

Reopening date announced for “bigger and better” South Yorkshire museum

South Yorkshire’s National Emergency Services Museum (NESM) has announced plans to reopen its doors on Wednesday 19 May, saying visitors can look forward to an “even bigger and better” day out than before.

The museum, based at West Bar in Sheffield, has been closed since November due to the coronavirus pandemic. Now it’s preparing to welcome visitors back again and, says Chief Executive Matt Wakefield, a lot has changed in that time.

“While we’ve been closed our team of staff and volunteers have been working so hard to refresh the museum, create new exhibits and make the visitor experience even bigger and better. We can’t wait for everyone to see the changes we’ve made - it’s almost like we’re a new museum!”

The star attraction is a brand new exhibition, ‘Daring Detectives and Dastardly Deeds’, housed in the museum’s original Victorian cells. The exhibition tells the story of 19th century crime and punishment from bobbies on the beat to thieves, forgers and murderers, and includes exhibits relating to the infamous Jack the Ripper case as well as original documents, weaponry and objects.

Another major exhibition, ‘Fiery Blaze to Fire Brigade’, has also been added during the last year. Vehicles and other objects not previously on display at the museum will also be on show from May, alongside all the old favourites like the museum’s 47-foot ex-RNLI lifeboat. Improved signage around the building helps to tell the story of NESM’s historic home as well as the many emergency services it celebrates.

The addition of a lift - the first time the museum has had one - and improved toilet facilities will also improve accessibility for all visitors.

Matt says, “We’re an independent, self-funded museum and most of our income comes from visitors, school groups and outreach work. Without them, this last year has been really hard for us and things are still tight, so we’re not out of the woods yet. I really hope that people do come and see us, support us and help us keep our fantastic museum going.”

Tickets are now on sale at [visitnesm.org.uk/booking](https://www.visitnesm.org.uk/booking). Advanced booking is recommended as numbers per day are limited. Covid-secure measures will be in place including hand sanitising stations and social distancing, and visitors will be required to wear a face covering unless exempt.

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