

Issue No7: COVID-19 (coronavirus):

Latest Government Update

The latest round of Government advice was published last night and this essentially strengthens the message widely disseminated that 'social distancing' is key to combating the virus.

The latest advice enforces closure of non-essential retail activity, leaving food retailing and pharmacies as essential retail services still being allowed to continue to operate.

The advice in summary, is to only leave your house:

- If you need to travel to work if you are unable to work from home. Practice social distancing principles whilst at work
- To go shopping for essentials such as food and medicine and do this infrequently
- For one period of exercise, such as walking, running or cycling
- For medical emergencies

The government has also issued advice regarding key worker status and the waste and recycling sector have been identified under these key worker statements. The detail of which is included in the guidance note issued by the Government dated: 19 March 2020 and includes utilities, communication, financial services and waste disposal sectors.

Furlough Initiative

Some of you may have heard the term 'Furlough' recently and I'm sure all of you will have seen the extensive press coverage describing the Government's initiatives to support businesses in many ways during these unprecedented times.

Furlough is a term used to describe a temporary leave of absence and the term 'Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme' has also been used extensively for the same purposes. Under this initiative, the government scheme is set to meet up to 80% of an individual's pay to a maximum of £2,500 per month.

The scheme is likely to provide a lifeline to individuals and businesses in these uncertain times and is designed to be an alternative to wholesale job losses. At this point in time, it is not entirely clear how the application process will work, but we at Acumen will continue to monitor the advice and guidance provided.

For further information and self-isolation advice, visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>