



COMMERCE  
HOUSE

CORONAVIRUS  
ASSISTANCE  
& ADVICE



# COMMERCE HOUSE

## A UNIQUE EVENT

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What an incredibly challenging, crazy time this is for us all. The impact of coronavirus is hugely concerning and no-one is fully certain on how this is going to play out. Never before has the global economy been shut down en masse, there is no rule book and we are learning as we go, on a day-by-day basis.

Firstly, some upside. Figures from across Europe seem to be levelling off and people are gradually returning to work. There are clear and positive signs that the measures put in place by the UK government have had a positive impact and there is now light at the end of what has been a dark tunnel for everyone. This will pass.

We are here to support you and help where we can. In first instance that means assistance with gaining access to the government corona schemes for interim support. Over the medium term it means working with each other to help rebuild the damage done as fast as possible so that we return to, and ultimately exceed, the position we were in only a few (long) weeks ago.

## RECEPTION & OPENING HOURS

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As you will be aware, throughout this period the building will continue to open and we will continue to function on a limited staff basis. Cleaning will continue at pace and preparations continue ahead of lockdown restrictions being eased and business returning to something that resembles reality.

Several of the businesses have made steps to work from home but that is only made possible by having some staff (mainly Christine) on site where needed. The government has said that as long as we follow the guidelines it is acceptable to come into work on this basis; whilst stressing the importance of keeping your distance, cleaning your hands when you enter and leave.

We will make sure the front desks have anti-bacterial hand sanitiser, and our cleaning staff will wear masks and gloves at all times. We will promote and monitor the 2m+ distance rule and are cleaning the front desks regularly. **The cleaning of the communal areas and offices suites will also continue, with all areas being**





# COMMERCE HOUSE

disinfectant on a regular basis. Within the office suites this can only be carried out when the office desks are clear, therefore as always, the time of full deep clean of offices on a weekly basis will be agreed with the team and Alison the cleaner. If any member of your team has been sent home due to suspected symptoms, please contact Christine immediately and she will arrange for a full deep clean of the area to be carried out to prevent cross contamination. Alison will have the relevant PPE to protect her when carrying out these services.

## GUIDANCE ON GOVERNMENT ADVICE

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It will be important for all of us to follow guidelines, not just now but in the coming months ahead. Try and limit customer interactions to no more than two.

Please wash your hands and if in doubt about infection, stay at home and self-isolate. That's both for our Commerce House workers and our tenants.

By contrast, our buildings are little silo's by design and are small isolated rooms. The chance of mass virus transfer is small, and made smaller by our heightened cleaning and sanitising policies.

Please adhere to the well documented social distancing guidelines outlined by the government, including staying at least two metres away from others. This will be particularly pertinent in the shared, communal areas of Commerce House.

Careful what advice you follow, especially on social media. Be sure to check the government website ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)) to be kept with the most up-to-date information on the correct social distancing rules.

Please take the best precautions, for yourself and colleagues, at all times. Wear PPE wherever and whenever you feel it is called for and appropriate. Wash hands regularly and stay vigilant.

## GUIDANCE ON GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

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# COMMERCE HOUSE

**The Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS)** provides financial support to smaller businesses (SMEs) across the UK that are losing revenue, and seeing their cashflow disrupted, as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

This is available up to a maximum of £5m and has a number of stipulated terms such as 12 months interest free periods. It is being run via the national banks such as Barclays, Lloyds, NatWest, HSBC and more (check to see if your bank is part of the scheme) and each bank is free to set its own terms and criteria.

When you approach your bank, you will be asked for the following:

1. Loan amount required
2. Historic accounts
3. Up to date Cashflow forecast
4. Business Plan

If you don't have these you are likely to be put through a lengthy process. Early feedback has been poor to say the least from those that have applied, however, the Chancellor has since made a number of announcements to improve the scheme in attempts to make it much more accessible to businesses of different size and stature, moving forward.

The advice we would give is that you should consider carefully the concept of replacing missing revenue with debt via loans. It is not a grant, will need to be paid back, and should be carefully considered before proceeding.

**The Small Business Grant Fund (SBGF)** has started bearing fruit for many businesses now and it has been fantastic to see the Commerce House community come together to help one another to access this grant, providing advice and support to one another, as people go through the application process.

The process for accessing the grant has become a lot clearer in all aspects, so if any business requires any support in their application to access the £10,000, please reach out to us and we will be happy to assist in any way we can.





# COMMERCE HOUSE

## HOW WILL COMMERCE HOUSE PROTECT ITS TENANTS?

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The safety of tenants and Commerce House employees is of paramount importance to us. We have been working on a strategic plan around putting safeguarding measures in place, to ensure that everyone can have absolute confidence that we are doing all we can in response to coronavirus.

Some of the measures being put into place are:

- Antibacterial gel handily placed at key points, such as reception and in communal areas.
- A clear screen to be installed at the reception desk.
- Regular deep cleaning of the building, with cleaning staff wearing the necessary PPE.
- New process for visitors and contractors signing in and out of the building.
- Posters to remind tenants of the social distancing rules, on display throughout Commerce House.
- **Posters to remind everyone to wash their hands regularly.**

Whilst we are keen to express how much thought and effort we are putting into proactively ensuring that Commerce House is as safe an environment, that it can possibly be, we would encourage tenants to let us know if they have any concerns or positive ideas on improvements that could be made from a health and safety perspective. We are confident that we are as prepared as we possibly can be, however are keen to ensure that everyone has peace of mind about working from Commerce House during these times.

## SUPPORT WE REQUIRE FROM THE TENANTS

- **Always adhere to the 2 meters social distancing guidelines, in all areas.**
- **Rotor in place to select 1 or 2 members of your teams to carryout the coffee break run for the full team. This is to reduce the amount of people in the kitchens at anyone time.**
- **No more than 2 people allowed in the kitchens at the same time. Level 6 kitchen no more than 1 person in this area at any one time.**
- **Schedule times of staff attending and leaving site to ensure we don't have too many people entering and exiting the building at the same time.**
- **No more than 1 person to use the lift at anyone time.**





# COMMERCE HOUSE

## WE ARE HERE TO SUPPORT

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This is a challenging period for all businesses and we are keen support as much as we can. We're all in this together, so please let us know if you have your business has any needs or requirements in the months ahead.

## THANK YOU

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Finally, a huge thank you to all tenants for continuing to pay invoices during this period. We understand the challenges and pressures that businesses are facing during this period, as we are facing exactly the same ones ourselves. Honouring these commitments is enabling us to continue providing a fantastic base for your business, where we hope to see everyone again soon.



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