



British
Association
of Landscape
Industries

COVID-19 BALI Scotland update from Chief Executive - Specific advice from the Scottish Government

Dear member,

I trust that you and your teams are safe and well.

BALI has issued several statements in recent weeks in relation to COVID-19 and promised to keep you updated wherever we can in respect to BALI's continued lobbying for specific industry guidance.

Last week I wrote to Ministers in Westminster and Scottish Parliament to seek clarity surrounding our industry needs at this critical moment.

I have updated you on the response BALI received from Westminster and I can now confirm BALI has received a response from the departments within Scottish Parliament.

Their response is as follows:

Start of letter...

Dear Mr Grills,

Thank you for your email of 25 March to the Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform. I am responding on her behalf regarding your concerns for the landscape and horticulture sector as a result of COVID-19.

The Scottish Government recognises the vital importance of the landscape and horticulture sectors to our economy, in mitigating the effects of climate change

and to our health & wellbeing. The information provided in your email provides a clear picture of the concerns being raised by your members in relation to their businesses.

Advice from the Chief Medical Officer is that all non-essential business sectors should close unless, and until, we can all be clear how operations can be undertaken safely and in a way that is fully compliant with social distancing.

**** As such we would advise that all business premises, sites and attractions not required by law to close should close now unless they are: essential to the health and welfare of the country during this crisis, or***

- supporting (or being repurposed to support) essential services, or***
- capable of working in a way which is fully consistent with established social distancing advice, or***
- wider public health, health and safety or other considerations apply and require a facility or service to continue to operate or for a specific period of time for a safe shutdown process to be completed***

All individuals and businesses that are not being specifically required to close should consider a key set of questions – and at all times work on the precautionary basis:

- is what you do essential or material to the effort against the virus or to the wellbeing of society?*
- if so, can your staff work from home?*
- if not, can you practise safe social distancing in all aspects of the workplace including travel and break areas? Can you do this and comply with ALL other standard health and safety requirements?*

If the answer to none of the above questions is yes, our advice on a precautionary basis is to close.

We have published guidance which makes clear that businesses can only continue to operate if they can, by working together with staff and unions/staff representatives, establish ways to keep their employees safe, both in travelling

to work and at work. The social distancing rules must also be applied in order to protect workers' lives. We will continue to liaise with stakeholder organisations in the industry to ensure that everyone understands what is expected of them.

Further advice is available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-business-and-social-distancing-guidance/>

In the meantime, please be assured that across Scottish Government, and working with UK Government, officials are working hard to ensure that our industries are being supported through these unprecedented times we all face.

*****In that regard the Scottish Government is planning to hold a weekly roundtable discussion with the key stakeholders in the horticulture, fruit and vegetable sectors every Tuesday at 14:30pm with Mairi Gougeon, MSP, the Minister for Rural Affairs and the Environment, dialling in. My colleagues will be in touch with you directly with further details, but I hope that you or a representative from BALI will be able to participate.***

End of letter.

Following the guidance issued, BALI can advise the Scottish Government has suggested that all business premises, sites and attractions not required by law to close should close unless they meet the criteria above*.

Subsequently, I have indeed received an official invite to join the weekly roundtable discussion** with other key stakeholders in the sector along with Mairi Gougeon, MSP, the Minister for Rural Affairs and the Environment. This is a very positive move from Scottish Government, and I look forward to representing BALI members at these meetings.

With this in mind, I would ask all members either based in and/or operating in Scotland, to please share your concerns with me regarding the impact on your business and your staff, so that I can represent you properly during these weekly meetings. You can send them to wayne.grills@bali.org.uk.

Our recommendation is, where you can close, to close, for the safety of yourself, your employees and those at home. With the help of the Government's financial support packages, if you are able to furlough staff and temporarily cease activity, this is the right thing to do. By doing so, you will

help public services cope with the pandemic, including the NHS Scotland and police force, and protect our most vulnerable. This is absolutely critical; stay home, save lives.

In the meantime, I will continue to push the Government for more comprehensive answers to our questions and the current and future impacts on our industry. The team at Landscape House will continue to serve all members, including those that have ceased trading or for those out in the field, with supporting documents, templates and online events, with further details on what has been published so far, including the links through, below.

END

The following documents are available for BALI members only and can be found on the BALI COVID-19 portal [here](#). You will need to log in using your BALI website username and password to access.

- Work Authorisation Letter Template
- BALI RAMS-051 Rev O Coronavirus
- Furlough Employer to Employee Letter Template
- BALI Furloughed Worker Legal Guidance
- BALI Business Impact Survey Results

Useful links:

The Scottish Government has announced [a package of measures](#) worth £2.2 billion to support Scottish businesses.

- Changes have been made to [business rates in Scotland](#) for 2020-2021 along with extra rates relief.
- Businesses in Scotland can apply to the [Business Support Fund](#) for a grant to help them deal with the impact of the outbreak.
- Business can use the Scottish Enterprise [business support finder](#) to find out what is available to them.

- [BALI Landscape Site Operating Procedures - Protecting your Workforce](#)
- [COVID-19 Guidance for the Self-Employed](#)
- [BALI COVID-19 FAQ \(updated 30/03/20\)](#)
- [BALI COVID-19 Guide to Apprenticeships](#)
- [LISS/CSCS COVID-19 Impact on Applications](#)

- [Claim back wages with the Government Job Retention Scheme](#)
- [BALI Webinars](#)
- [BALI Closed Members-Only Facebook Group](#)
- [Perennial Support and Advice](#)