

Coronavirus Update – Thursday 7 May 2020

As we come to the end of our seventh week in lockdown and head towards the bank holiday, it feels as if we are about to enter a new phase. Updated guidance on 'Working Safely' is expected from the Government any time now as it looks to restart the economy, and we understand the key issues of PPE and travelling to work will be addressed as part of this.

Build UK would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to everyone that has provided feedback on the role we have played since the crisis hit. We have done our best to keep our members and the wider industry updated as quickly and efficiently as possible. Where we have been able to identify a solution, such as matching demand for materials, services or accommodation with suppliers, we have actioned it and the industry has responded accordingly; where we haven't had the answers, we have set out what is being done to find them and your patience has been very much appreciated.

The way in which Build UK members have contributed, and the industry has pulled together, demonstrates that we are stronger than we thought and can achieve more than we imagined. We must not forget this as we look ahead to the next stage and some form of recovery. We will need to address many more issues to get the industry through this, and consistency across the supply chain will give confidence to our businesses, our people and our projects which will benefit everyone.

We are receiving excellent feedback on the re-purposing of the [Open Doors website](#) to help construction workers working away from home find local accommodation. There are now **more than 300 accommodation providers offering over 16,000 beds** across the UK and Ireland. With more sites reopening, the system can be used by anyone in the construction supply chain looking to find accommodation when working away from home.

We also continue to list 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.

The Government has recently updated its [guidance for apprentices, employers and training providers](#) to support the delivery of apprenticeships during coronavirus:

- Employers can furlough apprentices and receive 80% of their wages via the [Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme](#). However, if the furlough payment does not meet the appropriate minimum wage for the time spent training, employers will need to pay the additional wages
- Furloughed employees can start an apprenticeship, provided they do not work for, or provide services to, their employer
- Where providers do not have systems in place for collecting learner signatures electronically, evidence or confirmation may be obtained via email
- New flexibilities around English and Maths functional skills for intermediate (level 2) apprentices to make it as easy as possible for them to continue to end-point assessment

- Allowing awarding organisations to provide email acknowledgement of qualification achievement, rather than a full physical certificate.

The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IFATE) has also published [guidance on the delivery of assessments](#), focussed on end point assessment plans and external quality assurance requirements during the pandemic.

CITB continues to provide a range of [support for apprenticeships](#), including [advanced payment](#) of attendance grants for 2nd and 3rd year apprentices as well as higher apprentices in their final year.

Build UK Trade Association members BESA and ECA have worked together to produce [guidance on working in close proximity](#) for the engineering services sector, where the activity is essential and unavoidable and a distance of two metres cannot be maintained.

We hope you all get an opportunity to take a break over the bank holiday weekend; looking after yourself as well as your businesses and your staff is extremely important. We will be back with our next update on Monday!

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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