

## Coronavirus Update – Tuesday 24 March 2020

The message is clear: stay at home, avoid all social interaction, and only travel to work if absolutely necessary. The dilemma facing construction is that a significant number of people cannot work from home, many won't get paid if they don't work, and there has been no specific instruction to shut construction sites. The Construction Leadership Council (CLC) is meeting this morning; however, it is not a regulatory or enforcement body with the power to instruct sites to close.

Build UK is talking to members this morning and will provide an update later today.

Where work has stopped, the Government is supporting business, including committing that public authorities will pay their suppliers. We know that large and small public sector clients are looking at what that means for each of their contracts and how they can work with their supply chains to keep payments on track.

Where work is still continuing, the (CLC) has published [Site Operating Procedures](#), developed by Build UK, to implement the Government's social distancing requirements and minimise the risk of spread of infection.

CLC Co-Chair Andy Mitchell says:

*"We are in exceptional circumstances, and doing our utmost to keep construction sites operational wherever it is practical and safe to do so. Whilst the guidance from Public Health England may change in future, for the time being construction sites of any size that are operating during the Coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic need to ensure they are protecting their workforce and minimising the risk of spread of infection."*

*"To implement the Government's social distancing recommendation the Construction Leadership Council has now published Site Operating Procedures. I would strongly recommend that these procedures are implemented by every operational construction site, with the aim of us having a standard approach across the industry that all firms and workers can adopt."*

*"It is also vital that the health and safety requirements of any construction activity must not be compromised at this time. If an activity cannot be undertaken safely due to a lack of suitably qualified personnel being available, or social distancing being implemented, it should not take place. We are aware that emergency services are also under great pressure and may not be in a position to respond as quickly as usual."*

The procedures provide clarity on canteens and eating arrangements, as well as specifying that the workforce should be required to stay on site once they have entered it and not use local shops. Build UK fully supports the implementation of the procedures on all sites across the UK.

The **financial support available from Government** can be found in this [easy to reference table](#) which will be updated with the latest information as soon as it becomes available.



The [Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme \(CBILS\)](#), specifically for SMEs and provided by the British Business Bank via your usual bank or lender, is now available. There is no maximum cap set for lending supported through the scheme, so there is no immediate need to approach your lender if your business does not need finance at the moment.

Businesses should continue to follow the most up-to-date [Government guidance](#) and members can contact [Build UK](#) with any construction-specific queries. We cannot guarantee to respond to every message; however, if we are aware of sector-specific issues we have the opportunity to address them collectively.

The situation continues to develop rapidly and please follow Build UK on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#) for the latest updates.