

COVID-19 AMENDMENTS TO PROJECT PLAN

Summary of the UK situation

In 2020 a global pandemic hit the world which affected every human being on the planet. A coronavirus disease spread through the global population at an alarming rate killing many and incapacitating many more. No area or person was immune from the disease. In March 2020, the UK, alongside much of the rest of the world, went into lockdown.

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. The COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes. While most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment, many people, especially Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness (WHO 2020).

On 23rd March 2020 the UK Prime minister 'locked down' the entire country. "In a televised announcement on 23 March, Mr Johnson said: "From this evening I must give the British people a very simple instruction - you must stay at home." This instruction included the "very limited purposes" for which people were allowed to leave their homes, such as shopping for necessities, one form of exercise a day or travelling to work if they could not work from home, and banned gatherings of more than two people from different households in Everything except essential services were shut down, including schools. All children were kept at home and home schooled. Staff who could not work from home were furloughed. Rapidly, the devolved countries, including Wales, introduced their own rules to follow. public. Non-essential shops were told to close, and social events including weddings were stopped. Mr Johnson warned the police could enforce the rules" (Johnson, 2020)

The lockdown lasted for three months. In June 202 a gradual easing of restrictions was introduced in England, and two weeks later in Wales, when some essential services were allowed to resume, including schools and training organisations. Over the summer of 2020, more lock down restrictions were eased, shops were re-opened,



and staff were allowed to return to work – subject to strict guidelines. In September 2020 Schools were allowed to restart to the full student population.

Unfortunately, in September, the rate of infection within the Wales and the UK (and the rest of the world) started increasing again and the easing of lockdown restrictions stopped. Over the next few weeks and months, restrictions were slowly increased again, including the need to wear masks in outdoor spaces and group activities being reduced. Finally, in October 2020 areas that had high rates of infection were once again locked down; including Torfaen on the 28th September 2020. The new lockdown measures however did not impede all work; the impact on the economy of lockdown could not be ignored (rising rates of unemployment, rising rates of suicide and mental health issues, physical health issues, the UK in the largest recession ever). Instead, rules were introduced so that no one could enter or leave the high-risk areas, groups were not allowed to meet indoors, and socialising had to stop, working from home was once again considered the main norm. People hoped however these restrictions meant that a semblance of normality could be continued.

Unfortunately, In October 2020, at the time of writing this update, the rate of infection across the World and in the UK continues to increase rapidly with reported cases and deaths doubling each week. On the 23rd of October the whole of Wales was placed back into full national lockdown for 2 weeks, with England following on the 4th November for 1 month. It is highly that these ‘firebreak’ lockdowns will continue for the foreseeable future. It is likely that this virus and its impact will be with us until a vaccine is found and able to be mass produced. It is estimated that the direct impact of this virus will be with the country for the next 12-18 months, but the wider impact on daily lives of the population will be felt for the next 10 -20 years. This will have a significant impact on the future direction of World Heritage Youth Ambassadors.

The Impact of COVID-19 the Hwb Torfaen and the World Heritage Youth Ambassador Program.

The Lockdown had a significant impact on every person and organisation in the UK, and the Hwb Torfaen and its work was no exception. When lockdown was initiated, the Hwb Torfaen took the only decision it could, and closed its doors and shut down its operations for the safety of its staff and users and to comply with government legislation. All members of staff were furloughed, and our two buildings were shut. The World Heritage Youth Ambassador program was closed down and the following was communicated to the National Lottery Heritage Fund in May 2020:



- *The project is first and foremost a direct contact engagement project which requires face to face contact, particularly over the summer period. With the inability to do this in lockdown, the program is unable to generate the number of engagements needed to meet our targets if the project is not extended.*
- *Without young people coming into the project, match funding can-not be drawn down, which is a significant financial risk.*
- *A decision to postpone all activity until September 2020 seems a sensible option, by which time it is assumed the schools will be back.*
- *The main risk to the project is not the immediate future (as the program is only at the start) but rather the end of the project. It is unlikely targets will be able to be achieved with a hiatus of 4-6 months, but the budget may well run out.*
- *If the director continues to work, and be paid, there would be no one at the end of the project to deliver or wrap the project up. There was also a consideration that there may not be enough work during lockdown to sustain a 22-hour contract if the project was not running fully.*

The following decisions were subsequently taken:

- The project was put formally 'on hold'.
- The director should be furloughed and the funding for their salary ring fenced to extend the project by the number of furloughed months.

At the end of June 2020 national lockdown restrictions were partially eased, and as a consequence, some elements of the organisation were able to re-open, including the Blaenavon building for some training. The situation for youth ambassadors was re-assessed, and it was decided that some small elements of the youth ambassador project could re-start and at the end of July 2020 the director was brought off furlough.

Throughout the summer holidays 2020, a small pilot program was run to 5 young people, trialling a new smaller approach with the new Covid restrictions, one day a week. While it was successful for the young people involved, it was realised that



without the ability to deliver to larger groups of young people, the wider impact of the project would be difficult to realise.

As lockdown measures continued to relax over the summer period, and schools returned full time, there was optimism in being able to re-start some of the wider activities. During this time, the 2 apprentice post were advertised and recruited in anticipation of being able to deliver a slightly altered, but similar program of activity that was originally planned for.

Unfortunately, as the UK situation deteriorated through September and October the project was re-assessed again. The following was communicated to National Lottery Heritage Fund:

“ The impact of the coronavirus is ongoing, and it unlikely to change anytime soon (in fact it looks likely to get worse before it gets better). The impact on the project is now significant and can be summarised as following:

- 1. The project had only just started (were less than 3 months into the project) before the virus locked the organisation down, so was never really started. The following 5 months march – July the project was put on hold. So the project is nearing the end of its first year (out of two years) without even really starting the main body of the project.*
- 2. Lockdown measures mean the organisation is unable to deliver any face-to-face engagement in any significant way (schools and youth clubs are not running or accessible in the current climate) and this is likely to continue which means targets cannot be achieve. Without this work, the trainee program cannot run, as there is not enough work to do for 30 hours / week for 21 weeks. All pilot sites are reporting an inability to deliver their projects for the same reasons.*
- 3. Significant amounts of match funding is now in jeopardy, as the trainees were bringing in £30k of match, which without delivering a traineeship, we cannot access this.*
- 4. The project has continued to spend small amounts. Trainee costs (who were still engaged and the management of was taken over by the training organisation), the director salary post August – October, and small amounts on getting other areas of the project set up. However, without the critical engagement – the impact at the end of the project remains the same as projected in May 2020 (when the director salary – the only paid member of staff – expires and the project has not been completed).*



POSITIVELY!!! The areas of the project which do not require face to face contact are going swimmingly - the adult online network is moving forward and we have our first virtual meeting in December. Work with WH:UK is going exceptionally well, so legacy of the project is being looked at. Marketing materials, design and online web content with WH:UK is moving forward and again will probably be complete by end of Jan 2021. We have 2 apprentices starting next week (more on this later!). Match that is not reliant on delivering training is also secure. Hopefully this demonstrates, that the areas of the project which are struggling are only struggling DIRECTLY because of the virus - not because of a failure of the project plan itself.

With all this in mind, and the ongoing nature of the virus impact, we now feel we can not 'wait and see' any longer, we need to take action and make some rather significant changes if we want to survive and also deliver the main conceptual outputs for the project, which we are totally committed to!

What we propose is this;

- 1. Re-write the budget to create a significant 'digital' budget to create an online learning platform and opportunities.*
- 2. Buy new equipment to facilitate online delivery of training and wellbeing support for young people - basically our face to face remit, but online!*
- 3. re-write the apprentice JD to move them to delivering mostly online youth work.*
- 4. Remove some areas of the project e.g. festival.*
- 5. Re-jig some areas of the project - e.g. creating 2x new accreditation's, to creating online accreditation.*
- 6. buy some PPE Covid equipment to enable us to deliver where possible face to face.*
- 7. Ring fence contingency to extend project and director salary at end of project for minimum of 6 months.*
- 8. re-assess and reduce targets to reflect current circumstances - particularly the traineeships.*
- 9. reduce match funding requirement from Sguilau (from trainees) which would mean the grant intervention would increase.*

But we believe making these changes, means we can still deliver a vast amount of our intended purposes, and more importantly deliver a fantastic and meaningful service to the young people and world heritage sites we work with".



The project and its outcomes with COVID changes.

The program, although complex and interwoven, is broken down into seven critical key activities of which delivery of will ensure all outcomes, accreditations, and outputs are met and measured to achieve the program overall vision and objectives. The following section summarises any changes proposed to the main body of the project and any changes to targets (changes are detailed in red).

- **Activity 1:** World Heritage school and youth group workshops delivered by trainees and apprentices
- **Activity 2:** Youth Ambassador voluntary group(s)
- **Activity 3:** Apprentices and trainees progression route
- **Activity 4:** World Heritage Learning and Engagement Network
- **Activity 5:** Adult Training
- **Activity 6:** Engage Pilot Areas to trial the program in diverse World Heritage Sites.
- **Activity 7:** Develop the program to be sustainably managed

Given the following climate, it is proposed that the following outcomes are amended or the way they are measured should be changed.

ORIGINAL OUTCOME	AMENDED OUTCOME	NOTES
A1A 500 children and young people will participate in workshops focused on World Heritage and explain why it is important to care for it and how to take action	500 children and young people will engage in either physical or online activity focused on World Heritage and be able to explain why it	Online engagement will also be measured towards this goal. Targets will also be reached by a new will 'offline' self-taught activity box.



	is important to care for it and take action.	
A2A. Deliver a program of World Heritage activity and youth engagement based on the World Heritage youth engagement model to 100 young people across the UK (60 in Blaenavon and 40 in Pilot Sites) to help them learn about World Heritage. 60% of Young People engaging with the programme will be classed as vulnerable or disadvantaged.		This outcome will remain the same, however online learning and engagement will now also be counted as engagement.
A2E. Deliver an accredited but voluntary training programme of activity, including heritage learning, peer educator training, advocacy, action planning, team building days, community event, to help Young People learn about heritage and change their behaviours and attitudes about World Heritage		This will now be available online as well as in person.
A2G. Develop two new World Heritage course for those that	A2G. Develop two new World Heritage learning programs; an online learning platform	This outcome will now be an online version of the short course, and a



achieve over 60 hours on the short course.	and an 'offline' distance learning package.	'offline; activity that can be handed out to schools
A3A. Deliver a "progression route" for employability skills in the heritage sector to 62 YP through 40 engagement traineeships (20/year), 20 Traineeships and 2 apprentices		This is now a high-risk area of the project and this target number may not be achievable. Currently a new way of working is being trialled and this will be re-assessed in January 2021 at the end of the current course.
A6A. Pilot the program and qualification in four other World Heritage Sites to engage with 40 young people.		The pilot program is at risk as they are not able to deliver original plan for engagement. Online support will now be provided as well as an 'offline' activity.
A6B. Facilitate one World Heritage youth festival to allow young people to discuss date and influence World Heritage youth practice at the high	REMOVAL OF TARGET ALL TOGETHER	This target is unlikely to be achieved as it will not be possible to deliver a festival within the current timeframes, and without young people engaged in the other areas of the program. The budget will now be re-allocated to digital engagement.



Amendments to Activities.

- **Activity 1:** World Heritage school and youth group workshops delivered by trainees and apprentices

This activity will now also include online engagement. A workshop will still be created; however, it will be produced in a variety of formats appropriate for online delivery as well as face to face engagement. Research is showing us that delivery of new 'online' workshops are rarely engaged with by young people or wider organisations unless the organisation was already involved in delivery, particularly in schools, so 'Offline' self-lead delivery packs will also be created by the apprentices, that can be sent to schools, youth groups, as well as residential homes. These packs will include activities, all the relevant materials, as well as an easy format to provide evaluation data.

50 workshop packs will be created, and these will be sent to 30 local schools and youth groups, 10 residential homes, and 10 will be available to interested individuals and families, who will be targeted through contact organisations. Evaluation of take up will be assessed via telephone calls structured interviews and online evaluation surveys.

Apprentices and trainees will create online digital content for young people to promote on new social media platforms, which will also be included in the measurement New measures on online engagement will be created.

- **Activity 2:** Youth Ambassador voluntary group(s)



Most of this activity will be 'paused' until we are able to deliver some form of face to face engagement. The model of engagement has been tried and tested over many years, and we know it works. This project excels in face to face engagement, and there is tremendous value in building relationships, and the project wishes to realise this rather than changing a successful model for the sake of meeting 'targets. When it is possible to re-engage with young people, numbers will be small and focused on vulnerable young people who need additional support. The focus of initial engagement will be short engagements through outreach work to recruit and build relationships. As soon as possible, a youth group will be established, even if this is in smaller numbers than originally intended.

While face to face delivery will be paused until the aspiration of the project is possible to achieve, (even in a smaller way), online engagement will be increased. The focus of this will be to raise awareness of the project and increase some form of digital engagement for future recruitment. Research has shown us that young people are unlikely to engagement in workshops, or anything that looks like digital learning, (as they have this through school) so instead, fun engaging content increased social media engagement will be focused on. Social media platforms will be expanded past facebook, to include Instagram, snap chat and tiktok. Short 60 second tiktok like videos will be created professionally to be able to send out through social media networks, with an emphasis on 'silly' 'fun' and 'cool' content that revolved around world heritage. Professional support will be required to achieve this! Digital content and engagement will then be measured. If this results in a core group of online followers, we may use this group to trial different approaches, but with no real online presence currently, this is aspirational.

Finally, The World Heritage Youth Ambassador short course will be turned into an online delivery format via a new website promoting the project.



A website will be created to promote the project and as a place to put digital resources associated with the website. The website will be analysed for engagement (see Activity 8 for measures).

- **Activity 3: Apprentices and trainees progression route**

While the aspiration remains to recruit young people to ‘work’ for the Hwb and Youth Ambassador project, while being trained by Sguiliau, as detailed above, the practicalities of providing a full week of work for 10 young people at time, while the organisation is shut means this is not possible. Instead, trainees will be part of the Sguiliau training program, and we will support their work. We will train small groups one day a week for a 10-12-week course, rather than take them on for the full hours. During this time, if possible, we will provide short practical activity out in the World Heritage Site. These smaller one-off projects will be delivered in collaboration with other organisations working in the WHS, and when combined with training, fulfils their community element of the traineeship. The hope is that while it is not the original program of activity, it will still achieve the essential targets- the qualifications through Sguiliau, the YAMS course, and young people will gain community engagement experience.

A small pilot group of 5 started in October 2020, and at the end of that program, this element of the project will be re-assessed.

- **Activity 4: World Heritage Learning and Engagement Network**

No change to this element of the program.

- **Activity 5: Adult Training**

This element of the project will turn to an online delivery format. The workshop course has been developed and will be turned into a series of online seminar workshops. An additional workshop will now be developed to look at online engagement in addition to the other models. These will be promoted and delivered through a new online platform (website).



- **Activity 6: Engage Pilot Areas to trial the program in diverse World Heritage Sites.**

This element of the project will be paused and reassessed in April 2021.

- **Activity 7: Develop the program to be sustainably managed**

There is no change to this element of the project.

Activity 4: Learning a

Amendments:

- 1. Re-write the budget to create a significant 'digital' budget to create an online learning platform and opportunities.**

While the world is moving to 'online' ways of working, it is felt that there an ever-increasing need and significant benefit to face to face work. With this in mind, while it is sensible to develop online content to enable us to provide an alternative way of working while this is not possible, this needs to be developed with the understanding that physical work still needs to be our priority.

2. Buy new equipment to facilitate online delivery of training and wellbeing support for young people - basically our face to face remit, but online!
3. re-write the apprentice JD to move them to delivering mostly online youth work.
4. Remove some areas of the project e.g. festival.
5. Re-jig some areas of the project - e.g. creating 2x new accreditation's, to creating online accreditation.
6. buy some PPE Covid equipment to enable us to deliver where possible face to face.



7. Ring fence contingency to extend project and director salary at end of project for minimum of 6 months.
8. re-assess and reduce targets to reflect current circumstances - particularly the traineeships.
9. reduce match funding requirement from Sguilau (from trainees) which would mean the grant intervention would increase.

