

## Coronavirus Update – Tuesday 31 March 2020

The Construction Minister, Nadhim Zahawi, has specifically identified construction as an example of work that should continue during the coronavirus pandemic, stating in [The Telegraph on Sunday](#): “*There will always be some work that cannot be done from home, whether it is construction or packing boxes in an Amazon warehouse – but we still need houses built and for deliveries to be made*”. **Government policy** remains that construction sites should stay open if work can be undertaken in compliance with the [Site Operating Procedures](#).

Companies across the sector are continuously making and reviewing decisions on whether to keep sites open based on their ability to implement the **Site Operating Procedures**. Build UK members have confirmed that projects in London continue to be particularly severely restricted as a result. A number of our key Client members confirmed on a call yesterday that they are working collaboratively with their supply chains to find a way through the current situation on each project, which includes extensions of time and LAD holidays.

For practical advice on a range of **contractual issues**, Build UK has worked with Wedlake Bell LLP to produce [comprehensive guidance](#) for all parties in the supply chain.

Build UK Contractor members have been clear that no-one should be required to travel to, or work on, their sites if the PHE guidance on social distancing cannot be met. Where we receive evidence that this is not the case on particular projects, we are **providing feedback** to the company concerned.

Trade bodies in **Scotland**, including the Scottish Contractors Group, have set up the Construction Industry Coronavirus Forum to lead the industry response to the pandemic. The position on construction work in Scotland is not clear, with First Minister Nicola Sturgeon advising that “*sites should close unless the building being worked on is essential – such as a hospital*” without then specifying what else is considered essential. The Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Economy Fair Work and Culture has written to representatives in the industry, stating: “*We are considering whether guidance could be issued to determine if a construction site can be safely operated in line with social distancing*”.

The **Construction Leadership Council (CLC)** has recently:

- published guidance on the [Temporary Suspension of Sites](#).
- confirmed that the Home Office has informed police forces that construction is a business sector that has been asked to remain open.
- provided employers with a [letter](#) to issue to their workers explaining that they are a construction worker or supplying services to a construction site in the event that they are asked to verify they are on an essential trip.

The Government has introduced measures to enable workers who do not take all of their [statutory annual leave entitlement](#) due to coronavirus to carry up to four weeks of unused leave into the next two leave years. The aim is to ease the requirements on businesses to ensure that workers take the statutory amount of annual leave in any one year.



Build UK partner **Citation** is hosting a webinar for members specifically on Coronavirus and HR and Employment Law on Wednesday 1 April at 1:00pm. You will need to [register to book your place](#).

Businesses should continue to follow the most up-to-date [Government guidance](#) and for the latest updates please follow Build UK on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#). If you have any construction-specific queries or feedback on what is happening, please contact [Build UK](#).