

# Re-opening Series Tourist Guides

Northern  
Ireland  
Embrace  
a Giant  
Spirit



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TED

Tourism  
Enterprise Development  
Programme



tourism  
northernireland



# Helping Tourist Guides Get Ready for Recovery!

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- Covid-19 Challenges for Tourist Guides
- Covid-19 Opportunities for Tourist Guides
- Covid-19 “Good to Go” Protocols for Tourist Guides.
- Covid-19 Check List for Tourist Guides



# Challenges for Tourist Guides



- Fewer overseas visitors, group tours and cruise ship calls
- Social Distancing will affect the number of visitors that can be accommodated on coach, site and walking tours
- Extra protocols for coach tours: Coach companies are developing ways of spacing guests.
- <https://www.vanhool.be/en/news/take-a-look-at-our-future-proof-coach>.
- Extra protocols for visitor attractions: Group size, timed tickets, guided tours



# Challenges for Tourist Guides



- Increased hygiene and protection of guides and visitors will be required
- Guiding skills and tours will have to be adapted to account for personal protection and social distancing
- First Aid
  - Be aware of risks to yourself and others
  - Keep yourself safe: gloves, mask, sanitizer
  - Keep yourself informed and updated

<https://www.sja.org.uk/get-advice/first-aid-advice/covid-19-advice-for-first-aiders/>
- Requirement for cashless payments.



A photograph of two cyclists on a dirt path in a forest. The path is covered with fallen leaves, and the trees are lush green. One cyclist is in the foreground, wearing a dark shirt and blue jeans, leaning over their bike. The other cyclist is further back, wearing a plaid shirt and a helmet.

# UNWTO Global Guidelines To Restart Tourism

## Include

- Develop segmented and sustainable products focused on nature, rural areas and culture, eco tourism, small group or individual tourism, history
- Introduce storytelling for creating new tourism experiences
- Create personalized and small group tours and packages
- Incentivize domestic tourism, short trips and visits to nearby destinations in the short term.



# Tourist Guides

Are becoming more important with Covid-19



## Professional Tourist Guides

- Follow clear health and hygiene protocols
- Facilitate safe visitor flow
- Enable/enforce social distancing
- Remind of and encourage health and hygiene requirements
- .....ultimately enable/enhance a quality visitor experience





# OPPORTUNITIES for Tourist Guides

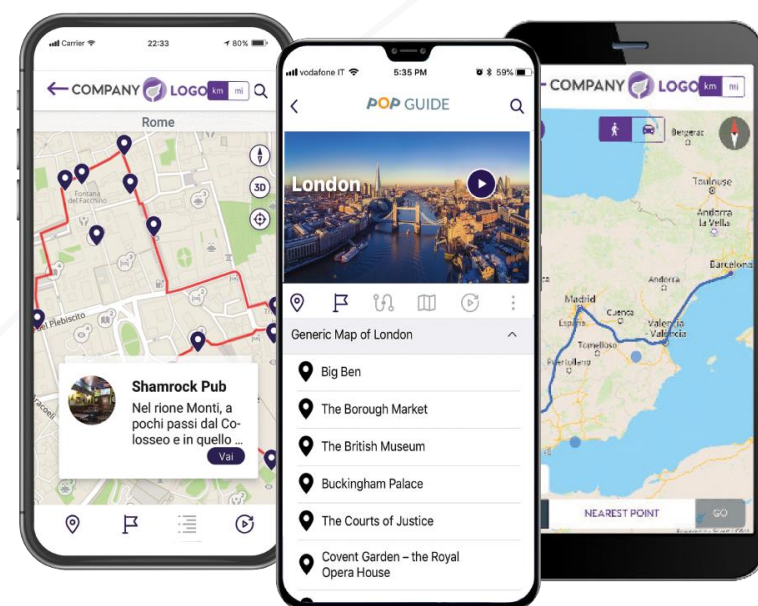
- Reassurance of working with a professional tourist guide with clear published protocols
- Virtual Tours: do not take the place of real tours but are being used for promotion by individual guides and associations <https://www.gguides-academy.com>
- Develop walking tours for small groups, locals and families – individually or in cooperation with colleagues
- Working with clients to suggest new sites and attractions to take visitors to avoid crowds



# Solutions for the New Normal



- Remote audio devices
- Whisper Systems
  - Tour Operator provision
  - Buy or Hire



- Apps <https://members.tourismus-training.com/en>
  - Bluetooth: short range at present
  - Internet: variable network coverage; mobile hotspot necessary for overseas guests; data consumption
  - WiFi : requires a mobile router





# Solutions for the New Normal

- Things to Consider
  - Ease of handling, connection and re-connection for guide and guests
  - No failure in enclosed areas e.g. narrow streets, inside buildings
  - Short delay (latency)
  - App suitable for all types of phone
  - App size
  - External Microphone possible for guide
  - External Headphones possible for guests
  - Focus on audio functions



# Solutions for the New Normal

## Best Practice

### Same Good Guiding Skills still crucial

All normal guiding skills: except you can walk and talk  
Repeat questions for everyone to hear & KISS  
But talk of practicalities on the move

### Group Control still crucial

Stop and gather (allowing for social distancing) and control...  
Stop and explain what they can see and should be looking at.

### Safety still paramount

Use system to reiterate on the go  
Stop and gather (allowing for social distancing)





# Covid-19 Protocols

## For Tourist Guides



### Professional Tourist Guides

- Follow clear health and hygiene protocols
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# Covid-19 Protocols for Tourist Guides



Guides are strongly advised to comply with this guidance at all times. Public Liability and Professional Indemnity Insurance requires safety briefings by guides and Covid-19 enhances this requirement and insurance may be invalid if guides do not include a Covid-19 safety briefing in addition to their normal safety briefing.





# Covid-19 Protocols for Tourist Guides

- Guides should wear an appropriate badge or identification
- Guides will ensure that they are familiar with the most up-to-date public health guidelines and will adhere to these for the duration of the tour. They will give guests advanced notice before the tour begins of how to be safe on the tour, enjoy the tour, and have fun while maintaining Northern Ireland Government public health advice.
- Guides will maintain government-recommended social distancing between yourselves and clients at all times. On tours where the group includes different households, guides will encourage and help clients to adopt appropriate social distancing between each other too.





# Covid-19 Protocols for Tourist Guides

- When guiding groups from different households, guides will follow government guidance to determine the maximum possible group size. <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/health/your-guide-to-covid-regs.pdf>.
- Guides will avoid shaking hands or any other physical contact with clients.
- Guides will apply rigorous hygiene practices, including thoroughly cleaning and drying hands before guiding, and use a personal hand sanitiser when this is not possible.





# Covid-19 Protocols for Tourist Guides

- Guides will be wearing a mask or visor according to Government recommendations and comply with the protocols of agents and coach companies they work with.
- Guides will know where public toilets/hand-washing facilities/hand sanitiser points are available.
- Remote audio devices (such as Whisper, Vox and various apps) can be effective for social distancing on guided tours. Use of these devices may be required by tour operators.



# Covid-19 Protocols for Tourist Guides



- Guides are experts in the tourist sites they visit with clients. Guides will ensure they are fully aware of sites' specific Covid-19 requirements and comply with them.
- Guides will be familiar with more crowded areas and will make best efforts to negotiate them, or if appropriate, avoid them.
- Guides will liaise with coach companies and private vehicle companies and drivers to check that vehicles have been thoroughly sanitised.



# Covid-19 Guidance for Tourist Guides



Driver guides will ensure their vehicle is thoroughly cleaned inside after previous use. They will follow licensing authority and national Covid-19 regulations for cleaning their vehicles and maintaining air-conditioning systems. Driver guides will carry disinfecting wipes, hand sanitisers and paper towels in their cars, and will use face masks.



# So How Will This Work In Practice?



In planning for the “New Normal” guides should re-evaluate each stage of the Customer Journey and consider what changes might be required in their usual practices. Guides meet visitors in various locations and take them on moving vehicle, site and walking tours. It is likely that there will be less coach tours in the immediate future but once the larger group industry opens up probably next year, extra safety and hygiene practices will still be necessary to give customers confidence that it is Safe to Go!!



# Covid-19 Checklist for Tourist Guides



- Prior to the Tour
  - Check the group numbers – is it feasible and within current government guidelines and tourism partners' protocols? For walking tours in normal circumstances, no more than 15 guests are advised per guide and most insurance specifies no more than 20. In this situation, numbers might have to be less because of the need for social distancing. Coaches are likely to be no more than 30% or 50% full.
  - Check the itinerary carefully to allow for current opening rules and advance ticket requirements. More time may be required as groups may have to be split into smaller numbers and specific arrival times are likely to be required.



# Covid-19 checklist for Tourist Guides



- Prior to the Tour
  - Liaise with the agent if applicable to check all is in order and whether whisper systems will be provided or apps will be used. Also check that they are contacting guests in advance to advise them what will be required and what to expect on the tour. Ask if face masks will be provided for guests (perhaps through the coach company).
  - Check any seating plan for guests to allow for social distancing
  - Get a list of names and contact details if booking is direct.
  - If taking direct bookings or if you have direct contact with guests then you should contact the guests in advance to inform them what will be required and what to expect on the tour.



# Covid-19 Checklist for Tourist Guides



- Prior to the Tour
  - Make arrangements for contactless payments where possible, including your own guiding fees.
  - Check with all tourism partners to find out their current rules and protocols e.g. coach company; private hire company, drivers, attractions; sites; hotels; restaurants. All including coaches will have sanitizer at entrances/exits and guests must use this on entering and leaving
  - Check the location and availability of toilets, hand washing and hand sanitizing facilities.
  - Prepare your own PPE including masks, microphone covers, portable microphones as appropriate. If doing a walking tour take sanitizer for guests.



# Covid-19 checklist for Tourist Guides



## Meet and Greet

- Arrive early enough to check on protocols at the venue or with the coach driver, chauffeur and any DMC or Shorex officials.
- For coach tours check again how the coach will be loaded and any seating plan.
- Wash or sanitize hands and any equipment e.g. microphone you are using directly.
- Wear a mask. according to your own risk assessment and government guidelines. Be aware that wearing a mask even if it is not required may give reassurance to guests.
- As guests arrive do not shake hands or come into physical contact.
- Maintain social distance and encourage guests to do the same.



# Covid-19 Checklist for Tourist Guides



## Meet and Greet

- Assist with coach loading as agreed with the coach driver if appropriate. This will include all guests loading in a prescribed order and using hand sanitizer. Household groups may not be able to sit together.
- Masks are likely to be required and it would be advisable to have some disposable masks available free of charge –this would normally be the responsibility of the agent or coach company.
- Advise guests of enhanced safety and hygiene protocols during the tour and at any venues you will visit.
- Re-assure guests that their safety and wellbeing is your top priority.



# Covid-19 checklist for Tourist Guides



## During the tour

- While walking ensure that social distance is maintained at all times.
- Sanitize or wash your own hands frequently.
- Use appropriate means for voice amplification. Projection of the voice is not advised.
- Avoid crowded areas: change your route if necessary.
- Call ahead to attractions, restaurants and other venues to advise of exact arrival time. You are likely to have a set arrival time which must be adhered to but, if anything unexpected happens, contact the venue immediately



# Covid-19 Checklist for Tourist Guides

## During the tour

- On arrival at attractions, sites and other venues – remind guests of safety and hygiene protocols for the particular site.
- Check again entrance restrictions and advise guests of arrangements. Groups may have to be split.
- Disembark the coach in the order agreed with the driver. Guests should sanitize their hands, on disembarkation.
- Re-load the coach in the same order as before.





# Covid-19 checklist for Tourist Guides



At the end of the tour

- Thank the guests for their support and cooperation.
- Disembark the coach in the same way as before.
- Guests are unlikely to want to handle cash so tips may be an issue. If they do want to leave cash tips have a hands-free pot they can be placed into and encourage increased handwashing or sanitizing. Cash left should also be sanitized for your own safety.
- Debrief the tour with the agent if appropriate highlighting any issues or challenges that arose.



# Message from Indonesia!

Our colleagues in the Indonesian Tourist Guide Association have shared this video.

We are all in this together!





# Re-opening series We're Good to go

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# QUESTIONS

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# Continued Support for Tourism Businesses

- Dedicated Tourism NI Covid-19 Business Support Helpline  
**Call 028 9592 5313 - Lines open Monday to Friday 10am-5pm**
- Dedicated Tourism NI Covid-19 Support Web Hub  
**<https://covid19.tourismni.com/>**
- Additional Sector Specific Support Webinars including Best Practice, Hints and Tips, Q&A Sessions
- Access to specialised legal/insurance/Health and Safety etc.