

COVID19: News and Information for the local Construction Community

Issue 1: 27 March 2020

Our intention is to provide a united front to help support local construction and built environment businesses and individuals, through the ongoing repercussions of the COVID-19 coronavirus for our sector.

Through this bulletin, we plan to provide a regular centralised, factual, relevant and robust source of official information. We can share intelligence to help us both now and to plan for the future. We want to create a forum for feedback with Plymouth City Council. We need to understand the implications for skills and employment. We must stay positive about our world post COVID-19 and we can help each other do so through staying in touch.



Welcome!

Hello, how are you? Welcome to our first issue of what we hope will be a helpful and supportive way for us to stay connected during this challenging time. Aside from team-working on delivering projects, given how much we socialise as a construction community this lockdown really is going to be tricky!

We welcome your feedback on shaping our bulletin content and are happy to help support in any way we can. We are starting Plymouth centric in our approach but as official information emerges from neighbouring areas then this bulletin's reach may potentially expand geographically. **Stay safe, stay in touch!**

Emma Hewitt
Building Plymouth Skills Co-ordinator



Official Government Updates

26/03/20 - UK government unveils aid for self-employed

The Government has announced a new self-employed income support scheme, which will provide self-employed people facing financial difficulties with 80% of their average monthly income, up to a maximum of £2,500. This will be calculated using their average monthly profits over last three financial years.

The scheme will initially last for three months, offering the same level of support for furloughed workers.

To be eligible, recipients must:

- Already be self-employed
- Have a self-assessment tax return for 2019 (a four week extension from today will enable people to submit a tax return if they missed the deadline)
- Have trading profits of up to £50,000
- Make the majority of their income from self-employment

HMRC are administering the scheme and aim for it to be live by June. Eligible recipients will be contacted directly and money paid directly into their bank account following application.

The scheme is in addition to all of the self-employed support measures already announced including access to Universal Credit, Coronavirus Business Support loans and HMRC support outlined at:

[CLICK HERE for more information](#)
[CLICK HERE for more information](#)

26/03/20 - Department for Work and Pensions, Plymouth Jobcentre Plus - Government's Covid-19 Retention Scheme

Guidance for employees, employers and businesses - GOV.UK

We advise all employers to ensure that they keep up-to-date with the latest Government advice via:

[CLICK HERE for more information](#)

It is important that employers are clear regarding the help and support available and that they note that it is their responsibility to communicate this effectively to their employees.

If employees are currently out of the business, clear and effective communication channels should be established, and maintained, between employers and employees. The communication should include information regarding how much, and when, an employee should expect to receive payments.

27/03/20 - FSB are hosting a webinar this afternoon

Coronavirus: Financial help explained for SMEs and the self-employed
Free webinar from Federation of Small Businesses – Friday 27 March 2020, 14:00

[CLICK HERE to sign up](#)



Official Plymouth City Council updates

25/03/20 Covid-19 grants available to support Plymouth businesses

Plymouth's businesses are now able to apply for financial support to help get them through the current uncertainties created by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Plymouth City Council has written to all businesses eligible to receive grants so they can urgently access financial help as soon as possible - with the ambition of making most payments within the next two weeks.

For more information about the business support available from Plymouth City Council:

[CLICK HERE for more information](#)

For more information about business rates:

[CLICK HERE for more information](#)

David Draffan, Service Director of Economic Development

David Draffan at Plymouth City Council is publishing a daily blog which brings you up to speed with PCC action and response to the government announcements:

23/03/20 [CLICK HERE for the blog](#)

24/03/20 [CLICK HERE for the blog](#)

25/03/20 [CLICK HERE for the blog](#)

27/03/20 [CLICK HERE for the blog](#)

You can register directly for the PCC Economic Development newsletter here:

[CLICK HERE for the Economic Development Newsletter](#)

Feedback Please

As part of Plymouth City Council's resilience work we are collating feedback from businesses within the city to share economic impacts of Covid-19 which we will feed into central Government to lobby for sector support for businesses in difficulty. If you have feedback to share on construction sector impact please can you email emma.hewitt@plymouth.gov.uk. Any information that is provided and shared with Plymouth City Council will only be used specifically for understanding the business impacts of COVID-19 and will not be used beyond this critical period.

Construction Sector Updates

26/03/20 - CITB to suspend industry levy collection

CITB's board has given final approval to suspend the issue of its levy bills, due for payment in 2020, for an initial period of three months. The bills will subsequently be issued for the full year. The delay will provide immediate financial relief to construction employers during the coronavirus crisis. In normal times CITB assesses and sends out levy bills each April in accordance with legal requirements. CITB levy bills are usually due for payment in May, but CITB will not seek collection on the suspended bills until August, or later if possible.

[CLICK HERE for more information](#)

24/03/20 - CITB paying apprenticeship grants in advance

CITB is making available advanced payment of apprenticeship attendance grants for second and third year apprentices to help keep skills within the construction industry amid the coronavirus outbreak.

[CLICK HERE for more information](#)

CITB urges all employers not to dismiss any apprentices without first contacting the apprenticeship team: apprenticeships.covid19@citb.co.uk

24/03/20 - Launch of site operating procedures during Covid-19

To implement the Government's social distancing recommendation the Construction Leadership Council has published Site Operating Procedures:

[CLICK HERE for more information](#)

24/03/20 Why aren't construction sites closing

The Construction Industry Council (CIC) is the representative forum for the professional bodies, research organisations and specialist business associations in the construction industry. They posted an interesting article here:

[CLICK HERE for more information](#)

Cabinet Office Procurement Policy Note published

This Procurement Policy Note (PPN) sets out information and guidance for public bodies on payment of their suppliers to ensure service continuity during and after the current coronavirus, COVID-19, outbreak. Contracting authorities must act now to ensure suppliers at risk are in a position to resume normal contract delivery once the outbreak is over.

[CLICK HERE for information released 18/3/20](#)

[CLICK HERE for information released 20/03/20](#)

What CITB is doing to support construction employers through the coronavirus crisis and beyond

CITB are providing their latest information about their operations:

[CLICK HERE for more information](#)



Legal Matters

There is a lot of legal advice out there whether it is for project issues or staff advice. Rather than give you a long list of links, here are some links to the local experts who are able to help on a broad range of topics:

- [CLICK HERE for Foot Anstey COVID-19 information](#)
- [CLICK HERE for Ashfords information](#)
- [CLICK HERE for Michelmores information](#)
- [CLICK HERE for Womble Bond Dickinson](#)

MOTs- Vehicles

There is a 6 month exemption from MOT testing - if first MOT due exempted from needing a test from 30.03.2020. Vehicles need to be kept in roadworthy condition.

Accounts

Companies House filing - Additional three months to file accounts.

[CLICK HERE for more information](#)

Gender pay reporting

If you needed to comply - this is suspended for the 2019/20 reporting year.

[CLICK HERE for more information](#)

ACTION REQUIRED!

26/03/20 - PPE needed call from Emergency Response Team Plymouth

As you will recognise the supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE) to the care sector is fundamental for the good care of people with suspected symptoms of Covid-19. Whilst we are working rapidly with the government to ensure a longer-term supply of all aspects of personal protective equipment, including gloves, aprons, face masks and hand sanitiser, in order to support our services, our frontline staff and those that we are working to protect, we urgently need action to address the PPE stock levels in Plymouth.

As a city we are pulling together in our time of need and we hope that you can provide further support with donating any essential Protection equipment to support the COVID-19 emergency.

The types of things we need are:

- Disposable nitrile or latex free gloves
- Disposable aprons

- Medical face visors
- Fluid resistant masks
- All in one PPE Body suits
- Disposable Shoe protectors
- Protectable sleeves
- 70% alcohol plus hand sanitisers
- Soap
- Paper towels or Alcohol wipes

If you are able to help with this request then please email with your contact details and number and Plymouth City Council will get in touch.

PeopleDirectorateResponseTeam@plymouth.gov.uk

Staying Healthy and Positive

Glayne's Top Tips

So how are you all doing in these difficult times? I appreciate that everyone will deal with the situation we find ourself in in very different ways. Living and working from home can be difficult as you no longer have that break. I have now been (almost) 2 weeks in #WFH and here are a few pointers that I have found have helped me to deal with this.

Keep in contact with not only your friends, family but also your colleagues. Don't forget that you are used to being around them for the best part of 8hrs a day and having long periods of time working from home can leave you feeling isolated. Technology has been massively important and the use of MS Teams or Skype is a great way of doing this - video chat, Messenger, whatever form of communication best suited for the situation - the main thing is to keep in contact!

Routine - I believe that we are all 'creatures of habit' and routine is a great way of keeping focussed and staying alert as the days go by. Personally, I have tried to retain my Monday to Friday routine (other than an extra hour lie in due to not having to travel) and set myself targets for the day ahead. Sometimes these don't always go to plan (but they wouldn't necessarily go to plan in normal circumstances!). It also means that when I reach the weekend that I 'shut down' and do my new and very different 'weekend' tasks!

Exercising - whilst this can be difficult (with the current advice being only going outside once a day) don't forget that there are many on-line events / classes that are happening. I have found a couple which have been great. Not only is this good for

your physical wellbeing, it is also good for your physical wellbeing too (and don't forget you can also do this with your children if you have them).

Listening to music - during the day my house can become very quiet - a great for concentration but it can also drive you a little mad! I tend to put on some music - it really does help to keep me relaxed.

Control - just bear in mind that you can only be in control of some aspects of your life right now. I try not to stress about things that I cannot change (these will be different for everyone) but the sentiment remains the same.

Enjoy time in your home - I don't tend have that much time in my home as I am often out and about. Do the things that you've been putting off (if you can!); Tidy up that cupboard, fix that door. Whatever it is, you will feel accomplished once complete!

So, these are just a few pointers of what I have found to be useful. They may help you or strike a chord with how you are dealing with life at the moment. They do not just relate to 'working from home' but also living day-to-day at the moment.

I believe that our world will have learnt so much about itself by the time we get back to 'normal'. Don't think that this is a negative - think about it as a positive. Take care and #staysafe

Glayne Price
LHC Design



Something to Look Forward To

The Trees have landed at the Mayflower Forest

Last week marked the beginning of 1000 trees being planted on Marsh Mills Roundabout as leading members of Plymouth's construction industry move forward to create 'The Mayflower Forest' as their community engagement efforts towards a lasting legacy for Mayflower400.

www.buildingplymouth.co.uk/news/tree-planting-has-started-at-the-mayflower-forest

[Watch our interview on site here](#)

CESW Construction Summit - An Industry of Opportunity

Rescheduled to September 4th, Marriot, Bristol

[CLICK HERE for more information](#)

Michelmores Property Awards 2020

Rescheduled to November 10th 2020

Herald Business Awards Plymouth

Scheduled to September 15th, Plymouth Pavilions

Plymouth Area Business Council Mayflower400 Dinner

Rescheduled to September 18th

The End2End Relay by Love Her Wild

Supported by SWWIC this walking relay from lands End to John O'Groats has a new start date of Wednesday 5th August.



Contact Us

For any queries, feedback and support:

[CLICK HERE to contact Building Plymouth](#)

Other key contacts include:

Emma Hewitt, [The Building Forum Devon & Cornwall](#)

Kate Mills, [The Building Forum Devon & Cornwall](#)

Glayne Price, [South West Women in Construction](#)

Peter Everitt, [Constructing Excellence Plymouth Club](#)

Mike Borkowski, [Constructing Excellence Exeter Club](#)

David Bayliss, [First Thursday Club Plymouth](#)

About Us

Building Plymouth is a council-led partnership with the local construction and built environment industry that drives skills and employment with the aim of increasing the number of local skilled people joining the industry. During this unprecedented and challenging time, we are very keen to support the local construction community and would be pleased to hear from employers and individuals about how we can best help.

