

# London

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[www.londonbusinessmatters.co.uk](http://www.londonbusinessmatters.co.uk)

## Business Matters



# Nightingale Ho London



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# Nightingale opens in record time

The NHS Nightingale Hospital London was the first of a chain of temporary hospitals set up by NHS England for the coronavirus pandemic. Housed in the ExCeL convention centre it was put together in record time - under a fortnight - and was designed to have an initial capacity for 500 patients, with potential for 4,000.

**“It is testament to their hard work and dedication that an additional four hospitals will be rolled out across the nation.”**

### Unprecedented

At the opening ceremony Secretary of State for Health Matt Hancock made a keynote speech. He said: “The nation is facing an unprecedented global emergency and we are



taking exceptional measures to ensure the NHS has whatever it needs to tackle this virus. The NHS and the military have achieved something extraordinary in setting up NHS Nightingale, London in only a matter of days.

“It is testament to their hard work and dedication that an additional four hospitals will be rolled out across the nation. We must all play our part to assist our heroes on the

health and social care frontline and I urge everyone to stay at home, protect the NHS and save lives.”

### Critical care

Reports of the successful treatment and subsequent discharge of the hospital’s first patients came in mid-April. Anticipated large numbers of admissions had not materialised as NHS critical care capacity in London had been holding up well, with existing hospitals managing despite the significant increase in demand for care.

The new hospital had been expecting to draw nursing staff from elsewhere in London only if there was a surge in patient numbers. There were however reports that requests to take in new patients had been turned down because of staffing issues.



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# Chamber members step up for the NHS and London



With coronavirus continuing to impact the country and the NHS under increasing pressure, LCCI members have been playing a key role in helping the capital and health service to respond to the crisis. *Steven Reilly-Hii reports*

From providing bikes so NHS staff can commute safely, to provision of accommodation, food, and supplies, appeals for PPE for disability carers, through to providing their premises for NHS purposes – Chamber members have stepped up to help the coronavirus response.

Richard Burge, LCCI chief executive commented: “So many of London and the UK’s businesses are showing right now just how much people matter to them – whether their own employees, NHS staff, or those they are caring for. It’s wonderful to see so many businesses providing vital support to the NHS and assisting our national response. Business is so often a force for good, and that fact doesn’t always make the headlines in normal times.”

## Entrepreneur and philanthropist

LCCI members playing a role include *Here To Help London*: a new initiative created and supported by entrepreneur and philanthropist Tony Matharu to assist London in the unprecedented Covid-19 crisis.

Matharu, an LCCI board member and chair of its Asian Business Association, established the initiative to help key workers and wider community during the pandemic.



**“So many of London and the UK’s businesses are showing right now just how much people matter to them.”**



Co-sponsored by Handsfree Group, Blue Orchid Hotels, Integrity International Group and Global Hospitality Services, *Here to Help London* has already provided over 3,500 room nights and over 20,000 meals to a mix of NHS service providers, key workers, local authority referrals, specialist Covid-19 con-

tractors, those in search of supported self-isolation, together with foreign nationals left stranded due to travel restrictions.

The initiative has also helped distribute soap and hand lotion, free eggs, and even the preparation of free pancakes for Easter to be delivered to central London hospitals.

## Frontline

Also helping key workers to stay centrally is OYO Hotels & Homes – who have launched a new ‘virtual hotel’ named OYO Rooms for Carers where the public can book overnight stays (at the cost of £25 per room, per night), which are passed over to NHS Trusts for frontline

healthcare workers to redeem at their nearest OYO hotel.

As the coronavirus crisis began, OYO UK announced that it was keeping over 2,000 rooms open to accommodate key workers who are unable to work from home and are in need of places to stay close to their place of employment. The company introduced significantly reduced fixed rate pricing across its UK properties to remove unpredictability, allowing individuals and businesses to accurately budget for contingency accommodation.

## Free bike loans

Also supporting key workers, Brompton Bike Hire, the sister company to Brompton Bicycle Ltd – the UK’s largest bicycle manufacturer – approached St Barts Hospital and NHS London to provide free bike loans for their frontline staff who wished to avoid being crammed onto buses and trains during the coronavirus crisis. To date, over 500 NHS staff have registered for the free rental of a Brompton Bike.

Brompton then went further, by unveiling a new initiative which aims to get over 1,000 Brompton bikes hired free to NHS staff during the Covid-19 pandemic. The *Wheels for Heroes* campaign has seen Brompton Bike Hire launch a Crowdfunder and commit production costs equating to an investment of up to £100,000 to fund bikes for NHS workers. With public and corporate support, the bikes will be produced at below cost price and loaned straight to healthcare workers via the Brompton Bike Hire network for as long as lockdown restrictions are in place.



**Direct support**

Also providing direct support to the NHS, around 1,500 nursing and midwifery students, plus staff, from Middlesex University (MDX) are helping the NHS in the fight against coronavirus.

MDX has also laser-cut 184 visors for staff at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, and hopes soon to produce up to 7,000 a week for London healthcare workers, to protect their faces and eyes as they tackle the crisis.

Livability, a disability charity, is also on the frontline at this difficult time as their key workers ensure the disabled people they support in care homes and communities keep safe



and well. The charity has launched an appeal asking for donations, including to help them to fund PPE to protect their staff, volunteers and those they are caring for.

**Key workers**

Gatwick Airport are also donating

to the coronavirus cause – having provided use of its long-stay car park as a drive-through testing centre.

Initially for use by NHS staff and invited key workers, the site is available between 9-5 daily, on an appointment-only basis.

Another airport playing a key role is London City Airport – who in early April welcomed an RAF chinook test flight to check procedures, should direct air access to the newly-opened NHS Nightingale be required. The airport, despite temporarily suspending commercial operations, remains ready to support the military and emergency services.

- [www.heretohelpLondon.com](http://www.heretohelpLondon.com)
- [www.oyorooms.com](http://www.oyorooms.com)
- [www.crowdfunder.co.uk](http://www.crowdfunder.co.uk)
- [www.mdx.ac.uk](http://www.mdx.ac.uk)
- [www.livability.org.uk](http://www.livability.org.uk)
- [www.gatwickairport.com](http://www.gatwickairport.com)
- [www.londoncityairport.com](http://www.londoncityairport.com)

Steven Reilly-Hii is senior media relations manager at LCCI

**For further information about LCCI's support and services for London businesses, including guidance and a free webinar series to boost business resilience, visit [www.londonchamber.co.uk](http://www.londonchamber.co.uk)**

# Furlough extension welcomed by business

Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak (inset) announced in mid-April that the government's furlough scheme would be extended by a further month i.e. to the end of June. This was a measure, said the government, that would keep millions of people in jobs and provide businesses with the certainty they needed.

Announcing the extension – to be reviewed monthly – the Chancellor spoke of the unprecedented actions the government had taken through an uncertain period to support jobs and businesses. He added: "It is vital for people's livelihoods that the UK economy gets up and running again when it is safe to do so, and I will continue to review the scheme so it is supporting our recovery."



Photo by Chris McAndrew (CC BY 3.0)

**Cliff edge**

Reacting to the news LCCI chief executive Richard Burge said:

"Businesses thank the Chancellor for rapidly acting upon their call for funding clarity beyond May. A monthly review is also welcome but needs to be conducted in good time so that employers are not on a monthly cliff edge of redundancy consultation."

BCC director general Adam Marshall said: "This commonsense move will provide many with the support they need to protect livelihoods as lockdown continues." He added that, with applications for the scheme opening shortly, and April's payday fast approaching, it was essential that payments were made as soon as possible.

Payments to firms in the scheme were reported to be coming through satisfactorily at the end of April.

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[www.proudtocarelondon.org.uk](http://www.proudtocarelondon.org.uk)

## The streets of London

No surprise of course that the streets and bridges of the capital are almost devoid of traffic and people. Capturing the moment on camera has become a favourite pastime of many of us as we take our daily exercise.

On a sunny April day it was rewarding to witness the lack of interviewees in the usually favoured places in and around Parliament Square, and to see the empty spaces of the City and the West End, with messages of thanks and optimism for the future.

Back in the suburbs the views of the city were as clear as can be recalled as pollution levels drop and images naturally become high resolution.



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# Managing your business-critical IP during the COVID-19 crisis

Victor Caddy, Director  
Trade mark and design attorney  
Wynne-Jones IP



**UK businesses are fighting for survival during the COVID-19 outbreak and trying to trade under difficult conditions.**

If you're worried your business is going to the wall, intellectual property (IP) probably isn't front of your mind, right? Where is the money coming from to invest in such luxuries when staff are being furloughed and orders have been postponed?

Protecting your products, ideas and brands is not a luxury, not even in these sanity-challenging times and it's still as important in managing the strategic risk to your company.

**What are the risks?**

**1. You risk damaging your business recovery**

SMEs that have filed at least one intellectual property (IP) right are 21% more likely to experience a growth period afterwards and are 10% more likely to become a high-growth company than those without rights applications. In fact, SMEs with an IP portfolio in place actually boost their chances of high growth by a third. There is no reason to believe that this will not also apply in the current crisis.

**2. You risk not being able to achieve your business goals**

If you don't invest in IP when it's needed you risk others stealing it or registering IP rights in similar areas that will prevent you from using yours once the crisis has passed.

**3. You risk missing out on increased company value**

Having IP assets locked down can be a key requirement for investors. IP can also add to the overall value of a business should you be looking to sell or merge in future.

**What do you need to do in times of business crisis?**

**1. Have a risk management plan**

It's vitally important that you have identified, assessed and mitigated the risks across all your business functions. You cannot take steps to protect your business, including your IP assets, unless you have this in place and know what you are going to do.

**2. Include IP in your risk management plan**

As part of this risk management plan you need to identify your IP assets and assess whether they're business critical. Being business critical means that the IP assets are essential to the delivery of your business goals, both during and after the crisis.

**3. Don't risk losing your IP**

If an IP asset is regarded as business critical you need to protect it. If you already have IP rights in place you need to ensure you keep them alive. You risk the viability of your business by not protecting business-critical IP; it's that simple.

**4. Identify financial support**

Find out if there is funding available that may be used to pay for protection of IP rights. If you use an IP firm, see if you can negotiate a payment plan with them.

If you don't have an IP firm in place, Wynne-Jones IP would be happy to offer advice and guidance on all aspects of protecting your business-critical IP assets during this difficult time and beyond. Contact us if you want a friendly ear and practical advice.

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## Construction Claims And Coronavirus

Ryland Ash, Managing Partner  
Silver Shemmings Ash



Construction projects of all shapes and sizes face the same risks: delays and additional costs; but these risks have increased exponentially since the outbreak of the Coronavirus.

The first issue to establish before a claim can be made is: which party has accepted the risk associated with the delay event or the additional cost? This will be determined by the terms of the contract the parties have entered into or, where not expressly stated or agreed, by terms implied by the common law and statutes.

In the UK and on international projects, it is common for parties to use 'standard' building contracts such as the JCT, NEC and FIDIC forms that contain essential terms relating to scope, price and time for completion. Often, however, bespoke amendments are made to these standard forms in favour of the party driving the changes, usually making the obligations of the contractor more onerous. This is the crucial moment when risk is re-allocated - way before any construction work has even begun.

There are a number of standard contractual provisions that may be relevant to the issue of the Coronavirus: instructions, changes or variations, suspension, prevention and force majeure. Most of these provisions will entitle a contractor to an extension of time, but only some of them will entitle a contractor to recover the loss and expense it incurs as a result. This is the big issue in construction law right now.

Under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (as amended in 2009), English law provides that there is a right under every qualifying 'construction contract' to regular interim payments, and to seek a decision from a third-party adjudicator within 28 days from any dispute arising under the contract. Adjudication is a very cost-effective and quick process when compared to Court proceedings and for these reasons, over 90% of all construction disputes that we see are resolved this way.

As the full impact of the current pandemic takes hold economically, the priority for construction projects is cash flow. The best way to maintain this is to enforce your rights early and quickly. Seeking an early and sensible agreement with your contractor or client is the ideal solution, but such agreements need to be carefully worded if they are to be binding and reliable. If an agreement cannot be reached, then adjudication is likely to be the best way to save your project.

To avoid these issues altogether, the parties need to have agreed contract terms that fully meet the requirements of the project by setting down appropriate procedures to manage the risks effectively. Achieving this aim requires specialist legal and commercial advice from construction lawyers throughout the lifecycle of the project.

Ryland Ash is the Managing Partner at Silver Shemmings Ash. He is dual qualified as a Barrister & Solicitor-Advocate and the focus of his work is dispute resolution.

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# Riding out the pandemic - advice and support



**Navigating the schemes and initiatives to help businesses – and individuals – survive the pandemic and stay in some sort of shape to be able to operate effectively in the new world is a challenging task in itself. *London Business Matters* picks out a selection of sources of help to ease the path, starting with an extract from the LCCI website**

- Apply for furlough funding [www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wages-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wages-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme)
- Covid-19: The Pensions Regulator [www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/en/covid-19-coronavirus-what-you-need-to-consider](http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/en/covid-19-coronavirus-what-you-need-to-consider)

## Government advice and support



Stay alert with the latest information from the Government and the UK's response to coronavirus.

- Coronavirus Business Support [www.gov.uk/coronavirus/business-support](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/business-support)
- Find coronavirus financial support for your business [www.gov.uk/business-coronavirus-support-finder](http://www.gov.uk/business-coronavirus-support-finder)



## CyberAware

The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) has launched a campaign to provide advice on how the public can protect their passwords, accounts and devices. In tandem with the launch of a new Suspicious Email Reporting Service, the NCSC are working to stop criminals undertaking coronavirus related scams. [www.ncsc.gov.uk/cyberaware/home](http://www.ncsc.gov.uk/cyberaware/home)

### Pay it Forward for the future of London businesses

This Mayor of London's initiative with Crowdfunder is offering 100 per cent free fundraising to help businesses to secure trade by pre-selling vouchers, goods and services. You can get involved by crowdfunding for your business, supporting your local business or nominating a business.

[payitforward.london.gov.uk/](http://payitforward.london.gov.uk/)

### London Growth Hub



To support London-based businesses, the London Growth Hub has brought together essential resources to help your business manage and mitigate its exposure to the impact of coronavirus. This page is kept up to date with the latest developments and support.

[www.growthhub.london/covid-19-coronavirus-support-for-businesses-and-employers](http://www.growthhub.london/covid-19-coronavirus-support-for-businesses-and-employers)

### Business Checker Support Tool



Helps businesses and self-employed people across the UK understand what financial support is available to them during the coronavirus pandemic.

[www.gov.uk/business-coronavirus-support-finder](http://www.gov.uk/business-coronavirus-support-finder)

### The Community Impact Partnership

Provides social investment to help charities, social enterprises, and community businesses to grow and innovate. The CIP fund is open and welcomes applications for investment.

[communityimpactpartnership.co.uk](http://communityimpactpartnership.co.uk)

### British Chambers of Commerce

Visit their comprehensive Coronavirus Support Hub [www.britishchambers.org.uk/page/coronavirus](http://www.britishchambers.org.uk/page/coronavirus)

## How to offer coronavirus support from your business

Use this government service to offer 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.

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-support-from-business>

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# Speaking up for London business

**LCCI in the news by Steven Reilly-Hii**

I'm sure that many *LBM* readers will agree with me when I say that we thought the Brexit period was keeping us busy. But then came along coronavirus!

The media demand for LCCI comment and interviews with LCCI member during this time remains very high indeed.

We believe that it's vital that the Chamber maximises every opportunity to stand up for the interests of business. That's why you'll have seen, heard or read what LCCI chief executive Richard Burge has been saying, right across the nation's media over recent weeks.



In fact, since he started with LCCI in February, Burge has been a regular on your screens – starting with a spirited debate with Greenpeace on *BBC News* channel about the merits of Heathrow expansion. Burge clearly has a broadcast presence that the media have swiftly recognised, and which LCCI has looked to maximise during the pandemic crisis on behalf of its membership.

## Surviving

The pace of adequate government and banking sector support is the difference between a business surviving or going to the wall during the current crisis, and LCCI has been forthright in making this clear in the media and to policy makers. The first half of April saw LCCI quoted in over



50 media outlets, reaching over eight million people across the country.

There have been interviews on *Sky News*, *BBC News*, *Channel 4 News*, *BBC Politics London*, *BBC Radio London*, and *Bloomberg Radio*, amongst others.

A comment piece about banking behaviour during the crisis from Richard Burge in *CityAM* proved such a talking point that a further 30 media outlets across the UK ran the story, including some big-hitting national print titles.

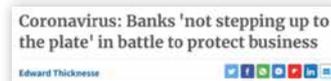
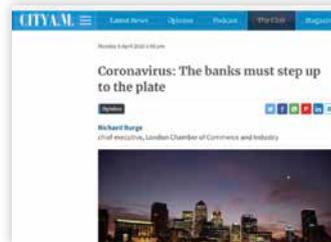


## Publicise

Whilst we are doing what we can to speak up for the interests of London businesses, many media stories are also dependent on having businesses themselves to speak to. So, if you have a story that you would happily publicise about how coronavirus is impacting your business, or how you are helping the NHS or your community, or how you've adapted your business to survive during the crisis – then send me an email at [press@londonchamber.co.uk](mailto:press@londonchamber.co.uk)

We've recently helped members to tell their story in prominent London and national media, including a powerful press release about how our membership has stepped up to help the NHS and key workers – see pages 4 and 5 for the full story.

Steven Reilly-Hii is senior media relations manager at LCCI



The London Chamber of Commerce has added its voice to calls for the UK's banks to do more to help British businesses, as some leaders "are simply not



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# Covid-19 – the waiting game



by Jacqueline O'Donovan

due to Brexit, the black cloud had lifted in January. I had hoped that downturns and unpredictable times would be in the past; at least for now anyway! But, sadly not. Little did I expect that a few short months later, we would be experiencing a worldwide pandemic and my days would be spent reminding people to self-distance and that washing your hands can save lives. It is all so surreal.

## Commendable

As a waste management company, we are crucial to keeping waste moving in these uncertain times. The work that the NHS and front-line workers have been carrying out to date has been nothing short of amazing and it is commendable how many leavers and retirees have returned to work following the Prime Minister's request for help to tackle the coronavirus. They have a daunting task ahead as they strive to relieve the pressure on the NHS and work together to save countless lives. The realisation of that task re-



Photo: Sludge 6 / CC BY-SA 2.0

ally hit me when I saw the 4,000-bed field-hospital being readied in the Excel Centre in London (pictured). The fact that the virus is indiscriminate and it could affect anyone, was brought home when our Prime Minister was admitted to hospital.

## Planning

For the business world, when this is over, we are most certainly going to come back ready to hit the ground running, as so much work and so many projects will have been put on hold or left incomplete. However, it is important I feel, that businesses are not lulled into a false sense of security. It is in the months after normality is back that the tax/

VAT deferrals and loans will need to be repaid, the financial breaks will come to an end and businesses will need to factor this into their fiscal models. Planning for these repayments in advance will ensure that there are no surprises ahead.

Unfortunately, for business owners, we have no control over when that time will come. No one can tell us how long this crisis will go on for because no one knows. All we can do is wait and hope for the best.

I will use some of the time ahead to play out the different scenarios and weigh up all the likely outcomes and plan for every eventuality. It is more important than ever to know that this will pass and when it does and some degree of normality returns, we must be ready, prepared and in a strong position to tackle whatever lies ahead – as business owners, as a community and as a nation. ”

Jacqueline O'Donovan is managing director of O'Donovan Waste Disposal [www.odonovan.co.uk](http://www.odonovan.co.uk)

“**W**ow! Now I know how a goldfish feels – all eyes on me. Working in a family-run business, my biggest task in these uncertain times has been managing and balancing my team's reactions to the coronavirus pandemic. My role has been centred on reporting and reassuring our 185 employees and my siblings as the situation changes daily. It is at a time like this, as a managing director, you can feel like a goldfish in a bowl.

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# International trade and the pandemic

Despite the fact that a large proportion of the world is in lock-down, trade continues. This is necessary because countries are not self-sufficient in food production; and medical equipment and supplies need to be moved cross-border too

Trade continues but the procedures are slower and volumes are down significantly. Like everywhere else, customs posts must observe physical distancing and this adds time to clearance processes, for both import and export.

Dover, the UK's busiest port volume-wise is reportedly around 90 per cent down in trade terms. And similar figures have been quoted for Heathrow, Britain's biggest airport, value-wise, for the movement of goods. Passenger travel has seen a 75 per cent reduction at the airport with the consequence that two of its five terminals have been closed, and only one of its two runways currently deployed.

A vast amount of air cargo is carried in the holds of passenger planes so it may not be surprising to note that cargo-only traffic increased in the last week of March by over 400 per cent. A significant amount of that cargo will consist of essential supplies, and indeed 40 per cent of the UK's pharmaceutical trade goes through Heathrow. A company which produces components for coronavirus testing equipment and has recently needed to import machinery (from both inside and outside the EU) to increase its production – another good reason for trade to continue.

## Global supply chains

At the beginning of April Axel van Trotsenburg of the World Bank spoke of the food and personal protective equipment crisis in parts of the world, especially Africa, and the need therefore for goods to be shipped. He also spoke of the threat to global supply chains and the potential undermining of globalisation. Integration in that context has never



**A vast amount of air cargo is carried in the holds of passenger planes so it may not be surprising to note that cargo-only traffic increased in the last week of March by over 400 per cent.**

been more advanced – many examples were cited in the Brexit debate. In the present circumstances, there have been some striking instances of the human element of global integration. *The Economist* reported that Apple, which relies on parts and assembly from China, shuttles 50 company executives between California and Chinese cities every day in normal circumstances – even during the US-China 'trade war'.

Looking to the future, the extreme integrity of global supply

chains may be questioned as companies seek to ensure that they have access to what they need, whatever the future circumstances. Van Trotsenburg has spoken of the potential rise of economic nationalism. And others have pointed out that, shorter term, as the Far East recovers from the pandemic, we can expect an avalanche of imported goods into the West.

## Government measures

Understandably governments are spending billions in introducing

measures to keep business going. Until recently it appeared to be only India who had bought in programmes specifically for exporting companies, keenly aware like so many countries of the need for foreign exchange receipts.

At the beginning of April however the UK's Department for Trade bought out guidance for businesses trading internationally. Some information pointed to existing measures aimed at keeping all businesses afloat but some was specifically for exporting companies. Alongside UKEF's export working capital scheme and export insurance policies (export credit guarantees) there is also a service for finding alternative suppliers, and the removal of import duties (12 per cent) for medical equipment.

Contact [customer.service@UKexportfinance.gov.uk](mailto:customer.service@UKexportfinance.gov.uk) for information.

It is also the case though that many countries have restricted exports of medical supplies, most of these since the crisis began.

## Trade promotion

Lockdown and travel restrictions mean that physical trade visits are on hold for the time being. But that is not to say that they can't be conducted in other ways. The LCCI is part of a network replacing ten scheduled missions – mainly to Asia and Africa – with virtual ones. Online there will be market briefings, how to do business in individual countries, sector briefings, company experience of the markets, and government projects and priorities – see page 17 for further details.

These are presented through webinars, podcasts and briefings culminating in in-market introductions. There is no doubt that physical missions will return when the crisis is over, but this helps to keep trade going and prepare for future deals.

This article is based on material from the LCCI London Resilience webinar on international trade which took place in early April. See page 22 for the May programme.



# In scientists I trust



In mid-April LCCI chief executive **Richard Burge** considered the role of experts in the pandemic and applauded them for giving us the facts

“In the next few hours, the government will almost certainly decide to extend the lockdown. This is not a reaction based on any inside knowledge, just I am just trying to read the runes.

And where do those runes come from? For me, the most important ones are those of the scientists and medics who stand alongside the ministers during the daily briefing from Downing Street.

## Evidence

It is a long time since I was trained as a scientist (as an evolutionary biologist specialising in mammals) and I do not claim to be a scientist now. But I do retain that way of thinking; that approach to understanding what the evidence tells you at that moment in time.

It demands huge humility. Because every time you make a decision based on your current under-

standing, you have to stand ready to be proved wrong or misguided by new evidence that may appear within minutes. It is tough, especially when the public and the political world expect you to know, and for that knowledge to be certain, and for that certainty to be proved right by your consequent actions. So the runes can only be what we understand now, today, this minute, and not what we may know tomorrow.

## Part of the dialogue

But something is different now. Most people in the UK are relatively highly educated. The vast majority have been schooled for at least 10 years, and can read write, and understand figures. People expect to be treated seriously and as part of the dialogue. I am impressed by the scientists and medics who explain the situation to us. They are trying to give us the information which explains why they are coming to decisions that they are.

As we approach a further extension, we need to be given the facts behind that decision. Those facts may demonstrate that we got things wrong in the recent past – so be it. The examination of the history of our actions can wait. What matters is that we are given the facts as understood now, and the actions we need to take on that basis for the next few weeks,

This is trust. I accept that experts are doing their best to understand a complex situation and are applying that knowledge to come to the best decision that they can make. I do trust our scientists; but I do not ask – or expect – them to be perfect. ”



SPONSORED COLUMN

# Does the stock market affect my pension pot?



By Andrew Tricker, Wealth Management Director at Lubbock Fine Wealth Management

**For many, the current stock market “Corona-crisis” will have had a significant impact on their investing confidence and on their future plans.**

**Concern is a reasonable reaction. We have witnessed the sharpest ever bear market, worse than the Global Financial Crisis or 1987’s ‘Black Monday’.**

Whilst confidence has been dented across age ranges, it is appropriate to remind those under 40 that there will be time to recover. This may be the first significant downturn in your investing life, the period after 2008 has been unusually low in volatility, however, investment markets will continue to deliver longer-term returns.

For those of a more “mature vintage”, this downturn could not have come at a worse time. If you are already retired and drawing from investments, what is your best strategy? Should you move to cash until the economy returns to normal? Should you take more risk and wait for an eventual recovery?

## What should you do?

The smart advice is to not sell at or near the bottom of the market. This simply crystallises your losses, which until then have only been on ‘paper’. But how do you recognise the bottom when it arrives? This is only clear in hindsight and the current situation is far from

predictable. For the first time in history the entire global economy has been halted. The statistics are not consistent, but around 50% of the world’s population are currently in lockdown.

What you need now is a clear head. There will be investment opportunities but there will also be significant casualties. The future could look very different.

While we will be more comfortable shopping online; have the confidence to use technology to facilitate virtual interactions and maybe even travel more mindfully when we can, if you are approaching retirement age, you may want to postpone your plans for 2 or 3 years and allow your assets to recover, while perhaps investing more. It may be appropriate to take on more risk. It may be appropriate to amend your targets and consider whether or not they were realistic in the first place. There may be other options to help achieve your goals.

Financial advisers have many tools at their disposal, like cashflow modelling and investment analysis software. They also have experience with similar situations that enable them to help you formulate the right strategy for your specific needs.

In conclusion: don’t despair, keep a cool head and employ a financial adviser to set you on the right path to the future you always dreamed of!

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**LubbockFine**  
 Wealth Management LLP

# Winners in international trade

Congratulations to two LCCI members who have picked up prestigious business awards – many would call them the ultimate awards – one for the second time

Step forward London Tradition and Warmup PLC who have both been honoured with the Queen's Award for Enterprise 2020 in the international trade category.

## Iconic

Founded in 2001, **London Tradition** designs and manufactures high quality outerwear and exports across the globe using a network of approved resellers.

The company first won the award in 2014 and are particularly renowned for their iconic duffle coat and transformation into a luxury heritage brand for an international market.

London Tradition began production in a factory on the site which has now become the landmark



THE QUEEN'S AWARDS  
FOR ENTERPRISE:  
INTERNATIONAL TRADE  
2020

Olympic Park in London. Today, all manufacturing is still based in London in its spacious factory and design studio by the River Lea in Hackney Wick. Every coat is hand-cut, hand-finished and made from sustainably-sourced fabrics from UK and Italian mills. The process demands exceptional skill and

**London Tradition and Warmup PLC** who have both been honoured with the **Queen's Award for Enterprise 2020**

in-depth experience of traditional methods of craftsmanship alongside cutting technology.

## Heroes

Mamun Chowdhury, co-founder and joint-managing director, paid tribute to the company's dedicated staff as well as heroes from the NHS and other essential services, and added: "After the lockdown is over London Tradition is determined to continue its leadership in the outerwear industry, driving demand for UK manufacturing abroad. We are proud that our products are made

locally, and we value that all our customers demand excellence in service and quality from a product made in England."

## Powerful

**Warmup** started in 1994 with a solution to a problem no one thought they had – how to heat a floor without raising floor height. After much research they had come up with a 2mm wide resistor wire that was powerful enough to heat a floor and the room, but tough enough to withstand the rigours of being placed under a tiled, stone or just about any kind of floor in a construction environment. It also had to be affordable, easy to control and install and cheap to run.

Floor heating as a concept has been around for thousands of years. However, how you work with the concept greatly affects the cost and effectiveness and, crucially, the longevity of the resulting system.

Within four years of setting up they had begun exporting to Germany, followed by setting up businesses in the US, Spain, Portugal and France.

## Diversity

Now in its 26th year, Warmup own and operate its business in 14 countries and exports under licence to more than 56 other countries. Over 2.1 million systems have been sold to those countries. Export business now makes up approximately 50 per cent of turnover and provides a diversity of business together with constant new ideas that dramatically adds to the overall value of Warmup PLC, the UK principal business.

## Talented

Warmup founder and chief executive Andrew Stimpson thanked a number of "great people who had contributed to the company's success" and commented: "This award recognises the talented people who have worked unceasingly for those twenty five years to do difficult things; like secure international regulatory approvals, hire great teams, get to grips with varying laws of everything from HR to IP, win competitive struggles against local incumbents and to above all live up to the high standards set by the Warmup brand name."



London Tradition



Warmup PLC

[www.londontradition.com](http://www.londontradition.com)  
[www.warmup.co.uk](http://www.warmup.co.uk)



## Overseas business opportunities

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



### Romania

Transylvanian manufacturer of wooden hot tubs with 19 years' experience in manufacturing wooden products wishes to enlarge its clients' portfolio by selling its hot tubs via an international agent on the basis of a commercial agency agreement.  
REF: BORO20200303001



### Lithuania

A manufacturer of polymerizing vinyl chloride (PVC) windows, doors, sliding and folding systems, winter gardens and other aluminum constructions is offering production. The company is looking for trade intermediaries and is seeking to work under commercial agency agreements or distribution services agreements with them. A subcontracting agreement could be offered to potential partners as well.  
REF: BOLT20200302002



### Poland

Distributor of ventilation and air conditioning systems, with experience in the industry and a wide portfolio of clients, offers its services as a distributor and representative of producers of heat exchangers. Cooperation is offered in the form of distribution or commercial agreement.  
REF: BRPL20200309001



### Netherlands

An e-tailer specialises in selling leather products like bags and shoes. For their web shop, the company is looking for new fashionable brands of leather/leatherette travel bags and suitcases for the low and middle segment. They are looking for brands based in Europe. A commercial agency agreement may be provided.  
REF: BRNL20200229001



### Germany

A textile company which manufactures commercial carpets with different finishing options and applications for walls and floors is offering weaving, finishing and laser treatment for woven heavy fabrics. The company is seeking partners from the textile industry, preferably from the technical textile sector. The collaboration is envisaged under sub-contracting agreements.  
REF: BODE20200306001



### Russian

Creator of a high-tech ball valve with a metal seal which is designed to work in conditions of high thermal loads at nuclear power plants. The company is looking for reliable suppliers of various metal pipe fittings (e.g. nuts, covers, front elements, drive unit) for the manufacture of valves and for the conclusion of a supplier agreement.  
REF: BRRU20200213004



### Israel

Company, active in the field of plastic manufacturing, has developed an innovative anti-finger trapping product. The door fitting is a simple and economical safety measure, particularly in situations where children or the elderly could sustain finger trapping injuries. The company is looking for a distribution agreement for this innovative product.  
REF: BOIL20190721001



### Italy

Company offers seafood and vegetable preserves in oil and pickles. It can produce under its own brand or the customers' label. A range of over 300 high-quality (certified International Food Standard) products allows this company to satisfy the needs of every request. The food producer is interested in negotiating a distribution agreement and/or a commercial agency agreement.  
REF: BOIT20200312001

SPONSORED COLUMN



## The virtues of virtual learning

COVID-19 has brought unparalleled challenges with social distancing protocols touching on our ways of working, learning and living our daily lives. Remote working and home schooling are the new norm, but what are the implications for those who had learning and development on their agenda? As the pandemic disrupts workplaces, we look what learning needs are coming to the fore and how training is adapting in response.

Over 80% of training activities have moved online so employees don't lose invaluable developmental opportunities from in-house or open programmes. Research also shows those working remotely have the desire and time to learn virtually and it can add value to the employer.

Right now, workers need to feel more supported and connected so having access to structured e-learning is central to maintaining normality. As remote working has demonstrated, home learning is viable for businesses especially when people still need to learn despite restricted movement. Reliable technology has massively advanced e-learning and webcams are crucial in helping people stay educated, connected and relevant.

The priority is to keep things moving with leaders acquiring new skills to lead their remote teams and take charge in these uncharted waters. So virtual coaching and training are pivotal in achieving this and just as effective especially when the emphasis is on virtual.

With attention paid to the technology, the social aspects and the learning itself, workers can still benefit from virtual training which will involve them in the

learning process. Content must be rich, practical and immersive so it engages and also allows for shared learning with practice and a free flow of information to reinforce and embed learning.

Priorities may have shifted with safety front of mind for many learners who want to use online courses to at a time when we are all practicing social distancing, but there does not have to be a compromise on quality.

Training and coaching in a lockdown need be no different and can still be a powerful experience with employees accessing the same high-quality content and trainers to ensure consistency and continuity.

Educators have an enormous role to play in helping people during this crisis. To come through it, our workers and leaders are going to need support more than ever to be equipped with new skills to enable them to collaborate, be better communicators and use their human attributes to the best of their ability as everyone pulls together.

**The AoEC is a leading global provider of accredited coach training for individuals and in-house, executive coaching and coaching-based solutions for organisations. To arrange a free virtual coaching conversation or to attend a virtual open event, please visit [www.aoec.com](http://www.aoec.com), email [consulting@aoec.com](mailto:consulting@aoec.com) or call us on 020 7127 5125.**



# Calling all international traders – export documents update

Davor McKinley advises that the LCCI is maintaining its contingency documentation service as follows

## 1. EC Certificates of Origin, A.TR and EUR1 movement certificates

The quickest way to obtain these documents is online using [www.es-docs.com](http://www.es-docs.com). We are operating both the DIY and Chamber Printed service. Any certificates printed by us will be posted out by 1st class post – please ensure that the correct posting address is stated in the special comments box. For the sake of expediency and simplicity, we would strongly advise that applicants use the DIY method wherever possible. The system will allow you to select a DIY service for those countries that accept electronic stamps and signatures. Recently Chile, Qatar and Switzerland have agreed to accept electronic stamps and Saudi Arabia and Turkey are expected to provide their consent shortly. Email [edocuments@londonchamber.co.uk](mailto:edocuments@londonchamber.co.uk) to obtain supply of blank Certificates.

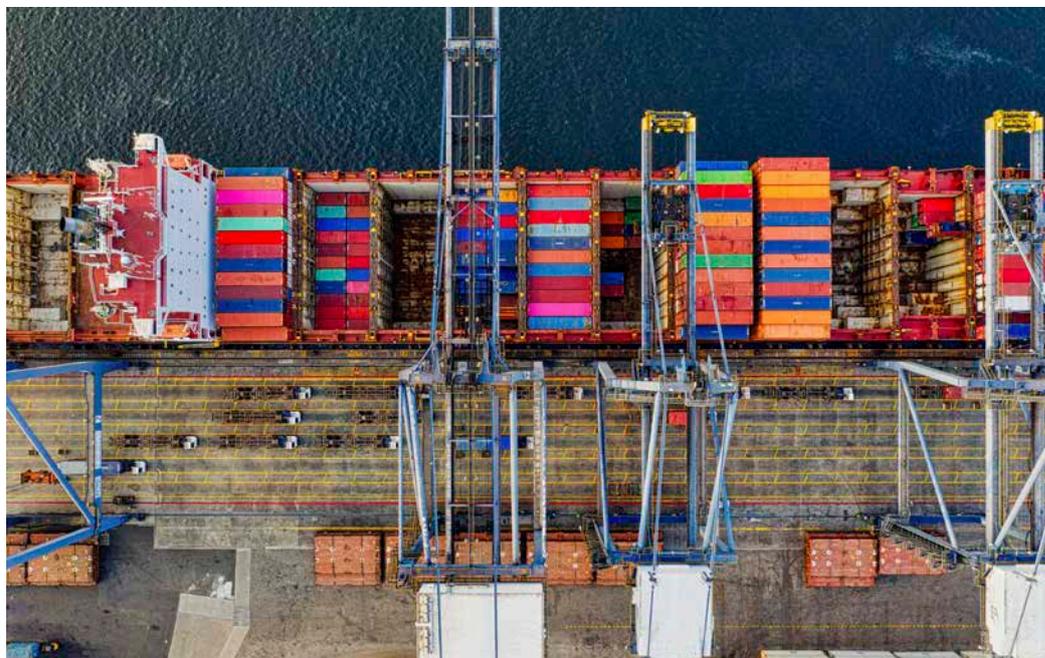
## 2. Certificates of Origin for Arab League countries

Please refer to the Arab Embassy Matrix for information on various embassies:

[www.londonchamber.co.uk/getattachment/Export-Documents/Arab-Certificates-of-Origin/ARAB-EMBASSY-FEES-15-APR-2020.xlsx?lang=en-GB](http://www.londonchamber.co.uk/getattachment/Export-Documents/Arab-Certificates-of-Origin/ARAB-EMBASSY-FEES-15-APR-2020.xlsx?lang=en-GB)

The Embassies of Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Qatar and Saudi Arabia are currently closed. We are, therefore, only able to provide certification service (LCCI + ABCC) for those countries. Customers will need to submit applications to the Barking office via postal service – please ensure that you enclose three photocopies of each original document that needs certifying before sending to us (photocopies are not required for COs).

Bahrain and Saudi Arabia – CO and Invoice online for clients registered for online Arab service. Clients not registered for the online Arab service will need to send completed documents to Barking office via post or courier (enclosing three



photocopies of each original document requiring certification) Please email us on [edocuments@londonchamber.co.uk](mailto:edocuments@londonchamber.co.uk) for a quote and further information

## 3. Situation with Egyptian Consulate, other Consulates and the Foreign Office

The Foreign Office has now resumed its apostille service and original documents (+ 2 photocopies of each) can be sent to our Barking office via post or courier service only.

Egyptian Consulate and the Egyptian Chamber are running a reduced service (twice a week) – documents requiring Egyptian legalisation can be submitted online

or posted to the Barking office.

Email us on [edocuments@londonchamber.co.uk](mailto:edocuments@londonchamber.co.uk) for a quote or if you require legalisation by any other non-Arab embassy.

## 4. EURs and ATRs

Applications for EUR1 and A.TR Certificates must be made online. Some countries will require original signatures on the Certificates, in which case the system will provide instructions on how to proceed. The BCC has managed to secure agreement from Chilean and Swiss governments to exceptionally accept digital signatures during the Covid-19 crisis and Turkey is expected to relax its restrictions soon.

## 5. Force majeure and special certificates

Our webpage contains information on how to apply for these documents: [www.londonchamber.co.uk/export-documents/special-certificates-page](http://www.londonchamber.co.uk/export-documents/special-certificates-page)

## 6. ATA Carnets and Carnets for Taiwan

Carnets have been and still are heavily affected by cancellation of events and passenger flights worldwide. There have been signs that certain markets could be on the rebound – especially in Asia. We are still issuing Carnets in the normal way using our eCarnet online application <https://www.ecarnet.co.uk/Lccicarnet/Index>



Documents will be posted out once issued as the offices are closed to public.

**Returning Carnets** – Carnets can still be posted to our head office as usual. However we may not be able to discharge them until the office reopens. We strongly advise that you keep photocopies or scanned copies of any pages within the Carnet that were endorsed by Customs.

**Carnets stuck abroad** – if your goods are currently abroad and unable to move, the likelihood is that the host Customs will extend the period of temporary importation until flights and shipments resume. For Carnets that are about to expire, you should apply for a Replacement (extension) Carnet through our online eCarnet system. Note that Japan and USA do not allow replacements – for these countries gather any evidence that proves that your flights were cancelled and ensure that the Carnet is stamped out of those countries and back into the UK even if the document has expired. Replacement Carnets must be validated by the National Carnet Unit.

### 7. LCCI offices

The Chamber's City HQ is closed until further notice. Barking and Hounslow offices are operating a postal service only. Note that for safety reasons the offices are closed to general public. The office postal addresses are on the reverse of the document pricelist: [www.londonchamber.co.uk/LCCI/media/media/Export-Documents-January-2020.pdf](http://www.londonchamber.co.uk/LCCI/media/media/Export-Documents-January-2020.pdf)

It is advised that an SAE is enclosed with your documents wherever possible to avoid delays or documents being returned to an incorrect address.

**Barking Exporting Document Office** - 12 Town Quay Wharf, Abbeey Road, Barking IG11 7BZ

LCCI would like to reassure customers that it is our aim to maintain our provision of export documentation services to all our customers during these difficult times. We will also be there for you when everything returns to normality and volumes increase.

**Davor McKinley is head of export documents at LCCI**

SPONSORED COLUMN

## Coronavirus: After the lockdown

by Jonathan Mansfield



**After the lockdown comes to an end there will be no return to business as usual. That is one thing we can be sure of.**

Even for those in the "glass half full" camp, we can expect changes with significant impact on employment.

As employment lawyers, we expect a number of themes to recur.

### After furlough

The Job Retention or "furlough" scheme has recently been extended to the end of June 2020. However, the question arises as to how long the Government believes that this will be sustainable.

The furlough scheme came in just in time as firms up and down the country were on the verge of making large numbers of redundancies.

### Redundancies?

Once the lockdown eases, it is likely that consideration will be given to redundancies again. It will be vital that employers follow careful procedures when this occurs. Essential considerations for employers in a redundancy situation will be:

- To consult with employees individually before any final decisions are made;
- To have in place a fair method of selection;
- To consider alternative employment where possible.

### Settlement Agreements?

Employers prepared to pay extra will be considering trying to speed the process up with the use of legally binding settlement agreements.

**"Even for those in the "glass half full" camp, we can expect changes with significant impact on employment."**

### Collective Consultation

Where there are 20 or more employees made redundant within a space of 90 days at the same establishment, there are also additional requirements for collective consultation. This is consultation with trade union representatives or representatives put in place especially for the purpose. A required period of consultation is at least 30 days, increasing to 45 days if there are a 100 or more employees involved.

### Changes to Terms

Some employers might seek to save money without reducing the size of the workforce. Changes to hours or rates of pay will in most cases need to be agreed with the employees. For a strong business justification, it may be possible to avoid unfair dismissal by imposing changes to contract. However, there will be a premium on a fair procedure. Collective consultation may also need to be considered.

On this rather gloomy note we will sign off while urging you to obtain legal advice if contemplating measures of this nature.

Please contact Jonathan Mansfield on [jonathan.mansfield@thomasmansfield.com](mailto:jonathan.mansfield@thomasmansfield.com) or 07947 598148.

**Thomas Mansfield**  
The Employment Law Solicitors

## Virtual trade missions

**Physical visits have been replaced by virtual trade missions during the pandemic.**

These virtual visits will run throughout June and will enable companies to find partners for the Energy Catalyst Round 8 application which will open in Summer 2020.

### Markets

**Rwanda, Togo, Ghana, Zambia, Malawi, South Africa, Senegal, Nepal, Vietnam, Uganda and Nigeria**

Using the B2Match platform, UK companies will be able to take part in in-market webinars providing them with information on topics which include the energy access situation, how to do business in the market, government policies related to energy, work done by NGOs and Universities in the energy sector which will prepare them for their only pre-arranged B2B meetings.

Contact: Gwen Laryea at LCCI: [glaryea@londonchamber.co.uk](mailto:glaryea@londonchamber.co.uk)



# Using hostage survival techniques to cope with the lockdown



by Sue Williams

All across the world, we are enduring extreme social distancing and isolation as our governments and health services fight Covid-19. I have been working for many years with people who have been kidnapped, people who have been held hostage, who have had to learn to adapt to survive.

There are similarities with where we find ourselves now – vast numbers of us forced to stay at home. So, what are the lessons to be learnt from ‘conduct after capture’ techniques and the parallels that could help us survive this ordeal?



If you are unlucky enough to be kidnapped and held hostage, you can expect to feel a combination of the following:

- An almost paralysing fear of being harmed or death
- Continuing panic, loneliness and disbelief
- Depression occasioned by the knowledge that you have no control over this situation, and you do not know when it is going to end
- Internal stress created by the uncertainty of regular food and drink
- Desperate longing to be back with your family and friends
- An obsessive reflection on the normal and routine aspects of your life, things you have so often taken for granted.

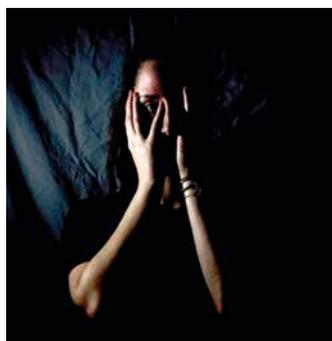
The extraordinary times of this virus do have some stark similarities to a hostage situation. In all probability, you may be experiencing one or more of the above. Although our isolation is to a certain extent voluntary, and is happening for our own good, and the good of our so-

ciety, human beings are social creatures. This is especially in times of crisis so it is natural to crave for the company of our friends and family. That urge to be together makes us who we are.

Let me stress these are normal reactions to an abnormal temporary situation. Allow yourself to feel what you feel. You are not weak. You are you. Everyone experiences, if not all these things, then some of them. What you feel is an honest response in a difficult time. Don't beat yourself up. In this case, your mission is to acknowledge where you are and then adapt and survive.

## Diffuse tension

To give yourself the best chance of surviving, be kind to yourself. Each one of us responds differently. Your reaction will not be the same reaction as your partners, or your friends on WhatsApp, or a colleague on the phone. Be kind to them too, diffuse tension, don't escalate it.

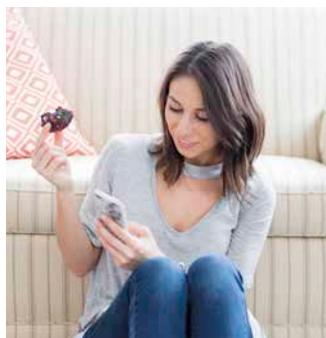


Recognise what you are feeling from the list above. This recognition will help you come to grips with what is, without doubt, difficult for everyone. Realise that you are having a natural reaction to an unnatural situation.

The most important thing is to remember to be who you are. Never lose sight of this. Your normal life has routines, standards. Be that person.

Do not slip into a dishevelled, sloppy person who has used the situation to give up in some way, someone you don't recognise. Plan a structure, a daily routine. This must include:

- Personal hygiene – start each day in your normal way
- Appearance – look in the mirror and see who you usually see



- Keep mentally active – don't slump in front of daytime TV. Find a way to challenge yourself
- Stay up to date with medication
- Make sure you have adequate food and drink at usual meal-times – if you are on your own, really try to make a special effort with this
- Communicate with your friends and relatives. We are all so busy. Use this extra time to reach out to people with whom you may have lost touch



- Exercise, a lot can be achieved in an hour. Plan out a routine for yourself, or if you're online, and most of us are, join a live stream class, something most hostages don't have access to
- Maintain a sense of purpose and value. It's hard for us to plan for the future, when we don't know when things will get back to normal. But we do know they will, so this time may be useful to evaluate how you feel about what gives you purpose and value. Try and use those values to how you approach this difficult time
- Knowledge is power, so keep well informed. Read outside your own comfort zone. Look at what is happening in other countries. Instead of waiting to have the news interpreted for you, compare and contrast stories from different news organisations yourself.

***“The most important thing is to remember to be who you are. Never lose sight of this. Your normal life has routines, standards. Be that person.”***

## Long haul

It is also important to plan for the long haul. If you think this will be over in two weeks and it drifts on for two months, or longer, this will add to your own psychological strain. So, lower your expectations to avoid disappointment. Expect months and you'll be happy when it's weeks.

Many former hostages I know adopted a combination of different coping mechanisms. Some wrote plays, music, or played chess with discarded objects. People are amazing. They can achieve great things in very restricted and most arduous of circumstances. So many people say, I never have the time to... Well, now you do. Use that time to focus the mind and learn something different. Come out of this better, stronger. How could this apply to you? What could you do? Hold that thought. Write it down. Look at the words you've put on the paper. Look at them again tomorrow morning.

And one more thing, don't forget, the longer your period in captivity, the more opportunities arise for a safe resolution and your return to freedom. Repeat that to yourself. The longer this goes on, the more likely it is that you will avoid the virus yourself and will survive. Outside, other people are working hard to fix this, to help you, to help us all return to a normal life. Trust this because it is true. This time will pass. This is all temporary. You have not been forgotten. Stay calm, stay safe. Adapt. Survive.

Sue Williams QPM is Associate Fellow at Saïd Business School, University of Oxford and travel security educator at Maiden Voyage to whom many thanks are due for this article  
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# Renaissance at Somerset House

As a showcase for the future of building restoration, there are few structures to rival Somerset House. Through a combination of meticulous stonework, painstaking redecoration and their patented façade gommage® technique, London-based restoration specialists Thomann-Harry® have restored the building's spectacular South Wing to its original splendour

The project marks a return for Thomann-Harry® to the site of previous triumphs, as Somerset House head of buildings Mick Figg explained, "Works were carried out two years ago on the courtyard façades and the results were tremendous, so we've now engaged in a further programme of works with Thomann-Harry® to complete the facades here at Somerset House".

## Inspired

Situated just to the east of Waterloo Bridge and built on the site of a Tudor palace belonging to the Duke of Somerset, the four-wing, neoclassical grandeur of Somerset House was designed by Sir William Chambers in 1776, with construction completed in 1780. Inspired by Chambers' attachment to Palladian architectural principles, Somerset House is defined by a giant order of pilasters and engaged columns that span the *piano nobile* and mezzanine.

The complex is elegantly arranged around a large interior court, with two narrow lateral courts. Further Victorian outer wings were added in 1831 and 1856. Until construction of the Victoria Embankment in the late 1860s, the River Thames lapped the South Wing, with three great arches enabling boats and barges to access landing places within the building.

## Creative hub

Somerset House was originally designed as one of London's first public buildings to exclusively house government and educational institutions, such as the Royal Academy and the Society of Antiquaries. Today, this iconic landmark is an important creative hub – and home to some of the city's most celebrated names in the arts, from the National Youth Orchestra and the British Fashion Council to the Courtauld Gallery and Institute. As a highly sought-after venue for sum-



**Somerset House was originally designed as one of London's first public buildings to exclusively house government and educational institutions, such as the Royal Academy and the Society of Antiquaries**

mer event hire, it was necessary for works to take place during the winter which, as it turned out, included three massive storms. Under such inclement conditions, the advantages of façade gommage® being a non-scaffold system were even more self evident than usual.

Moreover, the non-scaffold approach was also key in the decision

to appoint Thomann-Harry® to undertake the works, as Mick Figg explained "...not having to use scaffold on the building really influenced our decision to go with Thomann-Harry®. It makes the works really flexible compared to having a big scaffold." Figg went on to point out that the innovative approach offered by the façade gommage® process was

another important factor, "We always have to look at new technologies, especially in the conservation world. Façade gommage® is different from the traditional methods and I think it's very important, like the rest of the world, that we do move onto new technologies."

## Delicate

Entailing façade gommage® of the entire elevation, the cleaning phase of the project took place over some 12 weeks from late autumn into the early new year. Carried out from mobile hydraulic platforms, the company's patented process is ideally suited to the delicate restoration of historical structures. Projecting fine powders under compressed air across – rather than against – all surfaces, façade gommage® gently eases off decades of accumulated dirt, with residues lifted away for removal and recycling.



As all machinery had to be lifted from ground to terrace level, setting up for the project presented a series of interesting logistical challenges. However, with extensive experience of working in difficult access sites, the Thomann-Harry® team were able to have their equipment up and running quickly and expeditiously.

Once the façade gommage® works were complete, attention turned to repair and redecoration of Somerset House's imposing windows, characterised by monumental pediments and straight heads. The company's team of expert painters, decorators, stoneworkers and banker masons carried out meticulous repair and replacement work on all window, façade and baluster masonry.

Thomann-Harry® are a London-based world-leading façade cleaners also specialised in the restoration of stonework. Past two years have seen them working on prestigious landmarks and historic architectural gems such as King's College in Cambridge, Somerset House, The National Gallery and The Reform Club  
[www.thomann-harry.co.uk](http://www.thomann-harry.co.uk)

# Planning for the recovery



by Richard Burge

Planning is fundamental for any successful business. On a daily basis, businesswomen and men dedicatedly plan for a multitude of things to ensure their business is profitable and continues to employ people. Successful businesses not only plan for good times, but also for bad. And these are indeed bad times.

But the parameters on which business would normally plan are very different right now. A pandemic of this scale is uncharted for so many of us. That's why the government support package has been so welcome and allowed for short-term planning. But businesses need to be able to plan for what comes next.

We know there is still much we need to learn about Covid-19, so there cannot be a date set yet to ease lockdown. But business must have an inkling of what the process will be in order to prepare for restart.



## Science

Businesses understand that process may be interrupted, paused, even rowed back. And know that a much bigger disaster would be going back to normal without following the science needed to defeat the disease.

Gradual withdrawal of restrictive measures is likely, replaced by probably permanent changes to increase our resilience to the return of this disease and our ability to respond quickly to another pandemic.

The ability for London to plan is particularly important as it is the engine that fires the entire national

economy. Around 20 per cent of the nation relies on Greater London directly for their employment and livelihood. Without an effective London, the nation's economy will splutter and misfire. And given London is a global City (in terms of its economic diversity, arguably the global city), it is key to global Covid-19 recovery.

## Investment

In addition to measures that London businesses will put in place themselves, we need to identify what help government needs to give in loans, rate reductions, and inno-

**“Without an effective London, the nation's economy will splutter and misfire.”**

vative tax credits to enable business to reorder goods, and re-engage staff, to secure investment.

Beyond the workplace we need discussion about how London plans its infrastructure. For example, London relies on its public transport network, but in order to cope with our new reality we need to introduce new incentives and fare structures to embed home working and to destroy the rush hour through diverse opening hours.

Business will be the engine of our recovery, so it must be a partner in planning for it.

Richard Burge is chief executive of the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry

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## London business resilience webinars

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

To replace its events and networking programme during the pandemic LCCI has introduced a London Business Resilience series. Ten events were run in April and at least ten will be run in May.

# Events – London Business Resilience

## What's been on...

### London matters

Question & Answer session with LCCI chief executive Richard Burge

### What is happening in International Trade

Peter Bishop, LCCI deputy chief executive and Liam Smyth, director of trade at the British Chambers of Commerce - see page 12 for extracts

### Update on Export Documents

Peter Bishop and Davor McKinley, head of documentation at LCCI

### Helping business owners navigate the current climate

Robert Palmer and Neil Rowland, Partners at St James Place Wealth Management and Martin Brown, chief executive, Elephants Child Advisory Ltd, in discussion with Richard Burge

### Capital Conversation

Paul Scully MP, Minister for London & Minister for Small Business

### Immigration

Global and UK issues facing business - Julia Onslow-Cole and Louise Haycock, Partners at Fragomen LLP

### Marketing and relationship building in a time of crisis

Brian Woolrich, director, UK Business Mentoring

### Capital Conversation

Professor Tony Travers, Director of LSE London

### The importance of logistics and the supply chain in keeping businesses moving

Richard Currie, Director of Public Affairs, UPS

### Capital Conversation

Philip King, HMG Small Business Commissioner

## ...Coming up

### Tuesday 5 May at 1.30pm - 2.15pm

Effective networking and nurturing connections whilst WFH - Heather White, Smarter Networking

### Wednesday 6 May at 1.00pm - 1.45pm

The importance of mental health and resilience in the current climate - Marc Preston, CEO, New Foundation Counselling

### Thursday 7 May at 1.30pm - 2.15pm

LCCI / NEE Chamber of Commerce Joint Webinar - James Ramsbotham, CEO, North East England Chamber of Commerce

### Tuesday 12 May at 1.00pm - 2.00pm

Future of UK-EU business and trade - A Different London-Brussels Discussion - Daniel Dalton, Chief Executive, British Chamber of Commerce | EU & Belgium

### Wednesday 13 May at 12.45pm - 1.30pm

Pricing in a Crisis - The Do's and Don'ts for how to deal with your pricing challenges in the current climate - Mark Peacock, The Pricing Coach

### Tuesday 19 May at 3.15pm - 4.00pm

Coronavirus Job Retention - Furlough Scheme - Vandana Dass, Solicitor and Managing Director, Davenport Solicitors

### Wednesday 20 May at 11.00am - 11.45am

Supply chain management post pandemic - Peter Bishop LCCI Deputy CEO introduces Charles Hogg, Commercial Director, Unsworth

### Wednesday 20 May at 12.45pm - 1.30pm

How to grow your business through online lead generation - Simon Cripps, Owner, Smart Cow Marketing

### Tuesday 26 May at 11.00am - 11.45am

Export Documents: the situation now - Peter Bishop and Davor McKinley, Head of Export Documentation, LCCI

### Thursday 18 June at 11.00am - 11.45am

EU Exit: Customs Union departure on January 2021, what to expect and how the pandemic may affect things - Peter Bishop with Charles Hogg and Antons Gordejevs, Commercial Directors at Unsworth

Recordings of the webinars can be accessed at:

[www.londonchamber.co.uk/events/covid-19-webinar-series](http://www.londonchamber.co.uk/events/covid-19-webinar-series)

To book places on the webinar visit:

[www.londonchamber.co.uk/events/covid-19-webinar-series](http://www.londonchamber.co.uk/events/covid-19-webinar-series)

# Drivers' guide to lockdown during the pandemic

To reduce the spread of the coronavirus, the government has introduced rules restricting movement and requesting we stay at home except for very limited purposes, i.e. you're a key worker. These measures are effective immediately and must be adhered to. New powers given to the police will allow them to issue a fixed penalty notice to anyone failing to do so. *By Alfonso Martinez*

However, you may be one of those still needing to travel, whose vehicle is due its MOT, or you may be concerned about what to do if your vehicle breaks down during this period. For those of you, here is a handy vehicle guide to the lockdown.

## Travelling during lockdown

**Travelling in London:** With the restrictions placed on public transport, it may be necessary for key workers to drive in London. To help support key workers go about their work, TfL has suspended all road charging schemes, including the congestion charge, ultra-low emission zone and low emission zone. The suspension has been introduced for lorries and vans as well as cars, and it remains in place until further notice.

**Special allowances for NHS and social care staff:** The Department for Health has said that all NHS and social care staff will be given free car parking on council-owned on-street spaces and car parks. The government says councils will ensure NHS staff, care workers and volunteers can provide suitable evidence to be displayed in their vehicles in order to avoid charges. TfL has also given all NHS staff free access to the capital's Santander Cycles.

**Petrol stations:** Fuel stations are still open but be aware that it is believed that viruses can survive on surfaces for some time, so wear protective, disposable gloves and keep a hand sanitiser in your vehicle. Many petrol stations already have gloves available for public use at the pumps, however these often run out, so we suggest you bring your own just in case.

You can also use pay at pump to minimise any contact with others – just be aware of the keypad.

Drivers of electric vehicles using public chargers should also follow the same guidelines.

## Immediate maintenance and breakdown

**Maintenance and vehicle repair:** Garages for essential vehicle maintenance and repair remain open for now – to help keep vehicles, goods and key workers moving and safe. Be aware that they are likely to prioritise key workers/essential repairs. Remember, you have a legal responsibility to keep your vehicle roadworthy. You can be fined up to £2,500, be banned from driving and get three penalty points for driving



**Garages for essential vehicle maintenance and repair remain open for now – to help keep vehicles, goods and key workers moving and safe**

a vehicle in a dangerous condition.

LeasePlan UK has published a guide to maintaining your vehicle to ensure you stay safe and meet the minimum legal requirements.

**Breakdown:** If your vehicle breaks down, you can still call out a recovery provider, who will either be able to repair your vehicle at the roadside or take it to a garage. Patrols are following government guidelines: keeping two metres from customers, wearing latex protective gloves and wiping down any surface-

as they touch with hand sanitiser or wipes.

The AA is advising that if you've broken down and have symptoms, have been diagnosed or have come in contact with Covid-19, to call and let them know when reporting the breakdown. If you don't have symptoms, haven't come into contact with the virus and aren't self-isolating, you can tell them about the problem online or use their app to report a breakdown.

**Cleaning your car:** It's more important than ever to take extra care to keep your vehicles clean and disinfected, as this will reduce the chance of the coronavirus being transmitted through commonly touched surfaces such as the steering wheel, gearstick, radio or door handles. To ensure your car remains a safe space, here is full guide to sanitising your car from the inside out.

## Rules and regulations

**Extension to MOT due dates:** Even though MOT centres and garages are classified by the Government as 'essential' and are allowed to remain open, many are closing to protect staff and customers.

To restrict the spread of the virus, the government has introduced a 6-month extension period for your car's MOT to be carried out if the expiry date is on or after 30 March 2020.

You do not need to do anything to extend your vehicle's MOT expiry date as this will be done automatically. However, vehicles must be kept in a roadworthy condition – with some garages remaining open for essential repairs.

If your first MOT was due before 30 March 2020 and your vehicle did not pass, you will not get an extension and your vehicle will need to pass an MOT before you can drive it again.

**Driving tests:** Driving tests have been suspended for the next three months. During this time, tests will only be available for critical workers. Keep an eye out on the DVLA's website for more updates and information about when you'll be able to re-schedule your theory or driving test.

## Ongoing vehicle maintenance

Keeping your vehicle ticking over

**during lockdown:** As many of us won't be driving for long periods of time during lockdown, there are a few things you can do to protect your vehicle and keep it in roadworthy condition.

Firstly, your battery may be dead or near dead if you aren't driving your vehicle. Occasionally starting your engine won't help much in this case and may actually drain your battery further. As the government advice is to drive only when essential, drivers will have to rely on these trips to keep their batteries healthy. If you have one, plug in a trickle charger to keep the battery topped up.

You should, where possible, keep your vehicle fuelled to prevent moisture from developing in the tank and leading to rust. Some people may also find that their tyres develop flat spots that can be felt when driving. Make sure you check your tyre pressure before making any essential journeys, including your spare tyre if you have one.

Also be aware of leaving your vehicle parked under trees. Resin, sap and bird droppings can cause considerable damage to your vehicle's paintwork, so consider a cover to protect it. Bird droppings on modern water-based paint will start to impact the lacquer within 90 minutes, or even less if the car hasn't been polished for a few years. If it's dried on, use some warm water to soak it first as this will make it a lot easier to remove. Scrubbing at it without soaking first will do even more harm as it can create scratches.

And finally, a special note to diesel drivers: please be aware that all diesel vehicles need to run at 50mph for 15 mins to burn off the diesel particles and clean the filter. Not doing this can result in the vehicle completely shutting down and cause major engine damage.

As we have all seen, the restrictions that have been put in place are altering almost every day, so it's important to regularly check [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) to stay up to date.

Alfonso Martinez is managing director of LeasePlan UK  
[www.leaseplan.com](http://www.leaseplan.com)



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# Building a healthy company culture with a remote team



by John Williams

Although three-quarters of companies worldwide have already switched to flexible working options, with 83 per cent reporting a boost in productivity, constant remote working is something that many workplaces haven't developed the infrastructure for.

However, 2020 stats show the number of people working from home has grown by 140 per cent since 2005, and telecommuting has increased by 115 per cent in the past 10 years. An Owlabs study show globally, eight per cent of employees work remotely on a full-time basis, while 52 per cent work from home at least once a week. The trend looks set to continue – Upwork predicts that 73 per cent of all departments will have remote workers by 2028.

The numbers speak for themselves:

- 75 per cent of people say working remotely means fewer distractions
- 86 per cent say it reduces stress
- 76 per cent would be more willing to stay in their current job if offered more flexibility
- 21 per cent would give up some of their vacation time in exchange for flexible working options
- Companies that allow remote work have 25 per cent lower staff turnover than companies that don't.

The growth of this trend has been fuelled by technology, including the rapid increase of mobile tech, communication and project management platforms. The rapid growth of Wi-Fi hotspots is likely to hit 432.5 million globally this year, and there will be 1.2 billion 5G connections globally by 2025, covering one-third of the world's population.

## Professional

For many workers, increased connectivity in personal and work lives has made the transition into remote working a relatively easy one. By streamlining work processes in this way, the team can be more professional, productive and efficient in



**For many workers, increased connectivity in personal and work lives has made the transition into remote working a relatively easy one.**

the long run.

Regardless of times of uncertainty, having a remote-working team can help reduce the stress of members of staff who want to self-isolate, which will also reduce the chance of in-office infection. However, along with the benefits, there are some

challenges to managing remote teams:

**Communication** – Getting people in different locations to work together for a common goal can be tricky. That said, the Internet has provided many powerful tools to assist with communication and collaboration in today's modern workplace.

**Keeping track of activities, goals and productivity** – Not everyone can work effectively in a remote location. In remote settings, employees must know how to manage themselves and often wear different hats. It is therefore important to ensure team members are aware of the company's long-term and short-term goals.

## Growing company

## Tools to help remote teams thrive

**Slack** – a popular web and desktop chat tool.

**Skype** – global audio and video platform.

**Google Hangouts** – Google's chat platform.

**HomeSlice** – a time zone viewer.

**Wrike** – one of the leading cloud-based solutions for collaborative work management.

**Trello** – an online visual planning and collaboration tool for virtual workgroups.

**Asana** – An online management tool to quickly capture tasks, to-dos, reminders, and ideas.

**Zoom** – audio and video and online meetings made easy.

## culture with a remote team

**Choose tools that match your culture** – Because all communication and collaboration will be done using online tools, it is essential to choose apps and software that match the culture you are trying to create. If you want to create a fun, laid-back environment, choose tools that match this atmosphere. You also want to make it as easy as possible for your remote team to stay up-to-date. Be it via video conferencing tools, chat apps, or the comments section of your project management tool, you need to offer various ways to keep in touch and on top of the work.

**Team building** – Team building does wonders to foster communication, especially among remote workers who do not see each other on a daily basis. While people are self-isolating it's still possible to be social with platforms such as Skype or Zoom for group messaging and video chats for a light-hearted catch-up to see how everyone is.

**Recognition** – Public recognition for a job well done is one of the most effective and most natural ways to motivate a remote team. Shout outs in a team chat, during meetings or any other way, will not only boost morale and motivation but set a standard for other team members to strive for.

## Permanent

Increased flexibility benefits businesses and employees, and top talent has already sought out organisations that encourage and support teams working from home, coworking spaces or coffee shops. There's plenty of data to back up the benefits of working remotely so work will continue even with the challenges ahead. With planning, open lines of communication and the right tech, there's no reason why companies can't run successful remote teams for short periods or even integrate more into their future approach on a permanent basis.

John Williams is head of marketing at Instant Offices

[www.instantoffices.com/en/gb](http://www.instantoffices.com/en/gb)

# How to make better decisions – the RADA way

**RADA  
BUSINESS**

Communicating in front of a screen has become a daily norm, as the Covid-19 pandemic is forcing many of us online. We tend to assume that work and productivity stops when workers take time to relax when working from home, or at their desk, however those who are able to take micro-breaks and relax are actually better prepared and more effective workers – according to new research.

A study of 1,000 workplaces published in *Thinking on Your Feet*, a report by the commercial arm of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, RADA Business, has found that 42 per cent of workers are able to think more quickly when they feel relaxed.

Nearly the same number say that they feel more confident following relaxation time, while 34 per cent say they feel better understood by others.

One in three admit that when they are relaxed, they can listen to what

other people are saying with greater skill, whilst 31 per cent say they can adapt better to people and situations.

## Equipped

The research shows that taking time to centre or move can help workers to refocus and make better decisions. Some techniques, which respondents say help them to be better equipped for thinking on the spot include getting some fresh air or taking a walk.

The study also found that one in five workers manage feelings of tension in work situations by having a hot drink.

Kate Walker Miles (pictured), tutor and client manager at RADA Business, comments on the findings: “Many people at this time are having their first introduction to working from home, day-in, day-out. Some are finding it hard to feel and be effective. It’s important take breaks to relax, to give yourself

some time and space to think about how you might respond to a challenging situation, or new requests from colleagues or superiors, as they arise.

## Flexibility

“If you are a leader, try to create a positive culture for your employees who are working from home. It’s good to let them know that they have some time and flexibility during the day to centre themselves, stretch,



and take some time to refocus. This will help them to be productive and will better prepare them for situations where they’re in the spotlight, such as delivering presentations and leading video conference calls.”

“Relaxation time can help workers to be more relaxed and adaptable when under pressure. This is a simple yet effective technique to help workers through what is a difficult time, allowing businesses to succeed and overcome the challenges of working remotely. Flexibility is key.”



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# Two minute interview

John Higginson of Higginson Strategy



## Who are you?

I'm the co-founder of Higginson Strategy, a communications agency for purpose-driven organisations and businesses that are really thinking hard about the effect they have on people and the planet, above and beyond simply making a profit.

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

Higginson Strategy became a member of the London Chamber of Commerce at the back end of last year. I'm a Londoner myself, so I was very proud to become a member of the biggest chamber of commerce in the UK.

## What was your first job in London?

My first job was trying to sell makeup aged 14. I answered a job in a local paper for an Avon-type business asking a question: 'Want to be your own boss?' I was very keen to start making money. There were two problems: 1) You needed to buy a test kit, but the woman who I answered the advert to was kind enough to let me borrow hers for the first one. 2) The more fundamental problem was that I didn't know anything about beauty.

***"London has always been excellent at embracing change, so I'm very excited to see how London adapts to the new environment we face as we leave the EU."***

My first sale was in at a gathering of my mum's friends. I thought this was a great opportunity. So, I set up my stall in the friend's front room. My naivety hit me at that point. These women would have been about 40 years' old. Younger than I am now. But to me they were ancient. I suggested a wrinkle cream product to one of them. Anyway, for that I received stern words and my career in beauty never revived.

## Which one business achievement over the last 12 months are you most proud of, and why?

Getting a Clean Air Bill into the Queen's Speech last year. As a Londoner I have children who go to a school that is in breach of air pollution levels, so it's an issue that I am very passionate about. Having a specific Clean Air Bill means that there will be much more joined up thinking when it comes to tackling air pollution, from people who are burning wood stoves, to people driving polluting cars, to flights, to people on building sites. At the moment, these elements are completely separate, and you have to look through different bits of legislation and pull them together to find violations. The Clean Air Bill will enable us to think in a joined-up way about the actual end-result, which is tackling air pollution.

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

...doing timesheets. As a professional services business we have to do them. I have to make sure everyone who works for me does them but I am useless at doing myself."

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

Richard Branson. Being passionate about the end customer is very important. Having a product that you yourself would use and you yourself can get passionate about. If you think in that way, that's the best way to grow your bottom line.

Businesses that fail to think in that way can get stuck. Sometimes you have to turn down money and business in the short term, but by doing that you can create a business that has stronger foundations.

Branson has demonstrated this focus on the end customer in all his businesses from aviation, to records, trains, holidays and finance. Each time he's added something to turn it into a product that people aspire to buy and use.

## How has Covid-19 impacted your business?

Our business is well set up for working from home. We have always run our two offices as one. However as a consultancy we are affected more quickly by fear of economic uncertainty. It is easier to cancel a contract than to make someone redundant. We lost a couple of smaller clients through fear straight away.

Other work that we would have expected to come in didn't. But we have made gains in other places. We have won two clients who have turned their businesses to supporting the NHS with vital equipment. Being set up as an agency that supports organisations in 'doing good' has helped us here. We spend a huge amount of time on Zoom now and we have to work harder for every penny. But it is making us stronger. It is great to be tested.

## What measures have you taken?

My wife (and business partner) Clodagh immediately came off the payroll so she now does the home schooling and I look after the business. We have set up a rapid response Speaker Bureau which allows journalists to get quotes and interviews with our expert clients. We are using lock down to get meetings for our clients with people we might not otherwise get to meet with as their diaries have been cleared.

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

I would love Crossrail to open, and the Bakerloo line extension down to South East London to be signed off. And I would welcome another bridge between East and South East London. I would also like to see tens of thousands of rapid electric charging points to be installed across London to make buying an electric vehicle a far more viable option. I'm a bit of a transport geek.

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

I love the fact that despite being a city of nine million people we have huge amounts of green spaces.



My least favourite thing is the air pollution.

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

I would invest heavily in electric charging points.

## What challenges face London?

London is at a really exciting point in our history. Change is where champions are created and new businesses arrive. London has always been excellent at embracing change, so I'm very excited to see how London adapts to the new environment we face as we leave the EU and as we seek the answers to the most fundamental challenge of all of our lifetimes which is tackling climate change.

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



# Business in lockdown: dealing with uncertainty

by Jonathan Ratcliffe

**L**ockdown poses many problems for small businesses; uncertainty, closures, restrictions and strained cashflow mean making informed decisions are near impossible. How we deal with uncertainty now is critical to future success.

All the people in business I know just want to crack on, but when will it end? Mid May? Schools going back in June? Another 18-months? – I’ve read many mixed messages this week, and this all compounds uncertainty.

Uncertainty in business is a poison, its why businesses prefer a steady economy with level-headed Government. Uncertainty prevents logical decisions and creates a state of panic which can ultimately lead to poor decision making. The virus has put many businesspeople with normally calm and calculated decision-making processes into a state of panic, and it is not a healthy place to be.

The first week was the worst, in a few days we saw business collapse, 80 per cent down on new enquiries. Now it seems to be picking up again, so should we be pressing ahead full speed spending cash reserves or

should I be cautious? I know I’m not alone in not knowing what I should be doing.

To deal with uncertainty it is important to step aside from daily tasks and take time out to plan. Only by stepping aside can you clear a path through troubling times and see a more positive future.

Using the allotted exercise time to escape your home office can do wonders for clearing your mind of day to day troubles and help you think more logically towards the future.

We recommend these six pointers in coping with uncertainty:

### Accept what has happened

The first step to dealing with uncertainty is to accept what has happened. Taking stock of events and the new norm helps you clarify in your own mind your new position. Understanding that you might not always be in control is scary but helps you put behind negative events and focus a new effort towards being more flexible in the future.

### Stay positive

Easier said than done. This is a very tough thing to do if your life has fall-

en apart. Certainly, taking stock of the then, the now and the future is critical in being able to turn a negative situation into something more positive. This step can take time.

### Reflect on the past

The past in terms of coronavirus was not so long ago, and so it is important to remember that good times aren’t so far away again. Use this time to think about what you would have changed, how you could improve and how you would like to be. In business you can be critical, think about your business as someone else looking in – how would you change things?

### Keep learning

Many are spending time in isolation, and with less workload there may be the opportunity to learn new skills and processes. Podcasts are great for learning from industry veterans, knowing you aren’t alone and how they see the future to be. You can use their insight to plan in your head how business will change and how you can benefit from it.

### Plan ahead

Planning is difficult in times of

uncertainty. However, the general basics of business are still relevant, it’s just the landscape that has changed. Try and work on the fundamentals such as human relationships, getting on top of admin tasks and planning out different scenarios all help your mind get ready for the future. You need to be in control.

### Stay flexible

Flexibility in all walks of life is a strong skill. We hear about agility, adaptability and flexibility as key traits in successful people. Laziness is not being prepared. Use this time to adjust your outlook in life, by being back in control, you regain a feeling of preparedness that will help you over the next year or so.

The mental toll on all businesspeople during coronavirus is not to be underestimated, so we all need to put aside time to think through recent events, take stock and get ready for what’s next. We all need to work together to try and be positive, because the future is bright.

Jonathan Ratcliffe is from serviced office agents Offices.co.uk

## Lockdown highlights pest problems at home

Working from home and spending more time at home generally has become the reality of the lockdown for many.

For Cleankill Pest Control this has resulted in an increase in calls from residential premises as people are spotting furry intruders and insects that would often go unnoticed.

Cleankill Managing Director Paul Bates says the mental health implications of having an infestation during lockdown when you can’t leave your home can be quite serious for some and affect the ability to focus on work.

He explains: “It’s bad enough having a pest problem during normal times, but usually people can get out of the house or go off to work and can escape the problem.

“Hearing constant scratching or pests running about in your roof space is really stressful along with the worry of not knowing what damage they are doing and whether they are gnawing through cables. Rats are also appearing in



Paul Bates Cleankill Managing Director

people’s gardens especially in urban properties as there is less food being discarded in the streets. This means the rats are having to explore new territories to find food.”

As well as rodents, people have been calling about clothes moths which they might not otherwise have spotted if they weren’t in their homes 24 hours a day. People are also finding time to tidy cupboards and loft spaces and uncovering textile moth problems that have been hidden.

Cleankill recommends using a professional pest control company to tackle problems particularly where rats, mice, birds or squirrels are concerned.

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## Many lessons to be learned from the COVID-19 crisis



Alastair McCapra, CEO CIPR

Last year the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) went through an extensive process to create a strategy for the next five years; the current crisis hasn't swept it away and it has proved a steadfast anchor in the most trying of times.

There are many lessons to learn from this crisis. For business, one emerging lesson – if it wasn't already required – is the need for clear, ethical and purposeful communication. Research shows that 65% of the public would trust a professional more if they knew they were a member of a professional body. Our strategy outlines the value we offer to members to be able to confidently deliver for their organisations and the public.

**Building a resilient community of practice.** Helping people network with each other, supporting volunteers, looking after people and helping them navigate a crisis has been more important to our work than ever. CIPR membership means access to a professional community sharing ideas, inspiration, encouragement and expertise and supports members to learn from each other and support each other so that the community is resilient.

**Advocating Public Relations with Employers, Clients and the Public.** There has probably never been a time when this was more important to our

future. Employers and clients are the primary beneficiaries of professionalism in public relations. A key driver behind the growth of professionalism in PR is their perception that it contributes value to them both directly and indirectly.

### Championing Lifelong Learning and the Value of Chartership

has always been important to us. Maintaining a competitive advantage in a rapidly changing world requires a commitment to lifelong learning. CIPR membership enables this through the provision of an online platform which enhances access and makes it easy to learn, gather and share resources and record continuing professional development. Many also complete formal qualifications or training. This learning opens up career paths into senior roles both within the public relations sector and beyond.

### Leading Practice Development.

To create a profession that can be sustained in the face of technological, economic, social and political pressure, the CIPR pioneers adaptability and the new ways of creating value. Challenges such as mental health and wellbeing of practitioners, the development of a genuinely diverse profession and the sustaining of ethical competence remain at the core of our work. Consistently high professional standards assure the integrity of members' work and advice.

The coming months are bound to prove testing and the need for strategic and effective communication has never been more important. CIPR members are ready to play their part to support businesses across the capital and the whole country as they prepare to face the challenges of the future..

[www.cipr.co.uk](http://www.cipr.co.uk)

# Pensions and furloughing



by Penny Cogher and Larisa Gordan

Since the government published details about its Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, there have been many questions asked about what it means for pensions.

With the further information provided on pensions and furloughing from the Pensions Regulator, HMRC and the Treasury, we now have a broad understanding of it. Essentially, an employer's automatic enrolment duties continue to apply as normal, including re-enrolment and re-declaration duties, regardless as to whether employees are still working or have been furloughed.

- The government will only pay the auto enrolment minimum employer pension contribution i.e. three per cent on the 80 per cent or £2.5k per month if lower of the employee's regular monthly wage (no commission, fees or bonus). If the employer pays more than the government's furloughing scheme only covers three per cent, it won't pay any extra.
- The government's scheme will not cover the employees' auto-enrolment pension contributions at all.
- For members who are part of a pensions salary sacrifice scheme, the 80 per cent pay is based on the employee's reduced salary and the government's scheme will only cover three per cent of the salary sacrificed amount. The information that has to be provided to HMRC is all based on what goes through PAYE and so there is no allowance for salary sacrifice. However HMRC has confirmed employees can opt out of a salary sacrifice arrangement, if they arrange this with their employer before they are furloughed.
- The three per cent itself is based

on three per cent of earnings above the lower qualifying earnings threshold (£512 per month up to 5 April and £520 after that). This is the case regardless as to the definition of pensionable earnings used by the employer for auto-enrolment and regardless of which quality test is used for auto-enrolment.

- An employer's normal payroll processes should be run as usual, with furloughing. So when the employer pays its employees, it should run their pension contribution calculation as usual, with national insurance contributions and pension contributions being made from the furloughed employee's wages and paid as usual.
- Some changes are needed if the employer does not use banded qualifying earnings. If so, the employer has to calculate and pay across the pension contribution as normal but the employer also needs to calculate three per cent of the qualifying earnings of the furloughed employees so it can claim for them under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

**An employer's normal payroll processes should be run as usual, with furloughing.**

The current scheme rules and contribution requirements continue to apply. The employer must top up any difference in contribution rates if it is furloughing. If the employer is not prepared to do so then this amounts to a listed change as it is a change to its pension contribution structure. The Pensions Regulator has confirmed it is possible to reduce employer contributions to a defined contribution (DC) scheme to the statutory minimum but not below it.

In normal times, this then requires the employer, if it has 50 or more employees, to consult for 60 days before changing its pension contribution structure. This is just a consultation - individual consents are not required. However the Pen-

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sions Regulator, which “polices” this consultation has announced a limited relaxation, otherwise it has the power to issue a £50k fine if the employer fails to satisfy its statutory 60 day pension consultation obligations. The relaxation lasts until 30 June 2020, when the Pensions Regulator will review the position.

No action will be taken if:

- The employer has furloughed employees and made a claim for them under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.
- The employer is only proposing to reduce the employer contribution to the DC scheme for furloughed employees, with no change for other employees.
- The reduced contribution rate for furloughed employees will only apply during the furlough period. After that it will revert to the normal employer contribution rate.
- The employer has written to all affected employees and their representatives to explain its proposed changes, the effects of these on the scheme and on its furloughed employees. Employers are encouraged to do as much



consultation as they can.

A full 60 day consultation is still required if the employer wants to change employer contributions outside this relaxation. We strongly recommend any employer proposing to reduce its employer contribution rates under the relaxation fully documents the steps it has taken to ensure it has a full paper trail if the Pensions Regulator subsequently starts to ask questions.

### Constructive dismissal

It is also separately a change to an employee’s terms and conditions and so the employee could claim constructive dismissal if they do not agree to the change i.e. there is the potential for a breach of contract claim.

### No flexibility

Employers should not be encouraging their employees in any

way to opt out of auto-enrolment and it is a statutory offence to do so. An employee must pay the minimum auto-enrolment contribution of five per cent on qualifying earnings unless the employer pays this. There is no flexibility on this in the auto-enrolment legislation. However employees can opt out, and on ceasing active membership, they no longer have to pay contributions. They must then be considered for re-enrolment at the employer’s next re-enrolment date.

Employers and employees must otherwise continue to make the contributions required under the scheme at the correct time and the contributions must not be used for any other purpose.

Employers and trustees of defined benefit schemes will have to work through with their advisers how to implement furloughing and what impact it will have on defined benefit schemes.

Penny Cogher and Larisa Gordan are lawyers at Irwin Mitchell [www.IrwinMitchell.com](http://www.IrwinMitchell.com)

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# Insights into global mobility

With global travel almost at a standstill, the latest results of the Henley Passport Index offer disturbing insight into the indiscriminate havoc caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Since its inception in 2006, the index has provided the authoritative annual ranking of global passport strength. Travel freedom has increased dramatically over the period in 2006, a citizen could travel to 58 destinations on average without a visa from the host nation; 14 years later, this number has almost doubled to 107. The first ranking of the new decade published in January this year conclusively confirmed that overall, people were the most globally mobile than we had ever been in the history of humankind, with the top-ranking passport (Japan) offering its holders access to a record-breaking 191 destinations without requiring a visa in advance. Just three months later, the picture looks very different indeed.

## Stringent

Japan's passport continues to hold the top spot on the index but the reality is that current stringent travel restrictions mean that most non-essential travel for Japanese nationals is heavily curtailed. This is true for almost every country of course, as more travel bans have been implemented,

and stringent coronavirus lockdown regulations imposed by governments worldwide. With 3.5 billion people, nearly half the global population, living in voluntary or mandatory confinement, the latest results from the index – which is based on exclusive data from the International Air Transport Association – raise challenging questions about what travel freedom and global mobility really mean, both currently and in a deeply uncertain post-pandemic future.

Dr. Christian H. Kaelin, chairman of Henley & Partners and the inventor of the passport index concept, points out that in an unprecedented global health emergency such as this, relative passport strength becomes temporarily meaningless. “A Swiss citizen can, in theory, travel to 185 destinations around the world without needing a visa in advance, but the last few weeks have made it apparent that travel freedom is contingent on factors that occasionally can be utterly beyond our control. This is something that citizens of countries with weak passports in the lower ranks of the index are all too familiar with. As public health concerns and security rightfully take precedence over all else now, even within the otherwise borderless EU, this is an opportunity to reflect on what freedom of movement and citizenship essentially mean for those of

us who have perhaps taken them for granted in the past.”

Commenting on the latest Henley Passport Index, bestselling author and the founder and managing partner of FutureMap, Dr. Parag Khanna, says the combined effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on public health, the global economy, and social behavior could lead to much deeper shifts in our human geography and future distribution around the world. “This may seem ironic given today's widespread border closures and standstill in global transportation, but as the curtain lifts, people will seek to move from poorly governed and ill-prepared ‘red zones’ to ‘green zones’ or places with better medical care. Alternatively, people may relocate to places where involuntary quarantine, whenever it strikes next, is less torturous. In the US, both domestic and international migration were surging before the pandemic, with Gen-Xers and millennials shifting to cheaper, second-tier cities in the Sun Belt or abroad to Latin America and Asia in search of an affordable life. Once quarantines lift and airline prices stand at rock bottom, expect more people across the globe to gather their belongings and buy one-way tickets to countries affordable enough to start fresh.”

## Visa waivers

This is supported by emerging research and analysis commissioned by Henley & Partners, which suggests that despite freedom of movement currently being restricted as a temporary measure, there is a risk that this will negatively affect international mobility in the long run. Political science researchers Ugur Altundal and Ömer Zarpli of Syracuse University and the University of Pittsburgh, respectively, note that public health concerns have historically been used to justify restricting mobility, but governments usually adopt travel restrictions temporarily, in response to short-term health needs. Until now, health security has not been a significant determinant or requirement when negotiating visa waivers, but Altundal and Zarpli warn that “increasing public health concerns due to the outbreak of Covid-19 may change this the quality and level of health security of a country could be a significant consideration for visa waivers in future”. The unprecedented and overwhelming focus on health security and pandemic preparedness we now see may change the face of global mobility forever.

Prof. Simone Bertoli at CERDI, Université Clermont Auvergne in France, says that the necessity of international collaboration in fighting

# Carbon neutral v carbon negative:



By Valpy Fitzgerald

As the conversation around sustainability develops past the point of the hypothetical, we now find ourselves at a decisive moment for the future of our planet. The government has legislated to become carbon neutral by 2050, and has already begun working on policies that will enable that to happen – such as the proposed ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles.

At the same time, businesses are becoming increasingly aware of the need to act now to reduce their total carbon output. According to the Carbon Trust, companies with fewer than 250 employees account for almost 20 per cent of the UK's total carbon emissions – meaning that their role in the fight against climate



change is a vital one.

But how, in a world full of conflicting advice and misinformation, do small and medium business owners know where to turn to when setting their own sustainability targets?

With so many sustainability terms being used, it can be hard to know what's relevant and what's not. So, I've broken down the jargon around some of the most commonly used terms, and shared some advice on how businesses can become

more ambitious in their sustainability targets.

## Carbon neutral

To achieve carbon neutrality means that your carbon emissions – that is, the carbon emitted by your day-to-day operations, such as manufacturing, travelling and so on – are effectively cancelled out.

This is achieved by balancing your carbon emissions with techniques such as carbon offsetting – which involves calculating your carbon emissions and investing in schemes which are certified as removing a certain amount of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Depending on the partner you choose to work with, the schemes will vary, but tree planting is a common one. This is because trees naturally absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, helping to reduce the volume of

# Who ranks where – the headlines



Japan retains its top spot on the Henley Passport Index, with a visa-free/visa-on-arrival score of 191. Over the past decade its travel freedom score has increased by 31 points: in 2010, the country was ranked 6th worldwide, with a visa-free/visa-on-arrival score of 160.

Singapore continues to hold onto 2nd place, with a visa-free/visa-on-arrival score of 190. Over the past decade Singapore's travel freedom score has increased by 35 points: in 2010, the country

was ranked 11th worldwide, with a visa-free/visa-on-arrival score of 155.

Germany remains in 3rd place, with access to 189 destinations compared to the 161 destinations its passport holders were able to access a decade ago. It shares 3rd position with South Korea, which has increased its travel freedom score by 38 points: in 2010, South Korea was ranked 13th worldwide, with a visa-free/visa-on-arrival score of 151.

The UK is currently ranked 7th on the index, with a visa-free/visa-on-arrival score of 185. Over the past decade the UK's travel freedom score has increased by 19 points: in 2010, the country was ranked 1st worldwide, with a visa-free/visa-on-arrival score of 166.

The US is also currently ranked 7th on the index, with a score of 185. Over the past decade, the US's travel freedom score has increased by 26 points: in 2010, the country was ranked 7th

worldwide, with a visa-free/visa-on-arrival score of 159.

The UAE has seen the biggest increase in travel freedom over the past 10 years. In 2010, the country was ranked 65th worldwide, with a visa-free/visa-on-arrival score of 64. It is now ranked 18th, with a score of 171 which means the country has added a remarkable 107 visa-free travel destinations over that period.

the pandemic could ultimately reduce current barriers to international mobility. "Humanity is confronted with a truly global challenge against which no country – irrespective of its level of income – can fully protect itself. This pandemic could therefore trigger renewed and more intense international cooperation, something that has (so far) not happened with the other main global challenge that the world is currently facing, namely climate change."

## Brexit

The chaos caused by the Covid-19 pandemic has cast further doubt on the timeline for the implementation of the UK's post-Brexit immigration system, according to Madeleine Sumption, director of

the Migration Observatory at the University of Oxford. The UK, currently in 7th place on the Henley Passport Index, with citizens theoretically able to access 185 destinations without acquiring a visa in advance, was set to end free movement with the EU in January 2021. However, as Sumption says, "The UK can only implement its new immigration system when the post-Brexit 'transition period' is over, and if this is extended to give negotiators more time to discuss trade and other issues, we may not be seeing the end of free movement with the EU quite yet."

In the US, also in 7th place on the Henley Passport Index, the impact of travel bans implemented at the beginning of the year appear to have

been compounded by the pandemic, according to Greg Lindsay, Director of Applied Research at NewCities. "For the children of a rising global middle class with more and more options, this pandemic may prove to be the tipping point in terms of choosing educational destinations. When the world gradually recovers with China, South Korea, and Singapore already succeeding in slowing the outbreak through effective quarantines don't be surprised if the best and brightest take coronavirus responses into consideration when deciding on their future options."

## A unique hedge against volatility in an uncertain future

Commenting on the ever-expanding

growth and popularity of the investment migration industry, Dr. Juerg Steffen, CEO of Henley & Partners, says: "We believe that in the post Covid-19 environment, investment migration will take on a dramatically enhanced importance for both individual investors and sovereign states. Acquiring alternative residence or citizenship will act as a hedge against the significant macro-economic volatility that is predicted, creating even more sovereign and societal value across the world."

[www.henleypassportindex.com/passport#](http://www.henleypassportindex.com/passport#)  
[www.henleyglobal.com](http://www.henleyglobal.com)

 Henley & Partners

# what's the difference?

the greenhouse gas. Or carbon offsetting can be done by simply not emitting carbon at all – for example, choosing to cycle instead of drive.

You might also hear people using the term net zero or zero carbon – these all mean the same thing. For example, if you used 100 per cent renewable energy to power your business and used carbon offsetting to ensure your net operations and supply chain were carbon free, you could call yourself a 'zero carbon' business.

## Carbon negative or climate positive

Carbon negative – also confusingly referred to as climate positive – goes one step further than carbon neutrality, aiming to remove more carbon from the atmosphere than you emit.

For example, Drax – my firm's parent company – announced their

goal to become carbon negative by 2030. They're doing this by using innovative technology to remove carbon from the air, meaning they will end up with less overall carbon emissions than they started with.

Again, carbon negative has a number of other terms associated with it, but it is the ultimate goal for businesses of all sizes.

## Taking the next step

It is a step in the right direction for businesses and organisations to commit to a carbon reduction plan, but it's also important to look at the bigger picture and take the next step to reduce the overall emissions in the environment. While cutting down on air travel, using LED bulbs and switching to electric vehicles is to be applauded, industry leaders and governments now need to shift their focus to removing the

amount of carbon that's already in the atmosphere. This is because proactively working to ensure no more emissions are released won't stop or slow down the impact that carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases are having on the earth; not unless we couple it up with removing the existing emissions, and collectively work to become carbon negative.

## Way of life

And this isn't just a job for big business and corporations. As recycling has been adopted universally, going the extra mile to reduce the greenhouse gases in the environment needs to become a way of life for all businesses.

Those looking to achieve carbon negative should first reduce their emissions by investing in energy-efficient technologies and energy storage, and potentially generating their

own renewable energy. Choosing a 100 per cent renewable energy supplier is also essential. Any remaining emissions can then be offset. While this may seem like a huge investment, particularly for smaller businesses, there are numerous benefits to be gained, from helping to save money and improving overall efficiency, to attracting and retaining top talent and improving customer loyalty.

With the right negative emissions policy, companies can do much more, collectively removing millions of tonnes of emissions from the atmosphere each year. But there's no one-size-fits all solution; every business will be at a different stage in their journey, so it's important to focus on what's right for you.

Valpy Fitzgerald is director of green markets at Opus Energy  
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# 5G – what the future holds



**Jerzy Drojecki looks at what 5G will give us, what it will take away; and how it will change the public internet infrastructure**

5G is no longer a buzzword, and is becoming a technology used by an increasing range of devices, as well as becoming available in more and more locations. The results of 5G are generally known: a significant increase in data transfer speed will provide higher quality multimedia for everyone and will open new paths for the creators of applications. However, most often we focus on the benefits of 5G and not on what it will take away from us.

## What will 5G take away?

In July 2016 the United Nations adopted a resolution according to which "Internet access is a human right". That may cause concern from people who are excluded in this instance. Rightly so - they have the right to demand representation, to ensure their access to a highly efficient infrastructure. This applies not only to quickly developing countries. For years even in many developed countries, hotspots that give

access to public wi-fi in city centres, public transportation and institutional buildings have been springing up everywhere.

The popularisation of the LTE (long term evolution) standard strongly reduced the interest in the public internet infrastructure. It is only one of the issues - another one is the dramatic level of security. It is no wonder that the public hotspots are the ones that are listed by network security experts as examples of untrusted and insecure connections. One should expect that 5G will speed up the trend of lowering the popularity of the public internet access even further. Soon it will be made clear that something that just a decade ago would make each city proud, will become a dangerous thing of the past.

## Does public infrastructure have a future?

The history is interesting. Consider how a significant number of internet users have connected to the network for years. It is no exaggeration to say that many of them experienced their first contact with a browser in an Internet cafe. Nowadays, these places are relics that at times operate in run-down tourist centres. Yet, at the beginning of the 21st century they



were the centres of internet counter-culture, a place of meetings for hours of online gaming marathons. But also, unique regarding the number of available assets, and a source of information for countless numbers of people worldwide.

The place that once could be regarded as the temple of the internet, is now practically non-existent. Similarly the expensive investments in public infrastructure of internet access once the requirement of modern society and of answering to the needs of the zeitgeist are now disappearing, and are the centres of the man-in-the-middle attacks. Everything points to the fact that they too will soon vanish from our culture and the air will be freed from the overlapping radio waves emitted from restaurants, trains, malls, or public administration buildings.

## The New York twist of fate

In concluding I must refer to a project

once realized in the streets of New York which seems like an exceptionally mean and ironical twist of fate. It appears that the process being a caricature reflection of the aforementioned expiry of the need to maintain an obsolete infrastructure, had already taken place. However, within the context of communication of the previous generation. Obviously, we are talking about the phone booth! However, it is not simply about the elimination of maintaining a system of phone booths, as a result of the popularisation of the mobile phone.

In New York a LinkNYC program was created, involving the systemic replacement of the traditional phone booth with modern hotspots. Modernising them so that they could serve as a wi-fi signal booster. Probably a few years back few would realise that the project which at the time was considered as an absolute cutting-edge solution regarding public infrastructure, would just a while later - by means of the LTE revolution and soon 5G - would become a thing of the past. Used mostly by thieves of login data for banking services fraud.

Jerzy Drojecki is the chief executive of Eversoft  
[www.eversoft.company](http://www.eversoft.company)

## "Sorry I lost signal" – tips for successful conference calling

by Sarah Kauter

The pandemic has changed a lot of things about business but one of the biggest changes is how we communicate day-to-day. You can't just congregate in the board room or chat to the colleague on the desk behind you. You have to call them or set up a digital meeting.

Whilst it's great that technology enables people to stay in touch, it also comes with its own challenges. With signal dropouts, video confusion and incessant background noise, conference calling can be problematic and may get in the way of important matters. Here are my top things to consider when conference calling.

### Decide on the right platform

Firstly, when my company introduced home working, we toyed with a few different platforms for our calls. Each have their own strengths and differences. For example, WhatsApp has group call

limitations whereas Zoom has time limitations. Make a note of your key needs and choose the one that will work best for you and your team.

### Make an agenda

With so much going on right now it can be easy to get off-topic. We've been working from home and it's easy to be distracted with colleague catch-ups. Prior to the call, write up all of the points you want to cover and make sure you stick to them, this way you won't forget any important matters.

### Decide on the video feature

Most group calling platforms have video capabilities, but it's not always clear when to use them. Of course, it may be nice at this time to see a friendly face on the other side of the screen, however, be sure to make it clear to all parties when arranging the call whether it will be a video call or just audio.

### Have a system

Every morning we have a team conference call to give client updates. With over 10 of us in the team, this can get complicated. Find a system that works for you and make sure everyone has their say. We give our updates in the order that we log into the call, this way no one is missed out and everyone knows the order we'll run in.

### Keep your focus

It's important to treat a conference call just like any other face-to-face meeting. Although you're on your screen and it can be distracting if an email pops up, your attention should remain on the call. This is especially true when talking to a client, make sure they know your attention is with them and refrain from looking at your phone or elsewhere.

### Minimise background noise

Working from home can bring a lot of unexpected background noises if you share the home with other people who may not be working. To

minimise this, let everyone know you're about to go on a call and they will likely be more aware of noise, or move your workspace to a quieter area of the house if possible. Sometimes noise is unavoidable, if this is the case, be sure to mute your microphone when you're not contributing to the conversation.

### Dress the part

Just because you're working from home, it doesn't mean the same level of professionalism shouldn't still apply. Whilst it can be tempting to work in your pyjamas whilst at home, make sure you are dressed appropriately for video calls. This rule can even apply on days when you're aren't expecting to video call clients or colleagues, it helps get you in to 'work mode'.

Sarah Kauter is the managing director of Verriberri, an Essex based marketing firm who have adjusted to working from home.  
[www.verriberri.co.uk](http://www.verriberri.co.uk)

# Supporting the homeworkers

**Working from home. Whether you and your teams had actually done this prior to COVID-19 or not, it's likely you'll be VERY familiar with it now!**

It has been forced upon most and for those who are not used to it, it can be a big adjustment with lots of new dynamics to adjust to. As with any change it needs to be managed correctly - and creatively, and our people must be supported along the way. Agile and remote working is our specialist area. Our team are often at opposite ends of the country and every now and then, even opposite hemispheres; check out our tips for successfully working from home (<https://www.ipwc.co.uk/home-remote-working-information-survey/>).



Photo: @johnny-mcclung

Everyone's immediate concern is the health of themselves, their friends and their families. Naturally, as we are all either business owners or employees; our next concern is continued employment, sales, productivity and success, all whilst doing this in an entirely new work setting! To fully understand how agile teams are surviving and thriving through managing in our 'new-normal', many organisations are engaging with their workforce by leveraging our Home & Remote Working Survey.

If you're questioning whether your teams are supported with the right IT equipment, if they have barriers to productivity, how they're managing their wellbeing and if they feel connected with their teams, managers and clients then get in contact with the team at [info@ipwc.co.uk](mailto:info@ipwc.co.uk) and claim your LCCI discount!

## How is this useful to you?

We support your teams and your business by collecting and analysing data, reporting on useful and practical metrics across our six key success factors that could mean the difference between just surviving or really thriving whilst your teams are working from home.

## Planning for re-occupation?

By analysing our data you can also identify teams that might be more productive if they were to be the first wave of people reoccupying your buildings. We have a specialist design team who can also help with social distancing planning of your workplace.

## Why listen to us?

We've been partnering with businesses since the early 2000's helping them to create workplaces that enable productivity whilst introducing remote and agile

working. Our work has been directly responsible in creating more streamlined businesses who

have been enabled to shed costs, maximise potential and get the most from their working teams.

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Photo: @Dhaya-Eddine-Bentale



Photo: @john-cameron



# “ A MESSAGE TO OUR SUPPORTERS

from Dr Tom Hurst, Medical Director

I'm writing this as the nation gets used to government guidance to stay at home, leaving only for essentials or exercise. It's a circumstance that many of us couldn't have imagined a matter of weeks ago, yet now it's the new 'normal'.

During this time, like many of you, I have been adapting my ways of living and working and I have been kept busy. The charity team and crew have been working together to manage the impact of coronavirus on our service and I want to reassure you that London's Air Ambulance is still fully operational. As this situation unfolds, we will do everything in our power to keep it that way, while also supporting our staff who are focussed on Covid-19 in other roles. We want to make sure our crews can continue to be there for the 10 million people living and working in London who might need us at any moment.

I want you to know that we are thinking of you, our supporters, during these testing times. We want to say a huge thank you for everything you do for us - your generosity plays a huge part in keeping us going. We are also thinking of our patients in recovery and their families - your strength continues to inspire us. And we're thinking of those we may need to help in the future.

We are thinking of our partners and colleagues at Barts Health NHS Trust and the London Ambulance Service NHS Trust. Both organisations still count on us to deliver major trauma expertise to the scene of incidents, and our Physician Response Unit (PRU) is helping to reduce ambulance demands and A&E attendances. The PRU is also allowing early discharge of hospital patients back to the community where we can do Dr follow up visits - releasing beds in hospitals. We are still going ahead with the launch of the second PRU car this month, which will provide coverage from 8am to 11pm every day of the week.

It's vital that as individuals we continue to do all we can to support the NHS during these exceptional circumstances. Thank you all for staying at home, for helping each other and those in need and for having compassion and appreciation for our key workers.

We simply couldn't do any of this without you - thank you again for supporting our service.

We wish you all good health and strength.

Dr Tom Hurst

”

# Coronavirus: Guidance to ensure full data protection standards

The European Commission has published guidance on the development of new apps that support the fight against coronavirus in relation to data protection. The development of such apps and their take up by citizens can have a significant impact on the treatment of the virus and can play an important role in the strategy to lift containment measures, complementing other measures like increased testing capacities. It is important, however, to ensure that EU citizens can fully trust such innovative digital solutions and can embrace them without fear. The largest possible participation of EU citizens is necessary to exploit the full potential of tracing apps.

EU rules, notably the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the ePrivacy Directive, provide the strongest



safeguards of trustworthiness (i.e. voluntary approach, data minimisation, time limitation) for such apps to operate widely and accurately. This guidance aims to offer the necessary framework to guarantee that citizens have sufficient protection of their personal data and limitation of intrusiveness while using such apps. The European Data Protection Board was consulted on the draft guidance. By committing to those standards, the full effectiveness and compliance of such tools can be

ensured, even in times of crisis.

Vice-President for Values and Transparency, Věra Jourová, said: "This is the first global crisis where we can deploy the full power of technology to offer efficient solutions and support the exit strategies from the pandemic. Trust of Europeans will be key to success of the tracing mobile apps. Respecting the EU data protection rules will help ensure that our privacy and fundamental rights will be upheld and that the European approach will be transparent and proportional."

Commissioner for Justice, Didier Reynders, said: "The use of mobile phone apps have the potential to really help in the fight against coronavirus, for example by helping users to diagnose themselves, as a safe communication channel between doctors and patients,

by alerting users who are at risk of catching the virus, and to help us lift confinement measures. At the same time, we are talking about very sensitive data being collected on the health of our citizens, which we are duty-bound to protect. Our guidance supports the safe development of apps and protect our citizens' personal data, in line with the EU's strong data protection rules. We will get out of the sanitary crisis, while keeping our fundamental rights intact.

This guidance follows the recent publication of the Commission Recommendation on a common EU approach for the use of mobile applications and mobile data, and is accompanying an EU toolbox on contact tracing apps, which is also published.

*Continued on p38*



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# EU remains world's leading aid donor

The collective Official Development Assistance (ODA) from the European Union and its Member States amounted to €75.2 billion in 2019, representing 55.2% of global assistance, according to figures released by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC).

The EU's and its Member States collective assistance represented 0.46% of EU Gross National Income (GNI), slightly lower than the 0.47% in 2018, but remains significantly above the 0.21% average of the non-EU members of the DAC.

Commissioner for International Partnerships, Jutta Urpilainen, said: "As the world's leading donor of Official Development Assistance, the EU is saving lives, building stronger economies and protecting the planet for the

benefit of millions throughout the world. However, I am concerned that our collective effort on GNI is at its lowest since 2016. I call on all Member States and all development actors to re-double their efforts. The current coronavirus crisis shows how interdependent we all are and how important it is to step up support to our partner countries as Team Europe."

## Commitments

In 2019, three EU Member States met their ODA commitments of providing 0.7% or more of their GNI in ODA: Luxembourg, Sweden, Denmark as well as the United Kingdom.

All in all, 17 Member States have increased their ODA in nominal terms compared to 2018: Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany,

Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Romania, Slovenia, Spain as well as the UK. The following Member States increased their ODA/GNI ratio by at least 0.01 percentage points: Austria, Cyprus, Finland, France, Luxembourg and Malta. However, the ODA to GNI ratio decreased in 8 Member States by at least 0.01: Belgium, Estonia, Germany, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal and Sweden.

The EU's ODA to Least Developed Countries increased for the second consecutive year in 2018, to €19.8 billion, i.e. 0.125% of GNI in 2018. Figures for 2019 will only be known in December. In 2018, EU28 ODA to Africa increased by 4.3% and reached EUR 25 billion.

Beyond ODA, the EU is helping partner countries to make the most of the diverse financing sources available to

support implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The EU has been instrumental in bringing together aid, investment, trade, domestic resource mobilisation and policies designed to unlock the full potential of all financial flows. The EU has played a key role in the Integrated National Financing Frameworks, to design financing strategies for sustainable development from all sources of finance. Through the European External Investment Plan, the EU is on track to leverage over €47 billion in investment for Africa and our neighbourhood. The European Fund for Sustainable Development guarantee in particular plays a key role in unlocking additional finance for partner countries. The EU also supports partner countries to improve tax collection and public spending.

# Coronavirus: Commission guidance on implementing EU rules on asylum

The Commission has adopted guidance on the implementation of relevant EU rules on asylum and return procedures and on resettlement in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, which it will present to Member States. This responds to Member States' request for advice on ways to ensure the continuity of procedures and the respect of, at a minimum, basic rights. The guidance was prepared with the support of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex), and in cooperation with national authorities.

Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life, Margaritis Schinas, said: "The pandemic has direct consequences on the way EU asylum and return rules are being implemented and a disruptive effect on resettlement. Today we are acting to support Member States in providing guidance on how to use the flexibility in EU rules to ensure the continuity of procedures as much as possible while fully ensuring the protection of people's health and rights. While our way of life may have changed drastically in

the past weeks – our values and principles must not."

Commissioner for Home Affairs, Ylva Johansson, said: "Even in a health emergency, we need to guarantee individual fundamental rights. The Commission fully acknowledges the difficulties that Member States face in the current situation. In the guidelines, we give advice for practical solutions which take into account Member States' legitimate concerns and constraints. Any measure taken in the area of asylum, resettlement and return should also take full account of the health protection measures introduced by the Member States to prevent the spread of coronavirus. Vulnerable persons, in particular unaccompanied minors, and families should receive particular care and attention."

## Asylum procedures

Health measures taken to limit social interaction among asylum personnel and applicants have an impact on asylum processes. The flexibility provided for in EU rules should be used:

- Registration and processing of

applications should continue. Maximum flexibility should be permitted in relation to deadlines and the duration for processing and examining claims. However, any delays in registration should not mean applicants are left without reception conditions.

- Personal interviews can be conducted with specific arrangements such as remotely through video conferencing or even omitted if needed.
- Dublin Regulation: Close cooperation between Member States is of fundamental importance for the good functioning of the Dublin system. The Commission encourages all Member States to resume transfers of applicants as soon as practically possible in view of the evolving circumstances. Before carrying out any transfer, Member States should consider the situation related to the coronavirus, including that resulting from the heavy pressure on the health system, in the Member State responsible. Where transfers to the Member State normally responsible cannot take place within the applicable time limit,

Member States can still agree bilaterally to nevertheless carry out the transfer at a later date, which is to be encouraged for example for unaccompanied minors and family reunification cases. The Commission and EASO are prepared to facilitate cooperation between Member States.

- Reception conditions: Quarantine and isolation measures must be reasonable, proportionate and non-discriminatory. Applicants must receive the necessary health care. Applicants in detention should continue to have access to open air and any restrictions, such as limitation of visitors, need to be carefully explained.
- Fingerprinting: In line with the Eurodac Regulation, where it is not possible to take the fingerprints of an applicant on account of measures taken to protect public health, Member States should take fingerprints as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after such health grounds cease to exist.

## Resettlement

The outbreak of the coronavirus has led to a severe

disruption of resettlement operations. Member States as well as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) have temporarily suspended resettlement operations. Preparatory activities should continue to the extent possible so that resettlement operations can resume smoothly. The Commission will continue to support Member States to fulfil

their 2020 pledges and will grant flexibility in relation to the implementation period.

**Return**

Measures taken worldwide to contain the pandemic are having a significant effect on return. Despite the temporary disruption caused by the coronavirus, work on return procedures to third countries should continue, particularly on activities that can be carried out despite

restrictive measures, to be ready for when return operations can be resumed. More than ever, voluntary returns should be prioritised, also because they present a lower health and safety risk. Frontex stands ready to assist Member States in organising air operations. Close cooperation and contacts with third countries on the identification, documentation and return of their nationals should also be maintained. As

regards pre-removal detention, the temporary restrictions during the pandemic should not be interpreted as automatically leading to the conclusion that a reasonable prospect of removal no longer exists in all cases. The Commission invites Member States to examine each case individually to determine whether a reasonable prospect of removal still exists when deciding on appropriate action to take.

**ONLINE EVENTS**



■ Registration Deadline: Sunday 10 May 2020



■ Registration Deadline: June 2020

The aim of the programme is to help organisations applying for the Energy Catalyst Round 8 to gain an understanding of the energy access issues in Malawi and for businesses to develop equitable partnerships between organisations interested in submitting an Energy Catalyst Application.



■ Registration Deadline: Friday 29 May 2020



■ Registration Deadline: June 2020

Location: Online B2Match platform

The aim of the programme is to help organisations applying for the Energy Catalyst Round 8 to gain an understanding of the energy access issues in Zambia and for businesses to develop equitable partnerships between organisations interested in submitting an Energy Catalyst Application.



■ Registration Deadline: Monday 7 September 2020

Registrations for all events are now open  
 Registrations for all these online events are now open. For further information contact the Enterprise Europe Network London office at [enterprise.europe@londonchamber.co.uk](mailto:enterprise.europe@londonchamber.co.uk)

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**Contact**

Please see [www.acetravel.co.uk](http://www.acetravel.co.uk) for further information.

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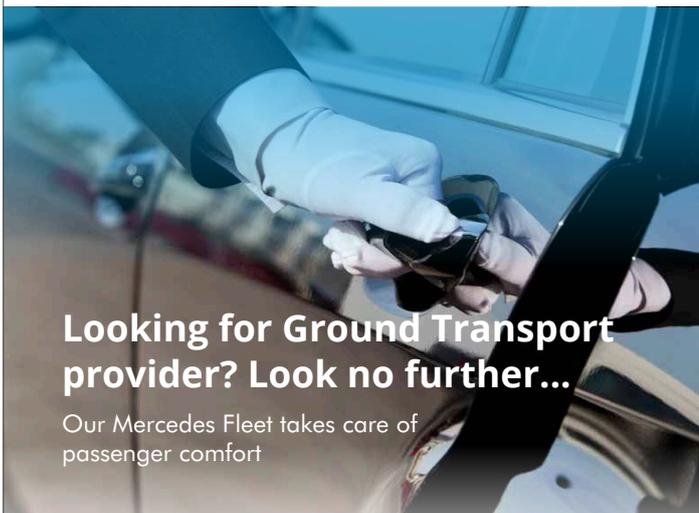
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Research by Deloitte suggests that poor mental health cost UK bosses more than £43 billion in 2018. That was an increase of 16 per cent since the previous estimate of £37bn in 2016.

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### ■ Crimestoppers Connections magazine

These are extraordinary times as our country faces the challenges of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. For Crimestoppers, this difficult period has seen a significant increase in calls and online contacts from the public - not just offering reports on people directly threatening the health of others by spreading the virus, but also providing vital information on all types of crime to support law enforcement across the United Kingdom.

For information on some of the things our charity has been up to, please see the latest edition Crimestoppers' Connections. The series of short articles have been written by people from key organisations and influencers that we work with. They, like you, value our essential role in helping support intelligence gathering and giving the public a chance to speak up about crime 100% anonymously.



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### ■ Assistance or support during Covid-19

Pearse Trust is an acknowledged expert provider of companies, partnerships and trusts, established in several jurisdictions around the world. We are on hand to assist should you require assistance or support during Covid-19

Our highly qualified personnel include lawyers, accountants, tax advisors, company secretaries, trust advisors and banking personnel, who provide advice on all aspects of the establishment and management of such structures. Many of our clients have worked with us for 10, 20 or even 30 years.

If you would like to learn more about the services we provide, please email [info@pearse-trust.ie](mailto:info@pearse-trust.ie) or [meetings@pearse-trust.ie](mailto:meetings@pearse-trust.ie) if you wish to be contacted via phone or video conference call. In addition, please feel free to peruse the many 'white papers', blogs and other useful information on our website.



### ■ IMSM promoting medical safety and supporting our NHS

IMS M, to promote medical safety and support our NHS, will be donating 5% of every ISO 13485 Medical Device Standard sold now until the end of June 2020 to the client's local NHS Trust.

In the last few weeks communities and businesses have come together in response to Covid-19 and to show support for our NHS. Seemingly overnight, companies started developing systems to help with producing masks, lab coats, ventilators, and other lifesaving equipment and products.

Producing these materials quickly is essential; however, the safety and effectiveness of these products are even more so. Therefore, following proper processes and management systems are just as important to ensure safety standards are adhered to. Please reach out - IMSM wants to help.

For further information, please call 01793 688990, email [marketing@imsm.com](mailto:marketing@imsm.com) or visit [www.imsm.com](http://www.imsm.com).

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