

STAYING COVID-19 SECURE			
Review	Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak		Version 2.0
Date	22 nd Aug 2020		
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Scope and reference

Management of business impact of global Coronavirus (COVID19) outbreak, considering;

Summary

- 1 Business response to UK government guidelines
- 2 Risk assessment and actions

Key updates on progress

Detailed review

1. Thinking about risk
2. Who should go to work?
3. Social distancing at work
4. Managing your customers, visitors and contractors
5. Cleaning the workplace
6. Personal protective equipment (PPE) and face coverings
7. Workforce management
8. Inbound and outbound good

Key points of reference;

Government advice 'Working safely during Covid-19 Office and contact centres'

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5eb97e7686650c278d4496ea/working-safely-during-covid-19-offices-contact-centres-110520.pdf>

1. Thinking about risk

Approach

A full review of government guidance has been completed using resources at:

- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/offices-and-contact-centres>

the output of which will be a detailed risk assessment that is shared with our internal teams and externally via our website:

- <https://www.patrickparsons.co.uk/>

Engaging our people

Since the beginning of the Corona virus outbreak, we have implemented a detailed business continuity plan. A key focus of this plan was the wellbeing and support of our people. Steps taken to ensure all staff have had the opportunity to feed into our response are as follows:

- Business continuity planning (BCP) steering group – Made up of our senior leaders and a representative from each of our offices meet daily to raise any questions or concern.
- Our CEO has completed weekly communications to all staff via email and held monthly meetings with all staff to keep teams posted and gather feedback.
- We have completed (socially distanced) face to face meetings with all of our teams to demonstrate and consult on the measures implemented in each office location.

Objective of this assessment

Objective: To reduce risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level by taking preventative measures, in order of priority.

Government guidance states:

Employers have a duty to reduce workplace risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level by taking preventative measures. Employers must work with any other employers or contractors sharing the workplace so that everybody's health and safety is protected. In the context of COVID-19 this means protecting the health and safety of your workers and visitors by working through these steps in order:

- Ensuring both workers and visitors who feel unwell stay at home and do not attend the premise.
- In every workplace, increasing the frequency of handwashing and surface cleaning.
- Businesses and workplaces should make every reasonable effort to ensure their employees can work safely. From 1st August, this may be working from home, or within the workplace if COVID-19 Secure guidelines are followed closely. When in the workplace, everyone should make every reasonable

effort to comply with the social distancing guidelines set out by the government (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable is acceptable). From 1st August, clinically extremely vulnerable individuals, who were previously advised to shield at home, can go to the workplace as long as it is COVID-secure, but should carry on working from home wherever possible.

- Where the social distancing guidelines cannot be followed in full, in relation to a particular activity, businesses should consider whether that activity can be redesigned to maintain a 2m distance or 1m with risk mitigations where 2m is not viable.
- Further mitigating actions include:
 - Further increasing the frequency of hand washing and surface cleaning.
 - Keeping the activity time involved as short as possible.
 - Using screens or barriers to separate people from each other.
 - Using back-to-back or side-to-side working (rather than face-to-face) whenever possible.
 - Reducing the number of people each person has contact with by using 'fixed teams or partnering' (so each person works with only a few others).
- Where the social distancing guidelines cannot be followed in full, even through redesigning a particular activity, businesses should consider whether that activity needs to continue for the business to operate, and if so, take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission between their staff.
- You should ensure that steps are taken to avoid people needing to unduly raise their voices to each other. This includes, but is not limited to, refraining from playing music or broadcasts that may encourage shouting, including if played at a volume that makes normal conversation difficult. This is because of the potential for increased risk of transmission, particularly from aerosol transmission. We will develop further guidance, based on scientific evidence, to enable these activities as soon as possible.
- Finally, if people must work face-to-face for a sustained period with more than a small group of fixed partners, then you will need to assess whether the activity can safely go ahead. No one is obliged to work in an unsafe work environment.
- In your assessment you should have particular regard to whether the people doing the work are especially vulnerable to COVID-19.

It is against the law to gather in groups of more than 30 people in private homes (including gardens and other outdoor spaces). Businesses following COVID-19 Secure guidelines can host groups of more than 30 people indoors. Events in public outdoor spaces that are organised by businesses, charitable or political organisations, and public bodies, can host more than 30 people provided they take reasonable steps to mitigate the risk of transmission, in line with COVID-19 Secure guidance and

including completion of a risk assessment. Any other gathering in an outdoor space must not be any larger than 30 people.

2. Who should go to work?

Our approach

Our Business continuity plan (BCP) focus changes from 1st September, from office working by exception to re-opening our offices for all staff to attend two days per week. Office attendance will be on planned rota basis, with numbers limited.

Enabling office working on rotation will improve the working experience for all of our teams, and the service provided to our clients. By 1st September all staff will have laptops enabling them to work at home or in the office. Our staff can work in a fully mobile way, with a planned approach to coming together. We have learned that our teams need planned time together, this supports; effective delivery of complex projects, junior colleagues learning vital skills from experienced engineers and improves mental health.

Our long term commitment to flexible working means the two days office working will remain in place. This creates a working environment that is critical to our future, and importantly improves the environmental impact of our business operations.

Our mitigation to Covid-19 risk is the measures we have implemented to limit office working coupled with robust measures in offices to reduce the risk of the spread of potential infection.

Requests from team members to work more than 2 days per week in the office will be considered by the BCP steering group and approved by exception. The steering group will carefully consider office capacity in the approval of requests.

There are occasions where our team members may need to attend a site-based meeting or go to site to complete works. This has become more frequent as Covid restrictions have lifted. Members of staff are able to go to a site-based meetings.

We have provided a separate clear guidance for these situations in this document.

Appendix 1

Keeping in touch with home workers and monitoring wellbeing

We are using Microsoft Teams and Zoom in order to collaborate at times we have people working from home.

These platforms have provided the tools we needed to hold large all group meetings, team meetings and conduct 'video' one to ones. While we plan to return to office working, our forward strategy is to allow our teams to work flexibly so VC tools will continue to be an important part of our operation.

To support increased levels of social interaction we have implemented a full calendar of virtual social events and launched Yammer. Our teams are actively engaging and sharing.

2.1 Protecting people at higher risk

As part of our BCP we have completed a review of any of our team members that we considered to be vulnerable. Our findings were as follows:

Based on latest guidance for the NHS vulnerable people are considered to be those who have or are;

- Cancer
- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- Asthma
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Primary immunodeficiency (PID)
- Cystic fibrosis
- Pregnancy

We have considered our workforce and reviewed advice from government bodies. We will also include the following people in our vulnerable people plan;

- Employees over 60

Current vulnerable employees;

	Medical condition	Pregnant	Over 60	Total	% of staff
Twickenham	1	1	1	3	8%
Birmingham	1	1	2	4	10%
Huddersfield	0	0	1	1	7%
Ashvale	1	0	0	1	9%
Gateshead	0	1	1	2	9%
Homebased	1	0	0	1	100%
Total	4	3	5	12	10%

The Public Health England report 'Disparities in the risk and outcomes of COVID-19' shows that some groups of people may be at more risk of being infected and/or an adverse outcome if infected. The higher-risk groups include those who:

- are older males
- have a high body mass index (BMI)
- have health conditions such as diabetes

- are from some Black, Asian or minority ethnicity (BAME) backgrounds

From 1st August, clinically extremely vulnerable individuals can return to their workplace providing COVID-secure guidelines are in place but should work from home wherever possible. If extremely clinically vulnerable individuals cannot work from home, they will be offered the option of the safest available on-site roles, enabling them to maintain social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable). It may be appropriate for clinically extremely vulnerable individuals to take up an alternative role or adjusted working patterns temporarily

Staff who identify themselves as to falling into a high risk category will be supported on an individual basis where they have concerns.

2.2 Self isolation

Any member of staff that needs to self isolate is able to work from home.

2.3 Equality in the workplace

During our Covid-19 response planning we have carefully considered the personal situations of all of our team members. This has allowed us to support all staff in the way most appropriate to them.

2.4 Ventilation

We have reviewed the ventilation in our offices. Importantly doors and windows should be kept open wherever possible. Staff members are reminded by onsite signage to ensure offices are securely closed at the end of the working day.

Office specific ventilation

- Birmingham – Fresh air ventilation – MHVR units To be switched on and to ‘Summer Time Bypass’ to avoid air being exposed to the heat exchange. FCU also to be switched on. All local extract fans in all toilets to operate as normal
- Twickenham – Fan coil units to be fully serviced ahead of 1st September and switched on, effectively operating as ‘ceiling fans’ Local extract fans in all toilets to operate as normal.
- Ashvale – No air circulation unit
- Wakefield – To be confirmed
- Gateshead – Air circulation to be switched off

3. Social distancing at work

3.1 Coming to work and leaving work

Our office capacities in larger locations are reduced, therefore reducing the number of people arriving and leaving office space.

Arrival and departure times

We will offer flexible start and finish times to any member of staff who is working from an office. Provided client needs can be serviced, the times at which office hours are completed will be at the discretion of the individual. Cleaners will attend the office outside of the hours people are present to reduce the amount of people in the office at any one time. This will be organised on a site by site basis.

Additional parking and space for bicycles

Our offices have limited parking. The consideration for returning workers will include their travel to work plans. Where possible we will provide parking spaces for those that drive and increased space for the storage of bicycles.

Limiting passengers in company vehicles

Our policy is that all company vehicles are limited to strictly single person occupancy at all time's during working hours. This includes personal vehicles used for company business.

Reducing congestion

We have completed visits to all of our office locations. Where possible there are separate entry and exit points and one-way circulation systems. These arrangements are clearly marked out for staff with appropriate signage. Consultative meetings took place in each site with all staff to explain and demonstrate the measures in place. Feedback was given and various office specific changes took place.

Providing storage for clothes and bags

Our approach is to reduce the capacity of our offices. As a result, there is more storage space for personal belongings. Personal belongings should be stored away from workstations.

For desk items we have provided each member of staff with a designated box, and storage unit.

Using markings to manage flow of people

Our offices are clearly marked with one-way people flow systems and entry and exit points. If a one way system is not possible priority of people flows and stopping points to ensure social distancing is clearly marked.

Hand cleaning at entry and exit points

During working hours when the buildings are occupied, doors will be propped open where appropriate but will be closed again each day when the buildings are vacated for fire safety. This will not include entry and exit doors. As a result, we will provide hand cleansing stations at all entry and exits.

3.2 Moving around buildings and worksites

Moving around our buildings

Numbers in our offices will be reduced. Those that do attend an office will be allowed to work flexibly. To manage our 1st September move to office working the following measures have been implemented:

- Masks must be worn if you are not sat working at your desk (Excludes Ashvale due to space available)

Where movement is required clear markings people flow will be followed. Multiple use items such as printers will have adequate cleaning materials.

3.3 Work places and work stations

Review layouts

We have completed detailed plans of each of our offices, detailing desk space that can be used in order to maintain social distancing guidance. Working at a personal desk will achieve the 2m (or 1m + with mitigation) social distancing guidelines.

We have implemented an approach of desks positioned facing office walls where appropriate to reduce risks while at work stations.

Our offices have undergone a significant clear out process through August. Many years worth of paper files have been removed from sites and taken to storage units. This enables us to have a much clearer office space and importantly a clear desk policy.

Our clear desk policy is managed by each individual keeping all work items in a cleanable box, stored in a designated storage unit. This allows for pre and post desk cleaning with wipes provided, and daily cleaning of high touch areas by our contract cleaners.

Appendix 2

These plans clearly detail the total maximum occupancy based on current guidelines.

Desks will be allocated per individual approved to attend the office in advance of their visit.

Occupancy levels

Occupancy levels will not rise above the levels at which social distancing can be achieved.

The control for this is our planned office working two days per week on rotation and any additional requests considered by the BCP steering group.

3.4 Meetings

We have implemented virtual meeting tools; Microsoft Teams and Zoom. These are available for our teams to conduct both internal and external meetings.

Where possible all internal meetings should be held by virtual means.. Internal meeting rooms are closed unless they have windows or doors that open externally. Rooms that are opened / closed will

be clearly signposted. Only meeting rooms with adequate space and windows / doors that open to the outside will be considered.

Pens, physical documents and other objects should not be shared during meetings.

Hand sanitiser and disinfectant wipes will be provided in meeting spaces. Individuals should always clean down the desk space and chair before and after use.

There will be occasions where external meetings and works need to be carried out on site with clients. Which is covered in our separate guidance here;

Appendix 1

3.5 Common areas

Shared buildings

We have reviewed the shared buildings in our portfolio. These are:

- Ashvale – there is shared toilet facility. We have however, come to an arrangement with the landlord and other tenants that for the time being we will have allocated toilet space.
- Gateshead – We have fully reviewed the position of the Gateshead office. The shared kitchen area is out of use to our employees. Tea / coffee and fridge facilities are provided in the office with bottled water available in the absence of a running water supply. Toilet facilities within the shared building are operating a ‘one in one out’ rule. Our teams must adhere to this as per our office specific meeting.

Breaks and food

Our teams will be able to work flexibly when in the office so working times of those in are likely to differ. Individuals will be encouraged to take any breaks at different times to others in the office.

Kitchen and toilet facilities will be restricted to one person at a time. This will be clearly signposted.

Teams will be encouraged to bring their own food to work in an airtight container. Fridge facilities will be provided as normal, but there will be more space per individual due to lower numbers of staff in the office.

Toilet facilities will be allocated per individual in the office. With the exception of Ashvale and Gateshead.

In line with mental health guidance staff are encouraged to get fresh air during breaks, but we advise against visiting high footfall areas during to avoid interaction with other people.

Our Twickenham kitchen facility is currently out of use, due to the fact it is in the open office environment on the middle floor.

To support our Twickenham team, we have implemented the following:

- New fridge's ordered, one for each floor
- Water dispensers installed on each floor, providing chilled and instant hot drinking water. The units are pedal operated to reduce high touch areas

Reception areas

Our reception areas will remain closed at present, a buzzer system is in place in all offices to notify staff of things such as deliveries.

Our reception areas are controlled by a bell to ring for entry with clearly signed instructions for visitors and staff alike.

3.6 Accidents, security and other incidents

Social distancing measures are not required during an emergency situation such as a fire.

People involved in the provision of assistance to others should pay particular attention to sanitation measures immediately afterwards including washing hands.

4. Managing customer visitors and contractors

4.1 Manage contacts

We have implemented Microsoft Teams and Zoom to manage both internal and external meetings. This option should be provided to all external parties before agreeing a face to face meeting.

Where face to face meetings are necessary it is likely they would occur at a client location, particularly site specific visits. Team members should request in advance the guidance from the business responsible for the location at which the visit is planned.

Some of our meeting rooms are now open, where there are externally opening windows or doors. Clients can attend meetings in our offices if they adhere to our Covid secure guidelines. Guidelines should always be shared in advance of attendance. Confirmation of receipt and understanding should be sought before a client attends our offices.

Our reception areas are controlled by a bell to ring for entry with clearly signed instructions.

Where site visits are required, for example tradesmen working on our property. In the first instance they should be pointed to our website to review our risk assessment:

<https://www.patrickparsons.co.uk/>

All sites have visitor sign in books that should be completed.

When booking any work only one trades person should be on the premises at any one time.

Any request to deviate from this guidance should be made to the BCP steering team who meet daily at 3pm.

4.2 Providing and explaining available guidance

Our risk assessment and guidance will be published on our website, and potential visitors will be directed here before attending any of our locations.

Internal teams will consume the contents of this document through our learning management system, where it will be mandatory reading. This will be recorded once completed and reports to check completion can be generated.

Our offices have clear signage displayed at entry and exit points and throughout the building. All visitors will use the detailed entry and exit routes set out clearly with signage.

Any member of staff hosting a visitor will be responsible for them during their stay.

5. Cleaning

5.1 before re-opening

Ventilation systems will be reviewed against guidance that has been considered by our MEP discipline.

Where safe to do so, we will encourage teams to open external windows and doors.

Each office will receive a cleaning service from our external providers.

5.2 Keeping the workplace clean

Offices will be cleaned by our cleaning partners daily.

Team members will be working at single use work stations assigned to them. To enable office working on rotation, we will be practicing hot desking, but desks will always be single use per day. This allows us to have office desks set up to allow for social distancing. Cleaning of your workstation by the assigned staff member should take place at the beginning and end of a shift.

We will focus on maintaining a clear desk policy, which has been further enabled by our August office clear outs.

Printers will be cleaned after every use. Printing will be activated using non touch access cards where available. Touch pads/ buttons should only be used where absolutely necessary. Cleaning wipes will be provided at each printed and the printer should be cleaned with wipes before and after use.

Kitchen areas should be used by only one person at any one time. Clear signage will communicate this to team members. Team members should use hand sanitiser before and after using the kitchen areas.

Should there be a confirmed case of Corona Virus the cleaning procedure should follow this guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/>

5.3 Hygiene - handwashing, sanitation facilities and toilets

Good handwashing technique is important, hands should be washed thoroughly for 20 seconds. Hands should be washed frequently using soap and hot water in toilet facilities and using the multiple hand sanitising stations. Team members should avoid touching their face and to cough or sneeze into a tissue which is binned safely, or into your arm if a tissue is not available.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/>

Hand sanitation stations will be situated around our offices. These will be in all Kitchen areas, entrance and exits to the office and at other convenient locations.

Toilet access will be limited to only one person at any one time, with toilet facilities allocated per individual attending the office. Adequate cleaning provisions are available in all toilets. Wash your hands and use hand drying facilities.

Our cleaning provisions will be reviewed and enhanced in partnership with our cleaning suppliers.

5.4 Changing rooms and shower

We do not have changing room facilities in any of our office locations. Shower facilities will be out of use at present.

5.5 Handling goods, merchandise and other materials, and onsite vehicles

Any deliveries of goods or merchandise into offices should be robustly cleaned prior to opening or use. This includes any packaging. Team members that open packages should wear gloves when opening any items. This also applies to team members sharing survey or monitoring equipment, which has been transported between offices and/or staff members.

Any non-work deliveries to our offices are prohibited until further notice.

Company vehicles should be used by one individual at any one time. Vehicles will ideally be assigned only to one individual. You must avoid touching your face whilst using the vehicle. High touch areas of the vehicle should be cleaned before and after use. Team members operating a vehicle should wash their hands before and after use and should carry hand sanitiser in the vehicle.

Operators of company vehicles are responsible for checking that hand sanitiser and wipes are in the vehicle before use. We have a stock available in all offices.

The same guidance on vehicles also applies if you are using your own vehicle on company business.

6. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and face coverings

Our guidance on PPE is unchanged. PPE use should continue to be used and identified in accordance with our standard risk assessments as normal.

Individual PPE has been ordered and delivered through August. Each individual will have access to the appropriate PPE to be stored at home to support our flexible working approach.

6.1 Face coverings

There is growing evidence that wearing a face covering in an enclosed space helps protect individuals and those around them from COVID-19.

Current guidance does not state that face coverings are mandatory in offices, however, our position on face coverings is that they should be worn in our offices while not sat at your work station. (Excluding Ashvale)

Current government guidance says:

A face covering can be very simple and may be worn in enclosed spaces where social distancing isn't possible. It just needs to cover your mouth and nose. It is not the same as a face mask, such as the surgical masks or respirators used by health and care workers. Similarly, face coverings are not the same as the PPE used to manage risks like dust and spray in an industrial context. Supplies of PPE, including face masks, must continue to be reserved for those who need them to protect against risks in their workplace, such as health and care workers, and those in industrial settings like those exposed to dust hazards.

Face coverings are not a replacement for the other ways of managing risk, including minimising time spent in contact, using fixed teams and partnering for close-up work, and increasing hand and surface washing. These other measures remain the best ways of managing risk in the workplace and government would therefore not expect to see employers relying on face coverings as risk management for the purpose of their health and safety assessments.

Face coverings are mandatory on public transport and in a number of indoor premises. Face coverings are not mandatory in offices. People are also encouraged to wear face coverings in enclosed public spaces where there are people they do not normally meet. If you choose to wear one, it is important to use face coverings properly and wash your hands before putting them on and before and after taking them off.

Some people don't have to wear a face covering including for health, age or equality reasons.

7.0 Workforce Management

7.1 Shift patterns and working groups

Staff are split in to teams and will only be required to attend the office two days per week.

We will maintain a robust register of office attendance, including desk locations and any toilet sharing to comply with track and trace measures.

7.2 Work related travel

Walking or cycling should take priority where ever possible. When this is not possible can use public transport or drive. You must wear a face covering when using public transport.

In all cases for site visits our teams should refer to the following document:

Appendix 1

Company vehicles should be used by one individual at any one time. Vehicles will ideally be assigned only to one individual. High touch areas of the vehicle should be cleaned before and after use. Team members operating a vehicle should wash their hands before and after use and should carry hand sanitiser in the vehicle.

In the event that a team member needs to stay away from home in the present environment, it will be centrally logged. Accommodation will only be booked where a property shares its Covid Secure risk assessment.

7.3 Communication and Training

We are actively engaging with our teams. Weekly communications are sent from the CEO to the whole business. Monthly all business updates are held via video conferencing, in August these were held face to face. Part of the face to face meetings was the demonstration of measures in place to all staff. Feedback was gathered and various site specific updates completed as a result.

This 'Covid Secure' document will be shared with all via our learning management platform; LinkedIn Learning. Our office locations have very clear signage to detail ways of working for those that attend. Any attendance will be managed by rotation and through our BCP steering group.

We will clearly communicate our approach externally via our website. Any suppliers due to attend site will be asked to review our guide in advance.

Supporting our teams through this challenging time is important. We are taking additional steps to engage the wider business with a series of work related and social activities, Our migration back to some office based working is to support our teams and the challenges faced with prolonged home based working.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-mental-health-and-wellbeing-aspects-of-coronavirus-covid-19>

8.0 Inbound and outbound goods

Our reception areas are controlled by a buzzer to make staff aware of a potential delivery.

Deliveries should be left by the delivery operative at the office door.

The member of staff receiving the delivery should wear gloves.

Any deliveries of goods or merchandise into offices should be robustly cleaned prior to opening or use. This includes any packaging. Team members that open packages should wash their hands immediately after opening.

Appendix

Appendix 1 – SOP site works during Coronavirus



PP SOP Site Works
During Coronavirus V

Appendix 2 – Site seating plans (social distancing enabled)

Birmingham



40 St Pauls Square
COVID-19 Draft-A3.px

Twickenham



TWI-021.pdf



TWI-022.pdf

Guildford



Guildford 2020
mitigation v4-Model.q

Yorkshire

TBC – on office move in

Gateshead

TBC - plan outstanding, actions complete

Read by..... Date.....

Signed.....

