

Coronavirus Business Advice and Support Update – Friday 22 May 2020

The information in this newsletter is correct as of Friday 22 May 2020 but we suggest monitoring the key webpages outlined below as well as the [Council's website](#) for the latest updates.

Sources of information and support for businesses

The Government's [Business Support Helpline](#) number has changed to 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. Financial updates for businesses

Launch of the Coronavirus Sick Pay Rebate Scheme

The Coronavirus Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme will launch online on 26 May.

The scheme will enable employers with fewer than 250 employees to claim Coronavirus-related Statutory Sick Pay (SSP). Employers are eligible to use the scheme if:

- they're claiming for an employee who's eligible for sick pay due to Coronavirus
- they had a PAYE payroll scheme in operation before 28 February 2020
- they had fewer than 250 employees across all PAYE schemes on 28 February 2020
- they're eligible to receive State Aid under the EU Commission Temporary Framework.

The repayment will cover up to two weeks of the applicable rate of SSP, and is payable if a current or former employee was unable to work on or after 13 March 2020 and entitled to SSP, because they either:

- have Coronavirus
- are self-isolating and unable to work from home
- are shielding because they've been advised that they're at high risk of severe illness from Coronavirus.

To prepare to make a claim, you should keep records of all the SSP payments you wish to claim for.

For more information about eligibility and how employers can prepare to use the scheme, please visit [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

You can also take part in a [HMRC webinar](#) that provides an overview of the scheme including who can claim, when to start paying SSP, employees you can claim for, making a claim, keeping records, and more.

Future Fund

The Government's [Future Fund](#) opened to applications on Wednesday 20 May 2020.

The Fund provides government loans to UK-based companies ranging from £125,000 to £5 million, subject to at least equal match funding from private investors.

These convertible loans may be a suitable option for businesses that typically rely on equity investment and are unable to access other government business support programmes because they are either pre-revenue or pre-profit.

Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme – extension of maximum loan size

HM Treasury has [extended the maximum loan size available](#) through the Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme from £50 million up to the lower of 25% of turnover, or £200m. The changes are expected to go live on 26 May and full details will be available on that date.

Loan funding for charities and social enterprises

The [Resilience & Recovery Loan Fund](#) (RRLF) provides loan funding for social enterprises and charities who are experiencing disruption to their normal business model as a result of COVID-19. It has been established to make an existing government scheme, the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS), more easily accessible to charities and social enterprises. The Fund is being run by [Social Investment Business](#) (SIB) with an initial £25m investment and support from [Big Society Capital](#). £100,000 - £500,000 is available for a minimum of one year and a maximum of three years.

RRLF is intended for those organisations who face a problem because expected income and activity has been delayed or disrupted. A loan may help with this, providing working capital until normal business can commence again.

Additional business grants for small businesses

Work is continuing to establish the eligibility criteria for the new [discretionary fund](#) announced by Government and to develop processes for distributing them. Government guidance on the new fund [is available online](#). The fund will provide grants to certain small businesses in England previously outside the scope of the business grant funds scheme (see Existing Business Grants section below). It is aimed at small businesses with ongoing fixed property-related costs. Please keep an eye on future issues of this newsletter and on our website for more information. To register your interest in the upcoming discretionary grant scheme, please email: businessgrants@scamb.gov.uk.

Existing Business Grants

We have previously sent emails and letters inviting eligible businesses to apply for the grants below, using our online form: www.scamb.gov.uk/governmentbusinessgrants. We have also called all of those eligible businesses that have not yet claimed. This process is continuing – if you think you are eligible please contact our team (businessgrants@scamb.gov.uk) as soon as possible, so that we can help you access the funding you are entitled to.

[Grants for small businesses](#) that already pay little or no business rates because of small business rate relief (SBBR), rural rate relief (RRR) and tapered relief will provide a one-off grant of £10,000 to eligible businesses to help meet their ongoing business costs.

[Grant funding](#) of up to £25,000 for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses:

- businesses in these sectors with a rateable value of under £15,000 will receive a grant of £10,000
- businesses in these sectors with a rateable value of between £15,001 and £51,000 will receive a grant of £25,000.

Active Together

Sport England has committed £1 million to combating the impact of Coronavirus on sports clubs and community activity groups, in the form of match funding through Crowdfunder.

Through their [Active Together programme](#) they will be matching crowd funds of up to £10,000 raised by clubs and organisations hit by the Coronavirus crisis.

To be eligible, organisations must be:

- Local sports clubs
- Charity, community, voluntary and social enterprise sector organisations that deliver sport and/or physical activity in their community – including organisations that are not solely or primarily sports organisations
- For the benefit of people residing in England.

Support services for people from Armed Forces communities

The MOD is funding a new [Covid-19 Impact Programme](#) that will ensure people from Armed Forces communities can keep accessing important services that have been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

This is a single round programme, with £6 million available to Armed Forces charities and Community Interest Companies supporting serving personnel, veterans and their families affected by Covid-19.

Charities must be working in one of nine key areas:

- Support to the elderly (including care homes)
- Mental and physical health
- Welfare
- Domestic violence
- Housing
- Criminal Justice System
- Service families (including childcare)
- Bereavement
- Employment

The closing date for applications is 29 May 2020.

Heritage Lottery Emergency Fund

The Heritage Lottery Emergency Fund is available to organisations across the full breadth of heritage, including historic sites, industrial and maritime heritage, museums, libraries and archives, parks and gardens, landscapes and nature.

Funding of between £3,000 and £50,000 or £50,000 to £250,000 is now available. You can find out more about who can apply, how they will prioritise applications and what they will fund on the [Heritage Lottery Fund's website](#). Organisations will be able to apply until 30 June 2020.

Food Charities Grant Fund

If you run a front-line food aid charity in England, you can apply for a grant of up to £100,000 to help you continue to [provide food to the vulnerable](#).

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) will assess applications to the fund in the order they are submitted.

You're eligible to apply if you:

- are unable to meet an increased demand for food from vulnerable individuals or supporting charities
- have the capacity to distribute all of the food purchased under this grant by 9 August 2020

You can apply for the grant to provide for people:

- unable to afford food
- who have moved into temporary accommodation as a result of COVID-19, for example those who have left home due to domestic abuse, newly released prisoners, the newly homeless

This grant is not to provide food for the [extremely clinically vulnerable](#), who are already being supported by government.

Funding for homelessness charities

Charitable homelessness and rough sleeping organisations can now apply to [Homeless Link](#) for funding in support of their response to COVID-19.

The COVID-19 Homelessness Response Fund opened on 14 May 2020, and funding will be allocated by June 2020. Funding is for frontline organisations working directly with people experiencing homelessness where more than 50 per cent of beneficiaries are people experiencing homelessness. Applicants must be incorporated charitable organisations with an annual turnover of less than £5 million.

Transforming employment for young people

Youth Futures Foundation's [rolling grants programme](#) is designed to find, fund, support and evaluate promising practice. Funding will go to organisations working with young people aged 14-24 to help overcome barriers to finding meaningful work. They are looking for approaches that can be tested, evaluated and, where proven to be effective, expanded to more young people.

Two types of grants are available:

1. Development Grants (£30,000 – £100,000 pa for delivery and development)
2. Impact Grants (Circa £100,000 – £800,000 pa for delivery)

The funding is open to not-for-profit voluntary or community-sector organisations, or statutory organisations applying individually or as a lead organisation on behalf of a partnership or consortia.

Get a payment deferral or deregister from money laundering supervision due to Coronavirus

If you're due to renew [money laundering supervision](#) with HMRC you may be able to:

- take a payment deferral for 6 months from the date it is due
- deregister if you stop trading due to Coronavirus

Check which expenses are taxable if your employee works from home due to Coronavirus

Businesses can check which equipment, services or supplies are taxable if their employee works from home due to Coronavirus with [new guidance from Government](#). Areas covered include mobile phones, laptops, tablets, computers, and office supplies and additional expenses such as electricity, heating or broadband.

Financial support if you've lost your job or you're self-employed and have less work or no work

You can [apply online for Universal Credit](#) to get financial support if you've [lost your job](#).

You might also be able to:

- [apply online for New Style Jobseeker's Allowance](#)
- [apply for New Style Employment and Support Allowance](#), if you have a disability or health condition that affects how much you can work

You might also be able to get New Style Employment and Support Allowance if one for the following applies:

- you or your child might have Coronavirus or you're recovering from it
- you or your child are self-isolating because you came into contact with someone who might have Coronavirus
- you have been told to stay at home for at least 12 weeks by the NHS because you're at high risk of severe illness

If you're [self-employed](#) and getting less work or no work because of Coronavirus (COVID-19), you can also [apply online for Universal Credit](#) or [apply for New Style Employment and Support Allowance](#), if you have a disability or health condition that affects how much you can work. Your Universal Credit payment is based on your actual earnings. You need to report any self-employed earnings and expenses at the end of each monthly assessment period.

You do not need to go into a Jobcentre Plus office to apply or get a payment.

2. Innovation funding and support

Clean Growth Fund launched

The Government's new [Clean Growth Fund](#) will support the UK's most ambitious low carbon innovators seeking investment capital to rapidly drive their businesses forward.

The Fund aims to speed up the deployment of innovative clean technologies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, by making direct investments in companies seeking to commercialise promising technologies.

It will be accessible to UK-based companies driving green technology across the power, transport, waste, and building energy efficiency sectors. Potential examples of projects the fund could support include:

- energy storage and smart grid systems to bolster resilience in the power system
- renewable heating and ventilation technologies across homes and commercial buildings
- bio-fuels and bio-energy systems

The Fund is seeking to make investments at early stage, seed or Series A rounds in exciting, innovative clean growth start-ups. The fund will invest in businesses with a prototype product or service demonstrating a clear contribution to reducing greenhouse gases together with compelling evidence of market demand. It will be managed by Clean Growth Investment Management LLP (CGIM).

Medtech Innovation Grants

Having access to the right knowledge and expertise is an essential part of successfully developing and commercialising new products and services for the health and care market.

[MedTech NAVIGATOR Innovation Grants](#) from Health Enterprise East are designed to facilitate interactions between SMEs in the East of England and eligible knowledge providers, such as NHS Trusts or Universities, during the product development process. Each Innovation Grant is worth 50% of the total project costs up to a maximum of £15,000, with businesses paying the remaining 50% and any project costs over and above the £15,000 cap.

The grants are designed to help SMEs gain access to the right knowledge and expertise during the product development process from eligible Knowledge Providers. Typical projects might include:

- Helping to develop, or test, new or improved products, processes and services
- Access to information and expertise on care pathways and workflows
- Tapping into clinical and scientific expertise

Helping innovative high-growth SMEs through COVID-19 and beyond

The Government's new package of support to help innovative, high-growth small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to survive during the COVID-19 pandemic, stabilise as we recover, and grow to support economic recovery post-crisis is being delivered by [Enterprise Europe Network](#) (EEN) with [Innovate UK](#) .

Support will be available to around 6,000 innovative SMEs over the next two years, including both existing and new clients.

Support is available for:

- SMEs currently receiving Innovate UK support, both funding and non-funding interventions (including Global Business Innovation Programmes, Women in Innovation, Young Innovators)
- EEN clients and high-growth SMEs in receipt of European Innovation Council funding

- Innovative, high growth-potential SMEs referred from Growth Hubs

Support is based around an innovative SME having access to an EEN Innovation and Growth Adviser and receiving up to five days of adviser time over a 6-12 month period, with an additional 3 days for those businesses demonstrating the highest growth potential.

Funding opportunities from Innovate UK

Innovate UK also have a range of funding programmes currently open for applications. They include:

- UK micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) can apply for a share of up to £2.5 million for [industry led civil aerospace research projects](#)
- UK registered businesses can apply for a share of up to £30 million to develop integrated aviation systems and vehicle technologies that enable new classes of electric or autonomous air vehicles
 - [Strand 1](#), the 'fast track' strand encourages applications from smaller businesses and organisations who may not work within the aerospace or aviation sector
 - [Strand 2](#) will focus on larger projects and encourage applications that seek to integrate technologies and systems
- Opportunity to apply for a share of up to £25 million to deliver ambitious or disruptive R&D innovations that can make a significant impact on the UK economy through the [Innovate UK Smart Grants: May 2020](#).

3. Support for businesses

Someone to talk to

[Lifeline Plus](#) is a new helpline for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough providing a listening ear, to discuss issues affecting mood and wellbeing especially during this time. The line is available Monday to Friday, 9am-2pm (excluding Bank Holidays) by calling 0808 808 2121.

[Lifeline](#) is a free, confidential and anonymous telephone helpline service available 365 days of the year for adults in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. The Line provides listening support and information to someone experiencing mental distress or if you are supporting someone else in distress. Available every day 2pm – 11pm, on 0808 808 2121.

New Corporate Insolvency and Governance Bill

On Wednesday 20 May, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) introduced the new [Corporate Insolvency and Governance Bill](#).

The measures in this Bill aim to relieve the burden on businesses during the Coronavirus outbreak and allow them to focus all their efforts on continuing to operate.

The Bill will:

- introduce temporary easements on filing requirements and Annual General Meetings (AGMs)
- introduce new corporate restructuring tools to the insolvency regime to give companies the time they need to maximise their chance of survival

- temporarily suspend parts of insolvency law to support directors during this difficult time

Temporary easements on filing requirements and AGMs will include more flexibility around when and how AGMs are held, and extensions to deadlines for:

- confirmation statements
- accounts
- registrations of charges (mortgage)
- event-driven filings, such as a change to your company's directors or people with significant control

The Bill was introduced on Wednesday 20 May and will now make its way through Parliament. Many of the measures in the Bill will need secondary legislation before they come into force, and this will be introduced in due course. Nothing will change until that legislation is introduced.

Advice for farmers, landowners and rural business owners

Farmers, land owners and rural business owners can check Defra's [Facebook Note](#) for the latest Coronavirus advice, including:

- business support
- safety at work
- funding

Advice for tourism and event businesses

The [VisitBritain advice hub](#), which has all of the official information for tourism and event businesses in one place, is updated regularly.

This includes:

- Government guidance on business closures and reopening
- Guidance on how to provide a safe environment for both your employees and customers
- A communications guide to keeping in touch with your customers during the COVID-19 pandemic

As well as a range of other useful information.

Reminder: free 121 advice sessions for businesses

The Combined Authority is offering a [free one hour consultation](#), on the phone or via video link, from an experienced business adviser to discuss your needs and provide guidance on how to access relevant support from their services and central government.

This might include how you can address immediate challenges, how you can engage with broader resilience issues, helping you to explore different ways to conduct your business or diversify. They can also help you to understand and mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on your clients, staff, suppliers and others, and help you to lay out an initial roadmap for a return to business.

Department for International Trade Webinars

The Department for International Trade are running a [series of webinars](#) to help businesses through Coronavirus. For example:

[Managing disruption of supply chains during COVID-19](#) – 22 May

[Rethinking your marketing strategy during Covid-19](#) – 26 May

[Social media networks are surging as a result of COVID-19, is your business ready to adapt?](#) – 4 June

[Risk management strategies and frameworks during Covid-19 and beyond](#) – 10 June

Check the tax rules on waiving your income or donating to charity

HMRC has [published advice](#) for people choosing to give up their income to support their business or donate to charity during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

4. Celebrating local businesses

When the going gets tough, resourceful small firms across South Cambridgeshire find innovative ways to keep going - saving jobs and bringing essential supplies to people who need them.

We're collecting and publishing inspiring [COVID-19 stories](#). You can find out about how Histon Produce in Over, The Dog & Duck in Linton and Harvey & Son in Little Shelford have been adapting to life under lockdown.

If your business has diversified as a result of Coronavirus, or has an uplifting or innovative story to tell, email communications@scambs.gov.uk.

5. Keeping your workplace safe

Webinars on how to make your workplace COVID-secure

A series of new webinars from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy about how to make your workplace COVID-secure cover [a range of different types of workplace settings](#) which are allowed to be open. Many businesses operate more than one type of workplace, such as an office, factory and fleet of vehicles.

Wednesday 27 May, 11am: [Factories, plants and warehouses](#)

Wednesday 27 May, 3pm: [Restaurants offering takeaway or delivery](#)

Thursday 28 May, 11am: [Shops and branches](#)

Thursday 28 May, 3pm: [Vehicles](#) including couriers, mobile workers, lorry drivers, on-site transit and work vehicles, field forces and similar

Monday 1 June, 11am: [Construction and other outdoor work](#)

Monday 1 June, 3pm: [Labs and research facilities](#)

Tuesday 2 June, 11am: [Offices and contact centres](#)

Tuesday 2 June, 3pm: [Homes](#) – for people working in, visiting or delivering to home environments as well as their employers

Advice for businesses who may be reopening

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has published some useful advice for businesses that are currently closed and may be reopening in future.

Legionella

If your building was closed or has reduced occupancy during the Coronavirus outbreak, water system stagnation can occur due to lack of use, increasing the risks of Legionnaires' disease. Employers, the self-employed and people in control of premises, such as landlords, have a duty to identify and control risks associated with Legionella. The HSE website provides information on [Legionella risks during the Coronavirus outbreak](#) and links to what businesses need to consider when reopening.

Working safely

The HSE has created two documents to help the self-employed, employers and employees [work safely](#) during the Coronavirus crisis:

- Working safely during the Coronavirus outbreak - a short guide on how to protect people from Coronavirus (COVID-19) in your workplace
- Talking with your workers about working safely during the Coronavirus outbreak - by consulting and involving people in the steps you are taking to manage the risk of Coronavirus in your workplace you can:
 - explain the changes you are planning to work safely
 - make sure changes will work and hear their ideas
 - continue to operate your business safely during the outbreak.

Reopening and adapting food businesses

The Food Standards Agency has published guidance on [reopening and adapting food businesses](#). This aims to provide a practical framework to identify what businesses need to do to continue, adapt, or restart operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. It includes the hygiene processes and requirements that must be followed to safely operate a food business. The guidance is split into the following areas: farming and agriculture, food manufacturers, restaurants and takeaways.

Safe working practices in the construction sector

A [Charter for safe working](#), co-produced by the government and the Home Building Federation, has been launched to enable housebuilders to make a common commitment to operate in line with government safe working guidance. Signatories to the Charter have publicly committed to safe working practices in accordance with government and Construction Leadership Council guidance.

Moving home

The Government has issued [new guidance](#) on home buying and selling including [advice to the property industry](#) and to [social landlords](#).

There is also new guidance on meeting the regulatory requirement to secure a valid [Energy Performance Certificate](#) on marketing a property during the Coronavirus outbreak.

Freight Transport Industry

The guidance for the [freight transport industry](#) on international travel has been updated following government advice for British nationals.

Safe working in education, childcare and children's social care

[New guidance](#) from Government explains the principles of infection prevention and control to enable safe working in education, childcare and children's social care settings during the Coronavirus outbreak.

There is also [updated guidance](#) on actions for early years and childcare providers during the Coronavirus outbreak. This includes clarification on the position on welcoming back all children to early years settings from 1 June, information on when childminders can reopen to more children, and what provision they can currently provide, information on testing for essential workers, and information for parents on temporary changes to the 30 hours free early education entitlements.

Access to schools and educational settings for critical workers

The Government guidance on critical workers who can access schools or educational settings has been [updated](#) to reflect that children of critical workers are encouraged to attend school, and to reflect plans for wider opening of schools from 1 June 2020, at the earliest. Updated information defining vulnerable children, in line with existing guidance, for the purpose of continued education.

Parents and carers can also find [updated guidance](#) on what they need to know about schools and other education settings during the Coronavirus outbreak.

Recreational general aviation

[Updated](#) Government Coronavirus advice means that recreational general aviation (GA) flying is now allowed from English airfields or flying sites if [social distancing measures](#) are strictly observed.

Answers to common questions

The Cabinet Office has published [answers to questions](#) that best capture the three most common topics people asked about ahead of the Coronavirus press conferences.

The three topics are:

- Social distancing, and seeing your family and friends
- When schools are reopening
- Rules for reopening businesses, and holding weddings

6. Other changes to Government guidance and legislation

Testing eligibility expansion

Everyone in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland who is showing Coronavirus symptoms is now eligible to book a swab test to find out if they have the virus.

You can register for a test at www.nhs.uk/coronavirus

Those in England and Wales who do not have any access to the internet, or who have difficulty with the digital portals, will be able to ring a new 119 service to book their test.

There is also [updated guidance](#) on how tests and testing kits for Coronavirus work for the public and professional users, and for industry and manufacturers.

New information on Coronavirus symptoms

[New information](#) about Coronavirus symptoms has been announced. Individuals should now self-isolate if they develop a new continuous cough or fever or anosmia. Anosmia is the loss of, or a change in, your normal sense of smell. It can also affect your sense of taste as the two are closely linked.

Personal Protective Equipment

The Government has [issued reminders](#) that masks, gloves or other personal protective equipment (PPE) should not be put in the recycling. They cannot be recycled. Throw them in the bin instead. If you have Coronavirus symptoms or live with someone who does, you need to take extra precautions before throwing away your PPE.

The [guidance](#) on the different regulations which apply to devices and equipment being used to help prevent Coronavirus, including hand gels and PPE, have been updated to include contact information for the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency should you have further questions.

The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) has [updated its guidance](#) on the Personal Protective Equipment Regulations to clarify the obligations of importers and its [Coronavirus guidance for business](#) with guidance for businesses on hand sanitisers and with an additional link to a technical specification for hand wash from the Department of Health and Social Care.

Genuine HMRC contact and recognising phishing emails and texts

HMRC have [published guidance](#) to help businesses recognise when contact from them is genuine, and how to recognise phishing or bogus emails and text messages.

7. Feed your experience back to Government

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority is capturing the health of local business and the impact Coronavirus is having across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. It will use this data to send back to Government and it will use the intelligence gathered to develop targeted support, information, advice and guidance. You can [fill out a survey](#) to let them know how Coronavirus is impacting your business.

The Department for Business, Enterprise, Innovation and Skills also welcomes information from businesses on the impacts of Coronavirus across supply, demand and labour markets, actions to address these impacts, and any gaps in the Government response from your perspective. Please send your intelligence to intel@beis.gov.uk. Please do copy Openforbusiness@scambs.gov.uk into your email as we are keen to understand the impacts of the crisis on the district's businesses.