

COVID-19: KEEPING YOU INFORMED

Covid-19 (Coronavirus) Update: Lockdown exit plan to come next week confirmed by the PM

Welcome

Dear Kingston First member,

In his first news conference since 25 March, Prime Minister Boris Johnson yesterday announced he will be setting out a 'comprehensive plan' to 're-start the economy' next week.

He acknowledged the huge impact of lockdown measures across society, including on businesses, but said that the government was doing 'everything [it] can' to look after workers and businesses with grants and loans.

We have outlined below some of the national and local announcements that took place this week including the Prime Ministers' update and the launch of 'Bounce Back Loans' by the Chancellor.

Don't forget to register for our second **'Voices for Kingston' webinar on Monday 4 May at 12pm with Raj Tandon from the GLA's business support network**, the London Growth Hub. Raj will be providing practical business advice on how to navigate and unlock access to CBILs and the new Bounce Back Loans.

Our contact details for business support and advice to our members is below.

Stay safe and well.

Best wishes.

Kirsten Henly, Chief Executive,
and all the team at Kingston First

TODAY'S NEWS:

LOCKDOWN 'EXIT PLAN' TO BE ANNOUNCED NEXT WEEK

On 30 April, the Prime Minister confirmed a 'comprehensive plan' will be revealed next week which will set out a roadmap for lifting lock down measures. The plan will include working towards getting schools re-opened, 're-starting' the economy and how workers can travel to work safely.

Find Out More: To see the full transcript of the speech and the media Q&As, [click here](#).

BUSINESS SUPPORT ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATED GUIDANCE

BOUNCE BACK LOANS LAUNCHED

On Tuesday, the Chancellor announced the launch of a new micro loan scheme, Bounce Back Loans, which are worth up to 25% of turnover of up to £50,000. The loans will be 100% government guaranteed for the first 12 months. The scheme will be fully open and available for businesses via their banks from 9am on Monday 4 May.

Find Out More: Visit the [GOV website](#).

FUNDING FOR CULTURAL BUSINESSES

Yesterday Sadiq Khan launched an emergency £2.3 million Culture at Risk Business Support Fund to protect the future of the creative and cultural industries across London. Organisations set to benefit are those most at risk of falling into administration and unable to benefit from Government schemes.

Find Out More: Visit the [GLA website](#).

INSURANCE CLAIM SUPPORT FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

The Financial Conduct Authority announced the formation of a new independent body under the Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS) to provide support for small businesses in negotiating insurance claims. Eligible businesses need to have an annual turnover of less than £6.5 million and fewer than 50 employees.

Find Out More: [Click here](#) to visit their website. All complaints can be sent directly to the FOS by email: complaint.info@financial-ombudsman.org.uk and telephone: 0300 123 9123.

SURVEY TO ASSESS THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON YOUR ORGANISATION

Business Secretary Alok Sharma confirmed that he was considering relaxing the strict Sunday trading restrictions (currently up to 6 hours of trading for larger stores) during the Pandemic. Social distancing measures have meant fewer customers at one time in stores and lifting the rules would allow for stores to manage the capacity demands better and also allow more time to serve key workers and the vulnerable.

Find out more: [Click here.](#)

SOCIAL DISTANCING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RETAILERS

The British Retail Consortium and the shop worker trade union Usdaw launched a series of practical recommendations on social distancing measures for retailers once lockdown restrictions are lifted.

Find Out More: [Click here](#) to read the full recommendations.

WORKING TOGETHER TO EASE THE PRESSURE OF HARD LOCKDOWN EXIT

Andrew Goodacre, CEO of British Independent Retail Association this week urged retailers who are not able to operate to think about life after lockdown, having a clear exit strategy in place, the right government support and a need for town centres and businesses to work together to ensure a cohesive reopening is key to survival should we come out of a hard lockdown.

Find Out More: [Click here](#) to read Andrew's blog, 'Life After Lockdown'.

INSIGHT AND EVENTS

KINGSTON TOWN CENTRE FOOTFALL INSIGHTS

During w/c 19 April, footfall was -80% compared with the same week in 2019.

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY WEBINAR

To find out more about how small businesses can access the Coronavirus business support measures, register for this webinar on Monday 4 May at 12pm. [Click here](#) to register on Eventbrite.