

# London

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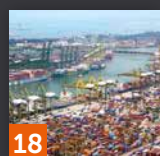
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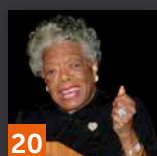
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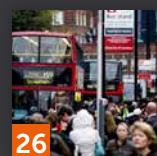
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# LCCI calls for UK safe travel corridors

On behalf of London business, LCCI questioned government proposals in June to introduce a blanket 'quarantine' for all international arrivals to the UK

In a letter to Paul Scully MP Minister for London (also copied to the Home Secretary and Transport Secretary), chief executive Richard Burge proposed that government instead take a 'risk-based approach' by introducing country by country assessments for quarantining visitors and the introduction of safe travel corridors with other nations.



*"The proposal sends out the message that the UK is closed for business, at a time when we are beginning to restart our economy"*

ports during this crisis have been huge, with London Heathrow having seen passenger volumes fall 97 per cent year-on-year, for example.

LCCI calls for the government to also look at targeted support for airports, including business rate holidays or reductions plus an extension of the Job Retention Scheme for the aviation sector.



Photo by: Chris McAndrew / LCCI BR 3.01

Paul Scully MP

He wrote: "Domestically, the government's roadmap to restarting the economy is correctly centred on a risk-based approach. Yet this blanket aviation proposal

doesn't appear to be risk-based. If it was, it would recognise that arrivals from some countries with much lower transmission levels than the UK and low incidence of the disease would not increase our risk, provided they adopted our social distancing protocols on arrival. The proposal sends out the message that the UK is closed for business, at a time when we are beginning to restart our economy."

### Risk-based policy

LCCI believes that better risk-based policy would enable the UK

to limit Covid-19 transmission, whilst fuelling economic recovery.

The letter also reports that the financial pressures on London's air-

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2 June 2020

Mr Paul Scully MP  
Minister for Small Business, Consumers & Labour Markets  
Minister for London  
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

Dear Minister

I am writing to you on behalf of London business, regarding the government proposal (announced by the Home Secretary on Friday 22 May) to introduce a blanket quarantine (bar specific exemptions) for all arrivals into the UK.

Domestically, the Government's roadmap to restarting the economy is correctly centred on a risk-based approach. Yet this blanket aviation proposal doesn't appear to be risk-based. If it was, it would recognise that arrivals from some countries with much lower transmission levels than the UK and low incidence of the disease would not increase our risk, provided they adopted our social distancing protocols on arrival. I've attached related data from Airports Council International.

The proposal sends out the message that the UK is closed for business, at a time when we are beginning to restart our economy.

The economic case for international travel into the UK is, of course, clear. Office for National Statistics data shows that inbound visitors to the UK spent £28.4bn in 2019 during their visits. Furthermore, an estimated £5.8bn of inbound visitor spending came from business travellers. Just two examples of the many economic benefits of the aviation industry to both London and the UK.

London Chamber of Commerce and Industry believe that better risk-based policy would enable the UK to limit Covid-19 transmission, whilst fuelling economic recovery. Namely by:

- **Adopting country-by-country assessments for quarantining visitors:** based on rates of infection in different countries. The Foreign & Commonwealth Office would monitor countries that have a lower 'R' number than the UK. Visitors from these countries would be exempt from the 14-day quarantine rule.

# Looking up after locking down – seeing London’s magnificent architecture with fresh eyes

Adoptive Londoner of ten years and marketing manager for building restoration specialists Thomann-Hanry®, *Claudia Colombo* has discovered that absence makes the heart grow fonder in our post-lockdown capital

After a few years working in building restoration, it's all too easy to get immersed in the technical minutiae of façade cleans, repainting and masonry repairs. As a result, one of the unexpected consequences as we start to emerge from lockdown has been a renewed sense of perspective – an ability to stand back, look up and appreciate the breathtaking beauty of London's historical architecture.

## Magnificent

Walking through the still relatively quiet streets of central London recently, I was struck by the diversity and overwhelming grandeur of our magnificent capital, a city rich in architectural treasures that span the centuries. At Thomann-Hanry® we've worked on many of London's landmarks over the last fifteen years, cleaning frontages with our scaffold-free façade gommage® technique, repairing masonry and painstakingly redecorating metalwork and woodwork. But, as I emerged from Green Park tube station (below) and headed through Piccadilly towards Regent Street, I found myself re-appreciating many of the buildings we've worked on and falling back in love with a city I've sorely missed during lockdown.



Green Park station itself sits within Devonshire House. Built in the 1920s, we revived its imposing Portland stone elevations in 2017. Almost directly opposite across Piccadilly, the iconic neoclassical front-



age of The Ritz, its belle époque stylings exuding an inimitably Parisian elegance – Portland stone again, this time paired with Cornish Grey Granite. Strolling up Regent Street, I passed Hamleys, a Grade II Listed facade which we cleaned in just two nights' work, last year.

## Transformation

Arriving at Oxford Circus, familiar facades awaited – all buildings we've been privileged to restore – Spirella House, home to Tezenis, and opposite Alitalia House, now Microsoft's flagship store. Further along Oxford Street, two more retail landmarks that have benefited from some Thomann-Hanry® TLC – TopShop and Primark. Adding to the non-disruptive advantages of working from hydraulic platforms – invaluable in such a busy retail

setting – all of these iconic storefronts were cleaned overnight, effecting an almost magical transformation, out of the public gaze.

Next, heading down Charing Cross Road towards Wyndham's Theatre, which we restored in 2018. Opposite Leicester Square Underground, and another Grade II Listed structure, its impressive Modern Renaissance Portland stone elevations were cleaned in just eight days. Minutes away in St Martin's Lane, the Noël Coward Theatre is "another one of ours". Built in 1903, its free classic style is redolent of the era and a fine exemplar of the work of prolific theatre architect WGR Sprague. Back across Leicester Square, the Prince of Wales and The Gielgud are two more architectural treasures which we worked on – and two more theatreland gems. The Grade II Listed

Prince of Wales theatre was built in classic art deco style in the 1930s, whilst The Gielgud dates back 1906. Seeing them all again stirred great pride in my adoptive home city... stepping back, looking up and drinking in the capital's fabulous architecture and rich heritage.

## Spectacular

It's the same story across much of central London. Our work on other buildings, such as The Dorchester and all of the other five star hotels in Park Lane, brought us up close and personal with some truly spectacular architecture. And again across in St James's, where we've turned back the clock at some 30 fine historical buildings, restoring each of them to their original splendour. Last but not least, paid a visit to the latest addition to our portfolio – the Somerset House river facades, which contemplates all we can do at its best.

## Epic scale

I finished my walk on the Embankment, looking back up at the neoclassical splendour of Somerset House, the latest addition to the Thomann-Hanry® portfolio of work across central London. Completed in early 2020, the project entailed window repairs and redecoration, masonry restoration and facade gommage® to some 3,200 sq. m. of Portland stone. It's a fabulous building on an epic scale, epitomising the grandeur and majesty of London's fine historic architecture.

Lockdown's been a tough but necessary challenge for all of us. Emerging, blinking, into the light on the other side, just as I did at Green Park station on that bright, sunny morning in May, there's a sense of hope – and of pride. London is a truly fabulous city, boasting far more than its fair share of magnificent buildings. Working at Thomann-Hanry®, it's always been about more than simply running a profitable business. It's about preserving London's architectural legacy for today, tomorrow and for generations to come.

# Polling shows pandemic impact on London business

New figures issued last month by LCCI shine a light on the impact of Covid-19 on the capital's businesses, including the use of the furlough scheme, the ongoing threat of redundancies, and permanent business change.

The Chamber worked with Savanta ComRes to interview 500 London business leaders online between 30 April 2020 and 2 June 2020 about the impact of Covid-19 on their business. Headline figures show:

- 28 per cent of London businesses have furloughed at least one member of their staff.
- A much higher share (64 per cent) of larger companies (10+ staff) have furloughed at least one employee, compared to 24 per cent of micro firms (1-9 staff).
- Among the 35 per cent of business leaders of firms that have furloughed or plan to furlough employees, nearly a quarter of

***"It is clear already that sectors like aviation, tourism, hospitality and leisure are going to see a delayed recovery."***

this group said that unless their business's conditions improve by the end of the scheme they will have to lay off all furloughed staff.

- 39 per cent of those have furloughed or plan to furlough employees said that unless conditions improve by the end of the scheme they will have to lay off some furloughed staff, and pay the wages of those who are retained themselves.
- 13 per cent of business leaders said they thought they will make shift-

ing to working from home completely and not using a permanent commercial office standard practice once the lockdown has ended.

- Nine per cent have permanently closed physical premises.

## Unprecedented

Responding to the figures LCCI chief executive Richard Burge said: "The government's economic support package has been unprecedented and business is grateful for the support during this difficult time.

"Our research shows close to a third of London businesses using the furlough scheme, but also the ongoing risk of redundancies amongst those firms if economic conditions haven't significantly improved as the scheme is scaled back.

## Targeted

"It is clear already that sectors like aviation, tourism, hospitality

and leisure are going to see a delayed recovery. We urge the government to stay open to the need of targeted sector support. And one measure that the government could implement now is to raise the rateable value cap from £51,000 to £150,000. This will allow over 19,000 additional retail, hospitality and leisure businesses in London to access business rates grant support in order to help them to survive and play a key part in the capital's recovery."

Note that on May 12 the Chancellor announced an extension of the government's coronavirus job retention scheme from the end of June until the end of October, before setting out respective details of the tapering of the scheme on May 29. These announcements came partway through the polling fieldwork.

## Because I'm a Londoner



To help make the reopening of businesses as successful as possible, LCCI is supporting a citywide campaign, *Because I'm a Londoner*, that aims to get London's economy going and encourages people to get behind their local businesses and rediscover their neighbourhoods.

### Promote your business

As businesses begin to open safely, this campaign helps Londoners to feel confident that going out and spending locally is safe and the right thing to do. If you run a London business, you can sign up for free-to-use downloadable assets, including videos, images and social media

posts. You'll also be informed about ongoing campaign activations and gain access to more tools to promote your business.

By joining, we are all playing our part in kickstarting London's economy alongside the Mayor of London, Transport for London, London Councils and hundreds of businesses across the capital.

**Register at [londonandpartners.com/JoinAlliance](https://londonandpartners.com/JoinAlliance).**

Once you have signed up, post a message on your social channels, using **#BecauseImALondoner**, and share the campaign with your customers

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The national standards body, BSI works in partnership with experts across industry in the UK, developing standards which capture internationally recognized best business practice, protect consumers and facilitate international trade.

The national standards body represents UK economic and social interests across all European and international standards organizations and in the development of business information solutions for British organizations of all sizes and sectors, which is one of the many reasons why hundreds of businesses use British Standards.

Our standards support business in multiple ways by driving efficiencies in processes, protecting you, your staff and your customers. BSI customers trust that our standards will enable them to trade overseas with ease and ensure that they are working to best practice.

Standards provide many economic benefits, including:

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to the UK economy  
– that's 28.4% of  
annual GDP  
growth

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of UK productivity  
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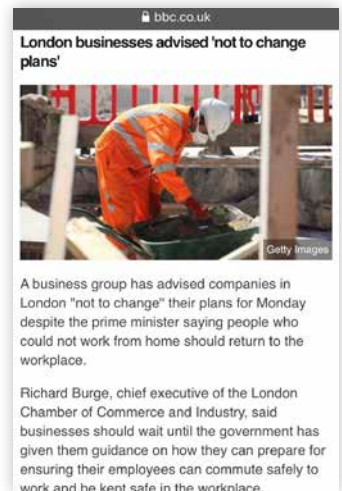
# Local and global – LCCI in the news

Since the end of April LCCI has featured in 250 London, national and international pieces of media coverage about the impact of the coronavirus crisis on business. *Steven Reilly-Hii reports*

To mark the launch of the *Evening Standard's* 'London after lockdown' series, LCCI provided an opinion piece from chief executive Richard Burge in which he highlighted the need for businesses to be involved in the planning for lockdown easing, and be given sufficient notice. Building on these points, Burge spoke with *BBC London TV News* about the challenge of social distancing on the capital's transport network and the need for clear guidance from Transport for London (TfL) that businesses could factor into their risk assessments about staff returning to the workplace. There was subsequent media coverage in local titles right across the UK.

## Critical

The Chamber's swift reaction to the Prime Minister's speech to the



nation on the evening of Sunday 10 May went even further – global in fact. LCCI was critical of the Prime Minister appearing to tell many businesses to return to work the following morning despite the government not having yet published the necessary workplace safety guidance.

Within a matter of hours the Chamber's Twitter account had about 10,000 notifications, with senior politicians, journalists and commentators all sharing tweets. The Chamber's key quote reached as far as the Philippines to the east,

## Business groups and labor unions demand more clarity after UK eases lockdown rules

Posted: May 11, 2020 12:02 PM BST  
Updated: May 11, 2020 4:47 PM BST

By Hanna Ziady, CNN Business

Groups representing UK business and workers have blasted the [government's plans](#) to ease coronavirus lockdown rules, complaining that crucial details on how companies should prepare for a safe [return to work](#) are missing.



Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Sunday announced that restrictions on exercise and local travel would be eased after six weeks of lockdown. Workers in some industries, such as construction and manufacturing, are being encouraged to [return to their jobs](#).



Richard Burge  
CEO, London Chamber of Commerce  
BBC LONDON

SPONSORED COLUMN

# Diversity and Inclusion in the Professions – time for leaders to take personal responsibility for change



Avril Lee MCIPR, Chair CIPR's Diversity and Inclusion Network and Health MD, Red Consultancy.

having to work harder for fewer opportunities and of the racism they experience. They speak of being judged to a different standard to their white colleagues and of a lack of support when they speak up; ultimately making individuals question their ability to sustain a career in the sector. We heard again and again about the lack of inclusive cultures and how BAME individuals were made to feel excluded; one professional told how they “acted and behaved how I thought a white person would. I was constantly having to prove my commitment and skills above and beyond others to prove I was good enough.”

Although we unexpectedly found ourselves publishing the research amid a wave of protests and self-questioning that is surging all around the world, this has enabled us to contribute to this important conversation with real experiences and to move us beyond words and into action.

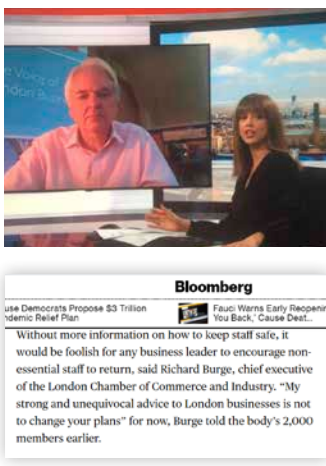
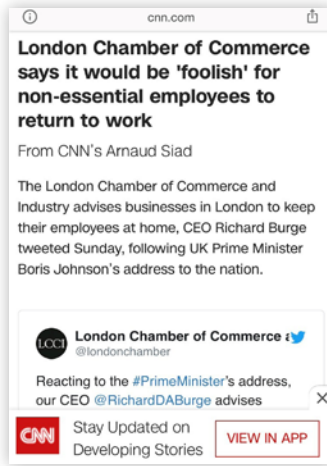
It is now time for senior leaders across the business world to own this problem, to realise it is their responsibility to change their respective sectors. Inaction is to ignore and deny - and is unacceptable. There will be no change unless leaders build inclusive cultures that retain, celebrate and promote professionals from diverse backgrounds.

As one professional told us; “these conversations about diversity are always happening and it’s frustrating and totally exhausting. All of the ways of sorting it area out there already. They exist. Organisations do not have to reinvent the wheel, they just have to put the work in, walk the walk.”

Earlier this month the CIPR published a new report – ‘Race in PR – BAME lived experiences in the UK PR industry’ – exploring the lived experiences of black, Asian and minority ethnic practitioners. It finds an industry in which BAME practitioners are unable to access the same opportunities as white colleagues and, too often, treated unfairly or inappropriately through microaggressions, unconscious bias and even racism.

Although an exploration of the PR industry, sadly I fear, these experiences are not unique to our sector. In a city as diverse as London - where over 40% of residents identify as BAME – it is not good enough that there are more FTSE 100 Chief Executives called Steve than are from ethnic minorities. That fact is from a recent report which also found that £2.6bn is lost to the economy due to ethnic minority discrimination.

Our report found a worrying set of common experiences; BAME practitioners speak of being afraid to make mistakes, of being unable to be their true selves, of



and Texas to the west, reported by titles including *CNN*, *Bloomberg*, *BBC*, *Good Morning Britain*, and *Sky News*.

## Pressure

A few days later the government published the workplace guidance and LCCI encouraged all London businesses to read it and begin to plan for their respective openings, once the time comes. Richard Burge spoke on the subject with *BBC Radio London* and *The Telegraph*.

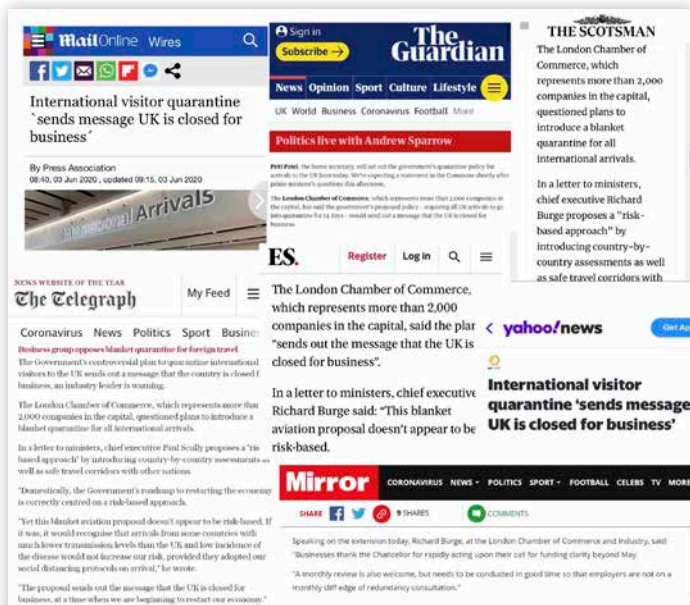
Towards the end of May TfL published advice to businesses about social distance restrictions and the impact on their services, calling businesses to support easing the pressure on the network where possible. LCCI supported this call, encouraging the continuation of working from home, as well as employers looking at other flexible working options. This stance was reported by 15 media titles across London.

## Questioning

As the government began to publish more details about the easing of lockdown, LCCI commented on specific measures – including questioning the need for a blanket quarantine for all international arrivals to the country, rather than a risk-based country by country approach – something which is supported by the aviation sector, including LCCI members Heathrow, Gatwick and City Airport – see page 3 for full story. That coverage spanned the UK, including the *Daily Mail*, *Daily Mirror*, *BBC*, *LBC* and *Guardian*.

LCCI has also backed a joint call from London’s business groups, regarding a road map to refuelling the capital’s economy. In addition the Chamber is working with Croydon BID and #RaiseTheBar campaign partners to call for government funding support for the many businesses in London with a rateable value of over £51k.

Steven Reilly-Hii is senior media relations manager at LCCI



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Speaking on the extension today, Richard Burge, at the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said: “Businesses thank the Chancellor for readily acting upon our call for funding clarity beyond May. “A monthly review is also welcome, but needs to be conducted in good time so that employers are not on a monthly cliff edge of redundancy consultation.”

SPONSORED COLUMN

## Take That Contract Out Of The Drawer!

**Jack Swadling, Associate Solicitor,  
Silver Shemmings Ash**



**As Coronavirus continues to place unprecedented disruption on construction projects throughout the UK construction industry, it has never been more important for contractors to understand their contractual obligations, entitlements, how contracts allocate risk for delay /disruption events and claim relief for time and money.**

Whilst many sites have remained open during lockdown, the impact of the pandemic has been dramatic - increased costs, reduced availability of labour, plant, materials and social distancing requirements delaying and disrupting programmes throughout the UK. The CLC reported this month that UK construction output fell 40.1% in April, in main caused by the effects of the pandemic to planned operations.

The Roadmap to Recovery report published by the CLC on 1 June identifies that minimising disruption caused by contractual disputes arising from effects of the pandemic will be key to mitigating damage and loss of output, stressing the need for "industry commitment to ensure prompt payment to firms within the supply chain" and "adoption of the Conflict Avoidance Pledge to avoid disputes, and to seek adjudication through the most cost effective process".

How employers and contractors address the causes of disputes and their resolution will be vital to the success of the broader industry response. Although it remains to be seen whether the crisis will spur firms to adopt a more collaborative approach to business, the industry's collective response to previous downturns suggests this may be wishful thinking for many contractors.

So what are likely to be to the main drivers of construction disputes arising from the pandemic and what can

employers and contractors do to address these issues? Findings in Arcadis's 2020 Global Construction Disputes Report sheds some light on how they will likely come about.

Based on survey data collected over the past year, the report concludes that two of the three most common causes of construction disputes in the UK are, "Contractor/Subcontractor failing to understand and/or comply with its contractual obligations" and "Poorly drafted or incomplete and unsubstantiated claims".

These findings certainly chime with our experiences, pointing to human factors and misunderstood contract terms as main underlying causes of disputes.

There are though matter's that parties can take positive action to address, which must start by employers and suppliers realistically assessing obligations and entitlements under contract and applying the contract terms to the issues they face.

Although an increase in the level of disputes may be inevitable between parties impacted by the pandemic there is every reason to believe that the human factors identified above will continue to play a key role in how disputes come about and how they can be resolved. Parties to construction projects will assist the wider needs of the industry when faced with a potential dispute by reviewing contract terms, seeking to engage with counterparties with reference to the agreed obligations and entitlements under contract and by seeking swift determination of disagreements rather than allowing issues to fester.

*Jack Swadling is an Associate Solicitor at Silver Shemmings Ash with broad experience in representing parties to construction disputes in adjudication, mediation and arbitration*

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## Royal approval



**HM The Queen has offered support to businesses as they reopen, and praised the contribution chambers of commerce across the UK and around the world were making to help firms, champion trade and rebuild communities.**

In a letter released in June, Queen Elizabeth wrote: "At a time of great difficulty for many, it is heart-warming to see the civic response and generosity of so many businesses, small and large, to the challenges posed, whether supporting the health sector or vulnerable communities.

### Pride

"As Patron of the British Chambers of Commerce, it gives me great pride to see the contribution you and your members are making to help firms, champion trade and rebuild communities."

Welcoming the letter, BCC President Baroness Ruby McGregor-Smith said:

"The Queen's personal message of support will be a huge morale boost to our business communities at this complex and sensitive time."



WINDSOR CASTLE

As many organisations around the country are reopening, I send my warmest best wishes and support to business communities throughout the United Kingdom, Commonwealth and across the world.

At a time of great difficulty for many, it is heart-warming to see the civic response and generosity of so many businesses, small and large, to the challenges posed, whether supporting the health sector or vulnerable communities.

As Patron of the British Chambers of Commerce, it gives me great pride to see the contribution you and your members are making to help firms, champion trade and rebuild communities.

I wish all businesses every success in their endeavours in the weeks and months ahead.

Elizabeth R.



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# Dining out as lockdown measures ease



by Alexa Michael

The UK's hospitality industry was ordered to close almost entirely at the start of lockdown on 20 March. The exception was takeaway outlets ('dine in' restaurants could switch to selling takeaway meals). A minority of hotels were used to house key workers and homeless people during lockdown. The doors of pubs, bars, almost all restaurants, nightclubs and other hospitality venues were locked and are only now starting to re-open.

When the government introduced its two metre 'safe distance' rule, many in the hospitality industry feared this would make the operation of most pubs, bars and restaurants financially unviable. Unlike much of continental Europe, the UK doesn't have the climate (or the wide pavements) that make *al fresco* dining and drinking possible for much of the year.

Having already suffered big losses after being closed for months, the industry now faced the prospect of being worse off by operating at below-capacity level then being shut (with the government paying 80 per cent of staff wages under the furlough scheme).

## Mutually beneficial

Kate Nicholls, chief executive of UK Hospitality, comments: "Businesses are now preparing to re-open their doors but they have been shut for months with no income. Many face rent and PAYE bills with no ability to pay. The moratorium on rents must be extended until the end 2020 and financial help is needed now if businesses are to pay these bills. The government must broker a solution



**Unlike much of continental Europe, the UK doesn't have the climate (or the wide pavements) that make *al fresco* dining and drinking possible for much of the year**

that is mutually beneficial to both landlords and businesses, otherwise venues will close and jobs will be lost. Promoting tourism should be a priority. The government should create an October Bank Holiday and cut tourism VAT by 10 per cent to encourage domestic tourism. Cutting Air Passenger Duty would also boost inbound tourism and hospitality."

Following intense lobbying by the hospitality industry, the government announced on 22 June that it would allow a 'one metre-plus' rule for bars and restaurants. Two metres

remains the preferred safe distance but one metre is acceptable providing that other measures are taken to mitigate the risk of transmitting infection from one person to another.

## Fighting chance

Reacting to the news, Roland Norman, sales consultant at Noble House said: "I feel the government have done as much as they dare at this stage of the pandemic by reducing physical distancing to one metre plus without completely disregarding the need for pub-

lic safety. This will give catering a fighting chance. However, I believe they need to give a financial incentive for those companies who are re-opening with reduced customer numbers. Some businesses may struggle just to break even and avoid losses. Businesses have been landed with costs just to re-open. The government must also acknowledge that recession is outside even successful businesses' control. We can't afford to let them go bust, or the country."

## Steps to take

What steps are those working in the restaurant and pub trade expected to take to ensure their patrons can eat and drink safely?

- Calculate the maximum number of customers that can reasonably adhere to social distancing rules at any one time
- Arrange indoor and outdoor tables and seating to allow at least a one metre gap
- Provide clear guidance on social distancing for customers when they book and on arrival, for example, through signage and floor markings
- Manage the entry of patrons at a venue so that indoor customers sit least one metre apart (no standing at the bar) and outdoor customers have enough space to sit or stand
- Make customers aware of limits on gatherings and encourage compliance (currently members of any two households can meet indoors while members of any two households or up to six people from any number of households may gather outside)
- Encourage customers to use hand sanitiser or other hand washing

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facilities on arrival

- Make any reasonable adjustments to entrances and exits for those who need them, for example, disabled people
- Remind customers with children that they also need to follow social distance rules
- Observe how people move through the venue and make any necessary adjustments
- Use mitigation measures where a two metre gap is not feasible, for example, customers ordering via an app and making contactless payments instead of using cash
- Minimise the risk to customers at their table, for example, providing cutlery and condiments only when serving food
- Provide disposable condiments or clean the containers after every use
- Reduce the number of surfaces touched by customers, for example, asking them not to touch the table or lean on counters
- Minimise contact between staff and customers, for example, using screens or tables at tills and counters to maintain social distancing
- Make sure ventilation is suffi-



cient, especially for outdoor covered areas.

### Recovery

Julie Gingell, managing director of Fox Bars, said: “The proposals are certainly challenging, particularly the requirement for minimised contact between customers

and staff. This will have a huge impact on the customer experience, as well as critical safety aspects such as noting food allergies when ordering. There will be an increase in the use of technology across the industry. Our business is already looking to introduce an App that allows customers to book tables

### Use mitigation measures, for example, making contactless payments instead of using cash

in advance and place orders from their table. However, Apps bring their own challenges. Many pubs and restaurants won't have appropriate technology skills or the staff to implement solutions.”

She added: “Recovery will be a marathon, not a sprint. There must be a continuing dialogue with government and many issues need to be addressed urgently. For example, the business rates system has been broken for a long time and requires reform before the next financial year. It would also help to review VAT to increase customers' disposable income. Ultimately, the key to restarting the hospitality sector is customer confidence.”

Alexa Michael is member research executive at LCCI



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# Best London parks in which to social distance

The hot weather has seen crowds of people flock to beaches and parks to bask in the sun and have picnics. Brits can now sit outside for as long as they like, and since 1 June, they are allowed to meet with up to six other people outdoors as long as they keep two metres apart. More relaxations were due to be announced at time of going to press.

But there have been complaints that beauty spots have been besieged with visitors since the government relaxed lockdown rules.

In light of this, researchers at Essential Living crunched the numbers to reveal how many people can visit London's biggest parks, whilst still adhering to social distancing. This means that you can visit knowing you'll have plenty of open space to have fun, but also abide by the guidelines. Here's how the six biggest parks in London stacked up.

## Richmond Park

Richmond Park is situated in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and was created by Charles I in the 17th century as a deer park. The largest of London's Royal Parks, it is of national and international importance for wildlife conservation. With an impressive size of 9.53km<sup>2</sup> – comparable in size to Paris's Bois de Vincennes and around three times the size of Central Park in New York.

So, Richmond Park may be the best place to go for social distancing as Essential Living has calculated that it could fit a whopping 684,788 visitors with everyone maintaining two metres between each other.

## Hainault Forest Country Park



Hainault Forest Country Park (above) is located in Greater London with portions in Hainault in the London Borough of Redbridge, the London Borough of Havering, and in the Lambourne parish of Epping Forest district in Essex.



Bushy Park

With 3.62km<sup>2</sup> of space this park is perfect for keeping your distance from others, so much so that the park could host 260,119 visitors even with social distancing meas-

ures in place. With open space parklands, numerous public footpaths, a large lake, Hainault Forest Golf Club, and Fox Burrow Farm, there is much to enjoy.

**With an impressive size of 9.53km<sup>2</sup>, Richmond Park is around three times the size of Central Park in New York**

## Bushy Park

Linked to Hampton Court Palace by the Longford River, Bushy Park is famed for its mix of waterways, gardens and grassland, and roaming herds of red and fallow deer.

With all 3.45km<sup>2</sup> of open space it is no wonder that Bushy Park could allow around 247,903 visitors whilst also maintaining the two metre social distancing guidelines.

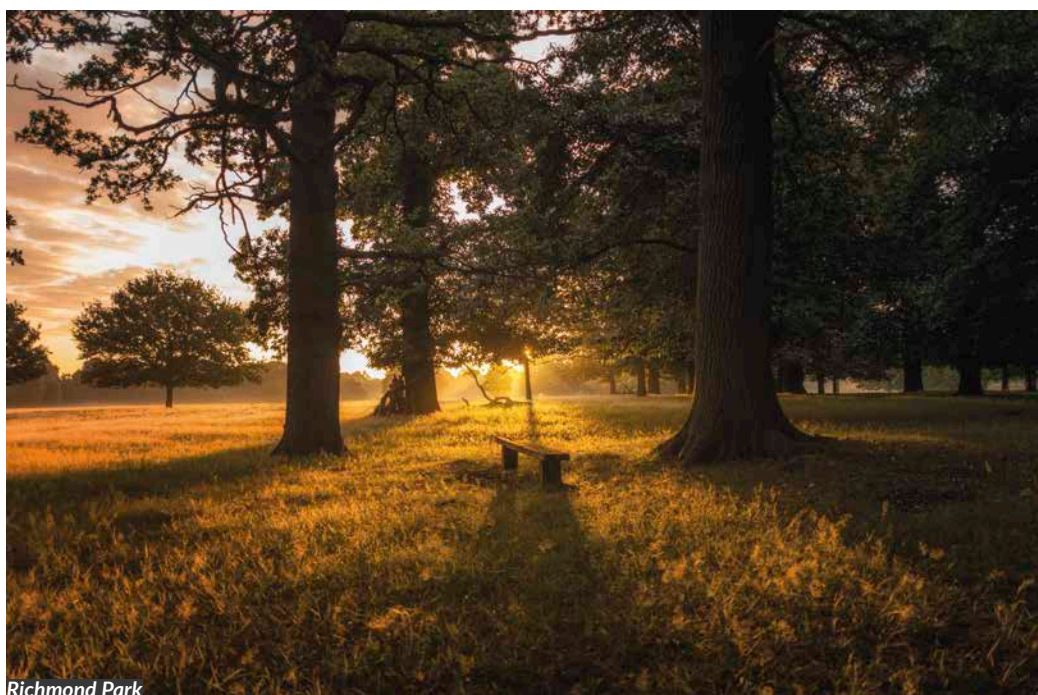
## Hampstead Heath

Hampstead Heath is one of London's most popular open spaces with beautiful countryside, the magic of Hampstead Heath lies not only in its rich wildlife and extensive sports and recreational opportunities, but also in its proximity and accessibility to millions of people.

With this in mind, it comes as no surprise that the large 3.16km<sup>2</sup> of space could occupy around 227,065 visitors with two metres between everyone.

## Wimbledon Common

Wimbledon and Putney Commons are countryside escapes amidst the urban surroundings of Wimbledon, Putney and Kingston-upon-Thames. Designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a Special Area of Conservation, the commons provide an



Richmond Park

SPONSORED COLUMN

# Is now the time to consider enveloping?



By Andrew Noton, Partner  
at Lubbock Fine



Hampton Court Park

important home for wildlife and a place for visitors to unwind.

This is an ideal place to relax with approximately 208,382 visitors able to occupy the 2.90km<sup>2</sup> space whilst also maintaining social distancing.

## Hampton Court Park

Hampton Court Park is a walled royal park managed by the Historic Royal Palaces. The park lies between the gardens of Hampton Court Palace and Kingston upon Thames and Surbiton in south west London. The walled fallow deer

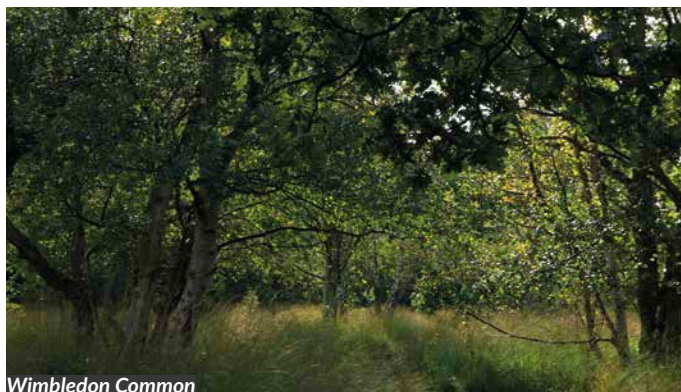
park has been open to the public since 1894.

This beautiful open space is perfect for those socially distanced gatherings (up to six people only though, remember) with lots of plant and animal life to gaze upon and with 2.59km<sup>2</sup> of space the team at Essential Living has calculated that approximately 186,107 visitors could occupy the park and maintain their two metre distance.

This article was written and supplied by Essential Living:  
[www.essentialliving.co.uk](http://www.essentialliving.co.uk)



Hampstead Heath



Wimbledon Common

## Methodology and data sources

Using the Ordnance Survey's list of 100 biggest parks, Essential Living extracted the six largest parks within Greater London and calculated how many people could visit the park based on its size and also keeping two metres away from each other. This was calculated by multiplying the amount of people that can fit in a 1km<sup>2</sup> area whilst keeping two metres distance between them (71,856) by the area of each park.

Sources: [www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/news/britains-100-biggest-parks](http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/news/britains-100-biggest-parks)

**If you are a buy-to-let landlord, this may be an advantageous time to envelope (incorporate) your portfolio, by transferring your properties into a company.**

## What are the benefits of enveloping a property now?

For landlords owning property, tax changes in recent years will have their full effect in the 2020/21 tax year. The principal change is the restriction in relief for finance costs, where relief is now only given at the basic rate. Enveloping properties can help to mitigate this impact, but many landlords have either not considered this or have been put off by the costs.

However, if the value of your portfolio has lowered in the current pandemic, you could benefit from cost savings and a reduction in tax liability - making it the ideal time to consider enveloping.

## Does this affect Capital Gains Tax (CGT)?

With lower values could come lower capital gains tax. For some landlords, claiming incorporation relief can mitigate CGT, but where this is either not possible or advantageous, selling properties to a company may be prohibitive due to the CGT position. Lower values may mitigate this.

## What happens with Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT)?

Where a partnership

incorporates a property business, it may be possible to claim relief from SDLT. However, in most instances, property portfolios are not held or managed in a partnership, and the formation of a partnership with the intention of claiming relief from SDLT is not possible.

SDLT rates for incorporation are always subject to the additional 3% for second homes and therefore usually comprise a significant cost - however, lower property values can reduce this greatly.

## How do the current interest rates impact my property portfolio?

The current environment for lending involves very low interest rates, especially for lowly-g geared portfolios. In recent years, the additional interest cost a company would have on a mortgage would be prohibitive. However as more and more landlords incorporate property, portfolio rates and willingness to lend have increased. It is hard to see that current economic policy will result in anything less than increased pressure for banks to lend to sound businesses.

## Get in touch

We've built our expertise as property accountants and property tax advisors, working for numerous clients. If you are looking for assistance with your property matters, please get in touch with Andrew Noton [andrewnoton@lubbockfine.co.uk](mailto:andrewnoton@lubbockfine.co.uk).

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# Alert level reduced and cautious relaxations introduced

On 19 June, the government lowered the UK's Covid-19 alert level from four (defined as 'epidemic is in general circulation but with high transmission and cases rising rapidly') to three ('epidemic is in general circulation') with immediate effect.

## Five tests

The change was recommended by the new Joint Biosecurity Centre and supported by all four chief medical officers for each UK nation after they were satisfied that the following 'five tests' had been met.

1. Ensuring the NHS can cope with Covid-19 cases
2. A 'sustained and consistent fall' in the daily death rate
3. Rates of infection at 'manageable levels'
4. There are sufficient tests and personal protective equipment (PPE) to meet future demand
5. Any changes to lockdown rules would not risk a second spike in Covid-19 infections and leave the NHS unable to cope.

In practical terms, this means that the country is emerging from a period of lockdown to a situation where restrictions can ease slightly. *This Q&A refers to the changes occurring in England; each of the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are moving out of lockdown at their own pace.*

**Coronavirus: UK's Covid-19 alert level reduced from four to three**

■ [www.bbc.com/news/uk-53106673](http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-53106673)

**Coronavirus alert level lowered after 'steady' fall in cases**

■ [news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-alert-level-in-uk-should-be-downgraded-from-4-to-3-chief-medical-officers-12010229](http://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-alert-level-in-uk-should-be-downgraded-from-4-to-3-chief-medical-officers-12010229)

**Coronavirus lockdown: Are the five tests being met?**

■ [www.bbc.com/news/health-52374513](http://www.bbc.com/news/health-52374513)

**How far has the rate of UK Covid-19 infections slowed?**

The virus is still circulating but at much lower levels than previously. On 8 June Health Secretary Matt Hancock announced that the R (rate of



Matt Hancock

infection value) was between 0.7 and 0.9 in all UK regions. This means that every person infected with Covid-19 was infecting fewer than one other person with the virus. The seven-day rolling average for both Covid-19 infections and deaths fell to their lowest levels since the start of the crisis. On 24 June, another 154 people died from Covid-19 in the UK, bringing the total to over 43,000. On the same day, a further 653 cases of Covid-19 were confirmed, the lowest daily increase for over three months.

**Coronavirus transmission rate is below one in all regions in the country, Health Secretary Matt Hancock says**

■ [www.standard.co.uk/news/health/r-value-below-one-all-regions-matt-hancock-a4463006.html](http://www.standard.co.uk/news/health/r-value-below-one-all-regions-matt-hancock-a4463006.html)

**Coronavirus: UK-wide infections fall by up to 4% a day - but could be rising in London**

■ [news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-infections-falling-across-uk-by-up-to-4-a-day-12010421](http://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-infections-falling-across-uk-by-up-to-4-a-day-12010421)

**When will the UK's 'track and trace' app be ready?**

On 18 June, the government ditched a centralised Covid-19 tracing app after repeated warnings from experts that it would not work. The move came after millions of pounds had been invested in the technology over the past three months. Health Secretary Matt Hancock announced that the NHS would use an alternative 'track and trace' app designed by US tech giants Apple and Google. Hancock said that he would not "put a date" on when the app will be launched. It is likely that the app will not be available until late autumn or winter.

**UK abandons contact-tracing app for Apple and Google model**

■ [www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jun/18/uk-poised-to-abandon-coronavirus-app-in-favour-of-apple-and-google-models](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jun/18/uk-poised-to-abandon-coronavirus-app-in-favour-of-apple-and-google-models)

**When will the UK 'track and trace' app be ready - and how will it work?**

■ [www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/2020/06/24/track-trace-app-uk-google-apple/](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/2020/06/24/track-trace-app-uk-google-apple/)

**UK 'close contact' definition for track and trace should curb COVID-19 spread but at a cost**

■ [medicalxpress.com/news/2020-06-uk-contact-definition-track-curb.html](http://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-06-uk-contact-definition-track-curb.html)

**Independence day: what will change on 4 July?**

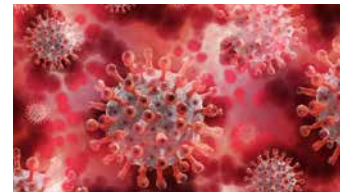
On 23 June, the government announced that hotels, restaurants, pubs and bars will be able to re-open on Saturday 4 July. While two metres remains the government's preferred social distancing standard, the hospitality trade will be able to operate at 'one metre-plus'. This follows intense lobbying by the industry to persuade the government that a two metre separation distance is simply not feasible for many eating and drinking establishments. One metre-plus means that customers can sit or stand one metre away from each other, providing that other measures are put in place to stop the spread of Covid-19. In a hospitality setting, this could mean ordering via an app, not drinking at the bar and patrons leaving their contact details with staff in case another customer is diagnosed with the virus.

**Boris Johnson ditches 2m physical distancing rule in England for '1m-plus'**

■ [www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jun/23/boris-johnson-ditches-2-metre-rule-in-england-for-1-metre-plus-coronavirus](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jun/23/boris-johnson-ditches-2-metre-rule-in-england-for-1-metre-plus-coronavirus)

**Coronavirus: Two-metre rule reduced as pubs and restaurants in England given green light to reopen from 4 July**

■ [news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-two-metre-rule-](http://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-two-metre-rule-)



**reduced-as-pubs-and-restaurants-in-england-given-green-light-to-reopen-from-4-july-12013085**

**Restaurants Can Reopen for Dine-In Service From 4 July**

■ [london.eater.com/2020/6/23/21300147/uk-restaurants-pubs-reopen-4-july-coronavirus-lockdown](http://london.eater.com/2020/6/23/21300147/uk-restaurants-pubs-reopen-4-july-coronavirus-lockdown)

Other businesses that can re-open include hairdressers and barbers (some will resume trading at 00.01 on 4 July to tackle the backlog of hair appointments), cinemas, museums and galleries, theme parks and outdoor gyms, all subject to 2 metre distancing. Hairdressers will have to wear full protective clothing, with chairs and equipment to be sterilised after every customer. Libraries will also re-open gradually as from 4 July. However, indoor gyms and fitness centres, swimming pools, beauty parlours, tanning salons and indoor play areas will have to remain closed until further notice.

Churches and other places of worship can re-open with up to 50 socially-distanced worshippers but no singing will be permitted. Weddings can take place again in churches but with no more than 30 people and no reception after the ceremony.

**Coronavirus: Lockdown to be relaxed in England as 2m rule eased**

■ [www.bbc.com/news/uk-53152416](http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-53152416)

**Hairdressers allowed to reopen with PPE and visors**

■ <https://metro.co.uk/2020/06/23/hairdressers-told-can-reopen-july-4-12890898/>

**Coronavirus: Cinemas and museums set to reopen in England from 4 July**

■ [www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-53145629](http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-53145629)

There will be some easing of individual freedoms as well. As from 4 July, members of two households of any size can meet indoors again – including in a bar or restaurant – but they will have to remain one metre apart. Overnight stays will be permitted (but this does not mean couples).

Lockdown joy as Boris Johnson gives green light to dinner parties and weddings, opens pubs and axes 2m rule

■ [www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/lockdown-lifted-boris-johnson-update-a4477426.html](http://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/lockdown-lifted-boris-johnson-update-a4477426.html)

Two households will be able to meet inside, government expected to announce

■ [www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/lockdown-lift-ban-meeting-indoors-england-a9580516.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/lockdown-lift-ban-meeting-indoors-england-a9580516.html)

## Are we going on a summer holiday?

Holidays in England will be permitted as from 4 July, providing that no more than two households stay together. People will be able to stay in self-contained accommodation including hotels, bed and breakfasts, holiday apartments, caravan parks and camping sites. It is imperative that all shared facilities are kept clean.

British tourism industry rejoices as hotels and campsites will reopen on July 4

■ [www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/06/23/travel-news-air-bridges-uk-quarantine-portugal-spain-greece/](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/06/23/travel-news-air-bridges-uk-quarantine-portugal-spain-greece/)

When will we be allowed to go on holiday in the UK?

[www.timeout.com/london/things-to-do/time-in-the-best-things-to-do-at-home](http://www.timeout.com/london/things-to-do/time-in-the-best-things-to-do-at-home)

When can we holiday in the UK again?

■ [www.cntraveller.com/article/when-can-we-holiday-in-uk](http://www.cntraveller.com/article/when-can-we-holiday-in-uk)

At time of writing, the government is in talks with some mainland European countries with the aim of creating 'air bridges' so that people travelling to and from these countries do not have to spend 14 days in quarantine on reaching either destination and thus discourage tourism which many countries depend on. The first wave of 'air bridges' is expected to be announced in the week beginning 29 June. It is expected (but not certain) that these will include Greece, Portugal, Spain, Gibraltar and the Canary Islands.

UK air bridge countries: What Portugal, Spain and other destinations have said about quarantine exemptions

■ [inews.co.uk/news/uk/uk-air-bridge-countries-portugal-spain-holidays-coronavirus-quarantine-exemption-when-end-441902](http://inews.co.uk/news/uk/uk-air-bridge-countries-portugal-spain-holidays-coronavirus-quarantine-exemption-when-end-441902)

## When will the government's furlough scheme end?

The government's furlough scheme, set up to protect jobs in businesses that were forced to shut because of the Covid-19 pandemic, closed to new applicants in June.

The government is currently paying 80 per cent of employee salaries through the scheme, up to a maximum of £2,500 a month. So far, 9.2 million jobs have been protected by the scheme, with 1.1 million businesses claiming a total of £22.9 billion in the three months up to 21 June (although the numbers are reducing as the lockdown is eased and more businesses start to operate again). This level of wage support will continue up until the end of July.

However, employers will have to start paying towards the scheme from August, when they will be asked to pay National Insurance and pension contributions for their staff. From September, the government will reduce its share of wage subsidy to 70 per cent or a maximum of £2,190 per employee per month. Employers will be asked to pay the remaining 10 per cent. In October, the subsidy reduces further to 60 per cent or a maximum of £1,875 per employee, with businesses paying the remaining 20 per cent. At the end

of October, the furlough scheme will stop altogether. It is estimated to have cost £60 billion by the time it ceases.



Rishi Sunak

Photo by: Chris McAndrew / CC BY 3.0

When will the government's furlough scheme end? Latest update from Rishi Sunak

■ [www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/when-government-furlough-scheme-end-a4478631.html](http://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/when-government-furlough-scheme-end-a4478631.html)

Businesses must start paying towards the worker furlough scheme from August, Rishi Sunak announces

■ [www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/rishi-sunak-furlough-scheme-coronavirus-a4454831.html](http://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/rishi-sunak-furlough-scheme-coronavirus-a4454831.html)

This Q&A was compiled by Alexa Michael, member research executive at LCCI  
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# Hong Kong business – support for international companies

The Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) is continuing to seek out opportunities for SMEs in Hong Kong and around the world. As well as strengthening existing services, new digital initiatives and online exhibitions have been launched

The Spring Virtual Expo on [hktdc.com](http://hktdc.com) Sourcing online marketplace ran throughout April, providing a channel for buyers and exhibitors from around the world to do business during this peak sourcing season.

The Expo featured 22,000 suppliers, and attracted 1.4 million buyers to the online marketplace. It generated 217,000 enquiries with the leading categories of products sought being clothes, phones, face masks and latex gloves.

## Cooperation

In terms of physical exhibitions, HKTDC will offer support to local and international participants when fairs are physically held again. Overseas exhibitors joining these fairs can enjoy subsidies under the Hong Kong



government's Anti-Epidemic Fund. HKTDC will strengthen cooperation with the Hong Kong Tourism Board, and the tourism and aviation industries with a view to offer flight and hotel discounts to more buyers from overseas and the mainland.

In addition, HKTDC will offer online-to-offline (O2O) business-matching services at its fairs so that buyers who cannot come to Hong Kong can locate target exhibitors in advance. Video conferences will be arranged between buyers and exhibitors to discuss business deals.

O2O promotion packages for local and international companies to exhibit at physical exhibitions and

conduct promotions through our online platform (including the virtual expos) will offer an opportunity to meet new customers and secure orders.

## Events

HKTDC is organising eight start-up zones at its trade fairs and conferences in Hong Kong. These zones are designed to support local and international start-ups. More than 500 entrepreneurs exhibited at these start-up zones in 2019/20.

The events with start-up zones – all run by HKTDC – are:

- Hong Kong Electronics Fair (Spring Edition) and International

- al ICT Expo
- Houseware Fair
- Gifts & Premium Fair
- International Medical and Healthcare Fair
- Electronics Fair (Autumn Edition)
- Eco Expo Asia
- SmartBiz Expo
- Asian Financial Forum.

Under the Convention and Exhibition Industry Subsidy Scheme of the government's Anti-Epidemic Fund, all local and overseas participants in HKTDC's exhibitions and major conventions (i.e. over 400 participants) will be subsidised 50 per cent of their participation fee per participation, with the subsidy capped at HK\$10,000. The scheme will last 12 months, starting from the time when the HKTDC is holding events.

HKTDC's London office is organising a series of webinars to discuss developments in Hong Kong and the Asia-Pacific regions to keep companies informed and to highlight new opportunities for business partners around the world. [www.hktdc.com](http://www.hktdc.com)

# London gets gold for entertainment

Before the lockdown Luggage Hero ranked the most visited cities based on the number of theatres, nightlife and concerts to assess which is the most entertaining in the world. On those criteria London came top, with Paris and Tokyo in silver and bronze positions.

Taking the top 20 most-visited cities and scored them based on 10 different culture markers: Sights & Landmarks, Museums, Nature & Parks, Markets, Architectural Buildings, Art Galleries, Sacred & Religious Sites, Theatres, Food & Drink Tours, Nightlife/Concerts and Shows.

Sources: [Mastercard.com](http://Mastercard.com) / [WorldPopulationReview.com](http://WorldPopulationReview.com) / [TripAdvisor.com](http://TripAdvisor.com)

Rank	City	Theatres	Nightlife/Concerts	Score
1	London	204	890	1,094
2	Paris	287	539	826
3	Tokyo	39	227	266
4	Istanbul	100	131	231
5	Pattaya	63	147	210
6	New York	182	27	209
7	Phuket	48	108	156
8	Barcelona	29	117	146
9	Seoul	37	79	116
10	Osaka	55	19	74





## Overseas business opportunities

Do you want to access a selection of business co-operation offers made by European companies wishing to work with UK firms? Every month Enterprise Europe Network publishes a Business Opportunities in Europe Bulletin, which contains the latest co-operation offers from companies across the EU and beyond. To find out more about this issue's listed overseas business opportunities or to subscribe to the bulletin contact Enterprise Europe Network London at enterprise.europe@londonchamber.co.uk or 020 7248 1992.

### Poland

A well-established wine importer and distributor is seeking a non-alcoholic wine producer to set up a long time cooperation. The Polish company would like to sign a distribution agreement with the foreign producer.

REF: BRPL20200526001



### Greece

SME which imports and sells electric scooters and e-vehicles is currently looking to expand the offered products by adding to their portfolio more electric vehicles. The company is seeking cooperation with manufacturers of electric drive vehicles both on road and sea (electric scooters, vehicles, jet boards, e-foils etc.) under a distribution services agreement.

REF: BRGR20200515001



### Italy

A nutrition care company specialising in the Mediterranean diet is looking for cooperation with European clinics in order to extend its activity in foreign markets through joint venture agreements.

REF: BOIT20200519002



### Malta

A trading concern is offering distribution agreements for genuine medical supplies and certified personal protective products [PPE]. The entrepreneurs represent well-known leading US mask manufacturers, amongst others, and have available original and difficult-to-find PPE [personal protective equipment] stock. They are also looking for distributors for their Swiss Covid-19 rapid test kit.

REF: BOMT20200528001



### Netherlands

A producer of organic chocolate spread with no added sugar is growing fast in the home market. Currently, the company is selling in the Netherlands through more than 300 organic supermarkets. The SME is interested in reaching new EU markets in the framework of a distribution services agreement.

REF: BONL20200528001



### Romania

Producer of an automatic system for disinfection and sterilization of the inside of passenger vehicles, aimed at decontaminating all the accessible surfaces: seats, holding bars, floors. The system can be safely used by the driver, in the daily development of public transportation during the Covid-19 pandemic.

REF: BORO20200524001



### Portugal

A company in the sectors of renewable energy (wind and solar) and energy efficiency, is seeking for partnerships (commercial agency agreement or distribution services agreement) with other companies that have innovative energy solutions or products and seek their commercialization or distribution.

REF: BRPT20200604001



### Germany

A start-up offers methods for light-conducting 3D lacquers with the ability to make materials brighter and more transparent than they actually are. These lacquers show an extreme lateral reflection and transfer the property of their spacial magnification, illumination and transparency optimization to the materials. They are ideal for design-oriented applications or to illuminate materials, for colored mirrors/glass, etc

REF: TODE20200408001

SPONSORED COLUMN

## Update on the furlough scheme

by Jonathan Mansfield



**The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme more popularly known as "furlough" was introduced in March and has proved a lifeline for businesses in an economy ravaged by Coronavirus.**

Where employees agree to go on the scheme (typically because the alternative would be redundancy) for a minimum of three weeks the government will pay up to 80% of salary to a maximum £2,500. An essential requirement has been that employees should do no work for their employer. This means no services for the employer and no revenue generation.

*"It is strongly recommended that employees should carefully look at any claims they have made to ensure that they have not inadvertently paid people who have been performing tasks during their furlough."*

### Recent and future changes

A new condition is that employees not furloughed prior to 10 June 2020 are not eligible. Employees who were previously furloughed still can be put back on furlough.

Certain changes will be coming into the scheme from 1 July 2020. An important change is flexibility in the operation of the scheme. Until 1 July it was necessary for the employee to do no work. However, it is now possible for employees to return to work partially. Employers can still claim the furlough grant in respect of normal hours not worked. If for

example an employee comes back two days per week on 40% of their pay, a proportional amount of the furlough grant can be paid.

In terms of the government contribution to wages, this will continue at the same level until the end of July. This includes not only the 80% of salary but also National Insurance and pension contributions. From 1 August, there will be a tapering of benefits as follows:-

- August: 80% of salaries but no National Insurance and pension contributions;
- September: 70% of salaries to a cap of £2,187.50 per month only;
- October: 60% of salaries up to a cap of £1,875 per month only.

### Crackdown on abuse of the scheme

A further important development is HMRC concern about abuse of the scheme.

Legislation is to be fast tracked to recover any furlough money overpaid to employers. The focus will be on businesses who have "deliberately" been making an incorrect claim or not using the money to pay furloughed employees' costs. Many employees have already contacted HMRC to blow the whistle on their employers.

It is strongly recommended that employees should carefully look at any claims they have made to ensure that they have not inadvertently paid people who have been performing tasks during their furlough. This is providing services to the employer or making money for them.

For advice on these difficult issues please contact Jonathan Mansfield at Thomas Mansfield Solicitors [jonathan.mansfield@thomasmansfield.com](mailto:jonathan.mansfield@thomasmansfield.com) or 07947598148.

**Thomas Mansfield**  
The Employment Law Solicitors

# London's exporters secure half a billion in overseas sales

UK Export Finance's (UKEF) annual report and accounts, published in June, reveal its support for exporters from London resulted in £497 million worth of overseas sales

One company supported by UKEF in the last year is London-based Solarcentury, which has been selling renewable energy solutions for 21 years with an increasing focus on overseas sales.

UKEF recently guaranteed £47.6 million worth of financing to secure the company's work on two solar plants in Spain. The 300MWp Talayuela Solar project in Extremadura and the 200MWp Cabrera Solar project near Sevilla. Together, the developments will generate enough energy to power more than a quarter of a million homes each year with renewable energy.

## Flexible

Tony Crawte, chief financial officer of Solarcentury, said "UKEF's support was critical to successfully securing and subsequently fulfilling these contracts. Its flexible approach to finance has been invaluable throughout the last few months, particularly as we work through the Coronavirus pandemic and I anticipate working with them in the future."

UKEF's latest results reveal it has provided £4.4 billion in support for UK exports over the last year, supporting trade with 69 countries.

There was a sharp increase in companies in UK supply chains benefiting from UKEF support due



**"Supporting international trade will be crucial as the UK looks to recover from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic."**

a significant proportion of UKEF business going to industries with strong UK supply chains, with near-

ly £2 billion for the construction sector and over £500 million for manufacturers.

## Export-led recovery

Secretary of State for International Trade, Liz Truss, said: "This has been another outstanding year for UK Export Finance, helping businesses in every part of the UK win export contracts.

"Supporting international trade will be crucial as the UK looks to recover from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. UK Export Finance

is already playing a critical role at the centre of the government's plan to power an export-led recovery and its offer is more important than ever for UK exporters."

Exporters who want to know more about UKEF's support are encouraged to contact their local Export Finance Manager Hitesh Patel on:

**customer.service@ukexportfinance.gov.uk** or visit **<https://www.great.gov.uk/trade-finance>**

## Spotlight on UK Export Finance

**UK Export Finance is the UK's export credit agency and a government department, working alongside the Department for International Trade as an integral part of its strategy and operations.**

UKEF exists to ensure that no viable UK export should fail for want of finance or insurance from the private market. It provides

finance and insurance to help exporters win, fulfil and ensure they get paid for export contracts.

Sectors in which UKEF has supported exports include: aerospace, construction, oil and gas, mining and metals, petrochemicals, telecommunications, and transport.

UKEF supports exporters with

a range of products that include:

- Bond insurance policy
- Bond support scheme
- Buyer & supplier credit financing facility
- Direct lending facility
- Export insurance policy
- Export refinancing facility
- Export working capital scheme
- Letter of credit guarantee scheme



**UK Export Finance**

**The latest information on UKEF's country cover positions can be found here:**  
**<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/country-cover-policy-and-indicators>**

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The logo for Access Credit Management features a stylized, circular emblem composed of two overlapping, curved shapes that create a sense of motion or a globe.

  
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and Collection Professionals

The logo for ACA International consists of a blue square containing a white stylized 'A' shape formed by two triangles meeting at the top. Below the square, the text 'ACA' is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, followed by a trademark symbol. Underneath, the words 'INTERNATIONAL' and 'The Association of Credit and Collection Professionals' are written in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font.

# Leadership legacy is a team activity

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."



— Maya Angelou, American writer and poet



How we made people feel – whether they are staff, customers, suppliers or other partners – during the Covid-19 crisis, will be what they remember. That will be, at least in part, our leadership legacy writes David Jarrett.

From the middle of March to the middle of May my company convened conversations with over 100 leaders and coaches to track their experience of leading through the turmoil of Covid-19, what leadership qualities were needed and what might be their 'leadership legacy'.

The issue of leadership legacy in the post Covid-19 world came up spontaneously in over one third of our 14 conversations.

The dialogue centred on questions such as: "Once we are able to look back at this period of change, how will your leadership be described – what is the legacy you are creating now by your behaviours and focus?"

## Balancing short-term crisis with building for the new future

Anecdotal evidence suggested that

leaders were having to focus on some very specific details to keep people safe in the short term – as well as keeping their companies solvent. Immersion into similar levels of detail will be required to plan for the upturn and the return to work phase.

Short term reactions are necessary, but leaders also need to attend to the relationships and opportunities that are emerging in the volatility and uncertainty of the crisis.

What many had not attended to was how the balance of their attention would define a kind of leadership legacy – 33 per cent had not addressed this question in a deliberate way.

**The ability to admit to 'not knowing' and the ability to lead through uncertainty is emerging as a vital part of one's leadership legacy.**

The importance of this 'legacy' is that it may well determine the engagement scores – those key indicators of trust and staff satisfaction that drive talent retention, customer experience and productivity – for many years, or render them unnecessary because of the high levels of engagement created by actions taken in the 'crisis time'

## Brand value

We may conjecture that some leaders' image or 'personal brand' will be so damaged it will impact their performance ratings until they are able to act to counter the impressions they created 'back then'. And it is not only the legacy of individual leaders that will be noticed – organizations and brand value will also be judged.

We heard examples of leaders taking different stances, likely to dramatically impact their follow-

ing and engagement. For example, a leader who signaled the company values with:

"If you are billing to clients, fine. If not, take annual holiday. If, after that, you have no billable work you will need to go on furlough..."

Compare this to another leader's message: "As a guiding principle during the crisis we will halt our organization changes or headcount reductions. We will keep salaries and bonuses constant. We are doing this to help you focus on helping our people be safe and our factories producing"

Even though of course the costs of the latter strategy would have to be addressed, it is clear which one would be more likely to inspire loyalty and trust in their followers.

## Leading through the unknown

The ability to admit to 'not knowing' and the ability to lead through uncertainty is emerging as a vital part of one's leadership legacy.

Offering clarity around what is known and what is still uncertain is a key part of this. Being able to state the truth around uncertainty was fundamental to trust-building, for example the leader who said: "we don't know, the virus sets the timeframe, and once we get to a 'new -normal' we will know more about where we stand and what to do about costs and budgets."

## Teaming: a shared leadership legacy

To build a really strong 'leadership legacy' is a team activity, using consistency, shared purpose and intent. It is also probably an investment that will give a huge payback when done deliberately and well. Themes from our conversations include: leadership teams will not succeed if they stay in the current mode and: to really get our organization performing in 2021, teams need to be supported to help them continue to perform at each stage of the changes we now face.

'Teaming' is an alternative to seeing teams as sealed units that

operate independently of each other. Teaming can be fostered with effective team coaching: equipping teams to be more open, with team members all working across the business ecosystems, creating 'teams of teams' alliances and partnerships – allowing diversity, innovation and agility to flourish.

## Creating a 'Build Back Better' legacy

Was the Covid-19 crisis just something to be 'got through' or, as many leaders said, the biggest challenge and learning opportunity of their career?

**The hopes expressed for a better future was one that was more human- and planet-friendly, less linear in its thinking, and more resilient and innovative.**

The phrase 'Build Back Better' was heard from many different sources. To do this, leaders need to be deeply curious around the patterns of behaviour, assumptions and habits that they and their teams have fallen into – many of which have been exposed in the crisis. This is an opportunity to question these and to 'build back better' than before.

The hopes expressed for a better future was one that was more human- and planet-friendly, less linear in its thinking, and more resilient and innovative as part of a strategy to recover from any impending recession and thrive in the future.

David Jarrett is a team coach and leadership specialist and managing director of Orchard House leadership and team coaching centre

[www.orchardhousepartners.com](http://www.orchardhousepartners.com)

# ICC urges inclusion and fairness in words and action

John Denton, secretary general of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), has responded to the tragic death of George Floyd in May and the reactions that followed

**O**n behalf of the ICC he expressed support for “the peaceful demonstrations taking place in cities across the United States and the world in response to the recent act of violence committed against a man who deserved to live.”

## Sense of injustice

Denton spoke of the anger, frustration and sense of injustice that had been expressed and which have sadly become a recurrent theme—“to the exasperation of all who universally condemn racism and dis-



crimination.”

He believed that in this difficult time, it was important to openly acknowledge that these elements persisted to this day in too many parts of the world. “Within our global community, many will have experienced some form of discrimination first-hand. Others may find it difficult to fully comprehend just how

deeply our colleagues and fellow human beings may be affected by it.

“But what shines bright at this dark moment is the heartfelt unity of millions the world over in decrying such despicable acts against members of the Black community and others.

Racism and discrimination may exist everywhere, but we will not accept them anywhere.”

## Strengthened by diversity

At ICC, Denton said, it was known intuitively and empirically “that our organisation and the millions of companies we represent are strengthened by diversity in all its forms. In recent years, business has made great strides in advocating and adopting inclusive practices in everything from hiring and promo-

**“Racism and discrimination may exist everywhere, but we will not accept them anywhere.”**

tion to selecting service providers.”

He believed that the demonstrations the world is witnessing “tell us that our work is far from done, and business leaders have an important responsibility to continue to press the message of inclusion and fairness in words and in actions.” For its part, he said, ICC would not waver in its commitment to upholding these core principles.

[www.iccwbo.com](http://www.iccwbo.com)

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# London business resilience webinars

Register at [londonchamber.co.uk](http://londonchamber.co.uk)

## What's been on in June ...

### Dispute resolution during Covid-19 and beyond

Stephen Bate, Arbitrator and Mediator on the LCAM Panel and Jane Player, Leading Mediator on the LCAM Board

### Trading Through Coronavirus and Managing Your Contracts

Ben Holt: Partner, Commercial Litigation, Ed Rimmell: Partner, Commercial and Stephanie Rickard: Partner, Procurement at VWV

### Capital Conversation

Tony Matharu, Founder and Chairman, Integrity International Group and Global Hospitality Services

### Alternative finance during Covid-19: Non-bank finance for companies

Anthony Impey MBE, Founder, Optimity

### UK-Germany business and trade opportunities: a discussion with FrankfurtRheinMain GmbH

Eric Menges, CEO, FrankfurtRheinMain GmbH and Daniel Jones, First Secretary - Financial and Professional Services at British Embassy Berlin

### How to engage with existing and new connections on LinkedIn

Heather White, Smarter Networking

### Freight movement - lockdown and beyond

Alex Veitch, Head of Multimodal and International Policy, Freight Transport Association

### EU Exit: Customs Union departure on January 2021, what to expect and how the pandemic may affect things

Charles Hogg, Commercial Director and Antons Gordejevs, Commercial Manager at Unsworth

### Personal brand: have you got one and how do you create one!

Heather White, Smarter Networking

### Delivering Effective Insurance and Risk for Your Business in a Post Covid-19 World

Amy Green, Insurance and Risk Specialist, Gallagher

### Capital Conversation

Vernon Everitt, Managing Director - Customers, Communication and Technology, TfL

### Innovating in a Changing World: ADAPT | INNOVATE | LEARN | TEST

Professor Robert Holdway FRSA FIEMA (Innovation Director, Co-Innovate, Professor Associate) and Co-Founder of several business ventures Dr Ainurul Rosli, Reader in Enterprise and Entrepreneurship, Brunel University London

### Export documents: the situation now

Peter Bishop, Deputy CEO, Davor Mckinley, Head of Export Documentation, LCCI

### Capital Conversation: A Property and Construction Special

Simon Neate, Executive Director, WSP | Indigo and Claire Kober OBE, Managing Director - Homes, Pinnacle Group

Recordings of the webinars can be accessed at: [www.londonchamber.co.uk/events/covid-19-webinar-series](http://www.londonchamber.co.uk/events/covid-19-webinar-series)

## ... Coming up

Wednesday 1 July at  
10.45am - 11.45am

Capital 500 with Vicky Pryce, Chief Economic Advisor and Board Member, Cebr, Oliver Wright, EVP Public at Savanta ComRes

Thursday 2 July at 12.45pm - 1.30pm

Revenue Recovery Series: Selling in a crisis with Justin Stephenson, Partner, Sandler Training

Tuesday 7 July at 10.45am - 11.30am

EEN Webinar: Essentials of Developing Competitive Bid Strategies with Mike Raynor, Bid Consultant, Raynor BID Consultancy

Wednesday 8 July at 10.45am - 11.30am

Capital Conversation with Catherine McGuinness, Chair of the Policy & Resources Committee, City of London Corporation

Thursday 9 July at 12.45pm - 1.30pm

Revenue Recovery Series: Leading a team to revenue growth with Justin Stephenson, Partner, Sandler Training

Tuesday 14 July at 10.45am - 11.30am

EEN Webinar: Essentials of Writing Excellent Bids with Mike Raynor, Bid Consultant, Raynor BID Consultancy

Wednesday 15 July at 1.00pm - 2.00pm

US Growth Opportunities for UK SMEs - Update on the UK's Top Trade Partner with Dr Frank Levene, Independent Director, EMEA, Avitus Group Companies, Morgan Pierstorff, Business Development & Sales Director, Newable Limited

Thursday 16 July at 12.45pm - 1.30pm

Revenue Recovery Series: Managing your team remotely in recovery with Justin Stephenson, Partner, Sandler Training

Tuesday 21 July at 10.45am - 11.30am

What the Coronavirus pandemic is teaching us about Marketing & Mindset with Parag Prasad, Managing Director, ActionCOACH

Wednesday 22 July at 12.45pm - 1.30pm

LCCI Update - Maximise your Membership: new products and services in a changing world with Liz Henderson, Director of Membership and Events and Nick Charles, Head of Member Relationship Team, LCCI

Tuesday 28 July at 10.45am - 11.30am

Export documents: the situation now with Peter Bishop, Deputy CEO, Davor Mckinley, Head of Export Documentation, LCCI

Wednesday 29 July at 10.45am - 11.30am

Capital Conversation with Mark Vale, President - UK, Ireland and the Nordics, UPS

**Tuesday 4 August at 10.45am – 11.30am**

Capital Conversation with Sir James Bevan, Chief Executive, Environment Agency

**Thursday 6 August at 10.45am – 11.30am**

Data governance and Secure Tech in the 'new normal' with Dr Emmanouil Ioannidis, Head of Governance, Risk and Compliance, Consultancy of Corporate Governance and Compliance

**Tuesday 11 August at 10.45am – 11.30am**

Financing Growth with Equity and Debt; how they differ and when to access them with Jonathan Monnickendam, Managing Director, Development Debt Consultancy Ltd

**Tuesday 18 August at 10.45am – 11.30am**

Dealing with Uncertainty with Alison Charles, Managing Director, Alison Charles Ltd: Wellbeing in the Workplace

**Wednesday 19 August, 1.00pm – 1.45pm**

Trading with India through a pandemic and beyond with Siddharth Mukne, Associate Director – UK India Business Council (UKIBC)

**Thursday 20 August at 10.45am – 11.30am**

Export documents: latest update with Peter Bishop, Deputy CEO, Davor Mckinley, Head of Export Documentation, LCCI

To book places on the webinars visit: [www.londonchamber.co.uk/events/covid-19-webinar-series](http://www.londonchamber.co.uk/events/covid-19-webinar-series)

# ChamberConnect – new service hits the spot

LCCI recently launched ChamberConnect – ask the expert to help businesses overcome the challenges presented by the Covid-19 lockdown – see graphic on right for some of these experts

Exclusive to Chamber members, this provides businesses with up to 90 minutes of complimentary advice from a subject expert within the membership community.

Experts are now on hand to provide advice in the following areas:

- Legal
- Sales and Marketing
- Finance
- Well-being in the workplace

- Workspace design.

The experts' companies are displayed to the right. Take up of their specialist advice has been high as businesses start the process of returning to business as 'near normal'.

Members with expertise in human resources and international business are also being sought to join the panel.

### How to connect

Email Nick Charles, head of the LCCI member relationship team to be connected to a member expert and book your complimentary advice session.

[ncharles@londonchamber.co.uk](mailto:ncharles@londonchamber.co.uk)



# Making video while WFH



by Claire Scaramanga

Video is one of the most powerful mediums when it comes to getting your message across. Google states that 80 per cent of all online searches are followed by a video search and that videos are 53 times more likely to rank on page one. Video itself accounts for 80 per cent of all consumer Internet traffic and is significantly

growing in importance for B2B.

How can you create videos with social distancing and your team and suppliers mostly working from home? Animated video is an excellent way of getting your message and your brand across.

### Abstract concepts

Everything is illustrated, so you don't need to find the perfect location or props. It's a great way to explain both complex and abstract concepts, because you create the visual content, rather than having

**Animated video is an excellent way of getting your message and your brand across.**

to find a suitable location.

You can record a voiceover quite easily from home with a good quality microphone, or get a voiceover artist to record your script and send it to you. If you don't want voice, you

can get background music from a sound library and add captions to the video.

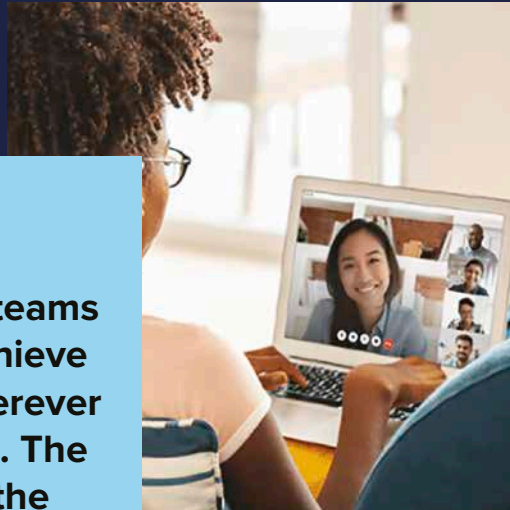
Many of the larger brands are catching on to the benefits of animated video, with new TV campaigns from McDonald's and Domino's, and it's very affordable for smaller businesses, as well as faster to produce and far easier to update than live action video.

Claire Scaramanga is director of Scaramanga Agency [www.scaramanga.agency](http://www.scaramanga.agency)

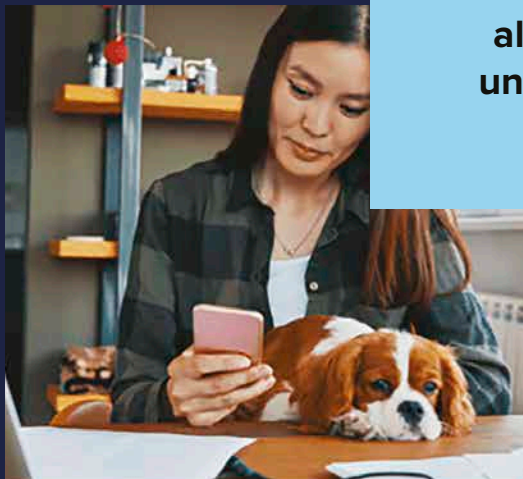
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I'm not sure I'll go back to working the way I did before this crisis, but that's partly due to the service excellence capabilities we've discovered in RingCentral highlighting quite how inefficient my meetings and communication were before!

Darren Preston, Chief Operating Officer  
Fulham FC

Video conferencing

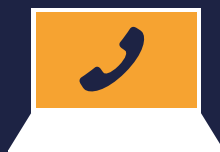


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# Commuting might be biggest hurdle to safe return to work



by Sam Ryan

The same public transport system that has allowed our city to thrive, now threatens the future of the London workplace. As we think about re-opening safely, the commute presents an almost insurmountable challenge. How do we convince staff that it's safe to return to work on public transport? Or indeed, is it safe for us to ask staff to do so? With social distancing in place, is there even enough capacity? And it's not on public transport, how do we ask them to get here?

## Overload



On a typical workday, the City of London expands from 9,000 residents to a daytime population of over half a million people (Bloomberg, 2020). Before the pandemic, in excess of 10 million journeys were taken on the London underground and bus network every day. More than 9,000 buses and 500 tube trains operated at peak times. With social distancing measures reduced to 1m, capacity on a typical Central Line tube will still drop significantly. Even a gradual return to work will be more than enough to overload the system.

Of course, our commuting habits will change. Outside of those who can't work remotely, the accelerated shift to flexible working means that many will only travel to the office two or three days a week. Over the coming years, it's likely that many will swap London-living for more space in suburban areas and commuter towns; accepting a longer commute for the days they travel in. But the immediate challenge we need to overcome is how we make them feel comfortable in travelling into work at all.



## Invested

For the first time, this shifts the commute to be the responsibility of the employer. Outside London where public transport is less sophisticated, employers have invested in commuting initiatives such as bus shuttles and car sharing with great results. It makes sense, given that 23 per cent of staff have quit a job because of an undesirable commute (Shelton Group, 2017).

With good reason people are concerned about the risks of using public transport. Social distancing is difficult and there is no way of knowing who you are sharing an enclosed carriage with. The government's answer is to tell people to avoid public transport and to cycle, walk or drive instead. The recent Transport for London initiatives to support cycling and walking are fantastic but they're not the silver bullet. For many, cycling and

walking are not viable alternatives and we don't live in a city blessed with a climate suitable all-year round; not to mention the office changes needed to accommodate extra showers and changing facilities.

## Modal shift

The car – which provides less virus exposure and more convenience – is a short-term fix on the long road to a new normal. But even a small modal shift to private car usage will bring London's streets to a grinding halt and most employers don't have adequate parking facilities. Creating irreversible habits now is also the last thing needed in our efforts towards cleaner air. Never mind the fact that many don't have access to cars, where public transport has been their lifeline to job opportunities.

Despite lockdown proving that flexible working is possible, many are eager to return to work and the office is likely to remain fundamental in encouraging collaboration, building company culture and allowing people to achieve a positive work-life balance. So how do we reopen the workplace safely?

First, employers must understand the commuting habits and concerns

of their staff. What are their transport options and challenges (and solutions) as we enter the new normal?

## Improved facilities

There won't be a one size fits all solution but employers can reduce the risk of infection amongst staff and make them feel confident to travel again through a range of actions. Staggering of shift times and days that staff are able to use the office are important to reaching a manageable solution. For those who live nearby, cycling and walking should be encouraged through cycle to work incentives and improved facilities. For those who may need to drive, car sharing should be encouraged through platforms like Liftshare who can help to ensure the same staff are sharing every-day.

For those previously reliant on public transport, companies like mine can provide dedicated commuter bus services to keep staff travelling together in 'safe bubbles' to and from the workplace. Technology is used to enforce social distancing onboard and to allow for contact tracing and operational measures are in place to make the environment as safe as possible (including air filtration, temperature checks and anti-viral fogging cleaning techniques). These services have been deployed for major employers such as Amazon, Avara and XPO during the lockdown period so they could continue operating safely and now I'm working with a number of companies to support their safe re-opening across the UK, Italy and South Africa.

London employers face the challenge of ensuring a safe commute in order to welcome their staff back. We will no longer be able to rely solely on the underground to keep our city moving safely but for employers who take targeted action, there are solutions that will make their company a better place to work for good.

## Message from Transport for London



**As the government eases lockdown and we start to reopen London, we want to help you plan your journeys.**

If you have to travel, consider including walking or cycling if you can. To help plan your walking or cycling journey, take a look at our:

- Digital cycle map
- Walking tube map journey times
- List of walking steps between stations

We're working closely with London boroughs and the City of London Corporation, changing town centres, building

new cycleways and creating low traffic neighbourhoods across London. Some streets are being converted to walking and cycling only, with others restricted to all traffic apart from buses. This will also create more space for social distancing and help reduce road danger. In addition, more Santander Cycles will also be available at key areas.

In line with the government advice, everyone who can work from home should continue to do so and we would still ask you to continue to avoid public transport, where possible.

[www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk)

**Sam Ryan is co-founder and chief executive of Zeelo**  
<https://zeelo.co>

# How to avoid damaging lawsuits



by Farad Asghari

It is recognised that many businesses may struggle to deliver on contracts due to the impact of Covid-19 and there is concern that the pandemic will trigger a flood of lawsuits against businesses. Guidance issued by the Cabinet Office urges groups to act reasonably in enforcing contracts. The guidance recognises the damaging impact a single dispute can have on a supply chain.

## Spirit of fairness

Responsible and fair behaviour is urged, including being reasonable and proportionate in responding to performance issues and the enforcement of contracts. The guidance particularly urged that a spirit of fairness is applied to the following:

- requesting, and allowing, extensions of time, substitute or alternative performance and compensation

- making, and responding to, force majeure and other delay and compensation events
- requesting, and making, payment under the contract
- making, and responding to, claims for damages, including under liquidated damages provisions
- returning deposits or part payments
- exercising remedies in respect of impaired performance, including enforcement of security, forfeiture or repossession of property, calling of bonds or guarantees or the initiation or continuation of insolvency or winding up (or equivalent) proceedings
- claiming breach of contract and enforcing events of default and termination provisions
- making, and responding to, requests for information and data under the contract
- giving notices, keeping records and providing reports under the



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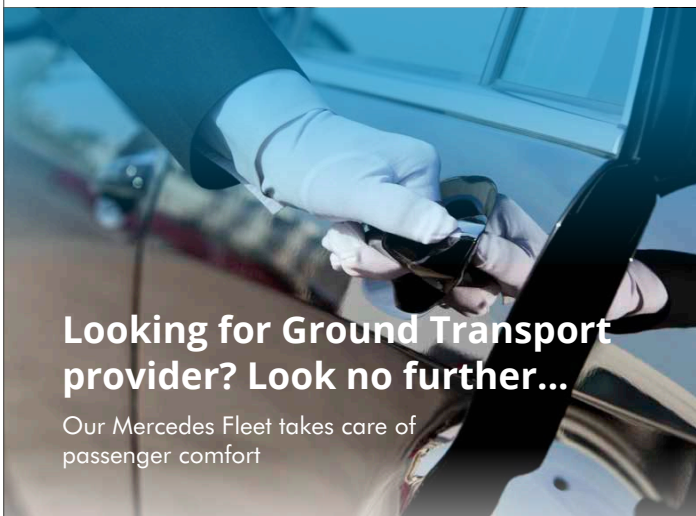
- contract
- making, and responding to, requests for contract changes and variations
- making, and responding to, requests for consents (including funder consents)
- commencing, and continuing, formal dispute resolution procedures, including proceedings in court
- requesting, and responding to, requests for mediation or alternative or fast-track dispute resolution
- enforcing judgments.

## Sustainable

Where continued contractual performance is not possible or is not essential, the government urges that those contracts, supply chains or markets are preserved and will be ready to continue in a sustainable way once the current emergency is over.

In conclusion, the guidance note advises: “The government would strongly encourage parties to seek to resolve any emerging contractual issues responsibly – through negotiation, mediation or other alternative or fast-track dispute resolution – before these escalate into formal intractable disputes.”

Farad Asghari is manager of the London Chamber of Arbitration and Mediation which is available to support businesses in dispute resolution, offering arbitration, expedited arbitration and mediation services.  
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# Two minute interview

Andy Stonehouse, creative director, S2 design & advertising



## Who are you?

I'm a founding partner and creative director at S2 design & advertising ltd.

We're a small, full service, graphic design agency, specialising in branding and brand positioning. We help our clients to communicate in an authentic and persuasive way. We call it getting the ABCs right – Authentic Brand Communications.

## What is your connection with the London Chamber of Commerce?

S2 design have been members of LCCI for several years and have found the networking events particularly useful for connecting with both potential new clients and suppliers. We don't advertise our services – we don't even have a website – so all our work comes through recommendations, referrals and networking. It may seem bizarre that, as an advertising and design agency, we do not advertise, but it's part of a considered plan and is appropriate for our route to market and clients. We've been in business since 2001, so we think it's a formula that's working.

## What was your first job in London?

I moved south (from the Midlands) in 1996 to work for a design agency on the London/Surrey border. I then joined a West London agency as director a few years later.

## "If there is one thing I hate about my job it's ..."

... as is probably the case for most creatives, deadlines can be the bane

of my life – but I'm pretty lucky in that I genuinely do love most aspects of my job. I think great design is a combination of problem solving and ascetic creativity, which I really enjoy. That said, I'm dyslexic and have dyscalculia, so I try to avoid wading through the accountant's figures too much."

## If you were advising a young entrepreneur which business person would you suggest as a model?

Personally, I have a lot of time for Simon Sinek – but I'm not sure I'd advise modeling anyone in particular. We all have to find our own path. Drawing from lots of sources and seeing what resonates with you is the way I'd advise.



Simon Sinek

## How is the current pandemic affecting your business?

The Covid situation has not really affected how we work, as we were early adopters of the remote/working-from-home model. In fact, we've worked remotely since we first started the business.

However, we have seen an effect in terms of workload. Some of our clients are struggling and their marketing budgets are – wrongly in my opinion – one of the first places business look to cut costs. Rebranding projects and many of the large contracts we had in the pipeline have either stalled or been cancelled entirely. People are understandably taking stock and waiting to see what the landscape looks like post Covid-19.

## What measures have you taken?

Not much to be honest. We hold more video meetings than we did and do much less face-to-face work, but there has been no need to alter our working model.

## How is your business reacting to Brexit?

We have not been massively affected yet. We've had a couple of projects stall while people wait to see how the dust settles. However, I think the biggest impact is a general sense of the unknown that seems to make some companies freeze to the point of not doing anything. This is a huge mistake as any economic observer will advise that it's the companies that press on with advertising etc. in difficult times that are generally the ones that come out the other side strongest. We just have to be sure we're speaking in ways people understand and have a service/product they truly want and need.

## How do you think the transport system in London can be improved?

I would like to see improved disabled access and provision. Personally, I generally find getting around London pretty easy. Most of our clients have London offices, so I regularly jump on the train into central London from my South London base. My co-creative director works out of an E14 address, so simply meeting up physically to discuss projects when necessary means we rely on TfL. However, if I'm travelling across the outer regions I will often take the opportunity to take my motorbike out for a spin.

## Which piece of red tape causes most problems for your company and why?

We've done work with local council authorities in the past, but I am not a fan of the procurement processes and hoops they ask you to jump through to get on to preferred supplier lists. In fact, we've generally stopped replying to such requests. In our experience, if people really do want to work with us then they will find a way to bypass

any red tape that is getting in the way.

## What is your favourite and least favourite thing about London?

London is really one of the true international cities and I love the energy and pace most of the time. It's never too hard or too far to go to reach a park and enjoy some space – the town planners did a great job on that front, but I think traffic congestion and air quality are areas that require some real, and immediate, intervention.

## If you were Mayor of London for the day which one thing would you change?

I think London has a few huge issues to tackle. Affordable housing for one – and into that I'd wrap the question of the capital's homeless.

The second, I'd suggest, is a ticking time bomb and that is the reduction in youth services. If we don't want to see a repeat of the riots we need to look at helping the next generation feel they have a valued place in the wider community.

As a biker, I'd also like to see the quality of roads addressed. I've had a few very close shaves due to huge potholes in the road.

enquiries@s2design.co.uk  
www.facebook.com/s2designLtd

**"London is really one of the true international cities ... It's never too hard or too far to go to reach a park and enjoy some space."**



## Are you paying too much for your pest control?

**With budgets tightening and all expenditure being scrutinised, it's a good time to evaluate your pest control provider.**

The big, national brands says Cleankill Managing Director Paul Bates don't necessarily offer the best value or service.

"It's well worth looking at regional pest control companies. They can offer better value and often more transparent, fair pricing. You will also get a more personal service. With shareholders wanting better returns, the larger companies can put a lot of pressure on their salespeople who then become focused on their targets rather than the problem they are trying to solve for the customer."

Regional companies are usually large enough to afford to invest in good training, accreditations and the latest products and services, but don't have the huge overheads and marketing costs associated with national brands.

If you have a contract with a national company, Paul advises careful examination of any hidden costs and extras that may be

charged alongside the charges for regular site visits. It is worth comparing the original contract with what you were actually charged.

"Pricing should be completely transparent and there should be communication after every visit so you know what has been done and why. All of our technicians use i-pads so instant reports can be sent to customers and there are no surprises," said Paul.

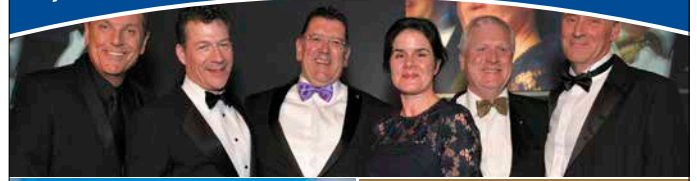
Accreditations and standards are something that should be checked. The European Standard for Pest Control is EN 16636 Certification (CEPA Certified®). This is independently assessed by qualified and experienced auditors with an in-depth working knowledge of the industry. Audits validate practices to a clear professional standard to ensure activities are delivered safely, effectively and within European and national regulations.

Also critical is British Pest Control Association membership.

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# Creating an authentic and



By Valpy Fitzgerald

When it comes to doing business, it pays to be sustainable. Sustainability is now a major factor in determining how consumers choose to spend their money. This is because people want brands to help them feel like they're making a difference and will actively seek out those brands and businesses that align with their own values. At the same time, businesses who put purpose on par with profit are far more likely to attract and retain the best talent, helping the company to innovate and grow.

Businesses have become increasingly aware of the many benefits of a climate-friendly business model. Companies are committing to reducing their carbon emissions to net zero, seemingly on a weekly basis. Yet many businesses that have chosen to communicate their sustainable vision have fallen foul of claims that they are 'green washing'



– a term used to decry those businesses using sustainability merely as a marketing ploy.

So how do businesses align themselves with the collective goal of net zero and communicate this to their stakeholders and customers in a way that is both authentic and credible? Here, I outline the four key things every small to medium business owner should be thinking about when es-

tablishing a sustainability policy.

## Decide on your 'why'

Sustainability can be a minefield. You have companies being accused of too soft an approach, while others are criticised for not acting at all. Before you implement change, you need to understand what it means for you to become more sustainable, your reasons for doing this, and how

**Businesses have become increasingly aware of the many benefits of a climate-friendly business model.**

it aligns with your existing brand and customer base.

Knowing your 'why' allows you to stay true to your purpose without the distraction, helping you to deliver a clear and consistent message to your stakeholders and customers.

## Work out your 'how'

Once you fully understand the reasons why you want to become more sustainable, you'll need to come up with a plan for how to do it. How far are you willing to go to achieve your sustainability goals and what is manageable in the long term? It's better to be realistic than overly ambitious.

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# credible sustainability policy

Invest your time on working out what works for you as a business, be it moving to a renewable energy provider, generating your own electricity on-site, or offering electric vehicles to employees as company cars.

Businesses need to be true to themselves and their own goals, and transparent to their customers, without over-promising. If you decide to commit to reducing your carbon emissions to net zero by a specific date, you'll have to be prepared to answer questions on how you're going to achieve this. Public statements announcing your commitment to the environment can easily be perceived as virtue signalling; people want to hear about what you're really doing to make a difference – and this means giving tangible details.

## Communicate this to your team

Making sustainability part of your workplace culture is essential. Your people live and breathe your brand, and they're also often the first

point of contact for your customers.

Any sustainability policy is destined to fail if your website says one thing, but your employees are say another. For this reason, good internal communication is just as important as customer comms. Before going out with a press release or an announcement on social media, make sure the whole team is on board and on message. Talk them through your 'why' and spend time consulting with them on your 'hows' – they're likely to be a big part of the latter.

Try to engage all your employees in your planning sessions at the earliest possible stage, rather than simply telling them 'this is what we're doing'. By encouraging your employees to form a personal connection to sustainable thinking, they are far more likely to get involved with sustainable actions within your company.

## Be open and honest with your customers

Customers are becoming increasingly savvy to brand decep-

tion and the repercussions of being caught out can be serious. There are countless examples of this happening, many of which gather media attention and can be reputationally damaging. This year, Ryanair was accused of greenwashing after the UK Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) banned an ad campaign in which the company falsely claimed it was "Europe's low CO2 emissions airline". Ancol Pet Products also had an advert banned by ASA after research showed its 'biodegradable' dog bags were no more beneficial than standard dog bags.

These companies were trying to leverage consumer demand for sustainable products in a dishonest way. That's why it's crucial to be transparent in all of your external communications, even if it means talking about your shortcomings. Customers respond well to honesty and openness and are loyal to value-driven brands. Clothing brand Patagonia saw revenue growth of 30 per cent after its 'Don't Buy this Jacket' campaign, which highlighted the importance of

sustainable consumption.

It's not just your campaigns you need to think about – it's every external touch point of your business. This includes your website and all social media channels. And remember, you don't have to be as bold as Patagonia, but a little bit of candour can go a long way.

## Not just a passing trend

Sustainability has proven itself to be more than just a passing trend; it has become a business imperative. Meanwhile, government regulations around carbon emissions are becoming more and more rigorous, which means that there's little room left for procrastination. A strong and dynamic sustainability policy will provide your businesses with a blueprint for future growth, in line with the UK's commitment to become carbon neutral by 2050.

Valpy Fitzgerald is director of green markets at Opus Energy [www.opusenergy.com](http://www.opusenergy.com)



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# What does a liquidator do?



by Vee Bharakda

view of what a liquidator does and what is involved. However, before we do this, we need to explain what a liquidation is.

## What is a liquidation?

Most liquidations occur when a company is no longer able to pay its debts in full or in more technical terms becomes insolvent. The company's assets are sold off and the funds used to settle creditor's claims at least in part.

Once the process is completed all legal action against the company and its directors is ended which can be a huge relief to all those involved. It is worth pointing out that becoming insolvent is not the same as unprofitable. The vast

*"It is worth pointing out that becoming insolvent is not the same as unprofitable, their problem is usually down to cash flow."*

majority of companies that suffer liquidation are profitable, their problem is usually down to cash flow, and other issues such as loss of business to new competition or loss of important customers who delivers a substantial percentage of the turnover.

## There are three types of liquidation

### 1. Creditors' Voluntary Liquidation (CVL)

This is when the decision to liquidate the company is taken voluntarily by directors whose company is unable to pay debts as and when they fall due. The directors take the decision to close down the business. In this scenario, the process is initiated by the directors who will appoint the liquidator (a licensed Insolvency Practitioner) and not the company's creditors. Neither the Court nor the official receiver are involved in a CVL procedure.

# Staying productive and motivated during a crisis



As many of us are now remote working and getting used to the 'new normal' with our working patterns, *Carly Lund* has compiled tips that may be useful for individuals and executive leaders to help people stay productive, motivated and to build their capability during this time.

- **Read about your industry to spot new opportunities.** Use this time to increase or update your expertise in your industry. Where possible, seek to understand risks and opportunities relating to the crisis to inform your decision making. Set a goal to read three documents about your industry to share ideas and their impact with your team.
- **Take time out for a 'Eureka' moment.** For those who have more

time due to remote working, use the space to look at a challenge differently, get more into the detail or stand back to view it holistically. Go for a walk, take a break or work on a different task and come back to the challenge with fresh eyes.

- **Make a creative space.** Remote working means a new working environment for many of us. Make it a pleasant space that fosters creativity. Where possible, vary your approach to tasks that require novel thinking and involve others. Find a space at home to create breakout areas, to encourage more exploratory thinking. You can still use mind mapping, story boarding or a video call to discuss ideas with a colleague.
- **Think about your audience.** If you manage a team, it's likely you'll need to increase communications around key challenges and keep the team engaged and motivated in a more difficult time. Virtual working takes away some of our audience cues. Ensure you start messages with an over-arching objective, take people through defined points

*"For those who have more time due to remote working, use the space to look at a challenge differently."*

and find places to use motivating language.

- **Create realistic goals.** Review your existing development plan in a virtual working context. Identify what online resources you can access and are relevant at this time. Consider who could be a peer mentor to keep you motivated and accountable. Use the changes in your role or organization as a learning experience – identify how you can grow in response to new demands the crisis might be placing on you.
- **Reward yourself and others.** Time away from others may become demotivating so identify short-term goals to remain focused, positive and energized during this time. Working on this with others will be mutually

beneficial. Incentives give small motivational boosts. Break your work tasks down into achievable milestones and connect these to meaningful longer-term goals. Track progress with team members to celebrate success together.

- **Face into discomfort.** Remote working will push many of us to find new ways to achieve our objectives. Do not let virtual working become an excuse to avoid new challenges. Work with your manager to consider new techniques or approaches to achieve your objectives in this changing context.
- **Take care of yourself.** Our ability to cope with life's pressures and adapt to change is supported by a healthy lifestyle and feeling good about ourselves. Having a good diet, sufficient sleep and exercise gives you the energy needed to tackle the day. Review your lifestyle and consider where you might make changes to benefit yourself.

Carly Lund is global head of organisational leadership at YSC Consulting  
[www.ysc.com](http://www.ysc.com)



## 2. Members Voluntary Liquidation (MVL)

In this case the Company is solvent and able to pay its debts. This route is taken by Directors for Tax Purposes or to restructure the Company. This requires appropriate resolutions to be passed at a general meeting to wind up the company and appoint a liquidator to enable a distribution to be made to the shareholders.

## 3. Compulsory Liquidation Process

Here the liquidation is initiated by a dissatisfied creditor and the Company is wound up by the Court. A Winding up Order is issued and an Official Receiver is appointed to manage the process. The Official Receiver may seek the appointment of liquidator if he or she believes that the complexity of the case requires it.

### What is a liquidator?

A liquidator, a Licensed Insolvency Practitioner, is the person who manages the entire process from soup to nuts irrespective of whether or not the business is sol-

**If your company is in financial difficulty don't delay, seek advice today. The sooner you do this the better the likely outcome. Remember, hope is not a business strategy!**

vent. A liquidator must carry out the procedures set out in place to efficiently close the company. The liquidation of a company can only be carried out by a licensed and regulated insolvency practitioner. The legislation which forms part of the procedure is the Insolvency Act 1986.

### The role of the liquidator

The liquidator has a host of powers, depending on the type of liquidation that he or she is administering. Their main responsibility is to convert any remaining assets or property of the company into cash to repay as many creditors as possible. In addition to a wide range of administrative tasks, such as paperwork, they will have to investigate director conduct and

schedule meetings with creditors and directors. The specific duties of the liquidator will also include the following:

- Review all debts and decide which should be repaid in full or in part. In some cases, claims can be rejected
- Bring to an end any outstanding contracts or legal disputes
- Seek valuations for company assets to maximise returns for creditors
- Closely inspect transactions that may have been sold at undervalue
- Keep creditors informed and involved in the decision-making process where appropriate.
- Communicate how creditor claims are progressing, the reasons why the company failed as well as details about the redistribution of assets

- Distribute funds to creditors fairly, taking into account the repayment structure which begins with the fees and expenses of the liquidation process itself
- Interview and report on the factors that led to the company's demise and liquidation. Report to the Secretary of State if he or she identifies director misconduct or fraud
- Dissolve the company.

Although not the subject of this article it is worth mentioning that, if handled well, a skilled and experienced insolvency advisor will also help with the more personal ramifications of insolvency, avoiding personal legal proceedings, loss of your home and bringing stress relief so you can sleep at night.

If your company is in financial difficulty don't delay, seek advice today. The sooner you do this the better the likely outcome. Remember, hope is not a business strategy!

Vee Bharakda is the founder director of Navigate Business Recovery  
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# Supporting employees



by Alison Charles

**W**ith the current Covid-19 Pandemic, life is more uncertain than ever before. So what can you, the employer do, to support employees during this uncertain time? It's all about embracing uncertainty.

I was listening to the BBC news the other week. I was particularly drawn to a story about a bakery that had managed to reopen, even with

the two metre distancing rules. They had one major challenge. One area of production required two people to be working in close proximity at all times. Management couldn't come up with a solution to this problem.

## Overcoming challenges

What did they do? They asked their employees to get creative and think of ways round the problem, so that they could re-open.

The solution: a husband and wife worked for the company in different areas of the business. They lived to-

gether so the social distancing did not apply. They were happy manage that particular part of the production on a temporary basis. Problem solved!

## Engage with employees

In these challenging times, many companies are facing a restructure or administration. As a leader, you may feel solutions have to come from the top. Perhaps telling employees just how uncertain the future of the company is, might make them anxious or stressed. You want to protect them.

That is understandable.

In reality they are probably already worried about the future. Lack of communication usually leads to speculation and greater levels of anxiety and stress. Recognise that it is a difficult time and encourage employees to think about what 'surviving-well' might look like.

Be honest and consistent with them. Tell them exactly what you do and don't know. Tell them what the organisation is struggling with. Facilitate open forums for employee input. Give them time to mull over the chal-

# Reposition and remain positive



by Alan Jenkins

**"N**ever waste a good crisis". I don't want to sound flippant. But this quote, attributed to Winston Churchill, contains a central and liberating truth. No matter how bad things seem, there are always reasons to be optimistic.

Amidst the pain of Covid-19, there are still opportunities available for entrepreneurs willing to take an honest look at their businesses. In seeking not just to survive the crisis, but to thrive afterwards, I have found these five questions to be clarifying:

**Does my company's strategy still make sense, or do we need to change our approach?**

An effective strategy takes an honest look at the competitive landscape in which you operate. It assesses your advantages and weaknesses and plots a practical course to overcoming these challenges.

The pandemic has challenged most businesses; what worked well before may not work in the future. The job of a business leader is to assess the situation as it is and make the necessary changes. Maybe a daunting process, but also a cathartic one, that will open your eyes to the hidden opportunities that a crisis creates.

My business, Quadrant2Design which designs and manufactures exhibition stands for B2B and B2C events, has seen many shows delayed or cancelled, leaving us with-

out work for an extended period.

We have used this time as an opportunity to think deeply about our offering and how we can restructure to suit the changing business environment better. This pause has led us to refocus our marketing message on our core values, and to introduce some creative new elements that we think will make our service more attractive post-crisis.

**Do we need to change our offering because of the pandemic?**

If you have thought clearly about how the pandemic has changed your customers' needs, the answer to this question should be clear. While competitors are fighting fires, you have a unique opportunity to improve your product offering to better match what customers will want after the pandemic.

The form this development takes will depend on what market you operate in, and the extent of the disruption you are facing. For instance, you might simplify your product range to focus on one specific aspect of your previous offering.

Businesses are also exploring new approaches to distribution; witness the explosion of online delivery services from everything including traditional retailers and pubs.

And we can be in no doubt; price, inherent value, and add-on value will become even more critical once businesses start to get back to work.

View the need to improve your business model as an opportunity, and maybe even an exciting opportunity, rather than a threat.

**How do we boost our market-**

**ing team's effectiveness despite Covid-19?**

While marketing might not seem like a priority, it isn't an optional extra that can be turned on and off at will. You've spent years building your reputation and connection with customers. If you don't maintain your marketing presence, all of this work can be unravelled surprisingly quickly.

Rather than cutting marketing, the opportunity is to build your customer base while competitors have their head in the sand. Put simply, people are bored and are sick of the paint by numbers Covid-19 adverts saturating our screens. Few brands are communicating interesting ideas which treat their customers like adults.

This is your opportunity. Whether in words, video, social media, your website, or the press; find something positive, real and exciting to say to your customers. They will appreciate it.

**Is our supply chain stable; do we need to bring some capabilities in-house?**

The majority of businesses will have assessed their supply chain to ensure continuity during Covid-19. And many business owners will be considering whether supply chains can be shortened, or dispensed with, by bringing back functions or manufacturing in-house.

The advantages of taking more control of the supply chain, beyond ensuring stability, include potentially improved quality, the potential to customise your product better, and

the ability to capture profits further up the supply chain.

You may decide that you don't have the right skills to bring supply functions in-house, but it is worth asking the question.

**My team is doing more with less. How do we harness this lean efficiency after Covid-19?**

Our team have rallied together, despite the severe conditions forced upon them by the pandemic.

Companies across the country are similarly proving that, with fewer resources, they can achieve more than they thought possible. In particular, I have taken two lessons from the crisis that we can hold onto and use in the future:

Firstly, identify a clear goal that the team can get behind, remembering that this is as much about what you don't do as what you do. Having this clarity has enabled my team to work coherently and avoid irrelevant distractions and side-projects as we get the business back on track.

The second is to make clever use of remote working. While I don't believe the office is going to disappear after Covid-19, remote working can remove distractions, improve efficiency and provide more time for meaningful projects. Providing space for important but not urgent work, away from the madness of the office, can help the team to achieve more than they thought possible.

Alan Jenkins is the founder and CEO of Quadrant2Design  
[www.quadrant2design.com](http://www.quadrant2design.com)

# through uncertainty

allenges and collectively come up with solutions.

There is no guarantee, but there is a chance that, like the bakery, their collective creativity will find a solution that might just solve the problem.

Focus on areas that they can influence. Remember to share what is positive as well as what is challenging. Make sure to recognise their hard work and resilience during "tough time". Employees need positive reinforcement more than ever. If they are working remotely, they don't have the usual physical cues and casual conversations that tell them they are doing well.

Embrace new ways of doing things and be open to all ideas. Be as flexible as possible. Enable employees to juggle work, life and family commitments in a way that works for everyone.

## Communication is key

Communication is always recognised as being critical, but often underestimated and inadequate. It is easy to get bogged down in the

**How you react will influence how employees perceive the situation. Be the steady helm to lead through the troubled waters.**

challenges and forget to tell employees what is going on.

- Communicate with employees often
- Use a variety of media
- Present to the whole company, divisions and teams at different times and in different ways
- Enable forums for Q&A
- Make sure solutions are captured, input is recognised and ideas are met with an open mind
- Send updates on items discussed
- Throw out old expectations and create new ones.

## Risk assessment

Carry out a risk assessment across all levels of the organisation and ensure that employees are engaged as part of the process. Plan for specific scenarios before they happen! Communicate early and often. This is a must do even for sole traders and micro businesses. It allows the possibility of a Plan B, minimises the impact of risk and takes advantage of opportunities.

## Lead by example

How you react will influence how employees perceive the situation. Be the steady helm to lead through the troubled waters.

The language you use is particularly important. Any attachment to certainty will increase stress and anxiety. Use of the words like 'hoped for', 'expected outcomes', 'right' and 'wrong', will stifle creativity.

Listen and pay close attention to your employees. Use words like 'might', 'possibility', 'I wonder' and

'maybe.' You might wonder if a particular scenario is workable, and you might wonder if that is the right solution. It might be right, it might be wrong. That's the thing about uncertainty – you can't be sure. Keep an open mind.

Create and share key learning moments. Change your mind if you need to. Employees will understand if you communicate. This is all about your personal mindset. Let go of the need for certainty and embrace the new.

Employees are our greatest asset. They can help us find solutions for readiness, response and recovery. The instincts and actions that will see us through the current global crisis will also make us stronger as we face the longer-term challenges.

Alison Charles is managing director of Alison Charles Ltd: Wellbeing in the Workplace <https://alisoncharles.co.uk>

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## Small businesses exporting beyond the EU employ over 13 million people

The analysis examines the growing importance of EU exporting SMEs in recent years, the number of SMEs and their share in EU exports, as well as key aspects that can guide EU trade policy and other policies. These indicators are export competitiveness, digital intensity of their exports, greenhouse gas emissions, and jobs supported by exporting SMEs.

These SMEs exported goods worth €476 billion in 2017, which represented 28 per cent of the

total value of extra-EU exports. In many economic sectors, EU SMEs account for more than 50 per cent of the total value of EU exports (textiles, furniture, printing and media, agricultural products, wood products).

The number of EU exporting SMEs has risen steadily in recent years, and in several sectors they are more competitive in digitally intensive products than large EU companies. SME exports are also greener. They have lower greenhouse gas emissions than

an average firm, with 70 per cent of SME exports belonging to the low to medium-low greenhouse gas emission. EU SME exports are also a major driver for export-led job creation: over 13 million jobs in Europe depend on EU SME exports, 37 per cent of total EU jobs supported by exports.

Compared to their contributions to national economies, EU SMEs remain under-represented in global trade in terms of export value. Ensuring that EU SMEs continue

to remain strongly engaged in exporting activities in the post-Covid-19 recovery is highly important. EU SMEs could become more international via outward foreign direct investment as part of the post-COVID19 recovery strategy. A stronger engagement by EU Member States in sharing data on SMEs, particularly on services trade where significant data gaps persist, would help EU policy objectives such as jobs creation and digital transition.

## Coronavirus: European Commission backs international initiative

These ideas address the ongoing international discussion on how to facilitate access to affordable pharmaceutical and medical goods and avoid trade disruptions in times of crisis, and could form part of an international agreement open to all WTO members.

Commissioner Phil Hogan said: "The present healthcare crisis may be long-lasting, and others may follow. We need to act quickly to improve the resilience of our healthcare systems, including through improved trade policy initiatives. The ideas we are putting

forward aim to facilitate global access to affordable healthcare products, including for vulnerable countries without appropriate manufacturing capacities. The goal is to make supply chains more resilient and diversified and to support efforts to build strategic reserves of critical equipment. This is a global challenge requiring global solutions, so we are committed to working with like-minded partners to achieve these aims."

A future agreement could facilitate trade in healthcare products and contribute to

stronger global preparedness for future health shocks by:

- abolishing tariffs on pharmaceutical and medical goods;
- establishing a scheme of global cooperation in times of health crisis, covering issues such as import and export restrictions, customs and transit, public procurement and transparency;
- improving the current WTO rules applicable to trade in essential goods.

The ideas presented to the 'Ottawa Group' (a group of 13 like-minded WTO partners) were

presented for reflection to EU Member States in the meeting of EU Trade Ministers in June. This discussion as well as the initial feedback from international partners will assist in defining the next steps to advance this initiative.

Other issues discussed among Trade Ministers of the Ottawa Group include transparency for trade-related measures taken in response to the coronavirus pandemic and progress on plurilateral negotiations on e-commerce.



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# Trade barriers report: EU continues to open up markets outside in midst of rising protectionism

Commissioner for Trade Phil Hogan has recently commented: "Ensuring respect of the existing international trade rules is one of my top priorities. Our action to enforce trade rights and eliminate trade barriers brings tangible benefits for EU companies, including small ones. In 2019, our joint efforts regained for them markets worth €8 billion. Yet, we have also been facing a worrying sea change in world trade. Barriers affect EU export sectors of particular importance and obstacles spread across regions. While we focus all our efforts on the post-Covid economic recovery, this calls for new impetus to enforcement. It is essential to keep global trade flows open."

Coordinated efforts by the Commission, Member States and EU business organisations in the framework of the Market Access Partnership allowed European companies to regain in 2019 important export markets. This benefited among others EU farmers and food producers, for example:

- Beef exporters from France, Ireland and The Netherlands



regained access to China; producers from Ireland and Croatia recovered access to Japan; and Dutch pork producers can now export also to Mexico.

- Polish producers of baby milk powder can now export again to Egypt.
- Belgian pear producers regained access to the Mexican market.

However, EU companies face also a multiplication of new unlawful barriers in sectors of strategic importance for the EU, notably in information and communication technology, electronics, auto and other high-

tech industries. The total number of existing trade barriers around the world amounts to 438, out of which 43 were introduced last year by 22 different countries. The highest number of trade restrictions concern access to the Chinese and Russian markets (respectively 38 and 31 measures). China also imposed the highest number of new restrictions in 2019, followed by South Mediterranean and Middle East countries.

## Analysis

The Commission's Report on Trade and Investment Barriers has been published annually since the beginning of the 2008 economic crisis. It is part of the Commission enforcement efforts in the area of international trade rules. The report offers a detailed analysis of the types of barriers causing most problems to EU's companies and the sectors where results have been achieved.

The report is based on information reported by European companies. To increase awareness of the available export support, the Commission established the Market Access

Days initiative, bringing together EU companies, national trade associations and trade experts from the Commission and Member States to discuss concrete market access problems on foreign markets. In 2019, sessions were held in the Netherlands, Lithuania, Portugal, France and Latvia in which hundreds of companies participated.

Given the need to step up enforcement efforts in the area of trade, a chief trade enforcement officer will soon be nominated to coordinate and steer all EU enforcement actions. This will include the establishment of a single entry point for trade enforcement issues to respond faster and more effectively to trade restrictive practices by EU trading partners. Furthermore, on 16 June, the Commission launched of a public consultation to review EU trade policy, seeking among others proposals on how to improve EU enforcement efforts to help small businesses facing unjustified export restrictions in countries outside the EU.

## European Commission kicks off major EU trade policy review

A strong European Union needs a strong trade and investment policy to support economic recovery, create quality jobs, protect European companies from unfair practices at home and abroad, and ensure coherence with broader priorities in the areas of sustainability, climate change, the digital economy and security.

Valdis Dombrovskis, Executive Vice-President for an Economy that Works for People, said: "To help repair the economic and social damage brought by the coronavirus pandemic, kick-start European recovery, and protect and create jobs, we have recently proposed a major recovery plan for Europe based on harnessing the full potential of the EU budget. The European Union is

the world's trading superpower. Open and rules-based trade will contribute significantly to the global recovery. We need to make sure that trade policy serves our citizens and companies. We launch a trade policy review in order to adjust the EU's approach to the global trade at this critical moment for the global economy."

Phil Hogan, Commissioner for Trade, commented: "The current pandemic is reshaping the world as we know it, and our trade policy must adapt to be more effective in pursuing European interests. So we are asking for the views of our citizens and stakeholders to help us develop a bespoke EU trade policy approach for the post-coronavirus world. We want our

policy to continue benefiting our people and our companies, enhancing our global leadership ambitions across a range of areas while taking a tougher approach to defend ourselves from any hostile or abusive actions. We must keep trade free and fair, underpinned by appropriate rules both within the EU27 and globally. With this review, we will listen to everyone who has a stake."

The results of this consultation will feed into a communication to be published towards the end of the year. The final review will be the result of a transparent and inclusive process including the online public consultation, discussions with the European Parliament and Member States, as well as engagement with

relevant stakeholders and civil society representatives.

The consultation covers all relevant topics to the EU trade policy, with a special focus on the following; Building a resilient and sustainable EU economy after the coronavirus; Reforming the World Trade Organization; Creating global trade opportunities for businesses and in particular small and medium sized enterprises; Maximising the contribution of trade policy to addressing key global challenges such as climate change, sustainable development or the digital transition; Strengthening of trade and investment relationships with key trading partners; Improving the level playing field and protecting EU business and citizens.

## ONLINE EVENTS

### EEN Webinar: Essentials of Developing Competitive Bid Strategies



**Registration Deadline:** Tuesday 7 July 2020

**Location:** Online

Peter Bishop, Deputy CEO, LCCI will be speaking with Mike Raynor, Bid Consultant at Raynor Bid Consultancy who will discuss the essentials of developing competitive bid strategies:

- Case Study – How an SME bidder beat major competitors
- Developing a competitive bid strategy
- Creating win themes
- Defending existing contracts

### Virtual - Q



**Registration Deadline:** Tuesday 7 July 2020

**Location:** Online

Qatar Matchmaking Event is a virtual event organized by EEN Qatar/ Qatar Development Bank under Tasdeer services, aiming to connect top companies within the Construction & Building Material and Plastic sectors to discuss and develop future partnerships with international companies.

This event will focus on raising awareness on the manufacturing capabilities in Qatar and allowing international companies to partner with the leading manufacturers in Qatar.

### EEN Webinar: Essentials of Writing Excellent Bids



**Registration Deadline:** Tuesday 14 July 2020

**Location:** Online

Peter Bishop, Deputy CEO, LCCI will be speaking with Mike Raynor, Bid Consultant at Raynor Bid Consultancy who will discuss the essentials of writing excellent bids:

- Planning your bid
- Creating storyboards
- Using different writing styles
- Developing high scoring content



**Registration Deadline:** Monday 7 September 2020

**Location:** Dublin, Ireland

Across two days, experts from over 70 countries come together to share knowledge, debate the latest trends, and network in Dublin – a city fast becoming the heart of the European tech community.

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- Partner with commercial entities to offer existing technologies and services
- Exchange knowledge and expertise by networking with public and private experts on latest technologies.
- Identify potential international partners for future cooperation projects
- Meet with potential investors

**How can you benefit from this event?**

- Initiate and arrange promising pre-scheduled 1:1 meetings at the event
- Generate fresh leads and meet new contacts in an efficient way
- Get your personalised B2B agenda according to your interests & availability
- Showcase your products, projects, services or business needs to event participants
- Stay one step ahead of your competitors by being visibly present at the event.



**Registration Deadline:** Monday 21 September 2020

**Location:** Copenhagen, Denmark

“Danish IP Fair - The Next Big Thing” where we bring investors and early science together to get the next big thing on the market. Danish IP Fair 2020 will showcase 80 inventions as spin-out investments or licensing opportunities in an open-fair environment with the presented cases ranging from frontier technology to IP-based start-ups within the categories:

- Sustainability & Advanced Materials
- Medtech & Diagnostics
- Biotech & Pharma
- Digitalization, AI & Robotics

# Top five legal hot spots when selling online



by Laura Barrell

Coronavirus (Covid-19) has changed the way we live. Whether it's personally missing friends and family, or organisations finding themselves shut to the public and left with limited options when it comes to keeping cash coming into the business.

One way businesses have been diversifying is by moving from on-premises sales to online sales through the internet. This change of venue is exciting but fast paced. Businesses can often find themselves rushing forward without consideration of the additional legal steps that must be taken to lawfully sell products to consumers online. Failure to comply can have serious consequences for the business, including risking unenforceable contracts, extended return periods, criminal liability, enforcement action from regulatory bodies and the reputational damage that often follows. Here are five key legal hot spots to be aware of when selling online.

## 1. The right to cancel

In general, for online sales, a consumer has a 14 day cooling-off period to cancel a contract without any financial penalty and without needing to give a reason for the decision to cancel. However, there are different rules depending on the type of product you are selling. For example, goods, services and digital goods have different rules associated with them when exercising the right to cancel. In short, for goods, the cancellation period ends 14 days after the day on which the goods come into the physical possession of the consumer (or someone nominated to take delivery on their behalf).

For a services contract, or a contract for the supply of digital content which is not supplied on goods or other physical media, the cancellation period ends 14 days after the day on which the contract is entered into. However, these time frames can change and certain exemptions gained under certain circumstances. For example, a consumer must give their express consent before digital

content can be downloaded. If no consent is given, the consumer and trader must wait 14 days before supply/download.

A failure to provide or comply with the right to cancel provisions can have serious repercussions. For example, it can invalidate any right to reduce the cooling-off period, any right to seek payment for services provided during this time or even extend the cooling-off period for over a year.

However, it is also important to consider if your business benefits from an exemption from the right to cancel. For example, the right to cancel does not apply to the supply of goods which are liable to deteriorate or expire rapidly, or goods which are clearly personalised (and there are many more exemptions). Therefore, it is worth taking the time to consider whether your product(s) fall within an exemption (before giving consumers information about rights, which they are not entitled to and therefore put your business under unnecessary financial or administrative risk).

## 2. Information requirements and pre-ticked boxes

When selling to consumers, you must provide them with certain information before the contract is concluded. This information includes the name and details of the trader, delivery and refund information, as well as information about the product(s) on sale.

Additionally, if the contract is being concluded by electronic means, the trader must ensure that the consumer, when placing the order, explicitly acknowledges that the order includes an obligation to pay. If placing an order entails activating a button or a similar function, the trader must ensure that the button or similar function is clearly labelled with sufficient wording to show, without doubt, that placing the order entails an obligation to pay the trader (e.g. BUY NOW). A failure to provide this clear indication of an obligation to pay, puts the contract at risk of being unenforceable because it will not be binding on the consumer.

A trader must also not use pre-ticked boxes which result in the

consumer being charged for an item which they did not independently select during the ordering process. For example, if a consumer selects to purchase a digital camera and the trader also charges the consumer for an extended warranty to cover damage to the camera by way of a pre-ticked box, the consumer is entitled to a full refund of the money paid for the extended warranty.

## 3. Delivery and faulty goods

As a general rule, delivery of goods ordered online should be within 30 days, unless a longer time period has been agreed with the consumer. A delivery date should be specified before an order is confirmed, or, if no precise date can be given, then an indication of delivery date/period should be provided based on the trader's anticipated time for delivery. Services should be performed within a reasonable time where a specific date for performance has not been agreed. It is important to inform the consumer about the delivery details, because if the delivery date was essential and the trader does not deliver on time, the consumer could gain the right to cancel and get a full refund.

It is also important to note that a trader is not exempt from the usual standards which are expected from products sold to a consumer at a shop, simply because they are being sold online. For example, there are requirements that the products must be of satisfactory quality and fit for purpose and correspond with their description, as well as providing associated remedies that are available to a consumer if these standards are not met. The Consumer Rights Act 2015, continues to apply for the supply of goods and services online and therefore traders should be aware of their obligations and what remedies the consumer is able to ask for within the specified timeframes. Such as refund, repair or replacement (depending on what happens to the goods and services or digital content, and when).

It is important to note that, any attempt by a trader to include terms in its consumer contracts which seek to restrict or exclude a consumer's rights in an unlawful way will not be enforceable and open the

trader up to enforcement action.

## 4. Additional considerations

In addition to the main pieces of legislation which govern the online sale of products to consumers (the Consumer Contracts (Information, Cancellation and Additional Charges) Regulations 2013 and Consumer Rights Act 2015, there is also a raft of other laws which kick-in when supplying products to consumers online. These include:

- the *Electronic Commerce (EC Directive) Regulations 2002* (such as certain information requirements, presenting a website in a particular way, and ensuring orders are promptly acknowledged)
- *Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008* (prevents misleading and aggressive practices, such as saying a product is only available for a limited amount of time when it is not - breaches can result in criminal sanctions, including for directors as individuals)
- *Consumer Rights (Payment Surcharges) Regulations 2012* (which introduced a ban on excessive surcharges)
- *Consumer ADR Regulations* (which grant consumers rights to alternative dispute resolution, including through the European ODR platform)

Certain changes may be made to these requirements after the transition period for the UK's exit from the European Union.

## 5. Never forget data protection

To save the best for last, a trader must also ensure it complies with applicable data protection legislation when collecting and processing the personal data of users/consumers. Including having in place the required privacy notices to the consumer which allow them to understand what personal data is taken, for what purpose and who else may have access to that data. Failure to comply can have serious consequences for a trader - including investigations, fines and bad PR.

Laura Barrell is an associate at VVW Solicitors  
[www.vvw.co.uk](http://www.vvw.co.uk)



# Locked out before lockdown

One in nine people in London were unable to use the internet by themselves prior to lockdown, lacking the basic skills required to communicate, shop or bank online, the latest Lloyds Bank Consumer Digital Index (CDI) has revealed

Technology is now a necessity for keeping connected, working remotely and accessing vital information. Research by Ipsos MORI carried out before the introduction of lockdown restrictions showed that one in six of those surveyed in London lacked the digital skills needed for everyday life namely: communicating, transacting, problem solving, handling information and content and being safe, legal and confident online.

Seven per cent of people were unable to connect a device to a wi-fi network, or able to turn on a device and log into accounts or profiles they have.

## Action

However, in a separate poll by YouGov carried out after lockdown measures were introduced, more than a third of people said they have now taken action to boost their digital skills for work, health and well-being during the crisis.

Ed Thurman, Lloyds Banking Group Ambassador for London, said: "Digital skills may be second nature for many, but this research confirms that for some people living in the capital it's simply not the case. During lockdown many of us have experienced challenges with technology, but a lack of digital skills can make it even more difficult to manage. What is encouraging is that instead of being defeated people are choosing to take action to improve these skills, which will clearly be of great benefit to them throughout lockdown and beyond.

## Academy

"The Mayor's Digital Talent programme, a brilliant scheme helping to ensure young Londoners have the digital skills employers want, is just one example of the great initiatives and support on offer to people wanting to learn new skills. Our own Lloyds Bank Academy will also continue to run virtual workshops to help address the skills gap too."

## Connected

Even before lockdown, peo-



Ed Thurman

ple in London with high levels of digital engagement recognised the benefits of these skills, with almost nine in ten saying it helps them stay connected to friends

***"Digital skills may be second nature for many, but this research confirms that for some people living in the capital it's simply not the case."***

and family, nearly two thirds say it improved their ability to get a job, and four in ten reporting it helps manage and improve their physical and mental health.

## New skills

In the last few weeks of UK lockdown, three quarters of people surveyed in London believe that the situation has escalated the need to be online and eight out of 10 people have felt that technology has been a vital support during the outbreak.

More than one in three across London have taken action and boosted their digital skills, with more a third reporting they have learned new skills for work reasons, while four in ten are using technology more than usual to help with health and wellbeing.

Of those in London who have improved their skills, almost two thirds are self-taught, more than a quarter are relying on friends and just under a quarter are calling upon family members for support.

## Digital skills

More than one in three in Lon-

don have also helped other people improve their digital skills during this period. Staying in touch with others is the most popular reason to ask for help, with almost two thirds of people helping their family members to use apps such as Zoom or WhatsApp. This is followed by banking and shopping cited by more than a quarter of respondents.

Encouragingly, more than six in ten of people in London want to continue to boost their skills beyond the current climate, with one in five having used the time at home to do online learning to improve digital skills.

The latest Consumer Digital Index also shows that without any intervention, by 2030, a quarter of the UK will still have a very low level of digital engagement.

To help people learn additional skills Lloyds Bank is running online digital skills training via the Lloyds Bank Academy. Free webinars are held each week providing access to digital experts, training on key skills and opportunities for virtual networking to support individuals, local businesses and charities.

[www.lloydsbankacademy.com](http://www.lloydsbankacademy.com).



# Key steps for an effective

As businesses re-open, it is likely that new cases will arise, as has been witnessed in other parts of the world where restrictions have been relaxed. A second (or even multiple) wave is a very real threat. Companies must have a response plan - a rigorous testing protocol (for presence of the virus) to ensure that employers can test, track and trace cases as they arise.

Businesses must also understand that they have legal responsibilities under Public Health England's (PHE) guidance. The Private Harley Street Clinic has

**Organisations have a legal and moral responsibility to provide a safe return to work programme for employees**

created a free guide which gives businesses advice on how to manage their return to work strategy, and fulfil their obligations under PHE.

"Organisations have a legal and

moral responsibility to provide a safe return to work programme for employees," says Dr Mark Ali, medical director of the Private Harley Street Clinic, and a cardiothoracic surgeon of 30 years' experience. "This involves having a robust clinical testing programme, underpinned by PHE principles. The importance of an app for test and trace is vital as the virus explodes in clusters. It is extremely important that companies set out a clear vision for safe return to work and establish an empathetic open dialogue with employees." Important steps for a safe return include:

## Clinical testing strategy

"Test, test, test," said the director-general of the World Health Organisation early on. Those countries with widespread rigorous testing have fared much better, and it is clear that testing will be an ever-present vital part of managing risk and response to outbreaks. It is here to stay.

Only use approved tests (antigen and antibody tests that are approved by PHE with results interpreted and acted on in line with government guidance. You can test employees for presence of the virus prior to

# Tips to tempt employees back into the office - and keep them safe



by Phil Oram

Britain's beaches and parks may be filling up as the lockdown eases - but getting workers back into the office is still a significant challenge for many employers.

Businesses across the country are debating when is the right time to ask staff to return to the workspace, and what should be done in the meantime to make the prospect more palatable.

What many are realising is that following government guidelines can only take you so far. The real conundrum is how to address the anxieties of employees and give them confidence that coming back to work will be safe.

## Easing

Bringing back employees on a rota system, so that not all are in the workspace at the same time, is proving popular with many businesses, gently easing employees into a new way of working.

Others are taking out desks to create space, removing hotdesks and introducing sanitiser stations to give staff a sense of security.

Whether the pandemic will lead to permanent changes in the office environment, and even in workplace design, as health and clean-

liness takes a higher priority, is already being debated.

However, the key for now is to make immediate changes which will entice people back to work.

## Practical tips

- **Install new building signage** - floor markings, social distancing signs and posters about washing hands can all give employees a sense of reassurance that something has changed.
- **Install hygiene screens** - by creating a barrier between workstations, designed to catch germs and prevent them spreading, employees can return to work with greater confidence.
- **Look at space plans to reduce hotdesking and increase fixed positions** - despite spending the last ten years persuading employees to embrace hotdesking, many companies are having to back-track. Employees will not want to sit at a desk that has been used by other people during the day.
- **Reduce the canteen and welfare facilities where crowding could take place** - bowls of fruit in communal areas and staff buffets are going to have to go. Anywhere where there could be a high volume of people in one place is going to make employees fearful.
- **Encourage people to use stairs**

**The real conundrum is how to address the anxieties of employees and give them confidence that coming back to work will be safe**

rather than lifts and escalators if they can - these are areas where overcrowding could occur. Encourage staff to leave the lifts for those who really need them - and lower the number of people they can carry at one time.

- **Introduce hand sanitiser stations** - these should be installed not only in foyers and entrance halls but across the office.
- **Increase the cleaning regime** - cleaning regimes will have to change to suit the new normal. Big organisations may well go back to having cleaners working throughout the day. Smaller businesses will need well organised rotas, with visible tick charts in place to prove that areas have been cleaned. This can also increase confidence for employees.
- **Reduce the amount of furniture on site to cut down footfall** - by removing desks and creating space, social distancing becomes

more feasible. At Tesco's head office, for instance, they are removing every other desk - and physically changing the footprint of the workspace. Employees know they can stay safe because desks have been taken out of use.

- **Reconfigure the furniture that you do keep** - clusters of desks close together will no longer be possible. Re-arrange furniture so that people are not walking close to desks - or consider utilising smaller desks.
- **Ensure those who are working at home are doing so safely and comfortably** - especially if they are going to be asked to do so long-term. Arrange for ergonomic desks and chairs to be sent to them; it is the responsibility of the employer to look after their well-being in working hours.
- **Consider who is the right person to take charge of ensuring the office is clean and safe** - and ensure they are properly trained. This may be the facility director or head of estate. In an SME it may be the office manager. They should work together with HR to ensure communication of safety rules is strong - and that rules are adhered to.

Phil Oram is regional director of Crown Workspace  
[www.crownworkspace.com](http://www.crownworkspace.com)

# return to work strategy

re-entering the workplace (currently performed by a test on a swab sample). This testing would be part of an ongoing programme to detect and respond to cases and minimise transmission.

## Test and trace – apps

In addition to the NHS' own track and trace app, corporations should consider bringing in their own sophisticated tracking apps. The clinic uses a reliable dynamic solution that allows companies to quickly react in case of infection, without the need to lock down the whole office or building. This app use standalone wearable technology (rather than a smart phone) and has improved indoor accuracy which stays attached to the employee all day. Information is stored locally creating a company-wide tracking system. It can be given to visitors and is highly accurate.

## Workplace modifications

Many employees are not current-

ly eligible for NHS testing. Businesses should consider using private testing that follows government guidelines. The testing programme should be robust with protocols that are bespoke to the specific organisation and different groups within the company depending on exposure risk. Some may wish to swab high risk employees at a regular frequency, irrespective of symptoms, as it is well recognised that asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic spread are great drivers of the disease. Imperial College analysis suggests that testing healthcare workers once weekly would reduce transmission by a further 16-23 per cent on top of self-isolation based on symptoms. The Premier league, for example, aims to reassure players by testing with swabs twice a week. Care homes in the USA now swab staff twice weekly. Alternatively, for employees without customer-facing roles and lower risk activities, employers may choose to swab only in response to symptoms. This is in

**The government has released guidelines for 'covid-safe workplace' and any return to work strategy must follow these**

line with current practice for key workers. Employers may also consider swabbing unwell household contacts to minimise work lost due to quarantining.

## Education - ethics, legal, social responsibility

The government has released guidelines for 'covid-safe workplace' and any return to work strategy must follow these. In addition, it is crucial for organisations to develop clinical strategies and protocols to safeguard employees, customers and clients on

return to activity. Each organisation must have robust systems in place to monitor and respond to infection when it occurs. It is likely there will be a second (or even third) wave of infections and companies must be prepared to manage this. [www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19)

## Compliance

As a business you will need to get your people to buy into the concept of your return to work. Good and open communication should spell out the benefits and importance of your strategy. Make it easy for people by adding value and giving employees a service that is going to help them. Make use of good simple technology to make it easy for everyone to be compliant.

For a free guide and further information go to: [privateharleystreetclinic.com/pages/getting-employees-safely-back-to-work](http://privateharleystreetclinic.com/pages/getting-employees-safely-back-to-work)

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### ■ Entering the Chinese Mother and Baby Sector

Digipanda is a London-based, China-focused digital marketing agency. Since 2014 we have helped numerous British businesses promote their services in mainland China. At the start of June, we announced a new partnership with Double line, an experienced and award-winning trade organisation focusing on both online and offline cross border trade.

Our goal is to connect with British mother and baby care brands to offer an opportunity of entering China in a comprehensive and cost-efficient way.

#### Offer to members

We are offering a free consultation and assessment regarding the potential of your brand in China.

#### Contact

For further information or to arrange your free consultant and assessment, please contact Edward Teng, managing director, at [edward.teng@Digipanda.co.uk](mailto:edward.teng@Digipanda.co.uk)



### ■ IPWC

Don't know where to start with your office reoccupation? We have compiled a handy guide from the latest information available on the steps you need to consider. This has been developed with the experience of our workplace consultants, change and facilities managers.

This simple and practical guide, which is complimentary and available to fellow LCCI members, will help you plan your next steps as Lockdown measures are eased.

#### Offer to members

To download the free guide, please visit: <https://bit.ly/reoccupy-office>

#### Contact

If you'd like further information or help implementing the recommendations, please do get in touch; our team are available to guide you through the process. Contact us at [info@ipwc.co.uk](mailto:info@ipwc.co.uk)



### ■ Pure Products

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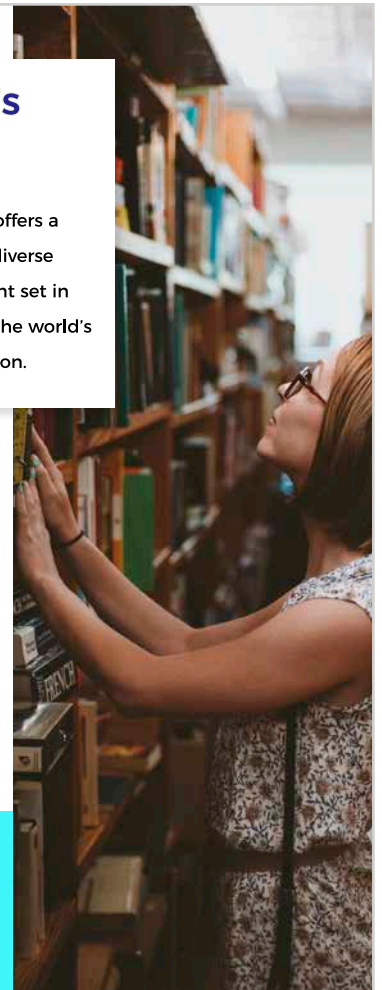
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## Members' noticeboard



### GDPR Two Years On – How Do You Compare?

Law firm VWV recently ran a survey to review how GDPR has impacted organisations since its introduction in May 2018. The results show that more than half of respondents are spending "significantly" on GDPR compliance, with those in the public sector spending more than £100,000. Only 8% of respondents have spent less than £10,000.

Results also show that the number of Subject Access Requests has rocketed for organisations, particularly those in the public sector. Another notable impact is on mailing lists and databases, with many respondents unsure of their compliance obligations under the e-marketing regulations. Organisations have seen their databases shrink.

View full report and webinar recording here: [www.vwv.co.uk/news-and-events/podcasts-and-webinars/gdpr-two-years-on](http://www.vwv.co.uk/news-and-events/podcasts-and-webinars/gdpr-two-years-on).



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For further information, please contact Luis Bernardino on 07951 270 342.

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Contact Kirsty Borg, Co-Founder & Managing Director, at [Kirsty.borg@strategicadvisers.co.uk](mailto:Kirsty.borg@strategicadvisers.co.uk) or on 020 3488 5266.



### Stirling Careers Consultancy

Stirling Careers Consultancy is a well-established careers and outplacement service supporting businesses. Currently we are helping businesses who may have to make employees redundant due to Coronavirus. We work closely with you to put a tailored programme of support together to help departing employees. This includes help with CV writing, job search support, preparing and succeeding at interviews and negotiating a new salary. We offer one-to-one career advice, career coaching sessions and a range of webinars

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For further information, please call Alistair Stirling on 07904 614 946 or email [info@stirlingcareersconsultancy.co.uk](mailto:info@stirlingcareersconsultancy.co.uk) [www.stirlingcareersconsultancy.co.uk/](http://www.stirlingcareersconsultancy.co.uk/)



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### Peppers Marquees

The Covid-19 pandemic has shaken most corners of the economy to the core, but few have been hit as hard as the events and hospitality sectors. At Peppers Marquees, spring and summer projects fell away at a bewildering rate. The events industry will bounce back; there are backlogs of milestone celebrations – weddings, Bat/Bar-Mitzvahs and 'Big' Birthdays – but fixed venues are already close to saturation for 2021.

We have adapted to the situation, supplying our products and know-how to companies and local authorities for a variety of purposes. Furthermore, we have provided care homes with surgical masks and supported an initiative to provide visors for frontline workers.

With additional government funding on the horizon, we are in discussions with schools and colleges to help them get back to full capacity from September.

Danny Tupling - Contract Manager  
Events: [www.peppersmarquees.co.uk](http://www.peppersmarquees.co.uk)  
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