PRESS RELEASE Friday 10 July 2020

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[Video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sITJPLu83Zs)

**NATIONAL FOOTBALL MUSEUM REOPENS 23 JULY**

**FOOTBALL COMES HOME AFTER 127 DAYS**

The National Football Museum will reopen on Thursday 23 July – more than four months after it closed due to the coronavirus crisis.

The museum is the first major attraction to reopen in Manchester and is among the first museums in the country to welcome visitors once again.

Visitors can expect a safe and warm reception as the museum gets back in the game after 127 days behind closed doors.

Initially, opening days will be Thursday to Sunday 11am – 4pm. Online bookings will be encouraged to safely manage visitor flow.

**PRESS CALL: Media are invited to a press call at the museum at 12 noon on the opening day – Thursday 23 July. Chief Executive Tim Desmond is available to interview. Please confirm attendance in advance to** **dickie.felton@natonalfootballmuseum.com**

Visitors will be reassured to find a one-way system, plenty of hand sanitizer stations and social distancing measures all in place.

The museum’s friendly staff are also trained and on-hand to help everyone enjoy their visit safely.

Tim Desmond, Chief Executive National Football Museum, said: “We’re delighted to reopen the museum and are really looking forward to welcoming visitors. Our team has been working really hard to get the museum safe and ready.

“At a time when the nation cannot get out and experience live football, people can re-live their passion for the beautiful game on our galleries. “They’ll find the museum 100% match fit with the usual fantastic displays, exhibitions and celebration of football as the game of our lives.

“It’s been a challenging time for us as a museum and a charity, but we’re sure visitors will come out, support us and help us get back on our feet. In return we’ll make sure they have a fantastic time and a huge welcome when they visit.”

Councillor Luthfur Rahman, Executive Member for Culture, Leisure, and Skills, Manchester City Council, said: "The revival of the city's cultural offer is key to attracting visitors back so it's great news that the museum is preparing to re-open.

“Manchester is a big football city as we all know, and we hope that local residents and others from further afield will take some time out over the summer to come and see for themselves this amazing cultural gem in the heart of the city centre that charts the history of the beautiful game."

The exhibitions ***Goal Click*** ***Women’s Football in 2019*** and ***Strip! How Football Got Shirty*** have been extended.

Featuring more than 200 football shirts, ***Strip!*** examines designs through the ages. It capturesthe growth of the football shirt phenomenon, charting the replica boom and the bold designs that followed, right through to the high-tech advancements and retro reappraisals.

During the lockdown curators have been busy collecting items relating to football’s response to coronavirus and the key issues of today.

Visitors will see new additions including a Wolverhampton Wanderers shirt with the Black Lives Matters message worn by player Jonny Castro Otto in a recent Premiership match.

The museum has also invested in a new projector in its Penalty Shootout making the experience from 12 yards even more realistic. Soak up the pressure of Wembley, keep your nerve and go for glory from the spot…

Tickets are on sale online from noon today (Friday 10 July) at <https://www.nationalfootballmuseum.com/tickets>

**ENDS**

**Notes to editors:**

For more details contact dickie.felton@nationalfootballmuseum.com

**NATIONAL FOOTBALL MUSEUM:**

The National Football Museum reopens on Thursday 23 July having been closed since Tuesday 17 March due to the coronavirus crisis.

The National Football Museum is a registered charity. It was established and its collection acquired thanks to £9.3m investment by the Heritage Lottery Fund.  Its vision is to become a leading national museum by 2022, exploring why football is the game of our lives.  The museum’s social purpose is to provide equal opportunity for all to enjoy football culture.

In January 2019, the museum became a charging attraction.  All visitors except for those living within the Manchester City Council boundary now pay an admission fee. School groups within the Manchester City Council boundary are also admitted free of charge.

When the Museum reopens on Thursday 23 July it has new opening hours: Initially opening Thursday to Sunday 11am – 4pm, visitors are asked to book online in advance of their visit.

The venue is fully accessible for wheelchair access. Cathedral Gardens, Manchester M4 3BG

[www.nationalfootballmuseum.com](http://www.nationalfootballmuseum.com)