

Coronavirus Update – Tuesday 5 May 2020

The Government is currently preparing for the **economic restart**, anticipated as part of any relaxing of the lockdown, and the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) will be providing sector-specific guidance on social distancing in the workplace. The draft guidance for construction that we have seen to date reflects the [Site Operating Procedures](#) which are already being implemented.

Build UK is part of the Government's '**outdoor working**' group and we are aware that other industry sectors have the same questions as construction on the use of PPE, the need for 'permission to work', and reduced capacity on public transport, particularly in London. These are expected to be addressed by the Government as part of its plan for businesses and the workforce to return to work.

Alok Sharma, Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, has [responded](#) to the Construction Leadership Council's recent [letter to the Prime Minister](#). He confirms that guidance has been provided to public authorities on [PPN 02/20](#), giving those that hold cash retentions the ability to release all or part of these monies in relation to projects and promoting the use of Project Bank Accounts to accelerate payment to firms within the supply chain.

Having teamed up with trade body UK Hospitality, Build UK has repurposed the [Open Doors website](#) and there are now almost 140 accommodation providers offering over 10,500 beds across the UK and Ireland to construction workers working away from home. Bookings are already being made and the new system can be used by anyone in the construction supply chain.

We are also listing sites looking for accommodation and, if your site requires accommodation and none is shown locally, please send [Build UK](#) the site postcode as we can add providers where there is demand.

A [discretionary fund](#) has been set up by the Government to support small businesses with less than 50 employees affected by coronavirus with their ongoing fixed property-related costs. Whilst local authorities are being asked to prioritise businesses, such as those in shared spaces and small charity properties, they may choose to pay grants of up to £25,000 to other businesses based on local economic need.

The Government has updated its [guidance on fraud and cyber-crime](#) to help businesses protect themselves, following an increase in the number of reported incidents of fraud and cyber-crime as a result of the rapid rise in home working.

CITB has extended the application deadline for its [Leadership and Management Development Fund](#) from 12 June to **31 July 2020**, in light of the fact that a number of organisations have furloughed staff who would usually prepare the bids for funding. The one-year fund enables CITB-registered businesses with more than 250 directly employed staff to bid for up to £100,000 to develop their leadership, management and supervisory skills.

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](#).

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