

Coronavirus Update – Friday 1 May 2020

Build UK joined the latest industry conference call with **Minister for Business and Industry Nadhim Zahawi** yesterday, during which he thanked construction for rising to the challenge of implementing social distancing on site in accordance with the [Site Operating Procedures](#).

As we prepare to enter week seven of the lockdown, there are a number of **issues for the industry to resolve**, including appropriate use of PPE on site, keeping face to face contact to 15 minutes or less where possible, and minimising the use of public transport, particularly in London where the service is drastically reduced at present. Build UK is working on each of these issues to provide further information to support the whole supply chain in taking a consistent approach, with the aim of instilling the workforce with the confidence to return to site.

To help contractors working away from home find local **accommodation**, Build UK has temporarily repurposed its [Open Doors website](#). We have teamed up with trade body UK Hospitality, which has confirmed that during the lockdown its members are able to provide accommodation for workers unable to return home.

Anyone looking for a bed for the night can now use the Open Doors website to find accommodation providers who have space for construction workers. The website is live but still a work in progress and accommodation will continue to be added. If your site requires accommodation and none is shown locally, please send [Build UK](#) the site postcode or location as we can add providers where there is demand.

The **Construction Leadership Council (CLC)** is looking at a ‘Roadmap to Recovery’ for the industry. During this week’s conference calls with Build UK members, we have been discussing what it should include, from accelerating public sector projects to delaying the implementation of Reverse VAT. The CLC also has a group looking at the challenges that will arise when the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme comes to an end and employers no longer have the option of furloughing their workers.

We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who responded to our recent Materials & Accommodation survey, which has provided us with extremely useful information on the **demand for products** which we can use to help open up the supply chain by matching demand with supply.

The results showed that plaster and plasterboard were in short supply; however, with key suppliers now re-opening their factories, this should start to ease. Other materials proving difficult to get hold of were aggregates and bricks, although data from the Construction Products Association (CPA) and the Builders Merchants Federation (BMF) indicate that these are available within the supply chain. Not surprisingly, there is also significant demand for facemasks, gloves and hand sanitiser (minimum 60% alcohol based).

A number of Build UK Trade Association members have published sector-specific guidance based on the [Site Operating Procedures](#), setting out how to comply with social distancing requirements in relation to various specialist activities. Any queries on the guidance should be directed to the relevant Trade Association.

- Construction Plant-hire Association (CPA) - [Protecting your Workforce \(COVID-19\) - Supplementary Requirements for Plant Operations](#)
- Finishes and Interiors Sector (FIS) - [Coronavirus Task Assessment Tool](#)
- Highway Electrical Association (HEA) - [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Local Highways Safe Operating Procedures - Protecting our workforce guidance document](#)
- National Access & Scaffolding Confederation (NASC) - [Guidance for Scaffolding Operations during the Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Pandemic](#).

BEIS is hosting a webinar next **Tuesday 5 May at 11:00am** for small businesses to find out more about the financial support available, including grants, loans, tax relief and the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. You will need to [register](#) and questions can be submitted via email to sed@beis.gov.uk until close of play today.

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 within the industry, please contact [Build UK](#).

1 May 2020