



Case Study:
**COME DINE WITH ME
LOCATION CLEANING**



COME DINE
WITH ME



The Client



The Project

COVID-19 Cleaning and Decontamination Services for Location Filming for 'Come Dine with Me' television programme.

Location

Across the UK

Dates

March 2020 – December 2021
(During the COVID-19 Pandemic)

The Background

As one of the UK's leading public broadcasters, it was important for Channel 4 to remain operational throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, delivering entertainment and other important broadcasts for the UK public isolating in their homes. However, like in many industries, broadcasters faced significant challenges in ensuring the safety and well-being of their crews and talent when producing television shows. At one point the UK television industry had run out of new material to show the public and were forced to run repeats.

Among other productions, It was decided by Channel 4 that they would produce a series of the popular cooking show 'Come Dine with Me', with this series instead being hosted in glamorous locations throughout the UK such as manor houses and mansions where the safety of crew and contestants could be fully controlled.



The Challenges

Channel 4 needed a reliable, efficient, and highly adaptable cleaning service to:

Protect On-Air Talent and Crew: Contestants and crew needed to work in fully decontaminated and sanitary environments due to high foot traffic and constant interaction between individuals.

Comply with Health Guidelines and COVID Legislation: Channel needed to comply with public health regulations and government guidelines, which constantly evolved, requiring flexibility and quick implementation of new cleaning protocols.

Minimise Disruption to Broadcast Operations: Given the complexity and cost associated with broadcast operations, cleaning procedures needed to be non-intrusive, ensuring that work continued without delays or disruptions.

The Solution

A tailored COVID-19 Cleaning Strategy

► **Comprehensive Risk Assessment and Tailored Cleaning Plan**

A detailed risk assessment was carried out at each location, identifying high-risk areas such as the kitchen, shared welfare facilities, production rooms, and other communal spaces.

We also identified all High-Touch Surfaces: such as door handles, desks, light switches, microphones, and equipment handles.

This assessment formed the basis of a customised cleaning plan for each location.

► **Enhanced Cleaning Protocols**

Given the nature of COVID-19, a heightened level of cleaning and sanitisation was necessary. The cleaning strategy followed the latest guidance from the UK's Department of Health and WHO (World Health Organisation).

Disinfecting and Sanitisation: The cleaning team employed hospital-grade disinfectants that were proven to kill viruses, including COVID-19. Special emphasis was placed on disinfecting frequently touched surfaces multiple times a day.

Deep Cleaning: In addition to daily cleaning, a deep cleaning of the entire facility was conducted on arrival focusing on thorough sanitisation of floors, walls, and shared equipment.

Fogging and Electrostatic Spraying: Electrostatic sprayers and fogging techniques were utilised to cover larger areas like studios, offices, and communal spaces with a disinfectant mist, ensuring hard-to-reach surfaces were sanitised effectively.



► **Focused Cleaning Teams for Broadcast Areas**

The cleaning staff was divided into specialised teams that focused on particular zones within the location facilities.

Kitchen and dining spaces used for filming: Come Dine with Me is a cooking show where guests each host a dinner party. For all shows filmed during the COVID period, Channel 4 used a single location, usually a luxury home, where all contestants cooked and hosted their dinner party. As such the dining and kitchen areas of these properties were areas of high traffic where all filming took place. In these areas we had cleaning staff on stand-by to ensure they were immaculately clean and sterile throughout the production.

Production Areas: Newsrooms and Offices: Workspaces were sanitised at the start of each shift, with specific attention to shared desks, computers, and phones. Cleaning teams ensured that any shared areas were thoroughly cleaned.

Common Areas: High-traffic areas like corridors, stairs, toilets, and meeting rooms were sanitised regularly throughout the day to limit cross-contamination.

► **Implementation of Social Distancing Measures**

To support the Channel 4's efforts to maintain social distancing, cleaning teams adopted specific operational practices to ensure minimal contact with staff and crew during working hours.

Flexible Scheduling: Deep cleaning was scheduled during off-peak hours, including before the start of the working day, during breaks, or after hours to ensuring that cleaning did not interfere with the productions filming. As mentioned, we

also had cleaning operatives on stand-by to ensure filming areas were constantly cleaned and sterile ready for use.

Signage and Protective Measures: Clear signage was placed in common areas to remind staff of hygiene practices, social distancing, and the importance of regular handwashing. Cleaning staff wore full personal protective equipment (PPE), including gloves, masks, and face shields, to protect themselves and the workers.

► **Ongoing Monitoring and Adaptation**

The cleaning protocols were continuously monitored and adapted in response to evolving COVID-19 regulations, infection rates, and the productions operational needs.

Feedback Mechanism: We implemented a feedback loop to monitor the effectiveness of cleaning practices. Staff were encouraged to report any concerns or areas that needed additional attention.

Adaptation to New Guidelines: As government guidelines and public health recommendations evolved, the cleaning plan was updated to include additional protocols, such as more frequent disinfecting of certain surfaces or specific antiviral treatments.



The Execution

The safety of the cleaning staff and production personnel was a priority throughout the execution of the cleaning protocols. The following actions ensured that the cleaning operations met the needs of Channel 4:

Staffing and Training: All cleaning personnel received specialised training on COVID-19 safety, proper disinfectant usage, and infection control protocols. This was given by one of our directors who is a fully trained and licensed Crime Scene Cleaner and was fully up to date with all bio-hazard best practices.

Coordination with Production Management: Cleaning schedules were coordinated with Channel 4 management to ensure minimal disruption to filming and the daily flow of operations. Regular meetings with production health and safety managers ensured alignment with any updated COVID-19 policies.

Communication and Transparency: Regular updates were provided to Channel 4 staff about the cleaning protocols in place, and records were kept to show that the cleaning scheduled had taken place, giving them confidence that the workplace was safe and regularly sanitised.

The Outcome

The COVID-19 cleaning services provided to the Channel 4 were a success, with measurable outcomes in both safety and operational continuity.

Reduced Risk of Infection: There were no reported outbreaks of COVID-19 within the production team or at the location during the pandemic's peak. The rigorous cleaning protocols helped reduce the potential for transmission of the virus among staff and talent.

Operational Continuity: Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, filming operations continued without major disruption. The cleaning services ensured that the facilities remained safe for production teams and talent.

Compliance with Health Standards: The production successfully met government health and safety regulations, ensuring that the workplace was compliant with COVID-19 guidelines at all times.

Positive Feedback from Staff: Channel 4 expressed high levels of satisfaction with the cleaning procedures, citing the visible commitment to health and safety.



The Lessons Learned

Adaptability is Key: As government health guidelines changed, the cleaning strategy was able to quickly adapt, ensuring ongoing compliance and protection.

Communication and Coordination: Maintaining clear communication between the cleaning teams, management, and staff helped ensure a smooth execution of cleaning protocols, which was critical in a high-pressure, live broadcast environment.

Continuous Monitoring: Regular feedback and adaptation to evolving needs ensured that the cleaning services stayed relevant and effective throughout the pandemic.

The Conclusion

The COVID-19 cleaning services provided to the Channel 4 played a pivotal role in maintaining the safety and health of staff and talent during a challenging and unprecedented time. Through thorough planning, specialised cleaning protocols, and continuous adaptation, Come Dine with Me was able to continue its essential operations while providing a safe, sanitized environment. This case highlights the importance of flexibility, communication, and expert knowledge in tackling health crises in high-functioning, high-profile organisations.





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