

BPF Response to COVID-19



18 March 2020

As all of our members and key stakeholders are, we are adjusting the way we work in accordance with Government guidance, to ensure that we continue to represent members effectively and deliver a first-rate service to all during the rapidly evolving COVID-19 pandemic.

Our first priority is the wellbeing of our teams and members, and hence we have taken appropriate steps to ensure that all BPF and SPF staff can work from home and can maintain business as usual as far as possible.

With this in mind, I wanted to share with you some of the steps we will be taking in coming days to ensure the continuity of our operations and to support our members and their customers more broadly.

Immediate activity

As a result of the new Government advice announced last night, we are in discussions with officials about what measures could be taken by both Government and the sector itself to help both small and large businesses on our high streets as we face the unknown and unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 epidemic.

Our high streets are already facing significant upheaval as they seek to adapt to changing consumer needs. As recent years have made clear, it is not only small businesses that are grappling with the consequences of this. Some of our largest and well-known retailers, employing tens of thousands of people, are also finding it tough.

In a rapidly evolving political and policy environment, our priority is to highlight with Government the property industry's key role in supporting people and businesses through the coming weeks and months. While the spotlight is currently on retail, leisure and hospitality businesses, we are well aware however that as the situation continues to develop, all sectors will become increasingly impacted and we will be working with you across the membership to understand the issues, represent your concerns to Government and do what we can to support you.

Meetings and events

We are proud of the role we play in connecting people across our industry, and the ways in which we do this will change in coming weeks and months as we play our part in slowing the spread of COVID-19.

Despite these challenges, we will stay closely connected and engaged with members and our wider stakeholders through this period and you will see more webcast events, podcasts and online engagement activities.

Our committee and working group meetings and forums will still take place, and we will provide dial in details for each, or use other audio and video technology to ensure that we can continue to gather and disseminate intelligence to inform both Government and the wider membership of key issues.

Our planned events over the next few weeks, including the Residential Investment Conference, the Tomorrow's Leaders Awards ceremony, the Residential Investment Dinner and the BPF Annual Conference have been cancelled or postponed and we will be in touch with those who have already booked about our plans. You will see more information about our future events on the BPF and SPF websites.

We will ensure that we continue to provide innovative, topical content that brings people together in this new digital world in the best way possible.

We will continue to discuss the ongoing challenges and to promote the sector with officials and wider stakeholders during this time and will ensure that we stay in touch. Do let us know if there are issues relating to COVID 19 or otherwise that we should be addressing, all staff are contactable either by email or by phone.

Best wishes to you and your friends and families.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Melanie Leech". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Melanie Leech
Chief Executive
British Property Federation