

Covid-19 Bulletin

16 September 2020



New guidance on what businesses need to do to protect staff and customers

Government guidance on Working Safely during Coronavirus has been updated to include a new section on '*Priority actions to take – what businesses need to do to protect staff and customers*'.

This includes seven actions to take as well as a list of things to be aware of when working in specific environments, including:

- [Vehicles](#)
- [Offices](#)
- [Branches](#)

[New rules on social contact](#) have also been introduced this week to help combat the spread of coronavirus.

Government steps in to stop business evictions

The Government has [announced that commercial tenants will be protected from the risk of eviction](#) until the end of 2020. This extension will protect businesses that are struggling to pay their rent due to the impact of Covid-19 from being evicted and help the thousands of people working in these sectors feel more secure about their jobs.

Businesses urged to prepare for NHS Covid-19 app

Pubs, restaurants, hairdressers, cinemas and other venues across England and Wales are being urged to download QR codes to prepare for public rollout of new app. The move comes ahead of a national launch of the [NHS COVID-19 app](#) across England and Wales on Thursday 24 September.

Local restrictions imposed to limit Covid transmission

The Government is publishing regularly updates on [areas with additional local restrictions](#) and is providing guidance for local authorities, residents and workers on what to do and how to manage the outbreak as cases continue to rise.

[Latest figures](#) from Government show that as of 11 September 2020 the 'R' rate for the UK is 1.0-1.2 and the growth rate range is -1% to +3% per day.

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ONS figures show gradually improving picture for business

The Office for National Statistics has published results from its [latest Business Impact of Coronavirus Survey](#) reporting on how turnover, workforce and trading status have been affected in two-week reference periods, from Wave 7 (1 to 14 June 2020) to Wave 12 (10 to 23 August 2020).

- The proportion of businesses that were currently trading gradually rose from 86% in Wave 7 to 96% by Wave 12.
- Proportions of the workforce furloughed within responding businesses that had not permanently stopped trading fell from 23% in Wave 7 to 11% in Wave 12.
- The proportion working at their normal place of work or working remotely rose from 72% in Wave 7 to 85% in Wave 12.
- The proportion of businesses reporting a decrease in turnover in the previous two weeks gradually fell from 64% in Wave 7 to 47% by Wave 12.

Wave 12 sampled 23,904 businesses of all sizes. Wave 13 data will be published on 24 September.

GDP rises for third consecutive month

The Office for National Statistics has published [figures on the impact on output in the UK economy: July 2020](#) which shows that monthly gross domestic product (GDP) rose by 6.6% during July 2020 but was 11.7% below February 2020 levels.

Following a third consecutive month of growth during July 2020, monthly GDP has recovered just over half of the decline in output from February 2020, measured from its lowest point during April 2020.

BVRLA Covid-19 survey shows green shoots of optimism

The views of members were canvassed in a recent [BVRLA Covid-19 Survey](#) to gain an understanding of the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on members' businesses. Wave 1 of the survey was conducted in June 2020.

Despite most (94%) of the respondents saying that revenue will be down this year, the overall outlook is more positive than three months ago with just 16% expecting revenue to be less than 50% of target, compared with 43% in the last wave.

An increasing number of respondents also report a more optimistic view when it comes to the number of people at risk of redundancy and the length of time members expect recovery to take.

- 26% indicate that more than 10% of their staff will be in danger of redundancy in November, compared with 35% in Wave 1.
- 61% expect the recovery to take less than a year compared with 50% in Wave 1.

Both Covid-19 Surveys plus other industry reports can be found in the [Industry Insight section of the BVRLA website](#).

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Funding open to entrepreneurs and innovators looking to create a better transport system

Innovative transport start-ups with a focus on decarbonisation or Covid-19 recovery can bid for a share of over £1 million in Department for Transport funding which became available this week.

The [Transport-Technology Research and Innovation Grant](#) (T-TRIG) is now in its 11th round of funding. Over 60% of grants so far have been awarded to SMEs and 30% to universities.

Guidance updated on claiming back SSP

The Government has updated [guidance on claiming back Statutory Sick Pay](#) to reflect that from 26 August 2020 employers can claim for employees who have been notified by the NHS to self-isolate before surgery.

Self-isolation requirements when entering the UK

[New guidance has been published](#) setting out how to self-isolate when arriving in the UK. It states you will not be allowed to leave the place you're staying for the first 14 days if you are entering the UK from one of the countries not on the travel corridors list.

[List of countries, territories and regions](#) from where you can travel to England and may not have to self-isolate is regularly updated to reflect changes which that can be made at short notice.

Recent changes include French Polynesia, Hungary, Portugal and Réunion were removed from the travel corridors list at 4am Saturday 12 September 2020, whilst Sweden was added.

Preferred mode of transport continues to be motor vehicles

The Department for Transport's [latest transport usage figures](#) show that National Rail usage peaked at 42% of pre-pandemic levels during this past week, similar to the London Underground which saw usage levels peaking at 40% of pre-pandemic levels.

In contrast, motor vehicle weekday usage levels peaked at 96% of pre-pandemic levels with weekend usage exceeding last year's figures, reaching 107% of pre-pandemic levels.