



# TOO MUCH DIRECTION

## SCENARIO

Covid 19 causes a pandemic: The country went into Lockdown One (March 2020), the R number started to drop and the Government decided non-essential places could open (following Lockdown One.)

## GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES AT THE TIME SAID - 'THERE IS NO NEED TO WEAR A MASK IN A MUSEUM, BUT YOU NEED TO WEAR ONE IN A SHOP.'

You can only deduce from the statement that whoever came up with that guidance was thinking of a museum the size akin to something like the Natural History Museum - not something like a small local museum. The shop bit everybody gets, that was consistent - thankfully.

## THE PINCH POINTS AND ISSUES FOR OUR CASE STUDY:

We were asked to help with the opening of Chertsey Museum by assisting in the writing and implementation of their covid management system. This is a small museum contained within a 3-storey house constructed in 1815. The staircase could barely accommodate 2 people standing side by side but according to the Government guidance issued there was no need to wear a mask and yet social distancing in places is impossible.

## WHAT WE DID - THIS IS IMPORTANT:

The key point to remember with guidance is that: Just because you can, doesn't mean you should and just because you don't have to, doesn't mean you shouldn't.

We made wearing masks compulsory within the museum. A policy eased slightly by the layout as you have to enter through the shop so you're already wearing it.

## OUR RESPONSE TO THE CHALLENGES:

We discussed the challenges with the curator, given the advice from the Government.

We said that ultimately: "It is your building, your employees and visitors you are protecting, so they are your rules. Never be worried about adding control if you think its required."

In this case it was obvious to those who knew the layout that the published guidance didn't fit. So often safety guidance is labelled as a bit vague. In this case it was the opposite but it still causes confusion.





## THE RESULT: A COVID SECURE MUSEUM FOR ALL

The museum opened, visitors came and went, challenges were met with a polite response regarding the conditions of entry. Once inside, it was obvious why masks were required.

**Never be afraid to stand your ground on safety, but always where you can set the expectations.**

Just because you can,  
doesn't mean you should  
and just because you don't  
have to, doesn't mean you  
shouldn't.