



## Covid-19 Statement

Date of last update: 10 December 2021

### WATERWORKS MUSEUM CLOSED UNTIL JANUARY 2021

#### **The Waterworks Museum is currently closed.**

When we re-open our normal open hours will be every Tuesday between 11am and 4pm.

In 2022, the Museum will continue the pattern put in place in 2021 for family open days and special events (Working Days) when engines and pumps will be working.

For details of date of re-opening and future Working Days and events at the Waterworks Museum please see our website [www.waterworksmuseum.org.uk](http://www.waterworksmuseum.org.uk) or follow the Museum on social media:

Twitter <https://twitter.com/WaterworkMuseum>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/WaterworkMuseum>

You Tube [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLGPW\\_ZFzGyHcC8TELroGQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLGPW_ZFzGyHcC8TELroGQ)

For more information please email [info@waterworksmuseum.org.uk](mailto:info@waterworksmuseum.org.uk).

#### **News release: 10 December 2021**

This week the government escalated Covid19 precautions in England due to current uncertainty regarding the impact of the Omicron variant. To avoid unnecessary risk to its volunteers and visitors, the Directors have reluctantly decided to temporarily close the Waterworks Museum. The position will be reviewed early in the New Year, and we hope to see volunteers and visitors return to the Museum as early as possible.

Since re-opening in July 2021, the Waterworks Museum has maintained the requirement for wearing of face masks and continued to encourage regular hand cleaning and use of the sanitiser stations positioned around the Museum. However, even with these precautions in place, December is routinely a period of low visitor numbers so to remain open in a period of such uncertainty has been assessed as an unnecessary risk.

## PREVIOUS UPDATES

### 12 July 2021

Although the UK government has relaxed the mandatory rules and guidance imposed during the Covid pandemic the precautions put in place at the Waterworks Museum will continue to apply until further notice.

This means:

- Wearing a face mask is (subject to health exceptions) required inside all Museum buildings. It is optional in the Museum grounds, but we ask visitors to be respectful of other visitors who may opt to take a more cautious approach.
- Visitors should follow floor markings to enter the Museum through the new one-way system.
- In all parts of the Museum, visitors should please maintain a reasonable social distance from other visitors/groups. Floor markings have been put down to assist with this.
- Payment for admission and café/shop services should, wherever possible, be by contactless payment card.

The safety of our volunteers and visitors is paramount, and our risk assessment recognises the narrowness of the corridors in the Victorian water pumping station and in other parts of our site, which are mitigated but not entirely removed by our recently installed one-way systems.

Free disposable facemasks (or, in the alternative, a face shield is available for purchase at cost) on arrival at the Museum Reception Desk.

We thank you for your cooperation and hope that you enjoy your visit to the Waterworks Museum.

Visitors who would like more information or who have questions in respect of the above are invited (before a visit) to send an email to [info@waterworkmuseum.org.uk](mailto:info@waterworkmuseum.org.uk) or (on the day of a visit) to approach Museum staff on our reception desk.

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### 23 June 2021

Having substantially completed the work to prepare the Museum for re-opening and having regard to the latest government guidance on Covid-19, the Directors are pleased to confirm that the Waterworks Museum will re-open to visitors in July 2021.

The reconfiguration of our visitor centre means that, on leaving our new reception desk, visitors will commence their tour of the Museum by entering the Southall Gallery via a new elevated walkway. On leaving this Gallery visitors will enter the Victorian waterworks building and view the exhibits and displays in Bays 1 to 6 following a one-way system. Changes have also been made to the upper part of the site and a one-way system installed through the Tangye House.

Under our Covid protocol, visitors will be required to register their contact details on arrival. You will also be asked to wear face masks inside museum buildings, to maintain appropriate social distancing and to use the hand sanitisation units located around the Museum, especially before using our 'hands on' exhibits. These safeguards will remain in place until further notice to protect the health and wellbeing of all visitors and volunteers, many of whom may not yet have received the benefit of full Covid immunisation.

We would ask for visitor co-operation in following our one-way systems and maintaining a sensible flow when viewing our exhibits and displays (to avoid creating bottlenecks). This will enable us to minimise any requirement to pre-book a visit except for the busiest of events. Visitors may, however, be briefly held back by Museum stewards to ease flow at periods of peak attendance.

Visitors should note that until further notice light refreshments in our café will be limited to tea, coffee, canned drinks and selection of pre-packed sandwiches and cake. Visitors are welcome, however, to bring their own refreshments and picnic in the Museum grounds.

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### **23 April 2021**

If current progress can be maintained (and we are reasonably confident that it can) then work to make the Waterworks Museum safe for visitors to return will be substantially complete and allow our first public event to be held in July 2021.

Some aspects of the refurbishment of our visitor centre will not be completed until later in 2022, following which we will host a formal event to re-open our visitor centre. Events held before that will be carefully controlled as regards maximum visitor numbers and the engines and pumps visitors will be able to see in operation. We will also only be able to offer a basic café facility. Individuals and families planning a visit to the Waterworks Museum should please read the detailed guidance on our website (Planning Your Visit).

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**11 September 2020**

The Waterworks Museum is delighted to acknowledge the award of a grant from @TheNationalLotteryUK @HeritageFundUK grant, which will fund the installation of a new entrance to our Southall Gallery (as part of a one-way system which will be installed between the walkways shown in the picture below) and improve facilities in our visitor centre, which will help make the Museum #Covid-safe for our visitors and volunteers.

**THANK YOU to #NationalLottery players for making it possible for the #volunteers at @WaterworkMuseum #Hereford to undertake this important work.**

The new entrance to the Southall Gallery will be created by installation of a covered walkway between the fire exits in the meadow car-park, which will be the start of a one-way route to visit our Victorian water pumping station. This will also have the added benefit of allowing visitors to see the exhibits in the Southall Gallery from a wholly new perspective.

More information

The award from the Heritage Emergency Fund will enable us to make certain structural changes which will greatly reduce the risks associated with Covid-19 and at the same time improve facilities for visitors to the Waterworks Museum.

The work which is planned will reduce the risks associated with Covid-19 (and any similar such outbreak in the future) by creating a one-way route to explore the Waterworks Museum, the narrow corridors and galleries of which otherwise make any form of 'social distancing' nearly impossible.

A new entrance to the Southall Gallery will be created from the visitor centre by installing a covered walkway between the existing fire exits in the Museum's meadow carpark. From here visitors can then enter our Grade II\* Victorian water pumping station and enjoy the engines, pumps and other exhibits on display in Bays 1 to 7 along a one-way route. Other changes in the visitor centre funded from the Heritage Lottery grant will see a new visitor entrance and a new and larger toilet block.

Visitors will also see some other small changes, but these are relatively low-cost actions that have been implemented by our Volunteers. Visitors will leave the Tangye House exhibit by a new exit at the rear of the building and there will be new arrangements to control visitors numbers in the tight spaces of the WW2 exhibit in the Rotherwas Building and in the area of the Massington Lineshaft Display.

## TIMETABLE

Throughout the pandemic, Museum Directors have taken a phased approach to assessment of Covid-19 risk for our volunteers and visitors and have only re-assessed the situation when new information became available.

<u>Date of issue</u>	<u>Announcement</u>
13 March 2020	The Waterworks Museum was closed to volunteers and visitors with all events cancelled to 30 April 2020 - this was announced 10 days before the Government imposed a national lockdown on 23 March
29 March 2020	Closure of Waterworks Museum extended to 30 June 2020
15 May 2020	Closure of Waterworks Museum extended to 30 September 2020
26 June 2020	Confirmation of closure until at least 30 September 2020 following a Government announcement on 24 June that museums and visitor attractions in England could re-open from 4 July 2020.
11 September 2020	Waterworks Museum confirms award of a Heritage Lottery Emergency Fund grant to support work to make the Museum Covid-safe for the return of visitors
12 September 2020	Closure of Waterworks Museum extended until 31 December 2020
8 January 2021	Closure of Waterworks Museum extended until spring 2021
23 April 2021	Target re-opening date - July 2021
23 June 2021	Waterworks Museum to re-open to visitors in July 2021
12 July 2021	Waterworks Museum to retain Covid-19 precaution measures until further notice
10 December 2021	Museum closed until January 2022

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End.