

Glassbond personnel have throughout the pandemic worked continuously to support customers both in the UK and around the world, many of whom are actively involved in key industries. We have supplied our adhesives and lamp capping cements for utilisation in numerous technologies including microbial destruction equipment, UV sterilisation systems and emergency lighting applications.

As the UK and European Governments slowly starts to allow further sectors of the economy to get back to work including non-essential manufacturing, construction, logistics and scientific research.

Glassbond is actively planning to extend manufacturing and trading hours for our lamp capping and ceramic adhesive product lines. In addition, the relaxation of measures, now provides us with the opportunity to plan for the reopening of our Moulding Compounds manufacturing facility over the next few months. Our moulding compound products are utilised in the leisure sector specifically in the manufacture of lawn bowls.

As we return further employees to work, our priority during this transition period, continues to be the safety and wellbeing of our employees and customers whilst ensuring we continue to deliver an exceptional level of service.

With this in mind, we have produced a detailed Recovery Plan. This plan has considered an extensive range of issues and scenarios that may affect our employees and customers and outlines how we will develop new measures designed to continue to keep our staff safe whilst actively increasing our personnel numbers and manufacturing capacity to accommodate increased order volumes from our customer base.

In addition to our recovery plan, a summary of which is outlined in this communication, we have issued detailed protocol and safety manuals to all our returning staff, copies of which are available to interested parties on request.

HR Support

Whilst we have made many changes to our workplace and changed the way some of our employees' work, we have been mindful at every step of the way to provide a safe place of work. This has been supported by Covid specific risk assessments in all key areas of our organisation.

We have insisted that employees follow guidelines on hygiene, particularly handwashing – entry to our facilities is only permitted after hand sanitising or hand washing.

Employee holidays – we have instructed furloughed employees where practical, to take pre-booked annual leave and introduced a policy where staff will retain annual leave proportionate to their return date throughout the year.

We continue to protect our most vulnerable employees including those over the age of 65 yrs, personnel with underlying health conditions, staff who have been advised to shield and those suffering from personal anxiety.

These employees will with individual agreement, either remain furloughed or where practical be encouraged to work from home.



Safety and Health

We continue to follow the guidance on containment, delay and mitigation measures by Public Health England and the World Health Organisation. We continue to support our colleagues with a range of measures including increased hygiene and cleaning, reduced business travel and site visitors, flexible working, working from home and other social distancing actions and provision of PPE.

Designated spaces have been set aside for any employee who may feel unwell - where they will be asked for details of where they have been working and if they have for some reason travelled outside of their work zone.

We continue to provide regular, clear guidance regarding isolation procedure and self-isolation.

We have also carried out workplace risk assessments and modified our normal working procedures where appropriate, to ensure the safety of both customers and colleagues.

Working Practices

Hygiene

We have introduced our employee hygiene plan, setting up automatic hand sanitiser dispensers at all entries and exits, and many additional ones throughout the building including personal hand sanitiser issued to employees where shift patterns mean more than one team in an area each day. We have introduced a one-way system of travel throughout our office and warehousing complex and have introduced weekly temperature checks for all employees who enter our premises.

Employees have been asked not to make drinks or prepare food for others and to sanitise all surfaces in shared canteen facilities once they have concluded refreshment and rest breaks.

All roles have been assessed and PPE defined and allocated as required. New initiatives we have implemented, have arisen as a direct control measure from our risk assessments. PPE levels continue to be maintained at appropriate levels and replenished when and where required. Issuing of PPE is on an individual basis with line manager and employee signing and recording PPE issued and frequency of issue.

Communication

Regular and clear communications both written and verbal are part of our recovery plan, with in-house produced communication briefs and posters combined with those available from outside agencies.

All individuals returning to work are issued with protocol manuals and undergo additional training, both on site and via our safety media online training programme.

In addition, our wellbeing room also holds a copy of all communications to help all team members' awareness.



Social Distancing

For those employees whose roles are best conducted within their place of work, we have implemented the following:

Limited all visitors and non-essential contractors attending our site.

Maintaining a min. 2m safe distance.

Phased return plans to our manufacturing and office spaces.

Office and Sales Personnel

Employees are encouraged to remain within their designated offices, with employees also encouraged to communicate via email and telephone where every possible and to restrict inter office movement.

A directive of a maximum of 3 persons per office has also been established. Personnel are being instructed to use kitchens, and toilets closest to them. Movement throughout office and warehousing is now by a one-way system identified by floor markings and signage. Site guidelines and protocols are briefed to all personnel ahead of any planned return to work dates for all returning office personnel. We have introduced restricted UK business travel and no overseas business travel for sales personnel.

Manufacturing and Warehousing

Our manufacturing and warehousing personnel now carry out all critical functions whilst complying where possible with 2m social distancing measures and where appropriate, personnel also wear additional PPE. These measures have been introduced following dynamic risk assessment at individual level which include a continued review of operational procedures.

Multi-skilling

The company policy on multi skilling has always included deputy cover for all critical functions not only between departments but also between companies, with TUPE agreements in place for all personnel. For each role we have identified at least one additional personnel as back-ups for the role and previously carried out training as required.

Service / Sales, Technical Advice

We have recently increased our weekday opening hours to 8am – 4pm Monday to Wednesday, with sales personnel working from home Thursday and Friday each week to acknowledge and process orders. Our Sales Manager and Technical Product Specialists are available via email to answer customers product queries. Customers can also access product technical and safety data via our comprehensive website.



Products and Inventory

We are working hard to maintain excellent stock levels of the products you buy.

We have been monitoring the impact of COVID-19 on our UK, European, Far East and USA based suppliers for a number of months and adjusted our onsite raw material and finished good stock according to material availability and customer order patterns.

We hold extensive inventory at our site in St Helens UK, which affords a degree of service protection and have in addition implemented a prioritisation process for existing customers.

Deliveries

Our UK based deliveries continue to operate as normal with enhanced hygiene protocols and PPE for collections from our warehouse. However, due to demand some next day collections and deliveries may not be guaranteed. As European and Far Eastern economies begin to reopen, we are seeing the flow of goods improve each day. However, we are also seeing higher demand for road and sea freight accompanied by higher transport costs and longer transit times in many cases. We have been using air freight where necessary or where instructed by our customers to negate some of the land and sea-based freight delays.

Sales Quotations

We are increasing the number of colleagues that we are returning from furlough to ensure we turn quotes around quickly. However please be aware that our sales office is currently open between 8am and 4pm from Monday to Wednesday each week.

Competitive Prices

We have currently only increased our standard product pricing based on pre Covid pricing advice from our suppliers. Where we have seen increased pricing since the onset of the Covid 19 pandemic, as a result of restricted supply or supply shortage, other than fuel and transport surcharges, we have not passed any of these additional charges onto our customers

Our technical managers are also available to advise you on the most cost-effective products for your individual applications.

Data Integrity & Privacy

All data continues to be protected in line with our employee and customer privacy policies. Additional requirements for employee health data will only be used to prioritise the safeguarding of employees' health and safety needs. No additional personal data is being obtained or shared regarding our customers or suppliers, and all IT safeguards remain in place.



Insurance

Working with our insurers we have extensive insurance cover including Business Interruption liability to £2.8m, Employers Liability Cover of £5m and Public and Product liability cover of £10m.

All other insurance policies remain in place.

Finance

Our cash position remains strong. Due to a long-term policy by the Board of Directors of continually reinvesting in the company, we remain financially stable despite the current challenges.

We are monitoring payment terms closely and will deal with any requests on a case by case basis.

Our accounts receivable / payable teams are working as normal Monday to Wednesday each week.

We remain committed to acting responsibly and paying our suppliers to agreed terms throughout the pandemic.

