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As we move into the Autumn, Government efforts to persuade people to go ‘back to work’ already look futile, with the revelation that many of its own stakeholders, such as outsourcing giant Capita, are adopting permanent Working from Home (WFH) policies amid the closure of a third of their 250 offices across the UK.

One problem is that the ‘back to work’ message completely misses the point. White collar staff may not have been in the office over the past few months, but they’ve still been working. This was one of the themes of our webinar with communications expert Moneypenny, featured in this issue, where we discussed the future of the workplace.

The term ‘digital disruption’ had already moved up the agenda over past few years, but no one could have predicted the level of disruption that COVID-19 would have on organisations and the critical role digital technology would play in what is already been viewed as a change in the way that we work to equal the industrial revolution.

Of course, the idea that the office is redundant is premature. People may no longer (at least for the duration of the pandemic) want to go into the workplace from dawn to dusk five days a week, but it still has an important role. According to figures from before the pandemic - more than half of remote workers already felt disconnected from in-office employees and 19 per cent of remote workers reported loneliness as their biggest challenge.

An office is just one type of workplace. What about the schools, universities, healthcare facilities, retail and leisure buildings which have continued to need careful management over the past six months? All of these buildings will need to be maintained throughout this crisis. It’s a challenge FMJ will be sure to reflect in the months to come.

As always, we’d welcome your feedback about any aspect of the magazine, together with your insight into what’s happening in the FM sector.
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Next Edition
In next month’s issue, we present the results of our annual waste and recycling survey carried out by FMJ in partnership with Grundon Waste Management, including comments by a panel of client-side FMs. We take a look at how CAFM can help us cope with COVID; from helping to run buildings as efficiently as possible to managing a mobile platform for field-based operations and service procedures. With buildings no longer always fully occupied, having remote, digital control of emergency lighting - managed and maintained across multiple sites can ensure regulatory obligations are met. Plus; UV-C lighting can help ensure a space is rigorously sanitised between meetings to maintain the highest levels of hygiene, crucial in preventing the spread of viruses.

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With the end of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) in sight, cash strapped UK employers are considering the need for pay cuts and other cost-saving measures, alongside possible redundancies. However, if it is not handled correctly, cutting pay involves substantial legal risks if claims from the affected workforce follow. More importantly, the value of those claims can easily exceed the costs savings that were planned.

Back to basics: a contract of employment is a legally binding bargain struck between two (or more) parties. Importantly, any changes to an employment contract, and certainly any significant changes, will require both parties’ agreement. It follows from this that changes that are implemented without the employee’s consent, will likely be in breach of contract and could generate the following legal claims against the business:

- Unlawful deductions from wages – if, after suffering a unilateral pay cut, the employee informs their employer that they do not accept the change, it is likely that they will be able to sue their employer at the Employment Tribunal for the return of all deducted pay. Such claims are very difficult for any employer to defend.
- Constructive unfair dismissal – case law supports the view that a deliberate refusal by an employer to pay the agreed remuneration to its employee will be a serious breach of contract that will entitle the employee to resign (a constructive dismissal) provided they do not delay too long before communicating that decision. Compensation awards can be as much as one year’s gross pay (currently capped at £88,519).
- Unenforceable post termination restrictions – when constructively dismissed, any post termination restrictions in an employee’s contract of employment (e.g. non-solicitation of customers or fellow employees) will fall away and will no longer be enforceable by the employer. This can be very damaging where employees leave to join competitors.
- Protective Awards – if material pay cuts are imposed on 20 or more employees at one establishment within a 90 day period without proper consultation, the Courts and Employment Tribunals can deem the employer to have dismissed the employees from their old contracts and to have imposed new and different contracts in their place. This triggers the UK’s collective redundancy laws allowing claims for penalty (protective) awards of up to 90 days’ gross pay per affected worker (whether or not they resign). That’s a potential hit of around 25 per cent of annual payroll simply because the employer failed to consult as the law requires.

From the above it is easy to see how hastily introduced pay cuts can cause far more long-term cost and damage for a business than the savings they were designed to achieve. There are also the reputational risks and long-term damage to the goodwill of those who stay to consider.

It is of course possible for employers to stay on the right side of the law - even if urgent payroll costs savings are needed, but it would certainly be sensible to be aware of the pitfalls – especially as these measures don’t seem to be going away any time soon.
RESEARCH FINDS UK FMS MORE ‘PEOPLE-FOCUSED’ THAN INTERNATIONAL FMS

**NHS Property Services publishes its first CSR Guide**

NHS Property Services (NHSPS), has published its first update on its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. The CSR strategy, launched in 2018, covers its commitment to acting responsibly and operating sustainably in order to help the NHS deliver on the Long Term Plan.

The updates, outlined in the latest report support key focus areas for the NHS: social prescribing, reducing carbon emissions, improving accessibility and managing waste.

Highlights of the report include:

- Creation of six social prescribing sites for patients and communities.
- Development of 324 online access guides for NHS sites in partnership with AccessAble, a not-for-profit providing accessibility information on airports, restaurants, public spaces and buildings.
- Offsetting over 830 tonnes of CO₂ through LED replacements.
- £556,000 raised for charity partner, Careers Trust with £689,000 raised for charity overall.
- 2,500 volunteer hours completed by employees.

Whilst good progress has been made, NHSPS is committed to doing more. As part of its role in helping the NHS to deliver on its Long Term Plan, the organisation is committed to creating healthy places for patients, colleagues, communities and the environment to thrive.

NHSPS has an ambitious programme of activity over the next year and will provide another update in 2021 to ensure the organisation delivers meaningful change for the NHS, employees and patients within the community.


**As the facilities management profession continues to evolve at a rapid pace, Service Works Global (SWG) has conducted research in partnership with leading journals FMJ (UK) and FM magazine (Australia) to understand how FM professionals are using technology in their roles, the direction of their company’s work, and if they feel tech is supporting them as much as expected – or if it’s more hype than helpful.**

For the first time, the survey was conducted across the UK and Australia concurrently in order to gain an accurate reflection of each market at the same moment, to share the priorities and challenges from across the world, and to see how close at heart two geographically distant sectors are.

The results of this year’s survey have been insightful, particularly in showing the similarities and differences in FM across the world. While many of the results were mirrored in various degrees, they show that the UK is undergoing a cultural shift and creating new strategies that balance technology and trade skills. Meanwhile, Australia is ready to take FM to the next level but is strategically planning for the right time and tools, with several urging others to follow proper business processes in order to implement the right software. Underlying both countries is a theme of untapped potential.

Data-led decision making was key across both countries, with FM teams becoming more reliant on software like CAFM systems to collect, manage and analyse this data. This in turn has paved the way for new services like BIM and IoT, and we’re seeing higher percentages of the industry investing in these processes.

The survey also revealed a growing trend in companies integrating their CAFM with at least one other system. In the UK, the percentage of users with an integrated system has gone up by six per cent to 78 per cent since the 2018 survey. In addition, it found that in the UK – the internet of things (IoT), sensors and smart buildings were voted as the second most important trend within FM, up from seventh place from the 2018 survey. This can only be expected to increase due to the reliance on remote sensors to help organisations with social distancing and other post Covid-19 measures.

To download the full survey report visit https://info.swg.com/fm-tech-survey-2020-wp
HAS THE ‘DEATH OF THE OFFICE’ BEEN CALLED FAR TOO PREMATURELY?

The Government’s upcoming campaign to persuade people to come back to the offices, reflects a continuing reluctance by employers and their staff to return to the traditional workplace.

According to RICS latest Global Commercial Property Monitor, which gauges the sentiment of occupiers and investors, the economic impact of COVID-19 has weighed on demand for commercial offices with requirements for city centre space in decline. According to RICS Chief Economist Simon Rubinsohn: “As the economic impact of COVID-19 has deepened, so too has the impact on commercial real estate. Sentiment among investors and occupiers has naturally weakened, with broad acceptance that rental and capital values will fall over the next year.”

The results suggest however that offices face three global key additional or accelerated structural changes: organisations reducing their overall footprint, a notable shift in location from urban to suburban, and a greater premium placed on the health and wellbeing of workers. Real estate professionals tell us they expect office footprints to shrink; more than half indicated that office footprints would likely shrink by up to 10 per cent over the next two years. With around one-third suggesting that it would be greater than this, just 14 per cent judged there would be no change.

Respondents also envisaged a shift in office space from urban to suburban locations as another aspect of the fallout from COVID-19. One in ten view this as a strong trend, while half (50 per cent) believe it will take place to some extent. Greater emphasis will also be placed on health and wellbeing in the workplace in a post-pandemic world, pointing to further changes to existing and new office space. Eighty nine per cent of respondents agreed this enhanced focus was likely.

Questions remain over how improvements will be funded, however, as only around one-third of respondents felt that tenants would be willing or able to shoulder the cost of enhancements. What these figures suggest is that while the commercial office sector is under pressure, the ‘death of the office’ has been called far too prematurely. Yes, many organisations are re-thinking their footprints, and questioning the need for such large spaces in city centres – especially in the current economic climate and with the proven efficacy of remote working. But rather than disappear, office use will evolve. Property strategies will be increasingly data-led, based around the performance of buildings, and how they add value to and support the productivity of employees.

The good news is that the health and wellbeing of workforces has rightly moved to the top of the agenda for occupiers too, and this will drive significant change for commercial property and support business performance. It is vital that enhancements are not limited to flagship office spaces, but filter through all types of commercial property. We need to see a new collaborative, flexible relationship model emerge between tenants and landlords to realise this, helping share both the responsibility and cost.

For more details visit www.rics.org

BUILDING SAFETY: CHANGE IS COMING - BE PREPARED

When the draft Building Safety Bill was published in July, the UK took another important step towards ensuring we can prevent another tragedy like Grenfell Tower from ever happening again. However, last month’s report from the Industry Safety Steering Group (ISSG), which is led by Dame Judith Hackitt, highlighted both the sector’s lack of leadership on building safety and the huge challenge of meeting the new competency requirements.

With this legislation due to come into force next year, there is no time to waste: it is crucial that the industry starts to prepare for the changes now. Our profession will be on the front line of implementing those changes, not least when the new statutory role of Building Safety Manager (BSM) is introduced, and we must be ready to act.

If you are not already familiar with the building and fire safety reforms incorporated in the draft bill, the BSM will be a named individual responsible for: day-to-day management of fire and structural safety in a building; ensuring residents have a clear point of contact for any issues relating to safety. For many years, FMs have played a critical role in creating safe and healthy spaces for people to live and work in, and already take on many of the responsibilities that will sit within the BSM’s scope; it is therefore clear that this new role will be a natural fit for our profession and that, in many cases, the BSM will come from an FM background. However, it will not be a straightforward transition from one role to the next: the BSM role carries with it new and extended competencies that will require upskilling, training and investment.

Although the range of buildings to which the draft bill applies mostly covers higher risk residential buildings, including student accommodation, the language is such that its scope can be quickly expanded to other types of buildings, such as: hospitals, care homes, residential institutions (prisons, for example), and temporary accommodation including hotels and guest houses. This draft bill’s fundamental importance is its acknowledgement that the occupation and management of a building - ensuring its standards are maintained accountably, responsibly and competently - are equally as important as the construction phase.

Whilst the bill represents a high-level overview of what to expect, further clarity on the detail is necessary and we stand ready to help articulate this further, as well as to help develop the BSM Publicly Available Standard (PAS). At the same time, we urge our profession to prepare to enhance their capability and put the necessary measures and upskilling in place so that these roles can be understood and undertaken effectively.

We therefore urge the industry to engage with the draft bill’s content as a priority. It is critical that our profession understands its importance and implications for the future, and begin to take the necessary steps to implement it, thereby ensuring the future safety of our buildings and their occupants.
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FUTURE OF THE WORKPLACE

When FMJ held a webinar with leading outsourced communications provider, Moneypenny on how to deal with the challenges of COVID-19 in the workplace: the discussion ranged from maintaining good communications with clients to building trust between managers and dispersed staff.

Recent research carried out by Moneypenny found that while almost half (45 per cent) of the office workers surveyed had already returned to the office, nearly two thirds (61 per cent) were working to a staggered start, break and finish times, in order to support social distancing. With so many people still working from home (WFH), we were keen to find out what this could mean for the workplace and the FM role, going forward?

Moneypenny’s Head of Operations, Ceri Henfrey reported that those customers who already used their switchboard service found it was a straightforward process to convert to home working because their phones could easily switch from desks to mobile. Simon Booth of Moore Kingston Smith extolled the value of communications technology in keeping lines of communication open. “Whereas before everything was anchored to the built environment, we are now using teams and other platforms for daily huddles,” he said.

Even before lockdown there was evidence of a stronger focus on wellbeing at work, with the growing acknowledgement that FMs do much more than just look after buildings.

Yet according to Alan Hutchinson of Howard Kennedy LLP, some old perceptions persist. “During lockdown an old FM colleague of mine was asked, ‘how come you’re still busy if you’re not in the office, the toilets surely can’t be getting blocked?’ It’s amazing that the concept of facilities and workplace management is still very much focused on a building, when in fact there are so many other things being covered. This crisis has highlighted the key role that FMs can play in keeping businesses going.”

WAYS OF WORKING

Simone Fenton-Jarvis of Ricoh believes the crisis has helped to demonstrate that we can change our bad working habits. For instance, travelling long distances for meetings. “It’s so much easier to meet virtually, saving so much time and effort, so in that way, there are some good things to have come out of this,” she said.

Another key takeaway from the effects of the lockdown believes FM Consultant Lucy Hind is a fundamental change to how we approach work and productivity. “Employers are now working towards more of an output model for their people. Rather than expecting staff to sit in front of a computer from nine to five, it’s about looking at the different ways people can actually work and allowing work patterns to change to a more flexible model.”

For his part Simon Booth says that we moved far away from the culture of spending long hours in the office, as the crisis has sped up the adoption of more flexible ways of working. He explained: “Most of the culture change wasn’t about whether agile working would happen, but then it happened in about 24 hours, it’s been the rate of change that’s been the curve ball for all of us.”

MONITORING WELLBEING

With so many individuals working remotely, the panel agreed that facilities managers are in a unique position to help monitor both their physical and mental wellbeing. After lockdown, Emma Doyle of the THB Group noticed that as time progressed, staff who’d assumed they’d be working from home for just a short period got in touch requesting ergonomic furniture to support home working.

When it comes to the mental health of those WFH, Lucy Hinds believes that FMs probably know more people within their organisation than individual managers. “I foresee that our role as FMs will change now, and with the level of flexibility being driven through business with WFH, our responsibilities will see us liaising with home workers on a day-to-day basis.”

FM has always been the hub of the office pointed out Simone Fenton-Jarvis and the value of this has been demonstrated through this crisis: “It will be a new strategy for many organisations to move past the building management stuff to looking at how we’re connected to all the people in the office.”

Checking on the welfare of those working away from the office is key agreed Alan Hutchinson which is why his organisation regularly surveys staff WFH. He added: “We follow up on the results and ensure that what needs to be tweaked is carried out, which means we shouldn’t shy away from asking those awkward questions.”

RETURN TO THE WORKPLACE?

Since lockdown ended there hasn’t been a rush of people returning to the workplace. Moneypenny’s survey found that just over a third (34 per cent) of workers are entirely comfortable returning to the office, with 48 per cent admitting to having some concerns about COVID risks. Ceri Henfrey found that the reason clients choose their workers remain at home is because “it is working for them productively wise and it’s what their people want.” But she pondered, “It’s the social side which is harder to crack. We’re remaining productive but it is as much fun without the office chat?”

Most of the panel planned to ‘test the water’, bringing people back into the office for part of the time, to help with social distancing. Said Emma Doyle: “Most offices in London have desks crammed into them so many organisations are looking at ways of splitting staff into smaller groups.”

Alan Hutchinson was clear about what the post-Covid office shouldn’t look like. “Don’t use realms of hazard tape to seal off desks, as you’ll make it look like a crime scene. Instead aim for a welcoming space where people can be productive.” Ceri Henfrey was able to demonstrate the approach Moneypenny has used towards social distancing for its returning staff.

The panel concluded that the purpose of the workplace has changed. As Simon Booth summed up: “The office isn’t going to be what it was. People will only come in for specific reasons so we’ve got to be careful not to lose the communications between colleagues and ensure they get the best possible experience out of their time in the workplace.”
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EXAMPLES OF LONE WORKING INCLUDE:

- People working alone in premises, such as shops or kiosks
- Home workers
- People working outside of normal working hours, such as cleaners, security staff, maintenance or repair staff
- Those who work separately from others, such as research staff, or those in leisure centres, warehouses etc
- Agricultural and forestry workers
- Service workers, such as postal staff, social workers, doctors and nurses, drivers, estate agents, etc
- Those involved in trades such as electrical repairs, plumbing, lift repairs, painting and decorating etc

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS

- When carrying out risk assessments involve staff or their representatives
- Put relevant control measures in place – and periodically check that they are sufficient to manage the risk
- If a lone worker works at another employer’s workplace, that employer should inform the lone worker’s employer of any risks and the controls in place
- If working alone is not able to be conducted safely, help or back up should be provided
- Review risk assessments annually, or when there are any significant changes in working practice or following an incident

EXAMPLES OF WHERE LONE WORKING IS NOT SUITABLE, AND AT LEAST ONE OTHER PERSON SHOULD BE PRESENT ARE:

- Working at or near exposed electricity conductors
- Working in confined spaces where there may be toxic materials, or lack of oxygen or other risks
- Undertaking health or social care visits to unpredictable clients

WHEN CARRYING OUT THE RISK ASSESSMENT, THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS SHOULD BE ASKED, TO ENSURE ADEQUATE CONTROL MEASURES ARE PUT IN PLACE:

- Is there safe access and egress for one person?
- Can one person handle any necessary temporary access equipment, such as portable ladders?
- Can one person handle all the necessary machinery and goods?
- Are any chemicals or hazardous substances used that may pose a risk to the worker?
- Does the work involve lifting objects too large for one person?
- Is there a risk of violence?
- Are young, pregnant or disabled workers particularly at risk if they work alone?

- If the lone worker’s first language is not English, are suitable arrangements in place to ensure clear communication, especially in an emergency?
- Do lone workers have any medical conditions that make lone working unsuitable?
- Can suitable levels of supervision be provided?
- What happens if the lone worker becomes ill, has an accident or there is an emergency including first aid arrangements?
- Are special lone working alarms or communication devices needed?

Visit https://barbour-ehs.com to register

CASE LAW

2016 – A manufacturing company was fined £1 million after a lone worker was crushed to death by falling machinery. The CNC milling machine had been lifted using jacks and placed on skates; the employee, working alone, was using an angle grinder to cut and remove fixings when the milling machine overturned, crushing him.

The employer had not ensured that employees had proper training, had not assessed the risks and the work was not properly planned. This resulted in an unsafe system of work being used, with fatal consequences. The employer pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and Regulation 3(1) of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. They were fined £1 million with costs.

LEGAL DUTIES

The main areas of health and safety law relevant to lone working are:

- Confined Spaces Regulations 1997
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981
- Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER)
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013
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Building with conscience.
C OVID-19 has created disruptions in all areas of our working lives - from conference calls at kitchen tables to home-schooling in between meetings. So, it’s hardly surprising that the vast majority of workers are eager to return to the office. However, it is unlikely that teams will return to the workplace as they left it.

Facebook has said that up to 50 per cent of its staff will continue to work remotely for the next five to 10 years. At the same time, Barclays and Lloyds Bank have both confirmed that they will reassess their real estate commitments - turning away from a central office model to embrace ‘strategic hubs’ across the UK.

As businesses rethink their real estate footprint in favour of greater flexibility and new ways of working, regional flexible workspace is primed to cater to the new demand. Already impressive growth in this market is set to be fuelled further by decentralisation of office catering to social distancing and strengthening preferences for working closer to home. And, underpinning this shift, will be the critical role of technology in facilitating a more footloose workforce now and for the foreseeable future to keep its capacity in offices below 20 per cent in order to comply with new health and safety priorities and social distancing. HSBC, for instance, intends at least for the foreseeable future to keep its capacity in offices by 50 per cent and in the country’s second and third cities expansion has been even more dramatic. In Nottingham, for example, flexible workspace grew by 93 per cent between 2017 and 2019 – testament to the strengthening demand for workspaces outside London even before the pandemic. This trend has not been hampered by COVID-19. In fact, operators such as BizSpace, already specialising in regional workplaces, are reporting a significant uptick in enquiries from larger businesses rethinking the need for long-term leases in central cities. Increasingly, such businesses are in favour of a strategic hub and spoke approach that combines remote working with regional flexible workspace options.

DECENTRALISING FOR SOCIAL DISTANCING
So, far from slowing demand for regional workspace, it appears the pandemic has accelerated it. Indeed, COVID-19 safety guidelines have raised new questions about the suitability of the traditional city centre office, with the skyscrapers synonymous with London’s skyline particularly unsuited to the demands of safe distancing. HSBC, for instance, intends at least for the foreseeable future to keep its capacity in offices below 20 per cent in order to comply with new health and safety priorities and social distancing.

For businesses now seeking offsite solutions to office blocks unable to accommodate density, flexible space outside the capital is the obvious answer, limiting crowding in central offices and public transport by providing alternative spaces closer to home. City landlords and office providers are, in turn, beginning to adapt their approach accordingly, with the managing director of strategy at Canary Wharf suggesting that the central office could become the mothership at the centre of a network of smaller, dispersed offices.

STAYING CLOSER TO HOME
With 72 per cent of people identifying ditching their commute as the main advantage of lockdown home working, there is also growing desire to work on a more flexible basis in the long term. Nonetheless, a survey by The Office Group showed that almost half (46 per cent) of lockdown remote workers have felt disconnected from their colleagues. Clearly, the need for physical office space will not vanish completely, but many are turning to flexible workspace closer to home as a solution, combining the convenience of working without the lengthy commute, but with all the amenities and connectivity of the office.

So, there can be little doubt that our new, more flexible working preferences will continue to drive this shift. In fact, our clients within the flexible workspace sector are already reporting increasing demands not only for workspace in town and cities outside the main hubs, but also workspaces in rural parts of the country.

TECHNOLOGY IS KEY
However, as businesses adopt a decentralised approach to the office, a shift to regional flex space must be matched by crucial investment by landlords and operators in the technology infrastructure to power a more dispersed and footloose workforce. In fact, up to 72 minutes of the working day are lost as a result of poor connectivity and out-dated technology.

As businesses turn to a more flexible model, offices will need to act as a ‘digital nucleus’, providing access to cloud based systems, remote telephony services and digital collaboration capabilities such as video conferencing in order to maintain connections and communications between disparate teams in regulatory compliant ways.

THE FUTURE IS FLEXIBLE
Flexible workspace in regional towns and cities offers a much-needed solution to the pressures faced by the workforce as lockdown begins to ease — the incompatibility of city centre skyscrapers with social distancing, a desire to work more flexibly, closer to home, and to ditch the commute for good.

But with estimates that 71 per cent of digitally unconnected spaces will become obsolete in the near future, robust technology capabilities have a vital part to play in ensuring the viability of regional workspaces to meet new demand now and for the years to come.

Richard Morris, Director at technologywithin explains why demand for flexible office space outside of the capital is set to grow

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The growth of flexible workspace in towns and cities outside of London is not a new phenomenon. Over the past five years, the entire UK market grew by 50 per cent and in the country’s second and third parts of the country.
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As technology advances, will we see mother nature’s green spaces and beloved landscapes controlled by the click of an App? Angus Lindsay from idverde, looks at what is possible now, what is feasible, where the future is really heading and what is merely science fiction.

You don’t jump to the moon in a single leap. From when the space race started to when we landed on our lunar partner, millions of tiny iterative steps were taken. The same is true, obviously on a far smaller scale, when we consider the future of grounds maintenance. From where we are now to a brave new world of drones and automation requires small steps, progression, failing, learning and a healthy dose of realism.

From drones to robotic mowers, VR to AI watering sensors, the image of traditional horticultural - one of pruning, preening, cutting all steered by a human hand - could be about to change. But what is that brave new world? What does it look like?

Technology for the now and for the future

For me, it is one that we, as caretakers of the planet, are responsible and proactive in our attention to our legacy. It is a future of carbon-neutral technologically enabled automation. It is of artificially intelligent 'ecosystems' working hand-in-hand with humans to detect and then act upon changes in the environment. It is one where we have ground maintenance based on need rather than frequency and rotas.

The technology to take this leap forward is, in many cases, already here. It is not just widely adopted. GPS mapping, drone site inspections, robotic tractors, laser cutting, alternative weed control and AI that offers preventative actions based on footfall and actual requirements – can all be utilised (at a cost, of course). At idverde, we have been using, with great success, robotic mowers in closed London parks for some time. Quietly, efficiently getting about their work as residents sleep.

How quickly will these technologies become commonplace? It is worth reminding ourselves that change normally comes in small doses. Did you know that the first driverless tractor was developed in the 1960s and the first radio-controlled mower was built in 1959? Take your day-to-day power tools. From twenty years ago to today, we have overcome our cordless technology scepticism to almost complete adoption. That change did not come with a fanfare, it happened slowly and naturally.

I suspect we will see similar changes with the use of drones. Drones are far from gimmicky and are here to stay. Will we ever see them armed with blades descending on a park to cut and prune? Not for a while (imagine the insurance for that!), but what we can (and what we are doing) is using them to give an overview of our parks – giving judgement on what routes to take, where to cut, essentially giving us an eye in the sky that would have been impossible ten years ago.

I see similar changes in how we adapt our vehicles to the necessary emission changes and low emission zones. As a land-based industry, so much of our impact on local and global environments is entwined with the power of our equipment. Manufacturers are making great progress here - Stihl, Husqvarna, Pellenc, and Bosch are all bringing new zero-emission power technology to life. Change and adoption, though, is also often slow. Currently, the cost of a tradition diesel sit-on mower is around £16,18k, while an electric version can be as much as £60k.

The advantages of adopting new technologies are clear to me. Climate impacts will be reduced, efficiency improved as we focus our resources on areas that most need it (reducing unnecessary recutting of grass, to over-seeding, to fertiliser spray), meaning better outcomes with less time and money invested. With the right technology and tools, two men could easily do the work of six. However, with so much power at our fingertips, we must not sacrifice individual passion and expertise – it is all too easy to become a jack of all trades and master of none.

Our industry is heavily reliant on people and practical skills, but we are susceptible to a slowly eroding skill base in a sector which may not be people’s career choices. Evolving technology certainly creates different priorities for employers, with different skill sets required, new training regimes are needed but it also potentially offers more exciting opportunities for younger minds.

These considerations might seem mundane when considering the alluring power of change but if you fail to make things easy for people you will fail. Blue sky thinking with great products but without the necessary support around them, will also quickly fail. A solar-powered hovering laser cutting mower is great, but in practical terms, this innovation needs a readily available supply of parts and the knowledge to repair breakdowns (a puncture repair kit alone won’t do).

I am excited by the possibilities of technology, and when managed correctly, we can create a ground maintenance regime based on need rather than frequency. We can use technology to evolve green amenities into ecosystems central to our urban environments. As technology continues to advance there will become more possibilities for innovation and efficiency. We shouldn’t be afraid of change; but we should learn from the past, both good and bad, and not reach a point where we are totally reliant or dependent on technology – we will always need the expert human touch. The fact remains there is no substitute for interpersonal cooperation and experience.
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The sudden change brought about by COVID-19 has highlighted several misconceptions about the workplace. Office-based workers, even those previously sceptical, will now accept that technology is going to play a key part in how the workplace is delivered. We have also seen the role analytics has played as the government displays data and insights to inform and educate throughout the pandemic.

The workplace will look and feel different as a result of social distancing, while technology will add layers of reasurance. Just as people had concerns when they left the office in mid-March, they will be equally anxious about returning. An uncertain period is ahead of us, whether the return to work is phased or not. The threat of COVID–19 demands a sophisticated approach when it comes to facilities and real estate management. Cleaning and security are high up the corporate agenda, along with the role they will play in ensuring people adopt the necessary behaviours to prevent infection.

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The Institute of Workplace and Facilities Management (IWFM) recently published guidance, in partnership with the Living Wage Foundation, outlining the practicalities and benefits of paying the real Living Wage. With FM suppliers admitting they often struggle to deliver a real Living Wage to workers whilst maintaining their competitive edge, what more can be done to ensure that clients and other stakeholders support the drive to pay people a fair wage?

In FMJ’s regular monthly column, our team of FM experts answer your questions about the world of facilities management

A:

SOFIE HOOPER, HEAD OF POLICY, IWFM

There are, of course, strong moral and ethical arguments for paying the real Living Wage, but we believe that the key to encouraging greater support for the movement is education. Specifically, we need champions to make the case for the tangible business benefits of ensuring that a hard day’s work receives a fair day’s pay. This can be through professionals educating internal stakeholders or Recognised Service Providers (organisations accredited by the Living Wage Foundation for their commitment to paying the real Living Wage at a minimum) educating external stakeholders.

Our intent in producing our Living Wage guidance in partnership with the Living Wage Foundation was to support that case. Through this guidance, we are arming our profession with the rationale and supporting evidence to drive change that benefits individuals, communities and their organisation’s bottom line.

Some of the findings from academic and independent research found within the guidance include:

- **Staff wellbeing**: as pointed out in the ‘Taylor Review of Modern Working Practices’, pay and good work are strongly linked to better physical and mental health outcomes.
- **Improved productivity and service levels**: healthier, happier staff can focus more on their job, morale and motivation are improved, absenteeism and sickness rates reduced, and individual and collective performance boosted.
- **Better staff recruitment and retention**: higher pay improves worker loyalty and engagement, and lower staff turnover brings down recruitment, training and overall personnel costs. With the UK’s post-Brexit immigration policy set to close off the supply of so-called ‘low-skilled’ labour on which cleaning, catering, security and other services rely, has there ever been a time

A 2017 survey of Living Wage employers concluded that ‘the balance of outcomes lies very firmly on the positive side’ with 93 per cent of respondents stating they had benefited from paying the real Living Wage. The same survey also reported that most businesses absorbed the additional expense without trying to recover costs elsewhere and in most contracts the higher costs were absorbed by the client. Furthermore, the majority agreed that paying the real Living Wage had given them a competitive advantage and enabled them to secure more client contracts.

With 19 per cent of jobs in the UK still paying below the real Living Wage, there are clearly more people who could benefit, especially during these uncertain times when many contracts are being re-negotiated.”

- Sofie Hooper
THE LIVING WAGE EMPLOYER’S VIEW
GUY STALLARD, HEAD OF PERFORMANCE & OPERATIONS, KPMG BUSINESS SERVICES

For us, there is a clear business case, as well as a moral one, for paying the real Living Wage. Since rolling it out to all of our employees and contractors in 2006, we have seen improved staff morale, a rise in service standards, improved retention of staff and increased productivity.

The actual cost of KPMG’s facilities operation has in fact reduced since we started paying the real Living Wage. Our facilities cleaning contractor, ISS, found that the extra wage costs are more than met by lowered recruitment churn and absenteeism (10 per cent in the first year of implementation), greater loyalty, and higher morale leading to better performance.

Ensuring all of our staff are being paid this rate and encouraging others within our supply chain and beyond to reciprocate, is a key role we, as a large business, can play. As part of our support for the movement, we have assisted clients to implement the Living Wage themselves and further supported the Living Wage Foundation through pro-bono work and secondments.

As a large firm, we believe that responsible, diverse and inclusive businesses are more successful and that the act of paying a real Living Wage can act as a fundamental driver of social mobility. Prior to COVID-19, it was encouraging to see more businesses pay their staff the real Living Wage, year on year. Our joint research with IHS Markit found that an estimated 19 per cent (5.19 million) of jobs in the UK were paid below the real Living Wage in the last year. These figures are an improvement on 2018, when 22 per cent (5.75 million) of jobs paid below the real Living Wage.

We’ve always believed that businesses that can afford to pay a fairer wage should do so. But with COVID-19, Brexit and economic uncertainty at a current threat, we must continue driving this momentum forward, both in terms of stimulating our economy to protect the livelihoods of key workers and those other workers, such as those in our supplier teams, who have worked tirelessly during the pandemic; to secure our buildings, undertake essential maintenance, provide business critical functions such as mail and print services and have ensured our buildings are clean and safe for occupation.

If you are not yet payment the real Living Wage or are and are not yet accredited, I would encourage you to have a conversation with the Living Wage Foundation, of which KPMG is a founding member.

It may not be possible or practical for everyone to implement, but as the economy recovers organisations need to do what they can to address the problem of low pay.

THE FM SERVICE PROVIDER’S VIEW
JAMES GREGG, MANAGING DIRECTOR, WATES FM

Businesses have a moral duty when it comes to fair pay. They proportion of people currently living in poverty within a working family is at record high and amounts to seven in 10 children - that is both startling and upsetting. It’s clear that there is a significant gap between what is deemed affordable and the true reality of the cost of living.

Working with informed clients who understand the importance of providing staff with a Living Wage contract is a very important way of showing that employee welfare is a top priority. Organisations in the FM industry as well as the business community as a whole must understand the huge difference the Living Wage can make to an individual’s life. However, as the economy recovers from lockdown, it is possible that many businesses may not be at the stage they want to be when it comes to providing fair wages. An effective starting point for those in this position would be to set out a three to five-year road map with clear objectives of what the business can achieve during that time frame.

Paying the Living Wage has far reaching benefits for not only the workforce but also employers. There is an extremely positive correlation between the Living Wage and employee loyalty and by paying the Living Wage, employees are less likely to need to opt for a second job to pay the bills. This means they will be more committed, positive and energetic when coming to work every day. Having a highly productive, happy workforce is a major contributor to the effective recruitment and retention of staff and enhanced company reputation and work quality.

Of course, organisations should not assume implementation of the Living Wage is a socially responsible endpoint. It requires on-going, active management to ensure its benefits are optimised. It is part of a far wider issue, so it is important for businesses to look at other aspects of responsible employment such as the gender pay gap.

Wates FM achieved Recognised Service Provider status in November 2019 and is committed to supporting the Living Wage Foundation’s work, ensuring our employees and supply chain partners earn a wage that meets the
cost of living, not just the government National Minimum or Living Wage. Our business is reliant on teams who work hard to deliver high quality services for our clients and we recognise that in order for families, communities and businesses to shine, we need to ensure our employees are treated ethically and paid fairly.

THE CLEANING PROVIDER’S VIEW
DOMINIC PONNIAH, CEO, CLEANOLOGY

With no vaccine available and queries over the value of antibodies against COVID-19, the profile of cleaning has never been so high and, as businesses start to reopen, hygiene is top of everyone’s agenda.

We are hearing a great deal of talk around the new normal, with questions about whether we can change attitudes to the environment and pollution. However, one area that is already undergoing major change is the cleaning industry.

Key workers have played a crucial role in recent months, and it has been gratifying to see cleaners applauded alongside NHS staff. Hopefully, we will begin to see greater recognition for our front-line staff translate into wider support for the real Living Wage.

When it comes to pay, perception plays a large part. In 2019, Cleanology commissioned the first independent research into attitudes around wage levels and perceptions towards cleaners’ pay. The results painted a clear picture. While 63 per cent of employees were concerned that cleaners should be paid fairly, only 39 per cent had an accurate idea of the real figures on pay.

At Cleanology, we support the view that commitment and fair pay go hand in hand. Almost half of our clients pay real Living Wage rates, and we include the Real Living Wage rate as mandatory in 40 per cent of our bids. This is not a luxury – when staff feel they are paid fairly, they invest in the job, in the client, and in their own future.

At the same time, it has become clear that many established ways of working are not fit for purpose under the new regime. For many cleaning businesses, the arrival of COVID-19 meant ‘normal rules of engagement’ ceased to exist. Clients suspended and cancelled contracts, and it remains to be seen how many of our competitors will survive.

While the furlough scheme has helped provide many employees with stability, the nature of our industry means that some have fallen through the net. As we return to work, we are finding that some staff who returned to their home countries for lockdown have chosen to stay with their families.

At the same time, the need to provide extra cleaning in workplaces means Cleanology is likely to fast-track existing plans to replace large numbers of part-time cleaners with a smaller group working full-time hours. We see this as a positive move, which we were already working towards.

As we navigate new waters, we urge clients to recognise the crucial role played by cleaners and reward them accordingly. We are all facing new challenges – some predictable, others unknown – but we do know that responsible, responsive cleaners will play a large part.

THE FM SECURITY PROVIDER’S VIEW
MIKE BULLOCK, CEO, CORPS SECURITY

Paying the Living Wage has to be a collaborative approach between an FM service provider and their client. Every business will have different requirements and commercial constraints, so it won’t always be able to be implemented immediately, but it is important both parties have a plan in place to work towards paying a higher wage.

As an FM service provider, it is our job to educate our clients about the benefits of paying the Living Wage and that cost shouldn’t be the only point considered. Service providers need to illustrate clear advantages for a client’s business. Paying a higher wage for roles that have traditionally been low paid increases staff retention, garners more highly trained staff and delivers a better quality of service. Often by paying less in wages, it costs more in the long-term as staff turnover is higher and this comes with increased administrative and training expenses combined with a reduction in service levels.

In most cases, people want to do the right thing and support better pay for their critical FM workforce, but some clients automatically assume they can’t afford it. However, with careful planning, service contracts can be reviewed to help achieve this. In the security remit, this could mean, for example, that technology is implemented so fewer officers are required. Therefore, those officers that are appointed can be awarded a higher wage.

FM providers must also ensure Living Wage is an integral part of the tender process. Just simply tacking on a separate Living Wage proposal is not enough. The Living Wage proposal needs to be a fundamental part of every step of the process and client engagement is vital.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, we’ve already seen the cost of business interruption and this is far greater than costs associated with paying the Living Wage. Businesses that pay the Living Wage attract a more skilled employee with increased motivation and productivity. The Living Wage Foundation reports that more than 80 per cent of employers believe that paying the real Living Wage enhances the quality of the work of their staff. In the security industry the role of the security officer is now fundamental in safeguarding the welfare of people so getting the best quality service is key. If organisations don’t have highly trained and adequately paid officers in place, it could be a severe detriment to the health, wellbeing and safety of their people.

The recent pandemic has shown a light on the role of FM. In the security industry in particular the risks frontline workers have been exposed to is high following so many interactions with the public. This has been evidenced by the COVID-19 death rate for security officers being higher than any other occupation.

In the post-pandemic world, we will see an increase in demand for security qualifications and with this we’ll see a shift in the role of security moving towards a professional career. With the role expanding to now embrace safety and health and wellbeing, and increased duties and demands in responsibilities rising, so too should pay.

Do you have a question that you’d like answered by the FMJ Clinic?
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Current Software Not Cutting It?
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With 1.8 million sq ft of award-winning office space and 33 acres of landscaped open space gardens, Chiswick Park, located in the heart of West London, is a benchmark for business campuses around the world.

Integral to its success is the belief that supporting and engaging individuals first is the key to productive and engaged employees. Happy people are more committed, more creative, and more productive. Therefore, it is important to have a workplace that stimulates and refreshes its occupants, encourages them to work harder, stay longer and have better ideas.

Enjoy-Work is the property management company for Chiswick Park, which not only keeps the campus safe, secure and in pristine condition, but also offers a programme of events and initiatives to keep occupiers, or guests as we call them, engaged and productive.

With the advent of the global pandemic it has become clear that many employees will be splitting their time between the office and home. Therefore, it is essential to have robust and engaging digital platforms and experiences in place so we can connect with our guests whether they are working on the campus or from home.

ENJOY WORK APP
To bolster the campus experience for guests, we have launched a new Enjoy-Work app platform in partnership with tenant experience specialists, Office App. Amsterdam-based tech company, Office App provides over 76 modular app functionalities and has already been launched.
integrated with over 52 product partners to be able to offer a full suite of amenities services to maximise adoption and optimise tenant engagement. The partnership will enable Chiswick Park to create a digital community experience and offer a wider range of services, on top of events, clubs, and workshops all through the app platform.

Says Ikenna Nweke UK & Ireland Head of Sales at Office App: “As the world’s most advanced integrated tenant experience platform, we relished the opportunity to partner with Chiswick Park Enjoy-Work. Their core values and passion for customer service echo that of our own and this partnership means that the 10,000 guests at Chiswick Park will reap those benefits for some time to come.”

Launching in September 2020, the app platform will be the ultimate tool to make our guests’ experience at Chiswick Park the best one possible, through a series of features designed to create an integrated digital community and integrate with the physical campus.

The community feature allows individual guests to post a story to engage with the campus community wherever they may be. There is also the opportunity to book and pay for onsite services directly from the app platform, which alleviates the need to exchange cash and gives our guests a holistic overview of what additional services we offer. These range from an onsite nail salon and barber to a valet service and physiotherapist.

QUALITY OF LIFE

In a recent survey, we found that 53 per cent of guests will change the way they travel to work due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, we have improved our bike facilities and added several new bike storage units and service stations. We have also expanded the range of bikes that we offer on the campus. On the app, guests will be able to hire a bike for a couple of days or even five days to support their ‘new normal’ commute.

There are a host of events, workshops, and clubs that the guests can RSVP via the app, whether they are events taking place onsite or online. Plus, there is an ‘on the go’ library with key documents such as our social distancing and hygiene policy, Health & Safety protocols, and our events programme, to ensure our guests have all key information at their fingertips wherever they are.

A key feature for our facilities managers is the option for guests to report an issue directly through the app. The message is transmitted to the helpdesk so that our engineers can resolve the issue in a timely manner and then communicate that status back to the guest through the app. There is also an information feature where guests can call our reception or security control room directly, which will improve the coordination and communication between us as a management company and our guests.

Exclusive deals are always popular with guests and the app is not short of great discount features. Our guests can use ‘coupons’ created by the onsite retailers offering price discounts and special promotions in their stores.

As part of our local community support, we have created the ONECARD, which gives guests the opportunity to retrieve exclusive discounts from top retail partners within the local area. The digital card is featured on the app along with a list of all ONECARD offers.

Explains Matthew Myerson, Marketing Manager Chiswick Park Enjoy-Work. “We see the new Enjoy-Work app as an innovative communication platform, which will guide our guests throughout their journey on our campus and enhance their sense of belonging to our community. It will increase awareness of our brand by creating regular interaction with our guests while educating them about what Chiswick Park Enjoy-Work has to offer. The new app will support our multi-channel marketing strategy and will help us identify, in real-time, the needs of our target audience.”

DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

We have also integrated a shop feature whereby guests can purchase everyday office essentials that they can then collect from their reception, further supporting their working lives.

We believe that employees are seeking out digital solutions in the workplace so that they have more engagement and ultimately control over their working environments. The app platform offers us real-time analytics which will help inform how we should evolve our offering to best suit the needs of our guests.

We are constantly looking for ways to improve the lives of our guests and we will look to integrate the app platform into different areas of the campus to achieve this. From car parking to building access, our plan is to integrate our hardware with the app platform to create a seamless guest experience.

The Enjoy-Work app will enhance our marketing strategy by creating a direct marketing channel. Through push notifications, our guests will get direct interaction with our campus and services, and will receive timely reminders about the full extent of our facilities.

Our community spirit is a big part of the Enjoy-Work culture. The new app will enhance this spirit by providing a virtual community that encourages interaction as part of the new way of working. It will become the ‘go-to’ platform for both our virtual and physical work communities.

Overall, the platform will help Chiswick Park Enjoy-Work to continue to lead the way in guest experience at the campus by providing a constantly evolving world-class digital experience.
TWIN BENEFITS

Looking to improve the efficiency of your building stock? A digital twin could be the answer, according to HDR | Hurley Palmer Flatt’s Paul Scriven and Dr Annie Marston

Our built environment and its construction have a tremendous role to play in helping the UK meet its carbon dioxide emission reduction targets. We know that buildings have a colossal impact on global carbon emissions. The United Nations Environmental Programme: 2019 Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction figures indicated that as much as 39 per cent of energy-related carbon dioxide emissions can be laid solely at the door of buildings and construction.

Here in the UK the government has set the target of reducing carbon emissions to ‘net zero’ by 2050. Digital twinning will be a very important tool in helping all those involved in the design, construction, occupation and management of buildings to deliver those efficiencies.

The digital twin concept revolves around the connect between the physical and digital versions of a building. The digital replica reflects exactly the model of the physical version in terms of design and construction and represents – in digital terms – all the building services; lighting, HVAC, mechanical and electrical installations, controls and commissioning throughout. This digital facsimile can play its part in helping us understand how buildings work - and how we can manage and design them more efficiently.

Presently it appears energy modelling and design decisions are mostly taken around the concept of compliance – meeting building regulation standards, hitting (Energy Performance Certificate) EPC targets etc – but even with a building hitting these benchmarks, its performance in practice may be wildly different to that expected, as we’ve seen in (Display Energy Certificates) DEC’s vs EPC’s.

COMPLIANCE MODEL

When you build a compliance model it doesn’t necessarily reflect the future performance of the operational building. There is a gap between the designed performance and actual performance of a building which can lead to a lot of confusion for stakeholders when it operates using a completely different energy usage. Here in lies the issue around compliance led design verses performance led design.

A digital twin enables you to move away from compliance modelling and instead try to accurately model the building as it will run once in operation. The full complexities of mechanical systems can be plugged into the model alongside other technical design information, more realistic user profiles, and potentially data from the ‘Internet of Things’. Not only does this mean that anytime anything changes during construction we can understand what impact it might have on the building during operation, but also that this digital model can be used to understand why a building is not behaving as it should.

Faults happen very easily when buildings are in operation – someone might have turned the thermostat off, the lighting might not be working correctly or HVAC controls not set properly – so we can use the digital model as the ideal to help service engineers and FM teams compare, meet and maintain a building’s energy and carbon emission performance as well as ensuring the occupants remain comfortable. A digital twin helps reduce carbon emissions through the design process and also during operation. It gives much more useful information to the design team than a compliance model and encourages performance beyond compliance linked to actual fuel bills and interrogation.

ENERGY MODELLING

There are hopes that the use of digital twins and operational models can be included alongside a review of the current compliance methodology for energy modelling. For instance, SBEM (Simplified Building Energy Model), is a new software tool developed by BRE that provides an analysis of a building’s energy consumption. Incorporating digital twinning into SBEM could really improve it and although infrastructure that offers any peer review of incorporating digital twins into those models is lacking, it is an area where HDR | Hurley Palmer Flatt are frontrunners.

The full incorporation of digital twins into compliance methodology might be a goal for the future but under certification schemes and guidance such as CIBSE’s Technical Memorandum 54, their use can be brought further to the fore.

More enlightened developer clients are starting to recognise the advantages that digital twins can bring to their projects and building portfolio. Not only can they ensure their buildings perform at their most efficient, those advantages can be passed on to their clients and tenants, theoretically making their developments more attractive and easier to sell or let.

RETROFITTING

A building’s age is no hurdle for a digital twin. Refurbishment offers tremendous potential for delivering savings through digital twin methodology – both financial and carbon related.

When carrying out a refurbishment project designers and engineers typically want to remove and renew anything that is close to its end date. Now we can build a digital twin and use it to see how much energy they can save from day one, by using their existing services more efficiently. Then the project teams will have to prove their proposals deliver considerable betterment. If a digital twin is deployed on a new build think how much easier it will be to consider planned maintenance and options for refurbishment on the road to net-zero carbon.

in order to deliver those gains true net-zero carbon planning needs to move away from compliance tools and into a more structured assessment such as CIBSE TM54 or Build for Performance.

We should use digital twin not only for the betterment it delivers but also because the building assessment systems we are using now are not necessarily the most effective or most accurate for all buildings. Compliance has its place, but performance led design needs to be a major part of the process if we are to get it right for 2050. Afterall, compliance led design is traditionally based on historical data so why not make that data more readily available, up to date and accurate.
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BUILT FOR SPEED

The Coronavirus pandemic has accelerated the need for ‘fast buildings’ says Richard Kauntze, Chief Executive, The British Council for Offices, which will speed up the development of the digital office
The world has spent the last twenty years getting faster. We expect faster cars, faster Wi-Fi, faster solutions – and we expect them to be seamless. In a world as obsessed with speed as ours, there is less and less room for the trial and error approach of old.

The same can be said of our workplaces. While it may seem odd to talk about the ‘speed’ of a building, by its very nature a stationary entity, doing so can provide a refreshed, and indeed a productive, framework for approaching how we improve the workplaces our sector builds.

In the battle of the buildings, a slow building is one where the environment is considered thermally ‘heavyweight’ – its very fabric can influence the temperature of the space over time. While there is certainly value in these slower, heavyweight contenders, the Coronavirus pandemic has strengthened the corner of their faster, lightweight opponents: those which use technology to adapt to the demands of the occupants’ needs on a more immediate basis.

This is, of course, driven by a new occupier – one which expects the office environment to be as technologically advanced, as quick, as seamless, as the world outside its front doors.

THE STAKES ARE HIGHER

Before the Coronavirus pandemic, we were already seeing greater adoption of these faster models – developers and designers alike were beginning to explore the real possibilities of artificial intelligence and machine learning to improve the efficiency and the experience of the office. Smart sensors were already being introduced to measure levels of occupancy with greater granularity, to give the employee greater control over their workstation, and to make smarter decisions about office management.

But one very real consequence of the pandemic, the acceptance of a new, mixed way of working, where professional lives are split between the office and the home, accelerates the need for these faster buildings to be the new standard by which we hold ourselves accountable.

We are facing increased competition from people’s homes, and embracing technology in everything we do can help us deliver offices which work more effectively for workers. With the right building, people will want to be there not because they have to, but because they want to.

PUTTING SAFETY FIRST

More pressing, perhaps, than the need to impress, is the need to keep the UK workforce safe. It’s no secret that workers up and down the country are apprehensive about returning to their offices. Recent independent polling commissioned by the BCO found that one in five (20 per cent) UK adults plans primarily to work from home in the future, while 16 per cent hope that working from home replaces the office.

The uncertainty of the Coronavirus pandemic endures, and as lockdown guidance continues to ebb and flow, the onus is increasingly on landlords to convince occupants that they can, and will, deliver safe spaces for their occupants.

This starts from the second employees leave their front doors. Most workers, understandably, aren’t prepared to take public transport until the virus is better controlled. Recent research by workspace provider The Argyll Club suggested that the main concern for London’s businesses post lockdown was whether employees can get to and from work safely.

While landlords and tenants alike have limited control over traffic flows and train capacity (although a wider acceptance of flexible hours would undoubtedly help), there are ways technology can be used to help make active commuting – cycling, walking, or running – as accessible as possible. Smart management systems are already available which will inform workers of available car parking spaces, smart lockers and way-finding for cyclists. Increased adoption of these technologies can help reassure workers that their workplace is on their side.

Greater integration of smart sensors, specifically to monitor levels of occupancy, will also play an essential role in protecting occupiers. While traditionally used to improve environmental efficiency – by reducing energy consumption when not needed – these technologies can be pivoted to ensure employees are following social distancing guidelines.

They can also provide facilities management teams with a more granular understanding of what spaces employees prefer to use, which can in turn improve how these teams organise new one-way systems and signpost safe floor space.

Add to this the long-awaited availability of track and trace apps, and occupiers will be able to integrate this data with their own management systems to protect employees should they be alerted of new or existing Coronavirus cases.

The use of Vertical transportation (VT) i.e. lifts and escalators will also need to be addressed during the pandemic. The most obvious management solution is to reduce the number of passengers that can use a lift car. Aside from organisational controls, digital solutions could include upgrading the control systems to allow for touchless operation via mobile phones, security access cards or foot-operated buttons. (Some
manufacturers are offering facial recognition and voice operation interfaces, but these are not widely available.)

**MAKING DATA PROTECTION A PRIORITY**

While faster buildings and greater integration of new technology can unlock plenty of benefits for the way we build and manage offices in a post-pandemic world, they also increase the need for effective and secure data protection.

The implementation of GDPR in the UK helped turn data from a concern that was dismissed as ‘wonkish’ and nerdy to a boardroom-level issue. The pandemic has only increased the importance of data protection, particularly with so much work undertaken remotely on often insecure internet connections.

The future, faster office will collect far more data than we may realise. This data will help offices be designed more obviously for their occupants, enabling buildings to adjust and adapt to how they are being used. However, this data must be treated with care. It’s essential that we use it smartly, but also protect it for the good of occupants.

**THE OFFICE’S NEW ROLE**

Inarguably, the pandemic has posed new questions about the purpose of the office. Before the crisis, only a few freelancers, working parents and senior-level staff tended to work regularly from home. The vast majority took working from home as a given, and perhaps viewed being home-based as a remote prospect.

While some, almost certainly to their surprise, may have enjoyed the experience at the start of lockdown, it will probably feel less agreeable now. Many are facing daily challenges in protecting their work/life balance as the distinction between home and work fades away. Others are battling with the constant interruptions of their children, while younger staff are often fighting for space on the kitchen table.

As an emergency measure, working from home has been an effective remedy. Remote access technology (AKA Zoom and the rest) have allowed vast numbers of businesses to continue to function. But, as a permanent, or even semi-permanent answer, the model is no substitute for the office. An office is an investment. A great office makes staff happier, more productive, more creative – it makes it easier to attract talent. Put most simply, being in the office is more fun.

When one considers just how much of a business’ expenditure is spent on salaries, it quickly becomes evident that a comparatively small investment in an office makes sense. However, these benefits only come from a good quality office. To attract occupants, offices will have to deliver clear benefits that make the investment worthwhile, and make working from home seem inadequate.

Clearly, a fast office, with all the benefits outlined above, can do this. In the immediate term, a fast office can help staff feel safer and help them adapt to the new realities of our world. In the longer term, fast offices will improve how we all work – and ensure the office remains important for years to come.

**REFERENCE NOTES**

(1) www.bco.org.uk/News/News45664.aspx

(2) https://workplacenight.net/londoners-demand-for-a-healthier-commute-is-redefining-the-office-market/

(3) THOUGHTS ON LIFT AND ESCALATOR DESIGN AND OPERATION AFTER COVID-19: British Council for Offices Briefing Note August 2020
PumpSmart Limited is one of the largest independent pump sales, distribution and servicing companies in the UK.

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Every major organisation likes to argue that its values underpin what it does – but not many can legitimately claim that this drives a decision to move its offices from High Wycombe to Staines. Most businesses make a choice to uproot only when the lease runs out or they have outgrown their existing space. But then, how many occupiers are like the privately owned, global developer and provider of enterprise software, Industrial Financial Systems?

Nicola Carton, Director and Global Head of Facilities Management at IFS, explains. “What we needed was somewhere that was more connected in all sorts of ways. Somewhere where we could showcase our brand. Somewhere where we could showcase to our customers. Somewhere close to the airport, motorways and city. Somewhere where it would be easier to attract top talent.”

The IFS values are agile, collaborative and trustworthy. In theory, one flows from another and the space at High Wycombe did not allow that to happen. The teams were split across two floors in a multi-tenanted building that prevented any sense of flexibility and movement, let alone proper collaboration. If you’re not collaborating – working as a team in an open manner – it doesn’t foster trust. But that agility is also about being able to visit shops; the flexibility to do dry cleaning, choosing to visit bars and restaurants easily, safely and without the need for a car after work. The High Wycombe office situated at the edge of a business park didn’t allow for that.

“We’re now a 10 minute walk along the Thames path to Staines. Two supermarkets are within minutes and there’s a selection of bars, restaurants and hotels for anyone visiting from out of the UK and we’re closer to transport hubs too,” says Carton. “The whole location is healthier and more connected in an emotional and physical way too.”

That last point, relating to wellbeing, is critical. It might not be listed as a core value, but a golden thread throughout the IFS culture is the sense of wellbeing. For it to be an agile business, removing the barriers between its people by replacing walls with planting to create natural breaks, was a key part of the attractive interior design for the new offices of the software developer IFS to encourage wellbeing and collaboration.
collaborative and trustworthy it needs its employees to want to enjoy the environment in which they spend most of their day. That is not some HR fad, it is a business requirement. So, following on from that, it was a strategic decision to move sites and fit out the new site, Bourne House at Staines, in a manner that reinforced its values. “It’s important to have a space that encourages teamworking and that physically, not just notionally, breaks down silos. So, we have taken down almost all of the walls in the space. Instead we have used planting to create accents of nature to soften the workplace,” says Carton. “But the main focus was to create something beautiful.”

DESIGN BRIEF
To help with the pursuit of that pure ideal, IFS hired the design team from Area, Europe’s leading workplace design and fit-out specialist, to come up with original ideas and then oversee the fit out of the 26,000 sq. ft space. Design Director, Kathryn O’Callaghan-Mills explains. “From the outset our brief was to provide a workplace that was going to be a sanctuary for employees, relaxed and welcoming with a boutique feel. That meant blending textures, varying ceiling features and keeping each zone connected: using a lot of natural light and soft furnishings as well as planting to break down physical barriers and create a variety of places to work for people either in groups or on their own.”

At the root of the brief was a focus on wellness. That meant prioritising the physical and emotional wellbeing of anyone working at Bourne House. One way to do that is guaranteeing an allocated workstation for anyone using the space more than three days per week. Straight away that removed any anxiety and reflected the nature of many of the employees who often have very focussed tasks.

“As a team, IFS & Area have created a collaborative, flexible space for the 175 people predicted to use the building alongside any visitors. It was a refreshingly brave brief that specified employee wellbeing facilities and a state-of-the-art technology solution at the core of the workplace design.”

As a team, IFS & Area have created a collaborative, flexible space for the 175 people predicted to use the building for the 175 people predicted to use the building for the 175 people predicted to use the building for the 175 people predicted to use the building.

main working environment and the ground floor being utilised for the client’s transient workforce, client-facing facilities, a staff restaurant and auditorium. The auditorium is also used for team meet-ups and as an event space for partner and customer events. IFS previously used hotels for these functions, by bringing this facility in house means that they can offer a more personal experience by welcoming guests and employees into their own setting;” explains O’Callaghan-Mills.

WELLBEING FOCUS
As a globally connected business, IFS have created a state-of-the-art customer experience centre. The floor to ceiling digital screens and ability to channel content globally creates a unique experience space that is fully immersive. “The IX Zone has been designed from the perspective of the user and their journey. You enter through from the boardroom, the ceiling height lifting to three metres displaying exposed services which strike a balance between warm and welcoming and the ‘wow’ impact desired. The tech vision from IFS blew me away, it has been implemented in a timeless fashion
which makes each user journey unique. This is very reflective of the IFS brand, the idea of trust and collaboration: it’s about bringing people into the IFS family,” says O’Callaghan-Mills.

That welcoming concept of wellness is found everywhere. A constant blend of warmth against exposed industrial features. For example, the café restaurant zone was warmed up and given a French brasserie theme with a mix of soft velvet finishes, warm timbers and a moss wall to one end. The playful section within the zone has been designed by a graffiti artist creating a work of art embedding the IFS values.

The sense of wellbeing is reflected in the café. As well as being 100 per cent subsidised with all of the food being made fresh on site daily by the caterers Thomas Franks, it is an inside outside space overlooking the Thames. Kathryn O’Callaghan-Mills explains: “We created a beautiful terrace outside from the restaurant area which overlooks the river. It gives everyone a sense of connectivity with nature – similar to the planting and building on biophilic design internally.”

We created a beautiful terrace outside from the restaurant area which overlooks the river. It gives everyone a sense of connectivity with nature – similar to the planting and building on biophilic design internally.”

“Every element of employee wellbeing is catered for, literally. Only nutritious food provided, plenty of natural light, showers, changing rooms and bicycle parking facilities and a location and connections to transport hubs that encourages an active and healthy lifestyle for everyone working at IFS or visiting. “It’s a vision that we have started to roll out across the global estate,” says Carton. “It’s rooted in what works best for our people. Not just in terms of their productivity and engagement, but also their perception about how we operate and who we are.”

SUSTAINABLE INTERIORS
That means working towards as low a carbon footprint as possible, which in fit out terms is not always easy, especially on a project that had to be quick – the turnaround was all done in 10 weeks from June to August 2019.

“We are well aware that there is a lot of embodied carbon in existing buildings, so we wanted to avoid a fit out for the sake of it. Yes, we wanted to deliver on our vision for the space, but in a manner that did not impact on the environment.”

Area already had experience of this type of work, having been involved in some demanding schemes that won WELL Building and BREEAM highest accreditation levels for sustainability.

“We have strong relationships with our suppliers, so we could reassure IFS that we were using products and materials from responsible sources, but wherever we could we worked with IFS to reuse, repurpose and recycle existing furniture,” says O’Callaghan-Mills.

All task chairs were reused, sofas have been reupholstered, desk electrics were re-used, lockers have been refurbished and reused and the meeting room furniture was recycled. It all adds to the vibe of a dynamic, agile space that’s fun to work in. What’s more, whilst the values are apparent, they are blended in a light touch.

“There is a nod to our company heritage with the use of oak flooring and detailing in some areas,” says Carton. “And if you look closely you can see the herringbone pattern of our logo picked out in the flooring.”

“It has been a privilege to design for IFS.” says O’Callaghan-Mills. “So much thought and care went into every element of the building. It’s been a pleasure to work with a client team that has been really invested in the vision from start to end.”

Only it hasn’t ended. IFS have sites across the world and the plan, driven by their Executive Vice President of FM and Chief Digital and Information officer, Sal Laher, is for this to be rolled out globally. Bourne House in Staines is the template of the art of the possible.
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We began by asking how FMs can help encourage people to wash their hands regularly, as it’s one of the most basic but effective ways of preventing the spread of infection. With the recommended amount of time for washing your hands being between 20 – 30 seconds, this is a much longer period than people think.

Mark Jankovich, CEO, Delphis Eco explains that when you consider that most people only wash their hands for six seconds and around 33 per cent of people don’t use soap when washing their hands; “a key factor to help ensure users wash their hands correctly will be the provision of hand sanitiser within washrooms alongside the traditional washroom products.”

Clear signage in washrooms can act as a useful reminder to encourage good hygiene practices say Sam Rylands, Marketing Manager, DURABLE UK. “Within washrooms, signage is best placed next to the sinks using a table presenter or on the walls and mirrors in direct eye line. Use eye-catching frames and notices so that the messages are clear and not easily ignored.

“Depending on the size of your washrooms, additional signage can be placed on the floor to remind users to keep a safe distance apart.

Floor markings can help people to judge distances more accurately. If sinks are too close together, use cross markings to indicate that every other sink is out of use.”

The availability and quality of the soap dispensers will also influence behaviours says Chris Wakefield, VP, European Marketing & Product Development at GOJO Industries-Europe.

“Washrooms must be well-maintained, well-stocked, and regularly monitored. After all, people are unable to wash their hands if the soap has dispenser has run empty. Product choice is also crucial. When you consider that approximately 60 per cent of the

WASH AND GO

The washroom is likely to be at the heart of any FM strategy to help keep non-domestic buildings infection free. FMJ asked a group of washroom experts to answer some frequently asked questions on ways of keeping COVID clear.
population report having sensitive skin\(^{iii}\), and combine this with the frequency with which people are now washing or sanitising hands, formulations must be gentle, unlikely to irritate but have proven germ-killing efficacy. Providing moisturisers can help to maintain skin health too, as they help to rehydrate and replenish oils in the skin. Paul Mulready Hygiene Products Marketing Manager at Northwood believes FMs can help ensure that users wash their hands correctly by not only installing simple visual guides alongside their washing facilities but also throughout their premises, including at sanitising stations. He says: “This provides teams with a constant reminder of good hygiene practice, as well as helping the stations to stand out and encouraging their use.”

How we dry our hands is very important says Mulready: “Efficient hand drying is also vital to limit the spread of the virus, as microbes survive better in moisture, and any that remain on skin after washing are more likely to spread to other surfaces when people do not dry their hands properly.”

HANDS FREE

There is growing evidence that COVID-19 is capable of surviving for several days on hard surfaces. Mulready cites a paper by the New England Journal of Medicine which reported in April the findings of a piece of research\(^{iv}\) undertaken by Neeltje van Doremalen of the US National Institutes of Health - which found that the virus could live for over 72 hours on plastic and up to 24 on cardboard. This being the case, FMs need to minimise opportunities for users to touch washroom surfaces by installing touch free dispensers that minimise surface touching and help reduce the chances of contamination. According to Jo Gilliard, CEO of Jangro end-users will demand clean and hygienic handwashing facilities, while conversely showing a reluctance to actually touch any equipment. “Anything that avoids users’ touch, from soap and sanitiser dispensers, to taps, dryers, and toilet flushes will all help increase a washroom’s hygiene rating. This, in turn, minimises the risk of contamination of COVID-19 or any other germ or bacteria for that matter.” Automatic dispensers can help increase compliance, by overcoming people’s reluctance to touch taps, dispensers and dryers, especially if they don’t look clean or are leaking says Wakefield. But there are other benefits too. “By releasing the exact dose of product required each time, touch-free dispensers can help reduce mess and waste.”

According to REACT CEO, Shaun Doak, M&E consultants will increasingly look to implement technology into their current/future building design without the risk of this technology being ‘value engineered’ out of the build (as is often the case) due to budgetary constraints. He also predicts an increase in the automation of other areas of the washroom. “We have already seen an increase in the last few years of automatic dispensers can help increase compliance, by overcoming people’s reluctance to touch taps, dispensers and dryers, especially if they don’t look clean or are leaking says Wakefield.”
FOCUS | WASHROOMS

Toilet flush and more recently airplane style flush devices on toilets that not only reduce water consumption, but also decrease the amount of airborne particulate being realised at point of flush."

Although the use of automatic doors at the entrance to toilets may sound like a solution to touching surfaces on the way out of the loo, (rather says Doak like those used in trains), the washroom experts concurred that privacy issues might make this an innovation too far. Instead, suggests Gilliard, there are ways in which FMs can make doors easier to open when exiting with clean, freshly washed hands. “For example, brackets can be fitted so that a door can be opened with your forearm, or double swing doors can be fitted. Either option can reduce the spread of dirt and germs and also make for a washroom that is easier to clean.”

**CLEAN PRACTICES**

Aside from the increasing adoption of automation, more stringent cleaning practices will be the best way to keep buildings infection-free, and FMs will need to increase the amount of cleaning and checking of washrooms to achieve this. According to Wakefield: “It is now more important than ever that washroom facilities are in good working order, and remain well-maintained, well-stocked, and regularly monitored. After all, people are unable to wash their hands if the soap has dispenser run empty.”

Doak agrees that although there will still need to be a human element for this to happen, the number of users could be monitored automatically, “avoiding unnecessary checks if the facilities have not been used very frequently.”

Gillard advises that FMs should plan and ensure a regular and thorough cleaning schedule is followed; and that washrooms are checked even more regularly to prevent toilet tissue, soap or hand drying dispensers from running empty. “To help avoid this situation, FMs can install high capacity toilet roll or continuous towel roll systems. This will also help minimise labour intensive repeat refilling of dispensers throughout the day.”

**WASTE DISPOSAL**

As Doak explains, with increased hand washing being encouraged, it is likely that washroom waste will also increase, not only through paper towels and tissues, but also discarded PPE such as masks and gloves.

He advises that: “Bins should be emptied more frequently, to ensure they don’t overfill and become difficult to manage, with the liners being sealed correctly and the correct PPE worn. Collections should be increased to ensure waste is not stored on site any longer than necessary, thus cutting down infection risk.”

“Offensive waste streams should be introduced into washrooms if not already in place and appropriate receptacles should be used (such as pedal or auto bins) to ensure waste can be deposited without the need to touch any lids or surfaces unnecessarily. Regular sanitisation of these receptacles should also become part of the new, enhanced cleaning regime.”

Another area which might need consideration is the materials used to carry out the cleaning of washrooms. Gillard advocates using a combined detergent disinfectant solution (at a dilution of 1,000 parts per million available chlorine) following Government advice to “think one site, one wipe, in one direction.”

She adds that “disposable cloths or paper roll, and disposable mop heads should be used to clean all hard surfaces, floors, chairs, and sanitary fittings. Any used cloths and mop heads must be put into waste bags and disposed of as normal.

“If an individual has displayed symptoms of COVID-19, any waste from cleaning of areas where they have been (including PPE, disposable cloths and used tissues) should be put in a plastic rubbish bag and tied when full. The plastic bag should then be placed in a second bin and tied, and placed in a suitable and secure place. It should be marked for storage. After 72 hours, or if the individual receives a negative test result before then, it can be placed in the normal, communal waste.”

She concludes that FMs should strive to offer a welcoming and pleasant washroom experience, because this helps to promote good hand hygiene.

“With all these practices in place, providing clean and hygienic facilities will be even more critical for business, as customers often judge the overall experience, because this helps to promote good hand hygiene.”

Reference notes:

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WINTER PREPARATION

CARLO ALLONI, MANAGING DIRECTOR, TECHNICAL SERVICES & IFM, MITIE:

Given that buildings have been empty or had very low occupation for so long, the first step on any winter maintenance agenda should be dedicated to ensuring that all key systems and emergency features, including emergency lighting, fire alarms, extinguishers and emergency generators, are working properly.

Winter maintenance should also prioritise measures to eliminate any bacteria or settled particulates that may have accumulated in water systems and HVAC systems during the off  ice closure. For example, water outlets will all need to be flushed and tap temperatures checked to ensure they are still compliant. A full system chlorination should also be considered for building water systems that have had little or no use, to reduce the risk of legionella. These systems should also have their dosing levels checked and water hygiene samples taken, to re-establish their regular water treatment regimes. HVAC filters will also need to be changed and air conditioning will need to be run for at least 48 hours to reduce the risk of airborne viruses.

As viruses can also be transmitted from touching contaminated surfaces, businesses should implement extensive cleaning measures focused on sanitising key touchpoints, including door handles, desks, coffee stations and meeting rooms.

PREPARING FOR SHORT DAYS AND COLD SNAPS

As the days get shorter, businesses need to carry out a thorough assessment of all lighting inside and outside the building to ensure they are working properly and that spaces are well lit. Businesses looking to reduce their carbon emissions can take this review a step further by replacing fluorescent and halogen lights with LED. Using LED lighting can improve energy efficiency, reduce carbon emissions, and save money, which are important considerations for businesses in the current climate.

With temperatures likely to fall and create frost, it’s important to keep gritting services on stand-by. Icy weather can make your employees and visitors slip and fall, so it’s important to be ready to respond to those cold days. We all know that the trademark of British weather is that it is very changeable. Technology is a vital tool to ensuring that businesses, particularly those with a national footprint, can quickly respond to changes in the forecast. Mitie’s ‘Go-Grit’ app allows customers to manage their winter services from any mobile device, 24/7. The app uses an interactive map system which features all of the business’ sites, tracks the local weather impact and flags high-risk areas in real-time. The app also shows the schedule of which sites are due to be gritted, allowing businesses to cancel or add a new service at the touch of a button.

By installing sensors throughout the building...
Downtime could cause a spill when equipment is restarted. It is a good idea to engage a specialist response contractor to be on hand when you restart equipment to deal with a spill of any hazardous or polluting material quickly and effectively.

**CRITICAL EQUIPMENT**

If you haven't been running equipment like tanks, pumps and fueling systems while the lockdown has been in force, you might find when you restart them, they don't work. You should work with specialists to service critical equipment before you switch it back on, to ensure everything is in good working order. They will diagnose and solve problems, such as degraded fuel quality in generator tanks, to get you back up and running, minimising further disruption to your operation. It is also important to ensure systems that have continued to operate, such as septic tanks and drainage, are operating effectively.

If your equipment hasn't been in use during lockdown there is a small possibility that hazardous materials could have leaked whilst you have been off site, or maintenance issues caused by the downtime could cause a spill when equipment is restarted. It is a good idea to engage a specialist response contractor to be on hand when you restart equipment to deal with a spill of any hazardous or polluting material quickly and effectively.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

**BRYAN CHERRY, ENVIRONMENTAL RISK SURVEY MANAGER, FROM ADLER AND ALLAN:**

If you are still to reopen your sites following lockdown, or you encounter localised lockdown during the winter, here are some environmental considerations to ensure you remain compliant and don’t cause unnecessary damage when restarting your operation that could lead to more downtime.

- **Tanks and pipes:** If you store fuel on your site, the colder months can bring an increased demand and risk, with tanks and pipes liable to being damaged by freezing temperatures.

A common problem for tanks as the temperature drops is burst pipework, so steps should be taken to protect them against corrosion and physical damage. With lockdown, followed by summer, heating systems are likely to have been switched off for an extended period this year. The system should be checked before switching it back on to ensure the integrity of the tanks and pipes to avoid the risk of oil spills.

**PREPARING FOR WINTER: KNOW YOUR RISKS**

Now lockdown has eased in the majority of the country, it is important to refocus on preventing environmental risks. Don’t let winter cause any further unnecessary downtime to an already turbulent year. Follow these simple steps to identify your environmental risks and ensure your sites remain safe and compliant, whatever this winter has in store.

**Check your separators:** Separators are essential for avoiding pollution. If left unchecked, they can become blocked and their filters saturated, creating a flooding risk or causing polluted water to contaminate the local environment. Ignoring the state of your separators could result in hefty fines and prosecution.

Environment Agency and EN standard EN858-2 states that separators should be serviced at least twice a year. Just before winter is a good time to do this as dust caused by long dry spells in the summer build up and turn into silt when it rains which can quickly block separators.

**If your equipment hasn’t been in use during lockdown there is a small possibility that hazardous materials could have leaked whilst you have been off site, or maintenance issues caused by the downtime could cause a spill when equipment is restarted.”**


Drainage: Ensure all drainage on your sites is running clear and free. Autumn is a good time to do this with the leaves dropping. If your gully pots become blocked with a build-up of leaves and debris a high level of water can mean they become overwhelmed. Engage a specialist to check the drainage on your sites and ensure these are running free. If the worst does happen and a flood does occur, having an emergency response contract can save you time and hassle arranging for the water to be pumped out getting you back up and running quickly and safely.

Bunds: Checking the integrity of your bunds is imperative at the start of winter. The changes in temperature from hot to cold can cause the lining or joints to crack which can cause hazardous materials to be released into the environment leading to downtime, costly clean-up and potential environmental fines. Checking the pump or drain valve on your bunds is also a good idea to make sure they are working effectively in managing the build of liquids. A specialist can check all the bunds across your sites and offer remediation work to make them safe and compliant before the winter comes.

Rainwater harvester: A lot of sites, particularly those that are unmanned, are investing in rainwater harvesting for systems such as toilet flushing and non-drinking water hand washing basins. Like any asset, these require maintenance to ensure they remain operational. Before the winter it is good to check their shut off valve is engaged so heavy rainfall doesn’t overwhelm them and they are protected from frost.

Environmental risk audit: This has been an unprecedented year so far and we are expecting the winter to bring about additional challenges. But with it comes opportunities to reassess your business operations to ensure that you don’t incur any unnecessary costs or downtime and thus giving you a critical advantage over your competitors.

TRUE GRIT

GRITIT is a specialist Winter Gritting company, servicing a wide portfolio of clients including numerous retail, education and healthcare sites: all sectors that have been especially hard hit by the COVID-19 crisis.

Compliance Director Steve Webb has been the driving force behind the operational and business changes required because of COVID-19 to guarantee employee and client safety. He explains: “Our cautious approach has centred around various immutable foundations, namely:

- Proactively communicate to each client on a 1-to-1 basis
- Follow and disseminate government advice to all employees as soon as it is updated
- Rigorous COVID-19 safety procedures followed across the board
- Emphasize employee wellbeing and health
- Provide every means possible for operational staff to ensure the safety of client sites and follow client requirements

As the COVID-19 events started to unfold, we took a calm, structured approach with clients, namely a clear missive from the top to contact each client individually to inform them of the measures that we were taking as a company, what to expect from us in the weeks ahead and how we’d help clients during their own difficult times.

As the pandemic unfolded, Government advice changed weekly, sometimes daily, and we have followed and disseminated this advice out to our teams, from social distancing to facemasks, and from self-isolation following non-domestic travel to personal hygiene measures. We will continue to do so for the foreseeable future – corporate COVID-19 advice is now part of the “new normal”. Safety of client sites

Throughout the COVID-19 crisis, we have made a point of it to follow client requirements, including signed declarations from our operatives, which were made possible at speed.

THE UPCOMING WINTER SEASON

We are not alone in wondering how the upcoming season may be affected by COVID-19, especially as the threat of a second wave looms on the horizon. This is why we have “wargamed” sets of highly detailed operational contingency solutions, anticipating possible “what if” scenarios in the months ahead such as the imposition of further local lockdown restrictions in specific areas, or imposition of transport restrictions.

Our internal operator staffing plans also cover standbys for every single operator and route we have, to make sure that regardless of events, we always have teams of GRITIT Winter Gritting professionals available for all our clients. The measures that we have taken means that we can safely continue the crucial work of keeping Britain’s commercial, public, emergency and critical infrastructure safe and operating during the entire winter, 24/7, 365/365.”
SIGN OF THE TIMES

Mandatory by law and essential in reducing the risk of accidents, the implementation of effective safety signage is crucial to any workplace. Danny Adamson, MD at Stocksigns looks at how compliance with the latest safety requirements can ensure a safe working environment for employees.

Workplace-related accidents can be highly distressing events, particularly when serious injuries occur. While workplace fatality figures are falling, there were still 111 workers fatally injured at work in the UK between April 2019 and March 2020. Work environments come in all shapes and sizes so safety requirements will differ between locations; but to help make workplaces safer, it is crucial that companies do everything they can to promote better on-site safety.

Whether to help make a building easier to navigate or ensure first aid kits can be quickly located, effective signage has a multitude of benefits. Most notably, it serves as a constant reminder to staff about various safety protocols. One of the best ways to mitigate the risk of on-site accidents is to invest in high-quality signage. This is recommended by the Health and Safety (Signs and Signals) Regulations Act, which states that safety signage should be used where there is a significant risk to health and safety and where other methods cannot control the risk.

As such, certain signage is required by law across all businesses, regardless of size, although these may vary dependant on industry. These signs, which include smoking legislation notices, health and safety law posters and fire extinguisher signs must be displayed and clearly apparent to all on-site and must also conform to the BS ISO 7010 standard to ensure consistency. Failing to do so can lead to companies being fined, particularly if an accident were to occur.

CATEGORIES

In general, signage is normally split into five main categories:

- Prohibition signs which prohibit actions detrimental to health and safety
- Warning signs to alert onlookers to potential risk
- Mandatory signs which require actions to ensure safety
- Safe Conditions signs that indicate exit routes
- Fire safety signs to mark the location of fire equipment

If you are in any way responsible for a business or commercial property, you must display the required signage appropriate to your industry and building. Whilst clear signage is not meant to be a substitute for proper health and safety protocols, it does help companies reduce and mitigate the risk on their premises.

The use of signs featuring pictograms can be very effective, as they help to illustrate warnings in an immediate and obvious manner and are an ideal solution to help keep non-native speakers safe. For example, pictograms are commonly used on hazard signs to alert the presence of a hazardous chemical, the dangers of using it, as well as the outcomes if not used properly.

However, it is important to only specify pictogram signs that are ISO 7010 compliant as this is the technical standard which regulates the colours and symbols on hazard and safety signs and ensures messages are universal and therefore recognizable and easily understood.

A good way to ensure that signs are visible at all times is to specify photoluminescent solutions. Photoluminescent signs self-charge in ambient light, meaning that should a power failure occur or conditions mean visibility is poor, the signs will illuminate and create a clear guide to the nearest exit or fire extinguisher. As always, it is imperative to place signs in a clear, obvious area so that they are easily visible to everyone.

INCREASED REGULATION

Health and safety regulators are permitted to conduct unscheduled checks around businesses and workplaces to ensure standards are being upheld. However, in the past, many sign-related prosecutions were reactive - only occurring once an on-site accident had already happened. For many, this enforcement approach was not rigorous enough and meant that some businesses could be operating without the proper precautions until it was too late. As identified in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government’s consultation outcome document, ‘Building a safer future’, moving forward companies should expect “greater oversight by regulators and tougher enforcement when things go wrong”. As such, companies which inadequately use signage across their premises should now expect more pushback from authorities.

This change has been further compounded by the rise of COVID-19, which has necessitated the purchase of a totally new range of signs for companies to buy and install. Since the outbreak, it is now recommended by the Government that companies display signs that remind employees and visitors of the advised hygiene methods. For example, hand washing guidance, and also to remain socially distanced and wear face coverings. With so many signs to display and only limited space to do it, the use of floor vinyl is increasing – helping companies stay compliant without overwhelming employees with information.
SNICKERS’ NEW 4-WAY STRETCH TROUSERS GIVE MAXIMUM MOBILITY

These NEW slim-fit stretch trousers deliver extreme working comfort all day, every day. Hi-tech fabrics and body-mapping designs in the NEW multi-purpose ALLROUNDWork 4-Way Stretch Trousers from Snickers Workwear ensure maximum working mobility wherever you are on site. The 4-way stretch fabrics integrated into these Work Trousers deliver maximum freedom of movement for all kinds of work all year round as well as improved ventilation and overall comfort.

With great fit and superb value for money they have a slimmer tailored fit for better all-round looks and protection against snagging. Plus reinforced stretch Cordura in the certified KneeGuard System for greater flexibility, comfort and durability. They’re specially designed to take the new DJ0 ERGO Craftsman KneePad.

Check out all the Stretch Garments from Snickers Workwear – the optimal choice for craftsmen and women who need to get every job done comfortably and efficiently on site.

BRADITE FLOORS THE COMPETITION

A warehouse floor in Barnsley was transformed using Bradite’s new single pack water-based floor paint, DP9 Floor-it.

The 1200 sq metre power floated, porous concrete floor had been penetrated with oil so required preparation for painting with Bradite’s TD39 Industrial Degreaser. Diluted with warm water, the solution was used to scrub the floor. Once dry, the floor was lightly abraded to provide a key for the Bradite DP9 Floor-it coating.

“I have used TD39 previously and I trust it to do the job,” says Jay Summers, Managing Director of Bedford-based Mayfair Decorating Contractors who completed the renovation. “It was the first time for me with DP9, but I found it very user-friendly,” he adds.

Four coats of the high-performance, water-based acrylic floor paint were applied by roller by a team of two. Completing the task in two phases applied by roller by a team of two.

Once the surface was fully cured, it was again able to withstand forklift traffic.

Thanks to DP9’s quick recoat time of just 1 hour, it was possible to apply two coats in a day.

“Because the DP9 is water-based rather than epoxy resin, it is not thick and gloopy which makes it easy to apply,” says Jay. Bradite Technical Sales Manager, James Burton, re-assured him of the suitability of the product and the correct method of use.

“I can’t fault Bradite or James for the advice given,” says Jay. “I’d use it again. You’d be silly not to.”

OUR FOCUS ON FIRE SAFETY & INDOOR AIR QUALITY

All Clean (Worcester) Ltd. has over 25 years of experience in providing high quality services to the facilities management sector. Our extensive experience and knowledge gives us the confidence to perform our tasks to the highest possible standards. We specialise, but are not limited to, the maintenance of fire and smoke dampers and cleaning of ventilation systems.

Services we provide:
- Fire & Smoke Damper Inspection.
- Swab Testing for Yeast & Microbiological Organisms.
- Ductwork Cleaning.
- Kitchen Deep Cleaning.
- Kitchen Extract Cleaning.
- CAD Drawings.
- Damper Repairs.

All our technicians are CITB qualified. Fire damper inspections are carried out in accordance with BS9999. All work is carried out to BS15780, EC852/2004 and TR19 guidelines. All our sampling procedures are independently verified by South West Water, a UKAS accredited laboratory. All Clean (Worcester) Ltd. is a member of NAAD UK.

Please contact us to find out how we can help you with your needs.

SURFACE OF THE FUTURE: NEW ANTIBACTERIAL ‘SEMBLANCE’ PORCELAIN FROM LAPICIDA

Lapicida, leading specialist in floor and wall surfaces, supply new and reclaimed natural stone alongside ceramics and new-generation porcelains. From their showroom, HQ and stone workshops in Yorkshire, they work with architects, interior designers, property developers and private clients across the UK, Europe and the US.

In response to the current crisis and with a renewed focus on the future of home design, Lapicida have launched ‘Semblance’, a new range of antibacterial porcelain. Manufactured using the latest technology, an antibacterial shield has been infused into the surface, creating a permanent, protective layer that eliminates up to 99.9% of bacteria.

Practical, hygienic, and completely weather resistant, ‘Semblance’ offers the authentic look and feel of marble but with all the benefits of porcelain. Available in both tile and slab format, it is suitable for floors, walls and work surfaces, both inside and out and is ideal for both residential and commercial projects.
FTSE 250 TECH-FIRM CHOOSES ADVANCED FIRE PROTECTION FOR ITS UK HEADQUARTERS

A network of fault-tolerant MxPro 5 fire panels from Advanced, have been installed at the UK headquarters of Computacenter.

As a leading independent provider of IT infrastructure services, having robust fire protection measures in place at Computacenter’s UK logistics and distribution centre is crucial to ensuring smooth operations.

As part of a fire system upgrade and move towards a more open-style protocol, Advanced was selected as the preferred solution at Hertfordshire-based Computacenter’s headquarters which, at over 220,000 square feet, are some of Europe’s largest and most sophisticated purpose-built warehousing and operations facilities.

Advanced partner, Controlled Ltd., was responsible for the complete replacement of the fire system, including installation, configuration and commissioning of one 8-loop, one 5-loop and two 1-loop MxPro 5 panels that form the core of the site’s active fire protection. Controlled Ltd. integrated the new Advanced control panels alongside several third-party systems in the warehouse and operations building, including auto conveyors, sprinklers, gas suppression, aspirator systems and fire doors and shutters.

In order to introduce the open protocol Advanced fire system, Controlled Ltd. had to install a temporary wireless solution until they were ready to conduct a phased changeover of loops, wiring and installation of new devices. With the control and indicating equipment now in place, Computacenter have the option to install graphical mapping and front-end monitoring software to improve visibility of the status of the fire system across the site.

Jim Brown, Building Services Supervisor at Computacenter, said: “As part of an extensive overhaul of the fire alarm system in our operations centre, Controlled Ltd. installed a temporary fire alarm system to work alongside the existing alarm system which was being upgraded to Advanced. This has worked very well with little disruption as progressively each loop has come online. The fact that they have successfully undertaken this work in what is essentially a manned site twenty-four hours a day is impressive, as is their ability to offer workable solutions to problems encountered, on time and on budget.”

The MxPro 5 is the unbeatable multiprotocol fire system. Approved to EN54-2, 4 & 13, it offers four protocols, Apollo, Argus, Hochiki and Nittan and a completely open installer network that benefits from free training and technical support.

AXIL SHORTLISTED FOR NATIONAL RECYCLING AWARD

A team of total waste management experts - which works with some of the UK’s biggest brands - is in the running for a prestigious national award.

Axil Integrated Services has been shortlisted in the Partnership Excellence – Commercial category at the MRW National Recycling Awards 2020 for its work with Cummins, a global leader in the design, manufacture and supply of engines and generators.

Axil manages multiple waste streams at Cummins’ multiple sites, including Darlington and Stamford, through tailored waste management solutions, and provides support to educate Cummins’ workforce.

Axil has achieved savings for Cummins through sustainable cost reductions and improved segregation efforts. Axil’s waste process improvements saved Cummins more than 4,000 hours in manual labour. The company also achieved “Zero to Landfill” in 2013 and Axil’s contract was renewed by Cummins earlier this year for a further three years, in recognition of Axil’s dedication and hard work.

Cummins HSE officer Fraser Troup added: “We’ve been very impressed with Axil’s innovation and with the reduced environmental impact and increased savings. “What stands out most about Axil is the personal service and willingness to help us resolve issues and offer innovative solutions. It’s refreshing to work with such a responsive business.”

Axil has bases in Corby and Cannock and handles traditional and complex waste streams from 350 customer sites across the country.

“When Cummins turned to us, their costs were escalating and their service levels were stagnating. We’ve been pivotal in helping Cummins to overcome long-standing challenges to reduce their overall environmental impact, all whilst achieving savings.” Axil Managing Director Edward Pigg said: “It’s fantastic for Axil to be recognised for our work.

Axil’s work has been crucial in sustaining this. Axil Managing Director Edward Pigg said: “It’s fantastic for Axil to be recognised for our work.

Cummins Facilities Lead Andrew McDonald and Axil Operations Director Paul Crabbe at Cummins Engine Plant in Darlington
ZEHNDER GROUP UK LAUNCHES NEW GENERATION OF BESPOKE RADIANT PANELS

Zehnder Group UK, the innovative indoor climate solutions specialist, has launched the Zehnder ZFP, a new generation of radiant ceiling panels to ensure businesses and other organisations can heat and cool their buildings comfortably and efficiently, whilst achieving substantial energy savings.

The panels are suitable for a wide-range of environments requiring heating and cooling solutions – from sports halls and showrooms, to logistics facilities, fulfilment centres and factories.

Zehnder ZFP delivers a number of benefits and advantages including an optimum indoor climate all year round, whilst the panels can achieve a proportion of radiation of over 80%, meaning that the supplied energy can be transferred effectively.

In addition, the high stability of the modules means that only a few suspension points are required – significantly reducing the required installation time.

Weighing only around 14 kg/m², the Zehnder ZFP can also be used for low roof loads.

The individual elements of the Zehnder ZFP are designed as an innovative modular system that can be combined with each other according to the project requirements to create tailored project solutions. Each solution is produced to a customer’s exact requirements and supplied in line with the on-site workflow.

The individual product components can be combined to suit the needs of each project. For example, a design for a sports hall may include ball guards, raised headers, perforation and acoustic insulation, whilst a solution for a logistics hall could incorporate LED light fixtures. The food industry could choose a system that allows easy adjustment and maintenance of the desired constant temperature, plus a dust protector panel.

David Simoes, Marketing and Product Manager - RHC at Zehnder Group UK, said: “The technology within the Zehnder ZFP is orientated for the future. It can be operated with a broad range of system temperatures. That is why it can be combined with modern heat pumps with their lower flow temperatures without any problems.

“The vast experience and expertise of our team ensures we can continue to develop and design industry-leading heating and cooling solutions that are truly flexible and allow our clients to make substantial energy savings.”

EMMA SAFETY FOOTWEAR JUST GOT SAFER FOR YOU & THE ENVIRONMENT

Next Generation Safety that takes your wellbeing and the environment as seriously as you do!

Now part of the Hultafors Group’s PPE portfolio, EMMA Safety Footwear is a fully EU accredited range of excellent values shoes and boots that satisfy a wide range of user needs and workplaces - including light and heavy industry sectors plus office and retail environments.

Complementing the Solid Gear and Toe Guard range, EMMA safety footwear includes all the Hultafors Group hallmarks of hi-tech designs that combine top quality materials for ultimate comfort, maximum safety and wellbeing at work.

What’s more, if sustainability is a priority for you and your company, every product in the EMMA range is made entirely from recycled or recyclable materials. It’s a 100% ‘circular’ manufacturing, usage and recycling process for every shoe and boot produced under the EMMA brand.

So, to make a positive footprint in your workplace, if your ordinary safety footwear just isn’t up to the job, you can be sure there’s an EMMA product that is.

View the catalogue here: https://bit.ly/2YJYY0p

SOPHISTICATED AND SMART SHOWERING SOLUTIONS

Concealed behind the slim, flush mounted shower control is the advanced technology of the CONTI+ Congenial Fit designed specifically for the demands of public and semi-public washrooms.

The water flow from the thermostatic shower controls is started electronically, either by means of a piezo pushbutton or IR sensor with touch-free operation and can be powered either by battery or mains supply. Available in both stainless steel and chrome finish, users can also specify round, square or oval shape for a cohesive design finish.

Electronic shower controls can be tailored to the specific sanitary facility, with especially advanced options available through integration into the CONTI+ CNX water management system. Water and energy consumption can be sustainably reduced, while operational reliability and drinking water quality are improved. Maintenance can be easily scheduled for a regular sanitary rinse or thermal disinfection of individual showers or rooms so they can be centrally controlled, monitored and documented.

Find out more: https://bit.ly/30qptIa
https://conti.plus/en/cat104/concealed-shower-faucets

TO ADVERTISE IN MONTH IN FM PLEASE CONTACT

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ARE YOU EQUIPPED FOR FLEXIBLE WORKING?

If the past few months have shown us anything, it’s that flexible working from home is possible (albeit with a few technical failures to keep us entertained!).

Whilst many had set up temporary desk spaces when lockdown started, are you planning to encourage home-working as part of employee future working practices?

Invest in products to ensure permanent home working spaces are properly equipped with DURABLE’S remote and flexible working range.

OFFICE ERGONOMICS

Home offices come in many different shapes and sizes. DURABLE offer solutions for efficient and ergonomic workstations to ensure your staff are set up for home-working efficiently.

Monitor mounts and desk accessories such as wrist supports can help avoid a painful neck and back and even wrist stain, preventing costly long-term health problems. These make a positive difference quickly and are a smart investment for a much larger gain.

CLEAN DESK

It takes more than a laptop to make a home office. Desk accessories and multi-functional products maximise desktop space, which in turn helps to boost productivity and maintain mental clarity.

The VARICOLOR MIX drawer box brings colour-coded organisation and structured storage to any workplace along with its modern feel. There are countless cables that come with PCs, laptops, tablets and mobile phone chargers. DURABLE’s award winning CAVOLINE cable management range tames and hides the cable spaghetti with clips and the fire-retardant box. Tablets are a great option for highly flexible workspace settings. DURABLE have developed a premium Tablet Holder Range, a functional tool for staff in changing environments.

BIOHYGIENE DESIGN AND MANUFACTURE EFFECTIVE, ALCOHOL FREE FOAM HAND SANITISER

Biotech innovators BioHygiene have once again bucked the trend and manufactured an accredited foam hand sanitiser that contains no alcohol or quats – taking the high ground in a rapidly expanding market that is saturated with harmful, unsustainable ingredients and rogue products.

Manufactured in the UK, the sanitiser boasts an impressive cleaning profile. Killing 99.999% of common germs, it is highly effective against viruses and bacteria, clings to hands easily due to the foam, and offers residual protection – unlike alcohol-based alternatives.

True to the company’s principles of environmental responsibility, the product is derived from natural and sustainable technology, whilst being 100% biodegradable and safer for the user than traditional hand sanitisers.

“There is a common misconception that a hand sanitiser must be alcohol-based for it to be effective, this is simply not true – there are other options available,” said Dr Carolyn Jones, Technical Director at BioHygiene.

“As many individuals will have experienced during the last few months, prolonged use of alcohol-based products can lead to dry and cracked skin, whereas our lactic acid-based sanitiser uses beauty industry technology to leave hands feeling soft and hydrated.

“Furthermore, we are beginning to see regular stories in the news of the perils of alcohol-based hand sanitisers, with high flammability being the cause of some particularly disturbing instances. The unprecedented demand has also led manufacturers of traditional hand sanitisers to see a shortage of raw materials, including gel thickeners. This has resulted in many non-viscous products which do not cling effectively and quickly run off the hands,” said Dr Jones.

BioHygiene is a Cardiff-based manufacturer with a strong environmental ethos. Using naturally derived, responsible ingredients, its full product range – including its All-Purpose and hand sanitisers – have seen unprecedented demand during the Coronavirus Pandemic.

https://www.biohygiene.co.uk
P4’s Emergency Lighting System Achieves IoT Enhanced Level BSI Kitemark

P4, the UK’s largest independent self-testing emergency lighting specialist, has again been breaking new ground by becoming the first to be awarded an enhanced level BSI kitemark for lighting.

Certification to the BSI Mark of Trust Kitemark for IoT Devices was achieved in March this year for their Fastel systems M-Web Controller Ecosystem following rigorous testing by BSI’s highly skilled team at its state-of-the-art IoT laboratory.

The kitemark for IoT (internet of Things) devices is designed to address the potential for cyber threats to all internet-enabled products. In the modern world, any connected device has the potential to be exploited by hackers as a way to access personal data and to disrupt or divert services.

Reduction of this operational risk is a key concern for any business, but particularly public sector bodies such as NHS hospital trusts and universities.

Alan Daniels, Technical Director at P4 explains why this certification is so significant for their customers: “We work with many institutions responsible for large amounts of personal data and critical services. By choosing our emergency lighting system, customers can be sure that they’re getting a system which is not only reliable in terms of guiding people to safety in an emergency, but is also secure in terms of reducing their vulnerability to attack and keeping their data safe.”

P4 has made a commitment to ensure their systems provide the most secure emergency lighting on the market. Kitemark certification involves ongoing regular testing of the systems to ensure they continue to meet the requirements. Alan continues: “For us, the kitemark is really important because it offers certainty to customers from a respected third party that our system is secure and their data will be safe – they don’t just have to take our word for it!”

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the team at P4 has been unable to receive their award in person. Instead, an online presentation took place on Thursday 23rd July as the team from BSI officially awarded the certification.

This is the second kitemark that P4 have been awarded, after achieving their first kitemark in November 2019 for self-testing emergency lighting systems.

P4fastel.co.uk

It’s All Under Control Thanks to Forbo

The newly created “Under Control” collection from Forbo Flooring Systems provides specifiers with a diverse array of flooring products to help control static discharge in sensitive areas of a building. The collection features its popular Colorex tile range, refreshed to include two new products, and Sphera SD/EC, a technically advanced homogeneous conductive sheet vinyl range.

Completely new to the market, Sphera SD/EC has been designed to ease installation in critical areas thanks to the special conductive backing, which is applied directly to the sheet material, allowing the charges to flow away horizontally within the flooring. As a result, only the copper earthing strip needs to be adhered with a conductive adhesive, while the rest of the Sphera material can be applied with a regular adhesive, reducing the risk of adhesion failure and saving up to one third on adhesive costs.

The copper earthing strip needs to be adhered with a conductive adhesive, while the rest of the Sphera material can be applied with a regular adhesive, reducing the risk of adhesion failure and saving up to one third on adhesive costs. Also sitting in the newly formed Under Control collection is the existing Colorex Tile range featuring new options. Alongside newly refreshed colour palettes for the Colorex SD and EC ranges, the new Colorex Glow is a permanently conductive solution that provides a phosphorescent glow for up to four hours after exposure to a light source. This means it is an ideal solution for floor safety signage, and to guide occupiers to exits, in case of a power cut.

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purell: proven efficacy against coronavirus

Skin health and surface hygiene expert, GOJO Industries-Europe, is proud that the PURELL Advanced Hand Sanitising Gel and PURELL Surface Sanitising Spray and Wipes have been tested and proven to be effective against Coronavirus. In June 2020, all three products were tested against Coronavirus BCoV (bovine coronavirus, a substitute for human coronavirus) and proven to be effective against Coronavirus. In June 2020, all three products were tested against Coronavirus BCoV (bovine coronavirus, a substitute for human coronavirus) and passed European Norm EN 14476+ A2 in a contact time of 30 seconds.

PURELL Surface Sanitising Spray and Wipes are no-rinse products that are fast acting, highly effective and specifically designed to meet surface sanitising needs, whilst PURELL Hygienic Hand Rub is an effective hand sanitiser, clinically proven to maintain skin health.

Even though PURELL products had already passed the EN norm for enveloped viruses (which assumes efficacy), GOJO decided to test it against Coronavirus specifically. This is just one way that GOJO goes above and beyond to support its customers, making sure products are safe, effective, and pleasant to use.

GOJO has developed a range of tools to help businesses understand what products they need and where they should be positioned, including posters, product placement guides, and what to look for in a hand sanitiser. Assets are available for food-based industries, education, manufacturing/warehouses, and offices and can be downloaded for free from http://www2.gojo.com/ReturnToWork.html or direct from GOJO distributors.

www.GOJO.com
infouk@GOJO.com
www.forbo-flooring.co.uk/undercontrol
www.purell.co.uk
STERILOC URGES ORGANISATIONS TO TAKE BIOSECURITY AND THE WELL-BEING OF ITS EMPLOYEES SERIOUSLY

Steriloc is offering a range of robust hand sanitisation systems for organisations committed to effective hygiene management and safety of its employees, visitors and customers.

Co-founder Mark Frost commented: “Too many major companies locate rudimentary sanitiser pumps at their building entrances and are not enforcing their use. Our experience tells us that mandatory hand sanitisation is crucial to mitigating the spread of viruses. All our units have the capability for integration with standard door entry systems.”

Steriloc hand sanitisation systems are manufactured in the UK by iGrowing Ltd and have been used successfully in the horticulture industry for nearly a decade to prevent the spread of viruses in plant glasshouses. Studies in these environments have identified that mandatory hand cleansing, where sanitisation is crucial to mitigating the spread of viruses. All our units have the capability for integration with standard door entry systems.”

Steriloc units are linked to door access systems, can reduce annual absenteeism due to illness from 2.2% to 0.55%. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, these units can offer significant biosecurity benefits to the wider world.

Its range of hand-cleansing units all provide rapid, thorough cleansing to both sides of the hands from four powerful dispensing jets. There are wall mounted and free-standing options, all with generous sanitiser capacities and can dispense up to 35 users per minute, at a cost of less than 1p per dispense. The ‘Steriloc Sentinel’ and ‘Sentry’ units have additional features, including Wi-Fi enablement for monitoring usage and sanitiser levels, while the ‘Steriloc Shield’ offers a more streamlined, lower cost option.

Every unit provides highly precise dosing that reduces wasted sanitiser and eliminates the need for paper towels or plastic bottle waste. They are built in the UK to be highly reliable and, in testing, have delivered over 1 million maintenance free dispenses. These super-secure systems are engineered to prevent vandalism and sanitiser theft and can be custom wrapped with a client’s own branding.

https://steriloc.com  sales@steriloc.com  https://youtu.be/a-h7QJIZRvg

CONDAIR APPOINTS NEW SERVICE ENGINEER IN SCOTLAND

Humidification specialist, Condair, has appointed Adam Norton as a humidifier service engineer based out of Edinburgh. Having a service engineer located in Scotland strengthens Condair’s strategic presence in the region and allows the company to provide a more efficient response time to its Scottish customers.

Adam joins Condair from the Royal Navy, where he spent five years as a Leading Engineer Technician and, among other things, qualified as a Nuclear Reactor Operator.

Tony Tullett, Service Manager at Condair, comments, “We are very happy to welcome Adam to the Condair service team. We are very proud to be expanding, even further, the UK’s largest specialist humidifier engineering department. Now with 18 service engineers spread across the UK, Condair is perfectly placed to support our clients wherever they may be, and deliver the manufacturer’s expertise directly on-site.”

The Condair Group is the world’s leading specialist in humidification and evaporative cooling, with energy efficient, hygienic and innovative technologies for commercial, industrial and heritage applications. Condair is represented in the UK by Condair plc, which offers system design, manufacture, supply, installation, commissioning, maintenance and spares.

www.condair.co.uk

REGENERATE RECYCLING IN OFFICES

During these challenging times, our nations commitment to recycling has continued. With people returning to work, it is important that businesses provide recycling bins to keep up the great work that has been done whilst at home. Leafield Environmental, a UK designer and manufacturer of recycling bins have a large portfolio of stylish and high-quality products that can be added with an optional antimicrobial additive.

Leafield’s best-selling Mendian multi-waste recycling bin collects and segregates multiple waste materials at source. Its innovative design allows the lids to be changed for different recycling requirements. It is available as a 100% open lid, 70/30% split or 30/40/30% split. Available in two sizes, a 110-litre unit or 87-litre unit.

The NEW EnviroGo bin range has been designed to collect up to 90 litres of waste from its open aperture. Its front moulded handle and non-marking wheels for easy manoeuvre makes it a flexible unit for cleaning teams. Standard units include WRAP compliant colour coded lid apertures, labels and signage kit.

All of Leafield’s recycling bins can be manufactured with an antimicrobial protection to inhibit the growth of microbes by up to 99.9%. The Biomaster antimicrobial additive is added during Leafield’s manufacturing process and is dispersed throughout the entire bin.

www.leafieldrecycle.com  01225 816541
recycle@leafieldenv.com
MILLIKEN & COMPANY PUBLISHES SECOND ANNUAL CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

Global manufacturer lays groundwork to achieve company goals for a more sustainable world. Diversified global manufacturer Milliken & Company includes progress across its global flooring, textile, specialty chemical and healthcare divisions, gives insight into Milliken’s environmental and social commitments by 2025.

“Milliken is meeting the demands of a rapidly changing world,” said Halsey M. Cook, President and CEO of Milliken & Company. “We’re driving progress for sustainability, inclusivity, zero waste, safety and more for the betterment of the planet and our company.”

Using a comprehensive goal scorecard, the 2019 report shares Milliken’s first year of progress towards the company’s 2025 sustainability goals. First introduced in the 2018 report, these goals encompass planet, products and people, and range from zero waste to landfill to fostering an inclusive community that embraces authenticity in the workplace.

Report highlights:
- A commitment to analyse all new products applying Life Cycle Analysis (Milliken Flooring has conducted LCAs for nearly all flooring products)
- In 2019 Milliken joined the UN Global Compact, the largest global sustainability effort
- Milliken named one of the world’s most ethical companies by the Ethisphere Institute for the 14th consecutive year

Milliken’s global carpet tiles are certified Cradle to Cradle Silver. Reduced water usage by 4,000,000 gallons per year, assessed by 5 sustainability categories all the company’s operations, and convene thought leaders in a broader dialogue for sustainability solutions.

View the complete report here: www.milliken.com/Sustainability_report

www.millikencarpet.com

THE BEST HANDWASHING POSSIBLE? (WITH THE LEAST WATER)

Methven have announced a range of Waterblade Compatible Washroom taps in their new 2020 ‘One Book’. Just look out for the Waterblade Compatible icon. An exceptionally powerful combination for the best low flow handwashing that is possible.

Waterblade gives great handwashing at just 2.4 Litres per minute.
Nothing else gives such great handwashing at such low flow.

The Methven 2020 One Book features a full range of Stylish Waterblade compatible Washroom manual, sensor and push type taps that are WRAS approved and come with a 12 year guarantee.

Methven and Deva taps are widely available, see their website for details.

Methven/Catalogue download: https://www.deva-uk.com/pages/downloads

KEE SAFETY INTRODUCES SCOTLAND’S LARGEST FALL PROTECTION COMPANY

Kee Safety, a leading global supplier of fall protection solutions and safety railing systems, has announced an exciting new venture that sees four of its Scottish-based businesses merge into one premier fall protection company. This development will allow the company to create new employment opportunities, invest in new technologies and deliver a more efficient and effective operation.

As of Tuesday 1st September, the four businesses – Roof Edge Fabrications, The Roof Anchor Company, W.H. Maintenance and APS Safety Systems – will have access to a larger product range, including fall protection systems, guardrails, walkway solutions and fixed access products.

“We are very excited about this merger,” comments Brian McLean, General Manager of APS Safety Systems. “Built on 10 years of success, APS Safety Systems’ reputation is based on quality and safety. This, combined with the ‘Separate People from Hazards’ philosophy that all Kee Safety companies abide by, makes us confident that this new structure will benefit existing and new employees, clients, and our supply chain and will allow us to continue our sales growth across Scotland.”

Part of the Kee Safety Group, APS Safety Systems specialises in the design, installation and maintenance of fall protection and access systems.

www.apssaftysystems.com
J S WRIGHT PROMOTES PENDLETON TO ASSOCIATE CONTRACTS DIRECTOR

Mechanical and electrical building services provider J S Wright has promoted Richard Pendleton to the position of Associate Contracts Director. The promotion follows the continued expansion of the 130-year-old Birmingham-based company which now operates across the UK as a £55 million business with more than 100 employees. Based at J S Wright’s central London office, Pendleton was previously Senior Electrical Project Manager responsible for overseeing major contracts for the residential Silk District in Whitechapel, the Arena Central mixed-use scheme in Birmingham, and a new student accommodation building in Exeter. Reporting directly to National Electrical Contracts Director Paul Featherston, Pendleton will help deliver all solus electrical contracts and the electrical element of combined M&E contracts working alongside Birmingham-based Associate Mechanical Contracts Director Matt Coy. With more than 15 years’ experience in electrical project management, the former apprentice rose to Electrical Technical Officer with a rail infrastructure provider, and went on to work as Contracts Director to M&E contractors across London and the South East, before joining J S Wright in 2019.

WATES ANNOUNCES NEW MD FOR SMARTSPACE DIVISION

Scott Camp has been named as the new Managing Director of Wates Group’s £145 million specialist fit-out and refurbishment division, Wates Smartspace. Camp, will take up his new role from 1 September 2020. The announcement forms part of a series of changes at the Wates Group, as it restructures its operations to focus on the opportunities that lie ahead in its key markets. The restructure saw former Smartspace MD, Helen Bunch, take over the leadership of the Group’s successful Residential business and saw Smartspace become part of the Wates Property Services (WPS) business. Camp joined Wates in 2002 as a project surveyor, having spent the previous six years at the specialist shop-fitting contractor, Plaza Interiors. Since joining Wates, he has held a number of positions within the business. In his most recent role as Smartspace’s Commercial Director, he led a national team of 65 surveyors with great success.

NEW HEAD OF HR AT PHS GROUP TO LEAD ITS PEOPLE AGENDA

Hygiene services provider phs Group has appointed a new Head of Human Resources. Mike Winstone joins phs as Group HR Director and will champion the firm’s people agenda. His permanent role with phs follows an eight-month stint as Contract Director, leading the delivery of phs’ contract with the Department for Education, supplying every school and college in England with free period products. Winstone has more than 20 years’ experience in HR director roles for a range of high profile organisations, most recently for vacant property specialist VPS Group and, prior to that, for the Theo Paphitis Retail Group, HomeServe plc and Virgin Media. He said: “If you want to provide the best customer service in any business then you have to hire the right people, train them really well and look after them. Having spent time in phs, I know we have a strong culture and a lot of great people doing a great job.”

SITE SUPERVISOR (ELECTRICAL) | PERMANENT

**WEST LONDON | £36K - £39K + EX BENS**

Working with Gov Facility Services Ltd, a Site Supervisor with an electrical bias is required at HMP Wormwood Scrubs. GFSL is a Ministry of Justice owned company providing facility maintenance services to 48 prisons in England.

For more vacancies or information, please visit buildrec.com/gfsl or contact Ruby on ruby.skinner@buildrec.com | 07944267226

Build Recruitment have been retained to handle all applications for this role. Please contact the team on 0203 176 4790 or GFSL@buildrec.com

SITE SUPERVISOR (MECHANICAL) | PERMANENT

**WEST LONDON | £36K - £39K + EX BENS**

Working with Gov Facility Services Ltd, a Site Supervisor with a mechanical bias is required at HMP Wormwood Scrubs. GFSL is a Ministry of Justice owned company providing facility maintenance services to 48 prisons in England.

For more vacancies or information, please visit buildrec.com/gfsl or contact Charlotte on charlotte.stagg@buildrec.com | 07944267250

Build Recruitment have been retained to handle all applications for this role. Please contact the team on 0203 176 4790 or GFSL@buildrec.com

www.buildrec.com
Leadership Race

To help promote race and equality, the FM sector needs to take a proactive approach to developing BAME workers for senior roles, says Matt Chapman, Atalian Servest’s Chief Marketing & Development Officer (UK & Ireland).

It is beyond cliché to state that 2020 so far has been a tremendous challenge for all; a year of global change, social readjustment and economic upheaval. Now, as schools tentatively reopen and workplaces align to the ‘new normal’, sustainable actions underpinned by a strong vision are naturally key. For both me and Atalian Servest however, this year has not just enforced a strong message of physical safety and hygiene but one of diversity, equality and opportunity. Now is the time for actions as well as words, even if that brings potentially uncomfortable conversations.

We talk a lot in FM about the financial and tangible benefits of ‘promoting from within’, so how do we ensure that the diversity evident in the entry level roles within our industry is carried through and developed into senior leadership positions?

This is not really a piece on “Black Lives Matters” but more the actual pressing matters that have developed into senior leadership positions?

As a result, we have asked ourselves several times this year: do we truly want our business to identify improvements to progress in the UK from cleaning a high street mine from West Africa, a friend who arrived to the UK could all be too late. I think of a close black friend of mine from West Africa, a friend who arrived to the UK and solutions going forwards.

By embracing diversity and opportunity some 80 years ago paid eternal dividends. Contrary to this, the lack of cultural and religious diversity in the 1990’s CIA teams is deemed to be one of the key reasons there was a failure to spot trends, that others may have seen, leading to the atrocities seen at 9/11.

We need to cohesively stand together in this ground-breaking industry for this to work. We need to literally join together and practice what we preach. I feel we will as part of a sustained journey, not a token, ‘of-the-moment’ reaction. Sadly, for many this could all be too late. I think of a close black friend of mine from West Africa, a friend who arrived to the UK as a graduate with a first-class honours degree and fluent in English, a friend who took almost 15 years to progress in the UK from cleaning a high street chain store to being a manager. His challenges now flow into my company’s challenges to find answers and solutions going forwards.

Atalian Servest are leading from the front with our Board members, myself and our Legal Director, Laura Ryan, as the company’s two assigned ‘executive sponsors’ for our Race, Ethnicity and Faith network. We are united and ready. I’m not advocating any kind of overreach, imbalance or preferential treatment for anyone, we’ll be actively pointing out that here and now, there is no hiding place on race.

Beyond our promises, our recharged modern-day approach has an actual acid test, an exciting system in place. The gauntlet is down. We are now committed to capturing baseline ethnicity data as a culture that mentors, closes the ethnicity pay gap and eradicates all harassment and bullying. Beyond this, we are committing to increasingly strategic engagement initiatives and recruitment processes. Goals will be met (BAME representation in at least 10 per cent of our senior positions by 2023, for example) and progress published. Is this in line with the 18 per cent who identified as non-White British in the 2011 UK Census? No, but it is a positive step forward. Crucially, however, this can only be done with a united work force, one that embodies and models all of the charter’s rhetoric. Six decades on from the dream of Martin Luther King, it is time to step up and stand out.

WHAT YOU CAN DO NEXT…

- All companies can commit and sign the Race at Work Charter by going to www.bitc.org.uk/race/
- Appoint an Executive Sponsor for race
- Capture ethnicity data and publicise progress
- Commit at board level to zero tolerance of harassment and bullying
- Make clear that supporting equality in the workplace is the responsibility of all leaders and managers
- Take action that supports ethnic minority career progression
ADAPT AND LEARN

FM careers - training

FMs experiencing career upheaval due to the COVID crisis, need to hone their skills and knowledge to ensure they’re ready for the next challenge, says Beth Goodyear of FMHS Consulting.

The workplace is changing, and we need to adapt. For some of our FM colleagues, the changes brought by COVID-19 mean redundancy or lack of job security in a challenging job market saturated with talent. Even for those lucky to have retained their roles, it is still a very challenging time with an uncertain future. It is therefore essential that we all recognise that standing still when everything around us is changing comes with risks and we need to consider how we can improve our knowledge and skills to make sure we don’t get left behind.

The problem is finding the time. So many FMs are already working flat-out and finding time for personal development might not feel like a priority. Another challenge is cost. We know that in times of financial crisis, learning and development take a backseat to just about everything else. So, what can we do to keep our knowledge and skills future-proofed and make sure we don’t get left behind?

Firstly, we need to acknowledge that learning and development is important and that not moving forwards is akin to going backwards. Secondly, we need to stop ‘reinventing the wheel’ and use the huge amount of free learning and development resources available on the internet. Thirdly, we need to schedule time for training into our diaries. Otherwise it won’t happen.

As an FM Trainer and Consultant, I regularly get asked, ‘What should I know to progress in my FM career? What’s the best course to go on?’ My answer is usually ‘it depends!’ There are so many required skills to learn, it really does depend on what you know already, the role you are currently in and where you want to go, but in general, these are some of the key tips I share.

**TRAINING TIPS**

**Tip 1.** Complete a skills gap analysis to help identify what you need to know. The best way to do this is by using the free tool developed by IWFM called the ‘Professional Standards.’ Their free to download handbook ‘define the competences necessary to be an accomplished workplace and/or facilities management practitioner at every career stage’. They cover everything from finance and technology to business continuity and compliance and are a very useful resource.

**Tip 2.** If you need a formal qualification in FM or H&S for example, now is a great time to consider it, because virtual or online training is being offered at a fraction of the usual face-to-face training cost. Also, and I may regret suggesting this, be cheeky and ask the training companies for discounts, particularly if you have been made redundant. I have given away free places on all the public training courses I’ve run since March and I’m sure others have done the same.

**Tip 3.** Learn for free in less than 30 minutes. YouTube is a brilliant starting point. Whether you are looking for a specific topic, e.g. ‘how to flush little used outlet’ as part of your legionella programme or want to learn more about an important subject like mental health there will be a range of useful videos. I recently launched the ‘FMHS Consulting’ YouTube channel which features two useful playlists for learning, the popular ‘FM Expert’ series with over 50 interviews with FM industry leaders sharing their top tips and the ‘FM Recommended Watchlist’ which features videos I recommend on my training courses.

**Tip 4.** Free e-learning courses. There are literally thousands of free e-learning courses on such a wide range of subjects useful to FMs including project management, accounting, IT, business and management skills and mental health. To save hours of searching for relevant websites go to the myworldofwork.co.uk website, click on the ‘learn and train’ tab and ‘free online courses’ where on one page they have links to all the main websites offering free courses.

**Tip 5.** You might need to relearn what you think you already know. Do you really understand the financial model or budget you are working to in detail? Have you read your supplier contracts and property leases enough to be confident you really know the content? Are your service specifications being adhered to fully or are you paying for services that aren’t being delivered? It takes dedicated time but check the details and look up anything you don’t understand. Without exception, everyone I know who has done this has discovered new information and improved their management of the service area or function.

**Tip 6.** Rethink how you communicate. In an increasingly automated workplace, it is recognised that interpersonal skills are what make us stand out. In a PwC publication titled ‘Workplace of the Future’, 52 per cent of CEOs said finding the skills they need; problem-solving, adaptability, collaboration, leadership, creativity and innovation, has become the biggest threat to their business. With so much more of our communication now happening via video calls and telephone, we need to recognise that our communication skills may need to adjust to suit these changes.

Finally, for those FM colleagues who through no fault of their own find themselves looking for new opportunities, remember, employers don’t expect you to know everything, but being able to demonstrate that you’ve been proactive in learning new things will make you stand out for all the right reasons.
How did you progress through the profession to your current role?

I started working on FM almost by coincidence, moving out from a previous role of an MD Executive Assistant. I am now a professional with 20 years’ experience and still have a lot of appetite for learning and improving. A relevant experience abroad, the last six years with my current employer have been crucial for my career development and for my personal growth and professional maturity.

What has changed about your job role since the COVID-19 crisis? E.g. home working, furloughed, redeployed?

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on individuals and organisations and the current affect we are experiencing in the way we are managing our FM teams is unprecedented. Many employees within my team allocated on Client Site are mainly working remotely and some not deemed critical have been placed on furlough. Given the period of uncertainty our Clients are facing and the fast changes in their requests and needs, JLL has already begun to significantly adapt its workforce to satisfactorily respond to this new scenario. These initiatives have had a relevant impact on our Client management strategy, as well as on the structure and the size of our headcount allocated on the Account, in order to fit the need to demonstrate savings and a clever use of budget.

What have you found most challenging about your job in FM since the lockdown?

During the lockdown we all have experienced a huge work-from-home experiment that has brought some unexpected challenges. This has required us to reassess priorities to deal with the pressure of the new remote-working mode that sometimes clashes with the home environment, especially if young children are quarantined at home. Through this we have learnt to communicate better than we have ever had, and in different ways. We have tried to keep our teams involved creatively by looking at new ways to do things, taking advantage of technology and finding new approaches to collaboration and sharing.

What qualities do you think are most needed for a successful career in FM?

FM, especially if outsourced, is a people-based profession where every decision we make is focused on how we can better answer our customer’s needs. In such a dynamic role where no two days are alike, some interpersonal traits are important to succeed in this role. Being a flexible/adaptable and proactive forward thinker is crucial to understand the needs of our team and immediately addressing issues and concerns. Emergency responsiveness is essential; keeping calm when facing adversity, developing a good crisis recovery plan and involving the entire team are the key to success. Within FM, our team is often the driving factor behind our success, being able to empower all the team members and letting their talents emerge is a good approach to strengthen the team performance, always making sure team members are happy and productive at work. For this, our ability to communicate is crucial, being able to inspire and engage our colleagues. Last but not least, the ability of cross-networking across the entire JLL structure, even outside our Client’s perimeter, is fundamental. Sourcing, IT, Finance, HR, are part of our team and building solid relationships with the overall FM team is essential to improve delivery to our client.

What is your organisation doing to ensure the safe return of staff to the workplace?

Both JLL and my Client have re-opened offices in most countries in EMEA, with the rest to follow in the next few weeks. There is a strong focus on getting back to business, helping our clients through common challenges and uncertainty, preparing them for a safe gradual re-entry by creating and executing a plan that fits their needs and keeping the safety and security of our people, buildings and spaces always as our main priority. We are working hard to improve the health and wellness of our employees and visitors, ensuring our buildings are safe, ready and compliant to the new EHS protocols. We have created new effective guidelines and adjustments to our space that are continuously monitored to drive adherence to local regulation and business needs. We have adjusted our space’s capacity, seating plan and layout based on social distancing guidelines and improved signage to clearly show new one-way circulation patterns and provide instructions for critical areas: in elevator lobbies and restrooms, for example. To let our employees and visitors feel safe and supported upon re-entry, in accordance with our Client requirements we have delivered a re-entry welcome back kit comprising post pandemic essentials like hand sanitisers, disinfecting wipes and masks.

Do you believe the pandemic has highlighted the important role of the FM sector and the part its people play in keeping workers safe and buildings clean and maintained?

The role of FM has been crucial in dealing with COVID-19, taking charge of the pandemic response plan and becoming the designated source for information. In our site we have been involved in the Crisis Committee Team, together with HR and EHS, which were overseeing all the preparedness and response tactics. It has been critical that all parties understood their roles and responsibilities. In addition, being in charge of the building maintenance is a crucial FM responsibility, to take action by implementing the right prevention and containment strategies in the workplace.

What advice would you give to someone coming into the profession now?

The FM role has significantly changed across the decades and now it is more strategic than ever. Typically FM activities are managed “behind the scenes” and no one thinks about FM until something goes wrong. There are so many areas of responsibility and so many competencies required, from communication to finance and business, from project management and quality control to HR and strategy, from operations and maintenance to technology that makes this role very dynamic and challenging for someone coming into the profession. My recommendation would be to build a solid background in hard services but keep eyes and mind open in trying to develop all the cross skills that are fundamental to succeed in this role.

What do you predict could be the main changes to the FM sector due to the impact of the pandemic?

It is clear now that the coronavirus pandemic will forever change our approach to work. In the future, we will be probably working from home more often than before, spending less time in the office. This is an enormous professional but mainly cultural change to the FM strategy. It will require the readjustment of agile workspace strategies, significantly reducing the size of offices, decreasing the number of workstations and may also result in the lowering real estate costs.

Would you, or someone you know, like to be featured in our career ladder column? If you’re an operational FM with more than 10 years’ experience in the sector, then email sara.bean@kpmmedia.co.uk
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