

Special PMG covid-19 bulletin

Edition #005 – 9th April 2020

This is the fifth in a series of special editions of the PMG newsletter in light of the current covid-19 situation. The purpose is to either share with you or to signpost you to useful information and tell you about fellow member's queries and questions. Thank you to everyone who has contributed.

I Covid-19 News

Alok Sharma, the Secretary of State for Business, writes to those working in manufacturing

1. *At this unprecedented time for the UK I want to pay tribute to you for the work you are doing to keep the UK economy going.*

As you know, the Government's priority is saving lives and we have advised that where possible, people should stay at home and work from home. However, our country needs your support to keep supply chains moving and key workers mobile, as well as to protect the economy as much as possible. Every business has a role to play in helping the country defeat coronavirus.



*Manufacturing is a critical part of our economy and I would like to be clear that **there is no restriction on manufacturing continuing under the current rules.***



Guidelines from Public Health England provide best practice advice on how this can be done safely. Many across aerospace, chemical, automotive, steel, aluminium, pharmaceutical, packaging and other sectors, including those providing essential services and materials, have answered the call to action and are playing a direct role in combatting COVID-19 by producing the material we need to fight the spread of the virus. It is vital that we ensure that servicing, parts and raw materials are available to keep vehicles and services on the road and operating. I would like to give you all my personal thanks for everything you are doing.

Those who cannot work from home and have to travel to work can continue to do so, consistent with the Chief Medical Officer's advice.

The complete wording of the letter can be found –

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/878651/Letter from Secretary of State Alok Sharma MP to those working in Manufacturing .pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/878651/Letter_from_Secretary_of_State_Alok_Sharma_MP_to_those_working_in_Manufacturing.pdf)

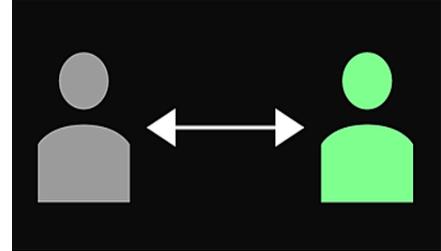
Social distancing in the workplace during coronavirus (COVID-19): sector guidance

2. Also published today by government is Advice for employers on social distancing during coronavirus (COVID-19). In full - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/social-distancing-in-the-workplace-during-coronavirus-covid-19-sector-guidance#manufacturing-and-processing-businesses>

Manufacturing plays an important role in the economy. It can continue if done in accordance with the social distancing guidelines wherever possible.

Where it is not possible to follow the social distancing guidelines in full in relation to a particular activity, you should consider whether that activity needs to continue for the business to continue to operate, and, if so, take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission between staff.

If you decide the work should continue, staff should work side by side or facing away from each other rather than face-to-face if possible.



You should increase the frequency of cleaning procedures, pausing production in the day if necessary for cleaning staff to wipe down workstations with disinfectant.

You should assign staff to the same shift teams to limit social interaction.

You should not allow staff to congregate in break times; you should consider arrangements such as staggered break times so that staff can continue to practice social distancing when taking breaks.

You should communicate to all staff that they should wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or more at the beginning and end of every break, when they arrive at work and before they leave. To help with this, you should consider adding additional pop-up handwashing stations or facilities, providing soap, water and/or hand sanitiser.

When entering and leaving, you should ensure your workforce stays 2 metres apart as much as possible. To protect your staff, you should remind colleagues daily to only come into work if they are well and no one in their household is self-isolating.

Read the detailed guidance on food processing. [here](#)

(Updated) Guidance for employers and businesses on coronavirus (COVID-19) including: Good practice for employers

3. Published by government on 7th April and tweeted on 8th April.

It's good practice for employers to:

- keep everyone updated on actions being taken to reduce risks of exposure to coronavirus (COVID-19) in the workplace
- ensure employees who are in a vulnerable group are strongly advised to follow social distancing guidance
- ensure employees who are in an extremely vulnerable group and should be shielded are supported to stay at home
- make sure everyone's contact numbers and emergency contact details are up to date
- make sure managers know how to spot symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) and are clear on any relevant processes, for example sickness reporting and sick pay, and procedures in case someone in the workplace is potentially infected and needs to take the appropriate action
- make sure there are places to wash hands for 20 seconds with soap and water, and encourage everyone to do so regularly
- provide hand sanitiser and tissues for staff, and encourage them to use them

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/guidance-for-employers-and-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19>

Plymouth manufacturers' asks from Government¹

4. This week, we asked you, our member firms, for your views on what government still needed to act upon to help manufacturing businesses during this unprecedented time. Here is a summary of the findings, combined with feedback obtained by MAKEuk. This has been shared with: MAKEuk; the Heart of the SW Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP); members of the SW Manufacturing Network and Plymouth City Council.

Consent to work (NB: this has been overtaken by the foregoing news item on p1)

Greater clarity and explicit consent for manufacturing employees, for whom it is not feasible to work from home, to be at work. It does exist at present, but it is difficult to find².

MAKEUK tell the PMG that BEIS are working on best practice in social distancing in the workplace at the moment and that it will be out by the end of the week. That may help to give the subject greater visibility.

Some suspect that when the upward trajectory of the curve of infections starts to flatten over the next few weeks, so the message about it being OK to go to work will become clearer.

Re Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme aka 'furloughing'

Greater clarity on the rules regarding furloughing – including occasional working; treatment of bank holidays; injustice to workers who left employment on or after the 28th February and started their new job on the 1st March or later etc. Furloughing needs to be more flexible – 3 weeks is too long and manufacturers need the ability to rotate on and off furlough.

Lawyers Foot Anstey LLP have come up with a list of furloughing questions for which there are no answers at present. <https://communications.footanstey.com/73/550/april-2020/newsletter-template.asp?sid=c5cc7378-e364-4d7a-828a-c2b94cd82188>

And, will the furlough period be extended?

Re Business Interruption Loan process³

Cash flow and access to finance remain a significant problem. One comment heard was that the banks are too busy to answer the phone never mind process claims. Do they have the capacity?

Meanwhile, all the previous question marks around CBILS remain in place for the time being e.g. being asked for excessive security for loans; being offered the banks' own products (with higher interest rates) instead; and being told that subsidiaries aren't eligible. This is despite assurances received from the Chancellor.

International Supply Chain

What can be done to support the supply chain with regard to the import of raw materials and a shortage of shipping containers? International trade has almost stopped which has led to a shortage of raw materials and shipping containers and massive price hikes on shipping.

Insurance and certifications

Can automatic extensions to insurance and certifications be issued as with MOTs? This is still a persistent question and cause for concern.

¹ This list is compilation of PMG and MAKEuk sourced comments raised during w/c 6th April 2020

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do>

³ We understand that more detail on Business Interruption Loan Scheme is coming later this week/early next week.

Administrative procedures creating barriers to production/servicing required for essential sectors: insurance/certifications are not being renewed/extended because inspection bodies cannot conduct their insurance inspections/audits or because the company has no resource to prepare for it (if they are working in an essential sector e.g. food supply chain).

Miscellaneous

Greater help to the manufacturing sector with meeting overhead costs in general, including business rates relief to match those sectors already announced and clarity on the ability to delay PAYE payments which would help cash flow.

Having one eye on the future – planning for a re-start

In many respects this is a return to the first point above regarding consent to work. It's the messaging around getting people back to work and the misnomer around "key" vs "essential" work. Also, providing adequate warning of when this might be effective from, so that we can work with our clients in preparation for the start.

Barometer reveals pressure rising on manufacturing

5. Manufacturers across the South West are being hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic with 87 per cent of SMEs reporting a significant decrease in production volumes.

Initial findings of the Manufacturing Barometer, which surveys firms across England, reveals a stark picture of how the virus is affecting industrial confidence.

Almost nine out of 10 respondents to the research conducted by South West Manufacturing Advisory Service and the Manufacturing Growth Programme expect sales to drop over the next six months.

And more than half predict the need to cut staff - despite the Government's furloughing scheme.

There also appears to be continued confusion over support available to business.

Nearly three-quarters of firms questioned either do not think the assistance on offer is sufficient or are unsure of the help they can access.

Almost 90 per cent said financial support was their most urgent need, followed by overcoming supply chain disruption and detailed advice on how to cope with the pandemic.

SWMAS managing director Simon Howes said: "COVID-19 is already having a significant impact on the majority of SME manufacturers surveyed and many of those who have yet to experience a change are expecting this global health and economic crisis to affect their business over the coming weeks and months.

"Unlike many sectors, our manufacturing industry cannot be carried out remotely as it relies on physical interaction with machinery and parts.

"Restrictions and lockdown measures in the UK mean capacity is reduced, and this is reflected in four-fifths of companies seeing a reduction in staff attendance."

He continued: "Companies who may still be able to produce goods are still reliant on their supply chains and a massive 80 per cent of businesses questioned are either struggling to source materials or have seen reduced orders from customers since the COVID-19 crisis began.

"Just over half of respondents said restrictions on exporting and importing are having an impact on their operations, so whether they trade nationally or worldwide, many small and medium-sized UK manufacturers are uncertain of what the future holds.

"Eight-six per cent confirmed they will need financial assistance, yet there is a great deal of uncertainty over the eligibility criteria for business loans and how quickly these can be accessed, if at all.

"Many businesses are also concerned about how paying furloughed staff will affect their cash flow in the short term before government support becomes available.

"While the Government's initial support package was widely welcomed by industry, there is a need to provide deeper advice and support for manufacturers to help them to adapt and to survive."



The Manufacturing Barometer, the largest survey of its type in England, shows that finding routes to new markets is one way for manufacturers to keep their business ticking over when their existing customer base is limited.

The 13 per cent who said production levels have increased are supplying into fields experiencing a higher than normal demand as a result of COVID-19, highlighting an opportunity for other manufacturers to support their supply chains.

Manufacturing Growth Programme managing director Martin Coates said: *"One in five manufacturers have answered the Government's urgent call for additional NHS equipment, but many of those questioned are still unsure whether or not their offer of help will be taken up.*

"As the list of products necessary to help fight COVID-19 continues to grow, SMEs should be exploring this in further detail and to find other possible opportunities for their business."

Your company can take part in the Manufacturing Barometer until Friday, April 17 at

<https://survey.zohopublic.eu/zs/LHh1U7>

Innovate UK, as part of UK Research and Innovation, will invest up to £20 million in innovation projects

6. The aim of this competition is to support UK businesses to focus on emerging or increasing needs of society and industries during and following the Covid-19 pandemic. By fast-tracking innovation, the UK will be better placed to maintain employment levels, a competitive position in global markets and make the UK more resilient to similar disruption.

Innovate UK

Your application must demonstrate both realistic and significant benefits for society (including communities, families and individuals) or an industry that has been severely impacted and/or permanently disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Your proposal must focus on a clear need and the proposed innovation to address it. You must have the ability to deliver the project during the working restrictions of Covid-19 pandemic.

You can claim 100% of your project costs up to the maximum of £50,000. These will be paid in advance of the project start date.

We intend to monitor and review projects during implementation with a view to providing follow-on funding and support for those with the most potential for impact.

The competition closes at midday 12pm UK time on the deadline stated.

Competition opened - 3 April 2020

Competition closes - 17 April 2020 12:00pm

Applicants notified - 1 May 2020

Funding type - Grant

Project size - Your project's total eligible costs must be between £25,000 and £50,000.

More - <https://apply-for-innovation-funding.service.gov.uk/competition/583/overview#summary>

Covid-19 Series of announcements to date by Government

7. In addition to the announcements set out previously in this bulletin, here is the latest news from Government since the last (fourth) bulletin.

- **COVID-19 Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme** - At Budget 2020 the Chancellor announced details about a new coronavirus (COVID-19) Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme. This scheme will allow small and medium sized employers, with fewer than 250 employees, to apply to HMRC to recover the costs of paying Statutory Sick Pay to their employees. HMRC has published [new online guidance](#) which includes information about who can use the scheme and the records employers must keep. HMRC is working urgently to set up a system for reimbursement. Existing systems are not set up to facilitate payments to employers. Details about when the new Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme can be accessed and when employers can make a claim, will be announced as soon as possible. HMRC will continue to update employers and the new GOV.UK guidance when these details are available.
- **Chancellor of the Exchequer strengthens support on UK Government offer for business** - The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak is taking [further action to support firms](#) affected by the coronavirus crisis by bolstering business interruption loans for small businesses and announcing a new scheme for larger companies.

- **Extended Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS)** - The UK Government has extended the CBILS so that all viable small businesses affected by COVID-19, and not just those unable to secure regular commercial financing, will now be eligible, should they need finance to keep operating during this difficult time. More than £90 million of loans to nearly 1,000 small and medium sized firms have been approved under the government's Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) since its launch last week. And a UK government-backed scheme to provide financing to larger companies, being operated by the Bank of England, has also provided almost £1.9 billion of support to firms and a further £1.6 billion has been committed. UK Government is also stopping lenders from requesting personal guarantees for loans under £250,000 and making operational changes to speed up lending approvals. The government will continue to cover the first twelve months of interest and fees. Please find further details [here](#).
- **New Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBILS)** - The new CLBILS will ensure that more firms are able to benefit from UK government-backed support during this difficult time. It will provide a UK government guarantee of 80% to enable banks to make loans of up to £25 million to firms with an annual turnover of between £45 million and £500 million. Loans backed by a guarantee under CLBILS will be offered at commercial rates of interest and further details of the scheme will be announced later this month. Please find initial details [here](#).
- **Use of facemasks in the workplace** - The guidance for employees, employers and businesses has been updated with [guidance on use of face masks in the community](#). The UK does not currently advise use of face masks outside of care settings, in line with [PPE guidance](#). Therefore, PHE does not advise masks in public places and for those working in supermarkets, waste collection, schools and similar settings. PHE recommends that employers should ensure that:
 - spaces in the workplace are optimised to allow social distancing to occur, wherever possible
 - signs are visible in the workplace reminding employees not to attend work if they have a fever or cough and to avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
 employees are provided with hand sanitiser for frequent use and regular breaks to allow them to wash their hands for 20 seconds.

The NHS has appealed for engineers to support work at huge new hospitals being set up to care for coronavirus patients

8. Field hospitals in [London, Manchester and Birmingham](#) could care for over 4,000 patients, while surrounding trusts will also need support as clinical engineers are transferred to the new facilities. NHS England appealed for volunteers with a range of engineering skills to help keep frontline services running. The application form is hosted on the [Royal Academy of Engineering website](#). Dr Helen Meese, IMechE trustee and founder of [The Care Machine](#), called for chartered engineers and engineering technicians to offer their help in "unprecedented" circumstances.
- "If there are any engineers who think they have got the kind of skill-set that could be useful, there is a form to fill out to register your interest," she said to Professional Engineering. "They are going to be doing fairly run of the mill jobs, in terms of keeping equipment working, making sure it is stored properly and everything. The idea is they are there to support the clinical engineers."*
- The job description [also calls for managerial support, calibration of test equipment and other desired skills](#).
- "It's really nice, the engineering community stepping up to help with this," said Dr Meese. "It's exactly what engineers do."*
- For more information and to apply, visit [the job post on the Royal Academy of Engineering website](#).
- **UPDATE: Sign-up for volunteering at the London, Manchester and Birmingham hospitals is now closed after more than 600 engineers applied in 24 hours.** Engineering expertise to help tackle the coronavirus is required for other opportunities on the Royal Academy website, and information about volunteering at other field hospitals is expected soon.

Offer coronavirus (COVID-19) support from your business

9. Use this service to tell us how your business might be able to help with the response to coronavirus.

The support needed includes things like:

- medical testing equipment
- medical equipment design
- protective equipment for healthcare workers, such as masks, gowns and sanitiser
- hotel rooms
- transport and logistics, for moving goods or people
- manufacturing equipment
- warehouse or office space, for medical use or storage
- expertise or support on IT, manufacturing, construction, project management, procurement or engineering
- social care or childcare



You'll be asked some questions about the type of support you can give. You'll then be contacted as soon as possible if your support is needed.

You'll need your company number if you have one.

[Start now](#)

Covid-19 Question & Request Corner



My name is Constantinos Regas, I am a healthcare worker in the #NHS, seeing patients. I have been coughed on and I have hoped not to get ill, so that I can carry on helping. But I can only see one patient at a time. I have also tried to channel my effort in a more scalable way.



After my shifts, I am helping a team at the University of Southampton (UK) to distribute the design of a new respirator, which healthcare workers can use to protect

themselves from #coronavirus, so that they can also carry on helping patients. Our aim is to share this proven design internationally, as either 3D printable designs or more generic designs that can be made using locally sourced materials if 3D printing is not available. Government agencies, universities and maybe even keen individuals and shared making spaces may have access to these facilities. If you know of anyone who would be interested in this, please share this, like this and ask them to get in touch. More info on the project, including a video, is at: southampton.ac.uk/perso You can message me directly or get in touch via the website. Let's get through this together.

II PMG Members' News

PMG Members' covid-19 News

EuroTech is doing its bit in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic

10. The following article appeared in the Exmouth Journal on 5th April 2020. [here](#)

Exmouth-based PMG member EuroTech, which usually manufactures printed circuit boards (PCB) for a number of well-known companies, is part of a national challenge to produce 30,000 medical ventilator machines in a matter of weeks.

The company was commissioned to make 19,000 PCBs for the breathing machines and, despite 'challenging' circumstances, the first batch left the factory on Monday (March 30).

EuroTech said fulfilling these orders has 'taken priority'.

A spokesman for the company said: "There has been reorganisation of shift patterns, so our staff can work safely and maintain social distancing.

"The team spirit has been inspirational, even when it was decided that we are going to have work through Easter to get the boards produced in time."

David Douglas, managing director of the EuroTech Group, added: "I am immensely proud of how the staff at EuroTech have responded to the challenge to engineer and produce these vital boards within an incredibly short timeframe.

"Whilst we might not be right on the very front line of the fight against coronavirus, we are certainly joined in the battle and I would like to thank everyone who is working hard in the factory on these products. "The team spirit and positive attitude shown by employees has meant we have been able to introduce 24-hour, seven-day working in key areas, including over the upcoming Easter weekend, for which we are extremely grateful."

After the Government announced the Ventilator Challenge UK, a number of household names such as Dyson, Airbus and Rolls Royce took part alongside EuroTech.

PCBs are integral to a wide variety of products – anything electrical needs a circuit board.

The boards, which took the Exmouth-based company less than 30 hours to produce from engineering to completion, will be incorporated into a ventilator prototype.

EuroTech is also urgently manufacturing PCBs for customers involved in the supply of equipment for the temporary Nightingale hospitals in London, Birmingham and Manchester.

Image - Staff at EuroTech working on the circuit boards which will go into new medical ventilators. Picture: Monty Rakusen/EuroTech



Composite Integration supports UK workers during the COVID-19 pandemic

11. Many countries including the UK are suffering from a severe shortage of PPE which is becoming an increasing concern for healthcare workers and healthcare organisations such as the NHS.

Composite Integration, a manufacturing company based in Saltash, Cornwall have decided to utilise their design and manufacturing capabilities to help fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. Working in a fast paced design stage, with a number of colleagues across the UK, Composite Integration produced prototype face visors which have been functionally reviewed and accepted by NHS Plymouth. All components have been procured from local UK sources enabling Composite Integration to offer rapid supply to meet the growing demand. Production has started and Composite Integration are aiming to manufacture approximately 2,500 visors per week for key workers including doctors, nurses, carers, shop workers and delivery drivers.

The company have introduced strict health and safety measures to protect its employees, families, customers and suppliers. They have many employees working remotely from home, reducing the contact levels internally and are working with a skeleton crew at the main facility to fulfill customer requirements.

Composite Integration continue to monitor and review the government guidance and will keep customers updated with any changes in circumstances.

For further information please contact sales@composite-integration.co.uk



Brief news from other PMG Members

12. **HellermannTyton** - *We are still operating, but at reduced capacity. We have furloughed about 30% of our employees on our Plymouth site and stopped manufacturing at our Manchester and Newquay sites. Where possible, staff are working from home and we are strictly following the latest Government advice in the factory. We have had the privilege to be part of the fight against CV-19 by urgently making components destined for new ventilator types and the Nightingale hospitals, we are also supporting key industries in Italy, Spain, USA and Canada. It's great to see cooperation right through the supply chain with one of our suppliers producing raw material for us despite being closed so these urgent components could be made.*
13. **Burts Snacks** - *As a Thank You to the amazing key workers we have working on the frontline to keep the country safe, we will be donating a selection of Burts potato chips and Lentil Waves to help support their continued effort against Covid-19.*
14. **Luminati** - *TPN has worked with specialist manufacturer Luminati to source reusable, full-face visors for its Hub-based keyworkers and Member teams. The visors will help to protect drivers and other workers from possible Covid-19 infection. They will be used alongside the other recommended Covid-19 PPE, and standard transport safety clothing, such as hi-vis jackets. The visors can be cleaned with anti-bacterial products or soap and water.*
Luminati, which normally specialises in more corporate merchandise such as creative retail cases, cabinets, frames and lecterns, was approached by the NHS to design and manufacture visors to counter the current shortfall. More - [here](#)



Dear Stuart and Team at Luminati,

I just would like to say a huge thanks for producing the Protective Full Facial Visors for our Primary Care NHS staff across Devon .

You have achieved this at pace and have provided a solution which is both effective and comfortable . This will benefit a large number of NHS staff . It is much appreciated indeed.

Best Wishes

Trevor

Dr Trevor J Avis.

Chair

Southern Primary Care Collaborative Board
c/o Mayfield Medical Centre

15. **Seetec Plus** - *We are utterly bowled over by our amazing participants who are continuing to find work in vital jobs within the NHS, essential retail and care sector! Your skills are more important now than ever. You guys totally rock!* [hashtag#keyworkers](#) [hashtag#disabilityconfident](#) [hashtag#nooneleftbehind](#) With [Seetec](#)



III Business to Business

Statutory Testing/examination regimes

16. Sound Health & Safety Advice from a good friend of the PMG, Jon Cooper, Partner, Womble Bond Dickinson LLP

I thought that you might be interested to learn of an issue which I have been asked to advise on increasingly in the past few days.

It relates to the requirement to have certain work equipment examined/tested by certified third parties. Obligations are imposed by a number of regulations including the Lifting Operation and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998, the Pressure Systems Safety Regulations 2000 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 as underpinned by BS5839.



The particular issue upon which my advice has been sought is what happens in terms of potential consequences in the event of equipment subject to a statutory inspection/testing regime not being inspected by a required date. For example, a lift within a building may not be examined in accordance with the statutory schedule or a FLT might miss its LOLER inspection date.

This issue has arisen primarily because:

- *Some of the testing organisations are not allowing their workforce to visit premises for the purposes of carrying out statutory testing/examination; and/or*
- *Work places have been temporarily closed and it is not considered appropriate to re-open them in order to allow statutory testing to be undertaken.*

To date (unlike for example in relation to MOT testing) there has been no amendment to relevant regulations automatically extending the validity of current approvals and I think that amendment by way of regulation is unlikely. However, I think that the risk of enforcement action by regulators is not great provided employers/those with a duty under relevant regulations take it upon themselves to apply appropriate measures in accordance with principles of risk assessment and risk control. I have therefore been advising organisations that they should:

- *Review their schedules of equipment subject to statutory testing/examination by third parties and identify where statutory time limits might be missed.*
- *Put in place arrangements to ensure that third party statutory inspections are carried out as soon as is practicable in the present circumstances.*
- *Where it is intended to use work equipment which is beyond its statutory inspection period they must be able to justify that decision based on risk assessment principles. In essence that will involve establishing whether there is sufficient in-house expertise to make a decision that it is appropriate to continue using equipment even though it is outside its statutory testing/examination period. That could also involve taking advice, for example from consulting engineers, even when those third parties are not authorised to issue the necessary certification.*
- *In the absence of an organisation not being able to satisfy itself that it is appropriate to continue using equipment outside its testing/certification date to make arrangements to take that equipment out of service pending statutory testing/examination.*

It is also important that where equipment has been out of service, for example due to premises/site closure, that it is tested/checked prior to being put back into service.

The other issue which has arisen is insurance cover. Some policies will allow insurers to refuse cover where claims arise from equipment subject to statutory examination/testing where such examination/testing has not been carried out within the prescribed period. In those circumstances appropriate enquiries should be made of insurers/brokers.

I hope the above is of some interest and assistance to you. Do let me know if you have any follow up queries.

Jon Cooper, Partner, Womble Bond Dickinson (UK) LLP

COVID-19: A message from the Department for International Trade

17. As the UK goes through this unprecedented period, the Department for International Trade is committed to standing behind businesses and is asking businesses to do their best to stand behind their workers.

We understand that as a business owner or employee, you may be concerned about the impact of coronavirus (Covid-19) on your business, your colleagues and employees.

The Government is supporting businesses and employees through a package of measures to help manage the impact of coronavirus (Covid-19).

These measures include financial support packages for businesses and support for employees' wages. UK Export Finance (UKEF) has also expanded the scope of its [Export Insurance Policy \(EXIP\)](#) meaning UK businesses will now be eligible to secure export insurance cover to all major markets.

You should now:

- Visit the [Business Support website](#) for more information about these and additional measures and support available to your business. This website will continue to be updated with the latest information.
- Pay particular attention to the [guidance for employees, employers and businesses](#) which is being updated regularly with the latest advice
- Read the guidance for [UK businesses trading internationally](#).
- Take [steps to protect yourself and others](#).

Request for PPE for Derriford

18. Right everyone listen up, I need your help. At my hospital we have managed to keep up with the incredible increase in demand for PPE through our established suppliers and some new ones. It is getting harder though. Right now though I need more as there is a need to help across GP's and social care and my colleagues in trusts across Devon and the land. So this is where you all come in , can you share this post with your networks. Ask your network to share it onwards as well. I need suppliers to contact me who have landed or planned UK stock of: 1. Surgical masks FFP2/N95 2. FFP3 masks 3. Full face Visors 4. White plastic aprons - rolls of 200 usually. 5. 400mm Long cuff gloves 6. Surgical gowns 7. Safety goggles 8. Alcohol gel.

Please message me and my team will contact you.

Many thanks

AND THIS WEEKEND ITS SO IMPORTANT THAT YOU STAY SAFE, STAY AT HOME , SAVE THE NHS

Andy McMinn, Chief Procurement Officer at University Hospitals Plymouth and Lead Spend Analysis at NHS England & Improvement Plymouth, England

LinkedIn profile – www.linkedin.com/in/andy-mcminn-752b481b



Muc-off looking for suppliers of 250ml, 500ml and 750ml bottles and triggers

19. Poole-based Muc-off - <https://muc-off.com/> have switched manufacturing from their usual bike cleaning products and developed a brand new range of hand washes & hand sanitizers. Sales are going well with lots of interest coming from both the UK including the NHS and worldwide. They are looking for additional suppliers of 250ml, 500ml and 750ml bottles and triggers. These are the types of bottles they are looking for:

Hand spray sanitisers
W.H.O. recommended formula
80% alcohol

W.H.O. sanitising hand spray
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION RECOMMENDED
ALCOHOL FORMULA AVAILABLE IN 7 SIZES.

specification:

- 80% Alcohol Formula
- W.H.O recommended formula
- 10% of profit from each bottle goes to the W.H.O COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund
- Available in:
 - 32ml
 - 50ml
 - 120ml
 - 250ml
 - 500ml
 - 750ml
 - 1 litre

- Specifications subject to change
- Available from April onwards
- Prices on request

If you know of any business that could help please let me have their contact details and I will pass them on. Steve Tyers, Relationship Director, Santander UK Corporate Bank.

Steve.Tyers@santander.co.uk

Professional Services communications received over the course of this week

20. The following communications from professional services firms and other commercial bodies have been received since the last bulletin.

- [Ashfords' third Coronavirus/COVID-19 weekly bulletin – 8/4 - here](#)
- [BCR Assoc's - Help to manage site and staff activity and keep costs low - here](#)
- [Bishop Fleming 6/4 – Latest updates to the Job Retention Scheme - here](#)
- [CIPD – CIPD experts, leaders and practitioners supporting you through this pandemic - 3/4 - here](#)
- [CIPD – CIPD Furloughing: your questions answered 8/4 - here](#)
- [Foot Anstey COVID Response Team - Updated furlough guidance – 6/4- The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme - what has changed? This includes: What is still not answered in the guidance? - here](#)
- [Nash & Co - Top 10 tips for Employers - Along with virtually every other part of life, it's safe to say that coronavirus \(or COVID-19\) has significantly disrupted UK businesses. We set out below our top ten tips for employers to cope with coronavirus: here](#)
- [PKF Francis Clark – 6/4 - Given the fanfare for the announcement of the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme \(CBILS\) and the demand for funding from businesses impacted by Covid-19, Paul Stout, Corporate Finance Partner at PKF Francis Clark, explains that it should not be a surprise that some of the relationship managers at the high street banks were reporting to us that in the region of 30% to 40% of their customers were looking at CBILS. More - here](#)
- [PKF Francis Clark – During these uncertain times we continue to support businesses navigate their way through the current pandemic. We have produced a practical guide in the form of a checklist which aims to provide tips and advice on what your business can do and should consider. The guide is available for you to download here: <https://lnkd.in/daWhEEv> We also continue to update our dedicated information hub with expert advice and Q&As here: <https://lnkd.in/dKEb3TP> Video - <https://vimeo.com/403248856>](#)
- [Thomas Westcott - Covid-19 Job retention scheme help sheet – here](#)

Other sources of advice, articles, videos and blogs:

David Draffan, PCC Service Director Economic Development, Corvid 19 – Business Blog No 6 - Saturday 4/4/2020 – [here](#)

Email from - [Johnny Mercer MP- 7/4 - here](#)

What Covid-19 means for influencer marketing – [Marketing Week – here](#)

IV Events

College calls on school-leavers to join virtual open day

21. City College Plymouth is inviting prospective students to its first ever virtual open day.

Aimed at 15 to 18-year-olds, the event is being organised in place of the College's annual spring Open Day, which has been cancelled due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

With the College closed to all apart from children of key workers, students with an Education, Health and Care Plan, and those with an assigned social worker, staff have developed the virtual open day as a way to enable school-leavers to explore all of their post-16 options using the Zoom video platform.

The virtual open day will take place on **Saturday 25 April**, with interactive subject talks scheduled to take place throughout the day. These 30-minute sessions are open to anyone thinking about applying to the College for a full-time course or Apprenticeship, but places are limited so registration is required.

V Consultations, Reviews, Surveys & Calls for Evidence

SWMAS Manufacturing Barometer

22. The Manufacturing Barometer is live and we're seeking your expert input!

Now, more than ever, it is vital that SME manufacturers are able to communicate their business needs. The impact of COVID-19 will vary from business to business depending on the type of product being manufactured. Whether you are experiencing a spike in demand or a reduction in sales, we want to better understand the support you need as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

ADD YOUR VIEWS TODAY <https://survey.zohopublic.eu/zs/LHh1U7>

Help reflect the voice of the sector!

Your response will help identify and call for the support you, and other manufacturing SMEs, need to help mitigate the impact that COVID-19 has on your business.

See page 2 above for initial results that have been revealed.

****This survey is open until 4pm on Friday 17th April 2020****

Thank you for your continued support of the Manufacturing Barometer, and we look forward to hearing what you have to say this quarter.



VI Community Requests & Corporate Social Responsibility Matters etc.

Good Neighbours Scheme – an option for furloughed workers?

23. The Plymouth Good Neighbours scheme <https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/goodneighbourscheme> will see the Council join forces with community groups and charities across the city to provide a central place for people to put their hat in the ring to help. We'll be updating our page regularly as more and more groups get in touch with us.

We'll collect names and skillsets and then help groups by distributing volunteers with the right skills to

right places at the right time, directly and through the many great voluntary sector organisations in the city, and key partners such as the Plymouth Octopus Project and Our Plymouth.

We fully expect to redeploy people from all over the council to help answer phones, to guide people through this incredibly difficult time and to help deliver services to people's doors.

But we'll also need the goodwill of residents to help us.

Thank you so much for getting involved.

How to help safely

The Government has issued advice on things to consider before volunteering. Please read it thoroughly [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) website before deciding to put yourself forward.

We have also launched our own [Code of Conduct](#).

Agencies actively seeking volunteers

- Age UK - seeking volunteers for various tasks involved in helping the elderly in Plymouth. Find out more on the [Age UK](#) website.

Already out there helping?

Let us know. We will be able to provide you with support and, if you want it, some more volunteers by featuring you on this website. This will ensure that we're not doubling up and wasting valuable resource where it isn't require.

Welcome to the Plymouth Good Neighbours Scheme.

On this page [here](#) you can find a number of different options for volunteering so that you can help those less fortunate than you as the coronavirus outbreak escalates.

Remember furloughed workers can volunteer – see

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wage-costs-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme> search for 'volunteer'.

THE PLYMOUTH
GOOD NEIGHBOURS
SCHEME

Coordinating our voluntary response to coronavirus



Covid-19 Most Useful websites for information

Here is a selection of government; local government; employment advisory bodies and private sector business websites that can be relied on to be frequently updated with the latest Covid-19 news for employers and businesses. As you can imagine, most include duplicate material.



If you are a PMG member and you can't find what you are looking for, please contact stevegerry@dsl.pipex.com



HM Government COVID-19: support for business

<https://www.businesssupport.gov.uk/coronavirus-business-support/> NB: This is being updated regularly with the latest advice. It may have changed since you last looked. Subscribe to bulletins - [here](#)

Heart of the SW LEP Growth Hub

The LEP is working hard with key partners in Government, Local Authorities, Business Representative Organisations and other agencies to support businesses through the unprecedented health and economic shock we are facing due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Heart of the South West Growth Hub is being promoted as a single point of contact for all advice and guidance, and its website is continually update as new information comes in about the measures and support packages that are emerging from Government.



Details on specific financial packages, eligibility and processes for applying are still being developed. At the same time local and free support and assistance is being offered by local partners and we are including details and links to these schemes on the Growth Hub website.

The Growth Hub team have capacity and interim support has been put into place by LEP partners to ensure increased volumes of enquiries can be managed. Longer term capacity is also being reviewed considering the budget announcement of more funding for Growth Hubs.

Updates and communications on latest advice will also begin shortly from the Growth Hub and businesses can sign up to receive this service. In the meantime, the Growth Hub's contact details are:

Website: www.heartofswgrowthhub.co.uk/

Email: info@heartofswgrowthhub.co.uk

Tel: 03456 047 047

Covid-19 newsletter – 8/4 - <https://mailchi.mp/heartofswgrowthhub/growth-hub-newsletter-8th-april-2020?e=b920e7bfa5>

Plymouth City Council (Invest Plymouth site) –

<https://www.visitplymouth.co.uk/invest/business-support/covid-19>

PCC are also producing a regular covid-19 newsletter

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKPCC/bulletins/284566b>



Subscription point - here: <https://www.visitplymouth.co.uk/invest/news/newsletter-link>

South Hams & West Devon district councils have their own bulletin

6/4 - <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKSWDEVON/bulletins/2847ddc>

Devon County Council

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/document/coronavirus-advice-in-devon/#section-4>



6/4 update - <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKDEVONCC/bulletins/2852295>

Business West

Business West is the largest Chamber of Commerce in the SW. It is a not-for-profit company with 200 staff and a turnover of £10 million.

'We provide guidance & support on Coronavirus (COVID-19) for businesses, employers and employees in the region.

We're working urgently to clarify how businesses can access the new measures announced by government – and will convey this to businesses as quickly as possible through the hub'.

<https://www.businesswest.co.uk/trading-through-coronavirus>



MAKEUK



All PMG members are eligible to become affiliate members of MAKEUK (formerly known as The Engineering Employers Federation). If you want to join contact stevegerry@dsl.pipex.com

The Manufacturers' Organisation <https://www.makeuk.org/coronavirus>

Webinar 25/3 - Our policy experts guide you through the new measures including the job retention scheme, the process, eligibility and what it means for you. Along with the new rules on SSP and childcare for key workers.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=3&v=2R6Xtn40tNo&feature=emb_logo

South West Business Council

In response to the challenges facing businesses around the region, SWBC has launched a COVID19 Taskforce to help mitigate the impact on businesses as far as possible. We have brought together firms of lawyers and accountants, in addition to banking, corporate real estate, PR & Communications companies and HR specialists to respond to business questions and short term requests for support. More -

<https://www.southwestbusinesscouncil.co.uk/2020/03/24/covid19-taskforce/>



ACAS



ACAS is the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service. We work with millions of employers and employees every year to improve workplace relationships. We're an independent public body that receives funding from the government.

This site is particularly strong on employment related issues including statutory sick pay.

<https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus>

This information is also available on the PMG website.

Credits:

The Editor of this bulletin is grateful to various news sources for stories contained either herein or in previous editions, including: The [Plymouth Herald](#) and the Financial Times.

Image credits:

BEIS, Constantinos Regas, Monty Rakusen/EuroTech, Composite Integration, Womble Bond Dickinson and Muc-off.

NB: Some weblinks are only accessible temporarily until the release of the next edition of this newsletter. Pl. contact the editor if you cannot access the link you require. stevegerry@dsl.pipex.com

If you want to read what some people are saying about this newsletter please see [here](#) and scroll down towards the bottom of the screen. All comments are unsolicited. Please send me your own if you wish!

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