



VIDEO TRANSCRIPT T ENGLISH

Hello everyone. My name is James and I'm Chief Executive at Eden Court.

I'm sharing this video today to update you on key information about everything that normally happens in our wonderful building and to share with you what myself, and my colleagues, have been up to since we, sadly, closed our doors.

Firstly, the most important update for you all: Eden Court will remain closed until, at least, 1 June. This decision has not been taken lightly, but it is, of course, in order to restrict the spread of COVID-19 and to follow guidance from government. The reality is, even if social-distancing measures are relaxed before this date the majority of all the productions and live events that were due to be on our stages before this time have been cancelled, postponed or rescheduled. If you have tickets for shows or film screenings between this updated period of closure: the 20 April to 1 June - we will be in touch with you soon. Please bear with us.

We're also announcing today that our studio classes and Youth Theatre programme for the Summer Term will now not take place. Again, we will be in touch to process any refunds or credit notes.

We know this extended closure is going to be hard for many of you.

One of the reasons I love Eden Court is that our building is truly busy from the moment we open our doors in the morning, normally, 363 days a year. Folk using our Café, Bar or Restaurant, one of our two beautiful cinemas, one of our two theatres or people in our studios taking part in everything from Ballet, Youth Theatre or Singing for the Shy.

We know for others Eden Court is a life-line. We know many of you visit us every day. Because we know this, over the last few weeks we have started calling those we know well. To check-in, to see how they're doing – to reassure them – that we will be back.

We're working closely with our funders at the Scottish Government to ensure our projects for vulnerable young people, who frankly now need us more than ever, can in some-way continue, to support these teenagers and young adults.

You may have seen in the local press or on social media that since closing our building many of our staff have been supporting the Highland Council's resilience and humanitarian response to the spread of COVID-19. Many of our Ticket Sales and Visitor Experience team members are running the Council Helpline from their homes and members of our Engagement team have been supporting the teaching and learning in the Key Worker Childcare Hubs. I couldn't be prouder of them.

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I'd like to thank all our friends and colleagues at the Highland Council: both elected members and Council Officers for their support and partnership over the last month. You know what, it's pretty easy to throw proverbial stones at local authorities but over the last few weeks all I have seen is tireless care and dedication to the communities we all serve – to protect them and to keep us all safe.

Eden Court is part of a vibrant Highland artistic community. I've been in close contact with other people leading and working in other Highland cultural organisations, we are supporting each other and will continue to do so as we collectively rebuild and recover.

Many of you have been in touch to ask about Under Canvas, our pop-up music festival showcasing the very best traditional Scottish music, DJs, jazz and blues. Under Canvas is, as I'm sure you can imagine, now postponed. We had hoped to run the festival for three months this summer. We're now expecting that it will run for two months. We will prioritise getting the tent-up. We're all thinking we're going to need it and I'm committed to ensuring we provide as many paid performance opportunities to all the artists whose incomes have been hugely affected as a result of the times we are living through.

The current situation is probably the biggest challenge ever faced by Eden Court. Approximately 75% of all our income is generated from ticket sales, our Café/Bar, Restaurant and Under Canvas. That income, over the course of one week, totally stopped. Now more than ever we need your support. If you are able to, please consider making us a donation. All the information on how to do so is available on our website.

That's it for now. We'll be back – big, bold and ambitious – because now, perhaps more so than ever before, we are committed to bringing the world to the Highlands and the Highlands to the world.

A transcript of this message is available in the Lockdown section of our website in both English and Gaelic.

Please like, share, ask us questions and comment on this message.

On behalf of Eden Court's board, and all of our staff - we'll see you soon.