



## Newsletter | 1st April 2020

At this time of uncertainty, we understand that businesses are anxious about where to find the best information to support themselves and their employees.

Find the most recent information on government and local schemes and support that is available and how to access it on our Growth Hub website here [Covid-19 Support for Businesses](#)

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### **Support for the self-employed**

On 26 March the Chancellor announced the [Self-employment Income Support Scheme](#), which HMRC is working urgently to deliver. Grants are expected to start to be paid out by the beginning of June 2020.

If you have a question about the scheme, check these [frequently asked questions](#).

## Guidance for employers and businesses

This guidance will assist employers and businesses in providing advice to staff on what you need to know, what to do if someone develops symptoms, sick pay, dependant leave and limiting the spread.

See Government guidance here [Guidance for Employers and Business](#)

See Acas advice for employers and employees [www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus](http://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus)

Have a question about Government business support? See their [frequently asked questions](#).



**Coronavirus Business Support**

There are a range of measures and schemes available to businesses such as grant funding, business rate relief and loans. For the latest updates and further

details on how to access the support, who is eligible, when the schemes open and how to apply see [HM Government Coronavirus Business Support](#)

Updates from the past week include:

- **Business rates holiday for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses**

The government has introduced a business rates holiday for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses in England for the 2020 to 2021 tax year. **You do not need to do anything.** If this applies to your business your local authority will contact you as soon as possible, but you can also find more information on your local authority website. [Find your local authority.](#)

- **New Technology Challenge Fund**

Funding of up to £25,000 per company is available for innovators who can find digital ways to support people who need help during the coronavirus outbreak. For information on the programme and how to apply, visit [techforce19.uk](http://techforce19.uk)

### **PPE – can you help?**

The NHS is calling for local businesses to help supply Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) from stocks not in use. Find out how you can help supply PPE to the NHS here [PPE – Call for Assistance From Businesses](#)

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Just so you  
know...



## **Other National and Local Support for Business**

This section highlights support and guidance offered by various organisations to support you and your business through the Coronavirus disruption.

### **Broadband connectivity**

Get the most from your broadband connection with [Connecting Devon and Somerset's top tips](#) which are based on Ofcom advice.

### **Arts Council Emergency Funding**

The Arts Council will offer individuals and organisations working in the cultural sector new financial support during the Covid-19 crisis. Applications open soon – find out more and sign up for

updates at [Arts Council Covid-19 support](#).

### **Virtual Careers Fair**

The [Virtual Career Fairs website](#) has been created to support those affected by redundancy and the closure of employers in the Heart of the South West. The website is being developed to include a job search function, news about job opportunities and (virtual) events. It has been created in partnership with the Heart of the South West LEP and local authorities and is led by Devon County Council.

### **Beware of scams**

Be alert to the risk that in these challenging times there may be people wishing to take advantage. Please do not provide bank details over the telephone. [Find out about Covid-19 scams and what to do if you see something suspicious](#).

### **Farm help**

Devon and Somerset farmers, if you are keen to find staff for your farm or you're looking for farm work to keep the supply chain functioning, the Heart of the South West has some resources to help: [Farming, Agriculture and Rural Job Opportunities](#)

### **Support for community organisations**

Devon County Council have listed grants available for community organisations including grants for Devon organisations as well as UK-wide support. See [Grant and funding support](#) on the council website.