

Coronavirus Business Advice and Support Update – Friday 12 June 2020

The information in this newsletter is correct as of Friday 12 June 2020 but we suggest monitoring the key webpages outlined below as well as the [Council's website](#) for the latest updates.

Covid-19 Business Reopening Survey - SMEs

If you are a small to medium sized, customer facing business in South Cambridgeshire, we are interested in finding out your views on reopening of your business, so that we can offer the right support.

Please [complete our business reopening survey](#) for SMEs.

Sources of information and support for businesses

The Government's [Business Support Helpline](#) number is FREEPHONE 0800 998 1098. The helpline provides free, impartial business support and signposting services to businesses in England – which currently includes business advice on Covid-19.

You can also find free support, advice and sources of finance through the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough [Growth Hub](#) or [speak to an advisor](#) on webchat about support for your business.

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1. Grants and funding

Discretionary Grants Scheme open for applications

There is now just over a week left to apply for South Cambridgeshire District Council's Discretionary Grants Scheme.

Eligible organisations such as charities, market traders, B&Bs; those in shared offices or flexible workspaces; and those businesses that form part of the supply chain for the retail, hospitality and leisure industry are invited to [apply as soon as possible](#), and no later than midnight on 22 June.

The one-off payments under the Government's discretionary grants scheme range from £2,500 for small firms to £10,000 for charities and other businesses connected to the retail, hospitality and leisure industry.

Businesses which are eligible for cash grants from any other central Government Coronavirus-related scheme are not eligible to receive a grant under this scheme, with the exception of support given under the Self Employed Income Support Scheme and the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

Among the qualifying criteria, businesses must have been trading on 11 March 2020, have a turnover of no more than £10.2m and employ less than 50 people. They must also have lost **around** 75% of their annual income as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. The wording around this part of the eligibility criteria has changed since the grant scheme was launched as previously businesses needed to demonstrate that they had lost at least 75% of their annual income. To help more companies, this was altered to around 75%.

Parents returning to work after extended leave eligible for furlough

People on [paternity and maternity leave](#) who return to work in the coming months will be eligible for the government's furlough scheme even after the 10 June cut-off date. This will only apply where they work for an employer who has previously furloughed employees. This applies to people on adoption leave, shared parental leave, and parental bereavement leave.

Covid-19 Emergency Heritage at Risk Response Fund

Historic England have launched the [Covid-19 Emergency Heritage at Risk Response Fund](#) which will award grants to help fund urgent maintenance, repairs and surveys at some of England's locally-cherished historic buildings and sites.

The work funded will help heritage sites reopen to the public and thrive once again as quickly as possible – subject to Covid-19 restrictions. The business generated will help heritage specialists who, it has been shown from recent research, have been severely affected by the Covid-19 outbreak.

Grants of up to £25,000 will be offered for urgent minor repairs to problems such as damaged roofs, masonry and windows, to hire scaffolding to prevent structural collapse, or to commission surveys necessary to inform urgent repairs.

Expressions of interest must be submitted by 28 June 2020. The work funded must be started before Saturday 31 October 2020.

Sport England Open Innovation Call

Many people are facing significant, disproportionate barriers to being active during the coronavirus outbreak. Sport England's [open call](#) is aiming to support innovative solutions that respond to these challenges and support those most affected so they can be active at this time.

They are looking for solutions from individuals and organisations specifically developed to support women, people on low incomes, people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds, disabled people or people living with long-term health conditions.

These solutions should address at least one of the challenges below, as they are the most likely to be affecting their target groups:

- Changes in circumstances
- Mental health
- Digital exclusion

The support could include:

- Access to their connections
- Advice from experts in the sport and physical activity sector
- Access to industry-leading research and insight into activity trends and motivations
- A possible award of up to £50,000

The call closes on Wednesday 24 June at noon.

Edge Post Covid-19 Revival Fund – how to build back better

The [Edge Post Covid-19 Revival Fund](#) is a one-off fund with up to £250,000 of grant funding available from The Edge Foundation. Its purpose is to address the educational challenges arising from the aftermath of the Covid-19 crisis.

The fund is open to institutions and not-for-profit organisations working in the educational sector to support the development of projects and initiatives to revive education and support the sector to build back better.

Applications are welcomed for grants of between £10,000 and £50,000. The closing date for receipt of completed applications is midday on Thursday 9 July 2020.

Funding for charities supporting at risk young people

The 7 Stars Foundation are launching an unrestricted [grant funding programme](#) for charities across the UK looking after our at risk young people across the themes of abuse; addiction; homelessness and those who are supporting our young child carers.

Grants are available up to £2,500 for charities with a turnover of under £1.5M to be directed on overheads; salary costs and however else the charity sees fit to ensure their survival and sustainable service in the future.

2. Innovation funding and support

Technation's new Net Zero Programme

Technation have launched a [new programme](#) for companies that help reduce the emission of greenhouse gases to net zero by 2050. With the aim to help scale UK tech that is working towards a more sustainable future, Net Zero 1.0 is open to digital tech or hardware businesses which help the UK reduce greenhouse gas emissions directly or indirectly.

They are specifically looking for digital and hardware companies which operate across key sectors including electricity and energy, transport and mobility, agriculture, food systems, manufacturing and building technology. Companies may directly contribute to net zero, with emission reducing and carbon capture technologies or may contribute indirectly by changing consumer behaviour or increasing efficiencies.

The programme will run for 6 months and will cover key scaling challenges specific to the sector.

Designing sustainable plastic solutions

Innovate UK will invest up to £800,000 to fund early-stage, human-centred design projects to reduce the harm that plastics have on our environment and to therefore increase productivity and growth of the UK economy. This funding is from the [Plastic Research and Innovation Fund](#).

The aim of this competition is to help businesses to create designs for innovative goods, services or business models that will result in less persistent plastic waste entering our environment. This should be achieved by them obtaining a better understanding of relevant customer and user behaviours.

Total eligible costs must be between £20,000 and £80,000. The competition closes on 16 September 2020.

3. Changing direction and finding a new job

Taking teaching further

Would you like to utilise your industry experience and have a career change whilst still taking home a salary and other benefits? If 'yes' then you might like to consider the [Taking Teaching Further](#) programme to become a lecturer at Cambridge Regional College.

The subject areas where there are opportunities are:

- Construction – heating and ventilation plumbing

- Electrical installation
- Engineering

They will be hosting a webinar on Tuesday 23 June at 6pm to introduce the Taking Teaching Further initiative in more detail.

4. Opportunities to help

Help the government increase coronavirus testing capacity

The government [wants help](#) from businesses to increase testing capacity in the UK as part of its strategy to protect the NHS and save lives. They want to hear specifically from companies who can manufacture and supply:

- consumables and equipment for coronavirus testing, in particular test kits (such as nose and throat swabs, transport media and vials) and RNA extraction lab consumables (such as reagents, plates and pipette tips)
- new or existing types of coronavirus tests for antigens or antibodies
- public or private sector organisations that can offer laboratory capacity.

Migration Advisory Committee seeks views on skills shortages

The Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) is currently [seeking evidence](#) from business organisations and employers on what skills are currently in short supply across the UK labour market as part of a review of the shortage occupation lists. As a result of the coronavirus outbreak, alongside the main call for evidence, the MAC have created options for businesses to provide more limited evidence or to register that they would have responded in different circumstances.

Opportunity to provide insight and analysis on the UK's economic recovery from Covid-19

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is bringing together businesses, business representative groups and academic experts to consider the measures needed to support the UK's economic recovery from Covid-19, [focused on](#): The future of industry; Green Recovery; Backing new businesses; Increasing opportunity; and, How to win and retain more high value internationally mobile investment for the UK. If you, your business or organisation would like to provide relevant insight or analysis on any of areas outlined above, a list of questions is available - please email Economic.Recovery@beis.gov.uk by Wednesday 17 June.

5. Keeping your workplace safe

Retail reopening

Shops in England selling non-essential goods will be able to [reopen from Monday 15 June](#). High street retailers and department stores, including book shops, electronics retailers,

tailors, auction houses, photography studios, indoor markets, and shops selling clothes, shoes and toys, will be allowed to open their doors again provided they follow [Government guidelines](#) to keep staff and customers safe.

Retailers will need to take certain steps to protect customers and staff, including limiting the number of customers allowed inside at one time, placing protective coverings on large items such as sofas which may be touched by passing shoppers, and frequently checking and cleaning objects and surfaces.

Businesses should only reopen once they have completed a risk assessment, in consultation with trade union representatives or workers, and are confident they are managing the risks. Employers should also display a notice visibly in their shop windows or outside their store to show their employees, customers and other visitors that they have followed this guidance. You can access this by copying the following URL and pasting it into your browser: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5eb97021d3bf7f5d43765cbf/staying-covid-19-secure-accessible.pdf>

Zoos, safari parks and open-air cinemas in England can reopen from Monday 15 June 2020

The Government [has announced](#) that provided visitor numbers are managed and safeguards put in place to facilitate social distancing, zoos, safari parks and open-air cinemas in England can open from 15 June 2020, though indoor areas such as reptile houses remain closed.

Guidance on Working Safely Outdoors can be found [here](#) and a recent Government webinar on the topic can be watched again [here](#).

Guidance and advice for those providing hotel and other accommodation in England

Guidance and advice for those providing hotel and other accommodation in the UK has [been updated](#). The advice now includes:

- Guidance on guests self-isolating as required by law
- Guidance for hotels on opening their grounds
- An updated list of those that hotels and other accommodation providers may provide services to
- Updated guidance for hotels serving food
- Updated guidance regarding people staying in accommodation that have symptoms of coronavirus

Requirements to provide public health information to passengers travelling to England

From 8 June 2020, new regulations have been in force requiring transport operators to ensure that passengers travelling to England from outside the common travel area are provided with public health information throughout the passenger journey including at the booking stage. [New guidance](#) sets out the information that must be provided to passengers, and the manner in which it must be provided.

Face coverings to become mandatory on public transport in England

From 15 June, face coverings [will be required](#) while using public transport in England. The UK Government asks transport operators in England to make wearing face coverings a requirement of using public transport from 15 June. Bus, coach, train, tram, ferry and aircraft passengers must wear a face covering on their journey to help reduce the risk of transmission when social distancing is not always possible. The safer travel guidance for passengers is available [here](#).

PPE portal for healthcare providers

The government has [issued guidance](#) to health and social care providers in England on using the new PPE portal. Providers can order additional personal protective equipment (PPE) through the portal to top up their existing supplies for COVID-19 in an emergency. The PPE portal can be used by small social care and primary care providers. Providers who can use the service will receive an email invitation to register.

Whole home testing rolled out to all care homes in England

Every care home in England will now be offered a coronavirus test for [all residents and staff](#), even if they have no symptoms. [New guidance](#) on the Adult Social Care Infection Control Fund is also available for adult social care providers.

6. Government guidance and legislation

Advice on staying secure during COVID-19

Guidance is available from the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure ([CPNI](#)) for businesses on managing security risks during the pandemic. The CPNI has drawn together [important security considerations for businesses in financial distress](#), including:

- Returning to the workplace
- Protective security and managing risks
- Securing your people
- Physical security and guarding

Suspension of evictions from social or private rented accommodation extended by 2 months

The Government has [extended](#) the suspension of new evictions in England and Wales until 23 August. Where tenants do experience financial difficulties as a result of the pandemic, the government is clear that landlords and tenants should work together and exhaust all possible options – such as flexible payment plans which take into account a tenant's individual circumstances – to ensure cases only end up in court as an absolute last resort.

Companies House – changes to strike-off policy and late filing penalties

Companies House have [updated information](#) on their strike-off policy (closing down a limited company by getting it 'struck off' the Companies Register). From 1 June 2020, there will be an exception to their suspension of strike off activity. In cases where their law enforcement partners have concluded that companies are no longer in operation following an investigation, the registrar will continue with strike off action for those companies.

Sending your forms to Companies House during the coronavirus outbreak

As an emergency response to coronavirus Companies House has developed [a temporary online service](#) to upload a number of completed forms and send them to Companies House digitally.

Payment deferral from money laundering supervision due to coronavirus

Guidance on money laundering supervision has been [updated](#) to explain that businesses do not need to contact HMRC if they choose to defer payment. If they are due to renew money laundering supervision they can get a payment deferral for up to 6 months or deregister if they stop trading due to coronavirus. This applies to all businesses with an annual fee due between 1 May and 30 September 2020.

Introduction of the domestic reverse charge for construction services delayed until 1 March 2021

The introduction of the domestic reverse charge for construction services will be [delayed](#) for a period of 5 months from 1 October 2020 until 1 March 2021 due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the construction sector. You can find more information here. The charge is a [major change](#) to the way VAT is collected in the building and construction industry.