

# Reopening for business

Welcoming the return of events from 12th April 2021



**From 29th March**

Venue site visits can take place at the NEC



**12th April**

NEC campus reopens & Drive In events return



**17th May**

Safely hosting events for up to 1,000 attendees



**21st June**

Safely hosting the return of large-scale events and exhibitions



Dates outlined as per latest Government Roadmap and may be subject to change.

**Working together  
to protect us all.**

This document provides detailed guidance on the measures that we're planning to create a safe and controlled environment for all events taking place at the NEC.

# SUPPORTING TRACING AND TESTING

We will be working with organisers, using data and technology to help ensure that audiences are known.

## Register or Buy in Advance



We would strongly recommend that all events are pre-registration/ advance ticket sales only for several reasons:

1. It helps to monitor numbers and spread visitors across all open days of your event, thereby controlling numbers and providing a better experience for visitors and exhibitors and creating the opportunity to have quality time with each.
2. It provides the ability to communicate in advance with your visitors advising them on the exhibition content, additional measures/ plans in place to manage social distancing and detailed information on the visitor journey.
3. It assists with tracing and testing as you will have the data to assist the government should it be required.
4. It supports a touch-free customer journey and fewer one-on-one transactions with venue or organiser staff

## Partner contact details



All exhibitors and contractors should also be encouraged to keep their own registers and H&S declarations to monitor they are fit for work and to be in the venue.

To ensure compliance with government guidance on track and trace, contact details must be obtained and stored for all exhibitors, contractors, sub-contractors and agency staff.

## Pre-book parking



By pre-booking your parking and following the guidance on our booking engine, this will help your visitors and improve their overall experience as they won't have to queue at the machines but also eliminates the need to use a high touch screen, therefore helping to keep everyone safe. This is quick and easy to do [www.thenec.co.uk/visitors/parking/](http://www.thenec.co.uk/visitors/parking/)

## Temperature Screening



This is not currently a requirement in the government guidance, however if a client wishes to introduce this measure on a particular event we will work with them to facilitate it on a show by show basis.

## Contact Tracing



When the government app is released, although this now appears to be some time away, we will ask all customers to download it. However, by customers registering or buying tickets in advance the data should be readily available to assist with contact tracing should it be required.

# SOCIAL DISTANCING MEASURES

Social distancing measures are in place to keep us all safe and at the NEC it is important that all our customer groups, even those just passing through, adhere to these measures. We welcome all our visitors, but all of us must follow the correct behaviours and follow the guidance we put in place.

## Arriving at the NEC



Social Distancing measures will be visible when your visitors arrive at the venue and our car parks if travelling by car. There will be signage before each crossing point leading to the roads and at our bus stops. The capacity will be reduced on our buses, and visitors will be advised of this at the bus stop. We envisage that more visitors will choose to walk from car parks to the venue. Please note that the wearing of face coverings will be mandatory on our buses.

At each of our entry points to the NEC there will be welcome signage and instructions on following the information for the measures in place. Please use the access doors as signposted: Entry Only, Exit Only etc.

## One-way systems / Barriers and Floor Markings



This is in place for everyone's safety so please follow the route as mapped out on the floor. We are taking a 'keep left' approach wherever possible and there will be arrows on the floor to follow with road-style markings down the middle to split both flows. It's important to note that the route to your final destination may not be the most direct but it is the safest route and helps everyone to keep to the social distancing measures.

## Footfall Management



As the UK's largest venue, we are experienced in managing queues during our peak periods and this will now become a daily event. We will create queuing plans to satisfy all of our events' requirements. Please follow the signs and the instructions given by Team NEC and remember to keep to the social distancing measures. It's all about being respectful and keeping safe.

## Safe and Compliant Signage



Our signage is here to help you get to where you would like to go to in the safest manner and to provide you with reminders on hand washing, hand gel stations and keeping your distance. Look out for these.

## Staggered arrival times



To ensure that we comply with social distancing, it's important to consider how visitors and exhibitors arrive and exit the venue. Please discuss this with your Event Manager during your planning phase. An example of how this could be achieved is to stagger visitor arrival in hourly or 30 minute slots as by phasing the arrival time we are able to keep visitor flows moving which will reduce the risk of creating queues - providing a much safer visitor arrival experience.



# ENHANCED VENUE SANITISATION

Increased cleaning procedures in place around the venue and our event spaces.

We recognise that cleanliness and hygiene is important to everyone, and even more so since the COVID-19 pandemic began. We pride ourselves in our venue and will continue to provide a high standard of cleaning across the venue and all event space.

Within the halls and our public spaces each team member will have their own area of responsibility and will be accountable to ensuring our high standards are maintained:

- Each team member will be encouraged to be proactive in their approach to monitoring their zone and carrying out the tasks required
- Social distancing guidelines are adhered to within our teams as working side by side is actively discouraged
- With a team of operatives purposely spread across the venue, there is ample opportunity for visitors to see a cleaner being proactive, increasing confidence in venue hygiene
- Within multi-day tenancies, exhibitors/clients have the opportunity to see a familiar face, providing continuity and confidence in venue processes.

All of our cleaning team will go through extensive training on our new cleaning regime and many have completed NHS standard training.

We have also introduced a further layer of sanitisation, **ULV (Ultra Low Volume) Treatment**, otherwise known as fogging which is seen as an additional precautionary measure in breaking the potential chain of infection.

## High touch points



Our team will focus on these areas such as hand rails, door handles, lifts, vending machines etc. During this period, we have made the difficult decision to remove most of the seating in our public concourse - there will still be some metal benches available but numbers will be limited.

## Hand Sanitiser Stations



These will be available throughout the venue, with over 600 stations in total. They will be located in our public areas, outside each toilet, organiser offices, meeting room/conference space, close to each entry point to the venue and in the exhibition halls by the large vehicle entry/emergency exit doors.

To make it easy for you, we have installed stations in the event space and we will refill these fixed units at your convenience for which there will be a small charge.

## Washroom attendants



We are increasing the number of washroom attendants across the venue and the number of days for each event.

Working exclusively within the facilities, they will be a regular presence, ensuring that high touch points such as door handles and cubicle locks, flush buttons, dispensers and taps are frequently cleaned using an approved antiviral chemical, ensuring that the risk of there being a chain of infection is broken as often as possible. Operatives can also ensure good social distancing practices are adhered to through customer interaction.

# COMMUNICATION

As ever this is such an important element, and we must work collaboratively to ensure we provide consistent messages to all of our customers to prevent confusion and make it clear to everyone what is required and expected of them.

## Team NEC



As always, Team NEC is here to help and our Event Managers will be here to plan your event taking account of the current government guidance. We all are striving for the same thing: the return of events and the re-opening of our venue from the 17th May 2021.

## Event Layout



The NEC recommendations are:

- all stands should be at least 2m deep
- all gangway widths for a trade show should be 3m
- all gangway widths for a consumer show should be 4m. If there are occasions where this is not possible please discuss with your Event Manager

Due to social distancing measures it is unlikely that additional desks/pods will be permitted on the NEC public concourse space.

## Contractors



We also believe it important that your contractors are involved in the planning stages taking account of all the various elements including: floor layout, build schedules, gangways, registration processes, hall entrance layouts, ticket sales, visitor numbers, visitor journey, staggered entry times, one-way gangways and of course breakdown – the list goes on!

We will work with you to provide you with more time and space whenever possible, if this is required.

## Delivery Booking Platform



A new Delivery Booking Platform is been created working with Voyage Control to add another dimension to the existing Deposit System booking engine. When we return to events all official contractors, stand contractors and exhibitors will use this system to book a delivery / offloading slot in advance. The user will print their own pass at home and remove the requirement for traffic staff on the lorry parks to write out and pass individual passes to drivers, using technology to remove a direct one on one transaction and making the experience safer for everyone. It will be important to include this information in your Exhibitor Manuals and all communications with contractors and exhibitors. Look out for more information with links to the booking platform which should be available early September.

**It will be necessary to make advance bookings for:**

- All event deliveries on all build up days including 'Deposit System' days
- All event restocking deliveries event open days (subject to organiser's event delivery times)

## NEC Orders



Because of hygiene reasons our Sales & Customer Support (SCS) Exhibitor Red Phone, normally located in one of the offices will be temporarily suspended. **For any queries on NEC orders please direct all parties to call SCS direct on 0844 338 8338.**

## COMMUNICATION continued.

### PPE



The wearing of face coverings is now mandatory in exhibition halls, conference suites and our public spaces. Please ensure that as part of your planning you advise all of your team, contactors and exhibitors that they must wear a face covering at all times when at the NEC. This includes the build, break and open periods and will be a condition of entry to the venue. Please also make arrangements for this information to be included in all visitor information you share and add a link to the visitor guidance webpage on the NEC website.

### Cloakrooms



Cloakrooms will operate but all parties should be encouraged to only bring what is required. Coats will be deposited into a bag prior to being held in the cloakroom. During COVID19 a no bag policy will be in place..

### Ventilation



Our Building Management Systems will monitor air quality and following a review of our building systems in line with CIBSE (Chartered Institution of Building Service Engineers) guidelines, we have recommissioned our ventilation plant for the safety of our delegates, staff and visitors. This includes maximising fresh air rates within the spaces and where appropriate upgrading our filters to NHS hospital standards.

### Contactless Payment



No cash will be taken at our catering outlets, cloakrooms & parking so all customers will need to have contactless payment methods available.

### Touch-free Journey



Wherever possible we have put steps in play to make your visit here as touch-free as possible by highlighting the entry doors in use, making most use of our automatic doors and even increasing these to reduce the number of manual push doors.

## COMMUNICATION continued.

### Food & Beverage at the NEC



Our in-house catering team at Amadeus has been busy re-engineering our menus to assist in the delivery of a safe and efficient service. We will be providing a range of hot food in our retail restaurants and a grab and go offer in our coffee shops, where all products will be wrapped. At Amadeus we take great pride in producing on site a number of artisan products these will still be available.

### Food Safety & Hygiene



As part of our revised Operations plan, an end-to-end Safe Audit is in place to continually assess food safety and the welfare of customers and staff. Our cleaning regime has been increased in all areas with emphasis on the frequency of cleaning touch points throughout.

### Catering Measures



We have developed a revised Operations plan in line with Government guidelines; this will assist with providing a seamless catering and hospitality service:

- Our customers will be guided with clear directional signage and floor markings, with queuing and a one-way flow throughout
- All restaurants will have hosts to greet and assist with social distancing
- All food and beverage transactions will be cashless
- To assist with physical separation, new hygiene screens have been installed at our retail operation where customer and staff may come in to close contact

# ORGANISER CHECKLIST



Reopening  
for  
business





## ORGANISER CHECKLIST



## Pre-Event

### Planning measures

	Complete a detailed risk assessment for your event.
	Complete role risk assessments for your team and ask contractors for their risk assessments.
	Determine if further additional measures are to be considered such as temperature checking, additional sanitiser gel stations and wearing of face coverings being mandatory.
	Determine if your event will have seminar theatres and feature/high touchpoint areas that will require additional cleaning during the event. Are you providing seating or is it standing only. If seating is provided hard surfaces are recommended as they can be more easily cleaned.
	Complete medical needs analysis and identify medical requirements for event.
	Review items that you will be bringing to site/offices such as additional PPE, wipes, masks etc.
	Add COVID19 into H & S declaration/CDM checks/sign off.
	Mandatory registration for all exhibitors, contractors, sub-contractors and agency staff. This will be required as part of track and trace.

### Floorplan and venue

	Create a floor plan that accounts for social distancing requirements and discuss gangway widths, stand layouts, feature areas, seminar theatres and space requirements with the NEC.
	Discuss queuing plans/arrangements with the NEC - are additional dedicated queue/visitor management staff required?
	Ensure the Hall Entrance layout is kept as simple as possible and allow for ticket check channels and social distancing.
	Consider your organiser office space – will this be open to all or restricted to your team? Is there an option to build a space on the floor for an organiser service desk, or immediately outside your office?
	Does your floorplan have stands either side of the organiser office doors? If so, we'd recommend these are relocated to ensure these areas remain clear.
	Discuss with the NEC your cleaning regime and identify any areas where additional cleaning may be required.
	Review and discuss catering offer with your Amadeus Account Catering Manager.
	Check all early access or early drop-offs are confirmed and provide the NEC with a final list.
	Discuss build and break schedules along with hours of work with the NEC.
	Consider if a one-way system is required - discuss with the NEC.
	To accommodate the number of visitors is a staggered entry time required, or two sessions in the day such as a AM and a PM slot, or possibly longer opening hours - discuss with the NEC.

### Exhibitor / Contractor

	Decide if your event will be shell scheme only or are space only stands permitted? Are you permitting double decker stands?
	Advise exhibitors that their stands should be large enough to accommodate their team and visitors taking account of guidance on providing a safe environment. Consider the number of staff they bring to the event. Exhibitors should consider design of stand and how visitors enter and exit safely.
	Discuss build and break schedules with your official contractors including hours of work.
	Ensure all information on hours of work and build/break schedules are included within Exhibitor Manuals.
	Include link for new Event Delivery booking process via Voyage Control in Exhibitor Manual.

## ORGANISER CHECKLIST


**Exhibitor / Contractor continued.**

	Consider staggered/phased delivery of products by exhibitors.
	Review H & S declaration for exhibitors – add a new section on COVID19.
	Your exhibitors will need to consider the volume of product they bring – is everything necessary or can this be displayed by using AV etc.
	Your exhibitors will also need to consider how they clean their stands and sanitise high touch points, handling of products etc.
	Consider staggering exhibitor arrival and departure times by creating split cleaning hours for stands – For example, 50% arrive in the morning to clean before open and 50% leave late and clean before departure.
	Consider how exhibitor car park passes will be safely issued.
	The Sales & Customer Support (SCS) red phone normally located in one of the offices and used by exhibitors is temporarily suspended because of hygiene reasons. Exhibitors should call SCS direct on <b>0844 338 8338</b> .

**Registration and visitor flow**

	Discuss registration or ticketing process with your provider and the NEC such as a touchless experience. Will you still using lanyards/ticket wallets?
	Discuss registration layout with the NEC – use the kiosks as a purpose-built space.
	Restrict desks in public concourse areas to keep space for visitor flows and queuing as all public space will be required for visitor flows and social distancing measures.
	Have you promoted pre-advance registration and ticket sales? Ensure that no 'on the day' ticket sales or registration is available as this will assist with tracing and tracking. Hold information for at least 28 days after event.
	Consider how tickets are to be scanned such as self-serve scanning. Discuss with your provider how a touchless experience can be achieved.
	Consider if a health declaration advising that all customer groups are fit and well to attend is required 2 days before event - this may be managed by your registration or ticketing contractor.
	Discuss hall capacity figures and crowd density with the NEC. Current ratio is 4.9sqm per person.
	Discuss with NEC how to monitor visitor numbers in your event hall/s.
	Review event open times – should the event open earlier and close later? Will staggered entry times be required? Will there be two sessions - a morning and afternoon ticket?
	For consumer events – consider how pass out system will operate as hand stamps will no longer be acceptable. Instead of a ticket consider the use of wristbands.

**People**

	Determine if the number of H & S/Floor Managers be should increased and consider having dedicated Gangway Patrol Managers.
	Recruit a Hygiene/Social Distancing Manager.
	Consider how your organiser team operates – is it possible to have a blue and a red team and consider different office space and separate hotels to build resilience.
	For team briefings - consider how these will be delivered – for example face-to-face may not be practical based on numbers and space available.
	Consider how teams respond to an incident/emergency – who needs to attend, how do all parties communicate? Integrate the use of Team/Zoom to ensure only essential personnel attend the incident.

## ORGANISER CHECKLIST

### Communication

	Include a link to the NEC website to ensure all relevant information surrounding visitor journeys and expectations is easily available across all of your platforms.
	Clearly communicate to exhibitors and visitors that Cloakrooms will accept coats – they will be deposited into a bag. However it is important that visitors and exhibitors only bring what is required and therefore luggage should not be encouraged. During COVID restrictions a no bag policy will be in place.
	Communicate any additional site rules for build and break to all relevant parties.
	Communicate added COVID information into H&S declaration and ensure exhibitors and contractors are aware of their responsibilities and all their staff attending have been informed and trained.
	Review format and channels for communicating during your important daily meetings.
	In line with Government Guidance, the wearing of face coverings is mandatory within the exhibition halls, our public spaces within the venue and on our shuttle buses where the capacity numbers will be reduced. Remember to clearly communicate to all parties including your team, exhibitors, contractors, sub-contractors and visitors that they should follow the guidance and wear face coverings in these areas. Please note that the wearing of face coverings also applies to the build and break periods, in addition to the open period.

### During and Post-Event

	Organise a daily check in with key personnel and walk the floor to monitor activity.
	Monitor/check progress across all key areas: build, features, registration/ticketing, venue services, visitor flows, queues, catering areas, show floor, high touch point areas, toilets, cleaning, feedback.
	Organise daily meetings/updates and log any actions.
	Continually assess and monitor visitor numbers.
	Ensure to check on welfare of the team.
	Check behaviours and conduct of all customer groups.
	Log number of breaches linked to Social Distancing Measures during build - highlighting both good and bad practice.
	Organise and host daily hot debrief sessions.
	Organise and host end of event debrief session.
	Log all feedback including trends, actions and lessons learnt.
	Put safe preparation in place for breakdown.
	Progress on any H & S incidents.

We hope you've found this useful. If you have any questions, please speak to your usual NEC contact or email [eventmanagement@thenec.co.uk](mailto:eventmanagement@thenec.co.uk)

For more information, please visit:

[thenec.co.uk/protect](https://thenec.co.uk/protect)



---

**Working together  
to protect us all.**

