

COVID -19

Springfield Properties Action Plan



16th March 2020

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, the Group has been following government guidelines and advice. As the situation escalates and new advice and measures are put in place, we will continue to do what we can to minimize the risk to our employees, sub-contractors and customers and the spread of the virus in general.

It's important that we adapt our working practices where we can. Below highlights some of the key measures that we as a Group must put in place with immediate effect. If you are in any doubt about any of the points please contact your manager.

General etiquette

- Continue to wash hands thoroughly with soap for at least 20 seconds and often.
- Always wash your hands when you get into work, before you leave and when you get home.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze and avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards.
- Handshakes and other physical contact to be avoided where possible.
- Try to remain at least 1 metre from people in the office, again where possible.
- Make your own hot drinks.

Travel

- All non-essential travel should be cancelled. All employees should remain in their place of work and avoid entering other Springfield premises. For example, unless there are exceptional circumstances, office employees should avoid sites and sales offices, and site employees should avoid main offices and entering sales premises.
- Use of pool cars temporarily suspended.
- Travel to events/awards/presentations/seminars etc. should be avoided.
- Inductions in the Elgin office will be suspended for the time being.
- Many employees travel to work together, particularly site employees. Please keep windows down to allow fresh air circulate.

Meetings

- Review all internal meetings. Only business critical meetings should take place. Attendees should be 1 metre apart, windows open and duration should be no longer than 15 minutes.
- Look at other means of communication, i.e. phone calls, skype calls, email, discussion papers etc.
- Sandy and Innes' annual team meetings are postponed until later in the year.
- No employee recognition gatherings should take place at this time.
- Meetings with external people should also only take place if absolutely necessary.

- HR and others will not participate in external presentations/school visits etc. until the situation has improved.

Vulnerable people

- We want to protect all employees, and we understand that additional measures may be required for those who may be vulnerable. We will ask employees to tell us, confidentially, if they have any underlying conditions or circumstance that would make them more vulnerable. You do not have to share anything if you don't wish to but, where possible, we want to assess what preventative measures, if any, could be put in place to reduce these risk factors. A questionnaire will follow.

Recruitment

- We will put on hold all non-business critical recruitment. Those with job offers can continue to start, however others will be held until the situation settles. If you require any urgent recruitment, please seek the approval of your Managing Director.
- No work experience students or placements should be taken on at this time.
- Where agency workers are required, the commercial department should seek full assurance from the agency that the worker does not have any symptoms, has not travelled from an infected area and has not been in contact with anyone with the virus.

Communication with staff

- It is Manager's responsibility to ensure that any key communication reaches all employees.
- Posters have been displayed on our office and sales office doors asking visitors not to enter if they have any symptoms of COVID-19.
- Posters have also been displayed in canteens, toilets reminding employees how they can best protect themselves and others.

Aftersales & Sales teams

- All aftersales teams are already checking with customers that there is no potential or current self-isolation in place at the property. No employee, sub-contractor, supplier or anyone under our instruction should enter a property that is in self-isolation. In the event of an urgent issue at one of our properties that is in self isolation, the Aftersales team should contact NHBC or Premier in the first instance and as a matter of urgency.
- We require an immediate review of our pre-handover and handover processes. To minimize potential exposure to the virus for our employees and customers these meetings with customers should be greatly reduced in time and a safe distance kept from customers. They should highlight the key information with full information provided by other means, i.e. information sheets, phone briefings etc. Customers need to feel more reassured than ever that their new home has been thoroughly cleaned.
- Councils and housing associations clients should be notified by our Partnerships team of our inability to enter any properties where there is self-isolation in place.

Training / Screening

- Non-essential site based and office training should be put on hold at this time. Some training has already been cancelled due to gatherings being actively avoided.
- Those attending college/university should continue to do so as per guidelines, however please speak to your manager or education provider if you have any concerns.
- CPD events should also be cancelled.
- Occupational health screening will not take place in the office or across sites for the time being.

IT planning

- Our IT team are already making plans to keep our operations running as smoothly as possible should home working be required by some employees.
- Managers should/have identified key personnel. Laptops will be considered for these employees if they do not already have one.
- IT will also test desktop ability at home should the need arise, along with testing the impact on the terminal server should increase remote access be required.
- As per the IT email last week, all employees should test to see if they can access emails and files from home and let IT and their Managers know of any issues as soon as possible.

Site Management

- Site Management should ensure that key communication reaches our employees.
- Managers should stagger tea and lunch breaks for workers on their sites in order to ensure staff canteens are not overcrowded and encourage social distancing.
- Site based employees travel between sites should be minimized as far as reasonably practical (i.e. scaffolders, fencers, civils etc.).

Office changes

- As on our sites, the office canteens should not be full of employees. Social distancing is encouraged and it is suggested that employees don't eat at tables unless there is 1 metre distance between each employee. People are free to eat at their desks or elsewhere.
- Internal doors will be kept open to avoid the use of door handles and where door handles can be replaced with push pads, this will be looked into. Please dress appropriately for the inevitable cooler office environment.
- We have already communicated that phones and IT equipment should not be shared, with the exception of reception where disinfectant wipes will be provided.
- Dishes and cutlery must be washed in the dishwasher, or if unavailable, you must wash, dry and put away to avoid the spread of any germs or viruses. If this instruction is not followed, all crockery and cutlery will be removed and employees asked to bring their own. Please do not leave any dirty cups on desks/meeting rooms.
- Please note, no babies or dogs should be present in offices or sites during this time.
- Employees are encouraged to eat their breakfast at home.

Purchasing / supplies

- Our purchasing team will continue to focus on keeping us equipped with essential supplies throughout this time.
- There are clear shortages in some PPE, i.e. masks and other items such as hand wash and hand sanitizer.
- Our purchasing department will continue to try and source these items and distribute appropriately.

Cleaning/hygiene

- Please continue to speak to your cleaners about extra cleaning that may be required.
- Site facilities should be cleaned regularly. Please speak to your Construction Manager should you have any concerns about hygiene.
- As soon as possible, our purchasing department will issue sites with disinfectant wipes for use at fingerprint TMS points, and hand sanitizer. Hand sanitizer will also be distributed to our site offices, cabins, offices and sales offices as an extra precautionary measure as soon as it is available.

Self-isolation

- Current guidance is that if you display either a fever, persistent cough (without phlegm) or breathing difficulties, you should self-isolate for 7 days. In this event, please contact your Manager and HR should be informed as soon as possible by phone. You will be asked about your symptoms and your self-isolation period will be recorded.
- We must stress that if you are told to self-isolate, this means isolation at your home, and ensuring that you do not leave your home for the period of time, unless medically told to do so.
- Managers need to complete the return to work form with employees over the phone and prior to the employees return to work. HR will provide further guidance.

School closures

- Potentially schools may close for a period at some point in the future to help delay the spread of the virus, or due to teacher shortages. We understand that some employees may need to look after their children if no other options are available.
- Please note that this absence from work should again be reported to your Manager and HR informed as soon as possible.
- This absence is not treated as sick leave and therefore SSP is not available. This leave is called time off for dependents. We do not have enough information yet about the potential length of school closures or if any government assistance will be available in terms of pay for such absence. We will await further information. In the meantime, employees should look at contingency plans open to them.

Absence Management

- As discussed above, any absences must be reported and communicated as per company absence reporting procedures.

- Managers should understand clearly the reason for the absence, i.e. self-isolation, time off for dependents, or sickness absence unrelated to COVID-19 so pay can be processed accordingly.
- If you end up self-isolated due to COVID-19 and have holidays booked off at that time, we will be flexible and consider if these days can be taken at another time.
- If there is a shutdown of the business for a period of time e.g. 2 weeks, we will ask all employees to utilise their holiday entitlement in this situation.
- Return to work meetings and forms MUST be completed by phone the day before an employee returns from any absence. These forms should be completed fully detailing all relevant information to ensure the employee is safe to return to work and the form passed to HR. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to a member of the HR team.
- Similarly, if you are planning on travelling, please ensure that you speak to your manager as soon as possible about where you are travelling to and how this may affect any return to work.

I understand that these measures are new and will cause disruption, however we believe it is key to make these adjustments now.

Additionally, this is not a definitive list and further changes may be required going forward. We will remain transparent about the measures we put in place as we work together to protect our workforce and the business during this unprecedented time, and welcome any viable suggestions in addition to these points. Any suggestions, please speak to your manager about submitting these through our Ideas forum.

Many thanks

Innes Smith
Chief Executive Officer