

Following the latest government guidance on COVID-19 and in light of the rapidly moving situation the Council has taken the difficult decision to remove all '**face to face public access**' to the county council's libraries and archive services.

This means most buildings will close to the public but a few shared buildings may remain open if they host other services such as registrars - who are currently still offering face to face appointments on matters like registering a birth.

This means face to face access to libraries and archives will cease **to the public** from Friday 20th March at 5pm until at least 1st May, at which point future opening arrangements will be reviewed.

This decision has not been taken lightly given the valuable service that our libraries and archives provide. However this is an unprecedented situation and the health, safety and wellbeing of our customers, staff and local communities has to be our number one priority.

Staff have now been informed of this decision as have the unions.

For your constituents we are still offering some services these include

- A contactless home delivery service provided to any existing customers already signed up for this service. We will be considering if this offer can be extended to additional customers however this will be subject to availability of staff and volunteers.
- Access to our online offer
- Access to books in existing unstaffed book drops in non County Council premises in community locations, should the location be open.

The Council has taken a decision to waive fines incurred during the temporary closure period as customers will not be able to return books in most locations, however customers will be able to renew the items they have borrowed online.

And we would ask you to help us encourage your residents to use these online services and resources, such as e-book and e-magazines, which are all available at Cumbria.gov.uk/libraries

The full list of the closures can also be found online at Cumbria.gov.uk or you can follow the latest information on our social media channels (Facebook and Twitter).

We sincerely apologise for any inconvenience this may cause and want to thank you for your support, patience and understanding at this difficult time.