or cycle to work.

#### Phase 1 (Weeks 1-4: June)

**Aim:** Gradually reintroduce working from the office environment adopting safe physical distancing practice. Iron out unforeseen problems, making adaptations as required for phase 2.

**Method:** Open both floors of our Ashton office to no more than a tenth of normal capacity. As our Oldham building is under renovation, we will open the Ashton office first and commence the process in Oldham once the building is complete.

The initial tranche of colleagues who return to office working will be those who are able to (i.e not self-shielding, have ability to get to work without using public transport and are not showing any symptoms) and who volunteer to do so. It is envisaged that these workers will undertake a mix of office and home working.

#### Phase 2 (Weeks 5-8: July to end of August)

**Aim:** As Phase 1 practicalities will have been embedded, this phase builds on this by slightly increasing the numbers of people working from the office ensuring that safe physical distance can be maintained. Again, iron out problems and make adaptations required for phase 3. Start to re-introduce clients to the building to access private space for therapy and introduce safe physical distancing meetings with clients outdoors in accordance with government guidance.

#### Phase 3 (Weeks 9-12: September to October)

**Aim:** Increase presence in the office to the maximum safe capacity whilst also retaining a positive balance of home and office working. Increase faced to face work based on the

learning from phase 2 again that insures we are able to do so working under safe physical distancing guidelines.

#### **Phase 4 – when allowed**

Aim: Identify fine balance of a new norm - a mixture of both home and office working including a mixture of face to face, online and phone service offerings.

- All staff back to work – perhaps adopting split working patterns with a mix of office and home working. This will remain the case while safe physical distancing is necessary due to COVID-19 but may continue to prevent general spread of viruses)
- Groups in person but maintaining safe physical distancing
- Review and finalise working practices

#### **Approach to reconfiguring office opening, access to clients and some face to face work**

The re-opening of the offices will be led by a thorough risk assessment process, which will adhere to the requirements of UK Government guidelines as they continue to be announced. This risk assessment will be reviewed when guidance significantly changes so that we can plan for the next stage of office re-opening. Below we outline some of our proposals, but these may change as the risk assessment process continues:

Guidance - all staff will be issued with guidance outlining how the building is to be used and how it can be accessed.

Meeting rooms:

- Meeting rooms will be repurposed into distancing working space or as large one to one rooms. All meetings will continue to take place digitally.

Workstations:

- Only workstations that are 2 metres apart will be used. Unusable workstations will be clearly marked.
- Staff will be allocated desks to work from. This will be indicated by name placards.
- All usable computers will be installed with zoom and webcams to enable digital meetings.
- Where needed, colleagues can bring in their own headsets or be provided one on request (these would be assigned for their sole use)
- Hygiene resources will be provided for each workstation

Kitchens/communal spaces:

- Up to 4 people would be allowed access to these spaces at any one time. Markers and furniture will be in place that clearly indicate distancing requirements
- Dependant on the risk assessment, in larger communal spaces, we will aim to provide space for physically distanced rest spaces.
- The space will be made physically distant by stacking chairs/tables and where appropriate, floor markings.
- People will be required to only cater for themselves (i.e making drinks) and bring in their own food.

- Anti-virus cleaning wipes and hand gels will be provided, and people required to wipe down anything they have touched.

#### Toilets:

- All our toilets are single person use
- Taped queuing markers will be placed outside these toilets
- Paper towels instead of hand driers
- Posters on doors to remind of guidance

#### Corridors:

- One-way systems will be created where possible.
- Staggered arrival times instigated to reduce congestion

#### Office services and IT functions

- Only one colleague will be allowed to enter these spaces at a time.
- Guidance will be provided on how staff can get support from office services and IT.
- Antivirus wipes will be available to wipe down shared equipment such as photocopiers

#### Hygiene and cleaning

- As with pre-lockdown, extra hygiene resources and posters will be provided across the building.
- Cleaners will be asked to increase focus on high touch areas

#### Face Masks

Government guidance in England is that protection offered by facemasks is extremely limited and offices should only require staff to wear masks where the risk of transmission is assessed as very high. As we can distance 2 metres+ apart and on the advice of our local Public Health team we are not required to wear masks. However, if staff want to make and wear their own as advised on the Government website, they are able to do so.

#### Travelling to work

As mentioned, it is expected that most colleagues commuting to the office during this period will do so on foot, by bike or by car. TOG Mind will look at the feasibility of increasing the space for securely locking bikes.

#### Travelling to other sites

It is recognised that some job roles include travelling to external offices and spaces to undertake required work. A risk assessment will need to be undertaken before this travel can take place. It is not expected that such journeys will start until at least the end of June. As noted above, any travel to or within each of the four nations of the UK will be in line with guidance of the relevant nation.

## Support for homeworkers

It is recognised that the part of the organisation will continue to work from home during this period and TOG Mind will identify measures to support homeworkers further.

## Health screening

Any colleague who experiences symptoms or has been in contact with someone displaying symptoms is required to self-isolate in line with the government recommendations. Staff will be asked to voluntarily be tested at one of the local testing sites. If positive, we will do a trace exercise asking any people identified to also self-isolate (this is unlikely as we will have no one working within 2 metres of each other).

All contractors or visitors to the site will undergo a screening for symptoms before access is permitted.

## Client work

### Utilising private space and or IT

- Pre screening will take place the day before use
- Clients will gain access via an entry access system and will be asked to follow floor directions.
- They will be directed to their pre booked room
- They will be asked to use hand gels on entering the build and again when entering their allocated room
- They will be asked to wipe down any equipment used before leaving
- 40 minutes after departure, a member of staff will also wipe down the equipment before its next use

(Rooms will only be used every other hour to enable a one hour gap during which the room will be cleaned and windows opened)

Outdoor social distancing- Worker will contract around physical distancing boundaries and our usual lone working processes will be followed

## Ongoing management

An 'Exiting Lockdown Team' has been established to lead this change. This team consists of members of leadership, management and frontline staff. Plans and risk assessments are signed off by the CEO and Board of Trustees and reviewed regularly.



Clearly we remain in the throes of battling the consequences of the COVID-19 crisis. We continue to focus on supporting the significant and immediate needs of those impacted most by the situation, and on building a safe environment for the people of Greater Manchester as lockdown lifts.

But, the earlier we can begin building for what comes next, the better our chances will be of delivering a strong and successful recovery. In planning our recovery, it's important to pause and reflect on what we've seen and learned during these difficult past few weeks.

We've seen that many of the people who play a vital role in keeping our lives ticking along are working in the poorest conditions, and often for the lowest pay. We've learned that it is possible to quickly and radically improve the quality of the air we breathe, just by changing our own behaviour.

We've realised that the health and wellbeing of our people and our economy are in fact intrinsically interconnected.

We've been amazed by people's ability to evolve and adapt to a very different world, almost overnight. And we've been moved by the kindness of strangers and neighbours alike, reminding us of the real power of local communities.

As a society, we're experiencing an unprecedented moment in time – a rare chance to step off the treadmill and consider our lives and our futures. In a recent survey, only 9% of people wanted to return to life just as it was pre COVID-19. Because our old normal didn't prioritise the things the majority of people actually value the most. But as Einstein famously said, "In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity".

### **This is our chance not to go back to normal, but forward to better**

Perhaps a crisis of this magnitude will enable us to reimagine our world and provide us with the opportunity to redesign it. We intend to grasp that opportunity with both hands. We believe that by working together – business, public sector, third sector and citizens – we can build an economy that's better for everyone in Greater Manchester, and for our northern neighbours.

A future where business can still be profitable and sustainable, but not at any cost. Where the people who provide our food, clean our workplaces, empty our bins, deliver our parcels and look after us when we are ill – the services we too often took for granted – are treated and paid at a level that reflects the valuable roles they perform. Where budding entrepreneurs of any age, stage and postcode can grasp the new business opportunities presented by the changing needs and behaviours that we will see emerging.

Where people can be employed in meaningful jobs and pursue their dream careers, but still have time left in their day to spend with family and friends.

Where young people can fulfil their true potential not pay the biggest price.  
Where being digitally enabled means more fulfilling and better paid work, not displacing 'costly' people with inexpensive machines.

Where the world can watch and learn from us about how a growing and productive economy can provide a positive outcome for investors as well as for the planet.  
In this emerging new world, the pillars of our Local Industrial Strategy – clean growth, digital, health innovation and advanced materials & manufacturing – feel more pertinent than ever, providing us with a strong strategic framework on which to begin building back.

We intend to begin the process of rewriting the goals and the rules for this new economy, now and together.

Supported by the GM LEP, **Build Back Better** is a movement of people and organisations who want to explore the opportunity to take stock, re-think and set a new course. If you're a business that shares our ambition, please get in touch with your thoughts on what better looks like and how you can get involved in helping us to build a better future.

### **The Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership Building Better with Business**



"The COVID-19 crisis has tested us on every level and exposed weaknesses and divides in our economy and society. But it could allow us to make this a re-set moment if we so choose. This is a chance to change to a better path; to capture the benefits of this time we have been living through.

**Andy Burnham**  
Mayor of Greater Manchester



"The Covid-19 crisis has reminded us who and what is important.

Our communities have shown incredible solidarity, coming together and supporting each other.

Key workers, who before this crisis were already undervalued and under-appreciated, have been our heroes on the frontline. We've relied on them more than ever as they keep the country moving. We owe it to them to ensure there is no return to business as usual.

<http://gmlep.com/news/build-back-better>