

Covid-19 updates from the BIAZA Office

BIAZA Office staff are working from home until further notice. If you need to contact a member of staff, please do so via their email address (which you can find here: <https://biaza.org.uk/biaza-office>) or via admin@biaza.org.uk. If you have an urgent concern you can contact Nicky (07593580591)

COVID-19 Member Update – 10/05/21

Dear Members,

There are a number of significant updates, in particular with relation to our members in England.

Animal Welfare Strategy

This week we are expecting significant announcements from the Government regarding animal welfare and, to a lesser extent, conservation. Today BIAZA met with Lord Goldsmith, the zoos minister, and many other leading animal welfare organisations to discuss the new strategy. Over the weekend, [Born Free and a coalition of 50 organisations published their own thoughts on what the strategy should look like which can be read here](#). Some of the Government's [plans to recognise animal sentience have also been trailed in the media](#).

BIAZA has fed into the announcements on a number of specific points and we will endeavour to share our thoughts with you when we are able to.

17 May confirmed for indoor areas in England

In welcome news, the [UK Government has confirmed that from the 17 of May indoor visitor attractions can open](#) including aquariums, tropical houses and indoor areas within zoos and safari parks. BIAZA would like to remind members of its [guidance for operating during the pandemic](#). We are also hoping to support reopening with a coordinated social media push on 14 May, get in touch for more details.

Tickets are now on sale for the 2021 BIAZA virtual conference.

Tickets for our BIAZA Annual Conference 2021 are now LIVE! The conference, themed around 'renewed relevance' will be an important opportunity to discuss the present and future shape of zoos and aquariums. Tickets are open to all, priced at £10 for staff at BIAZA members and £15 for non-members. They can be purchased here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/.../biaza-annual-conference...>

Full agenda and information can be found here: <https://biaza.org.uk/events/detail/biaza-annual-conference>

For queries, please email admin@biaza.org.uk - we can't wait to 'see' you there!

COVID-19 Member Update – 07/04/21

Dear all,

We have received new guidance from Defra that answers some of the questions about the [guidance](#) on maintaining records to support Test and Trace.

The guidance asks that to support NHS Test and Trace you ask every visitor over the age of 16 (not just the lead member of the group) to provide their name and contact details or scan the [NHS QR](#)

[code](#) using their NHS COVID-19 app. Keep these records for 21 days and provide data to NHS Test and Trace if requested.

Zoos and aquariums are not explicitly mentioned, and Defra have confirmed that **there is currently no legal requirement for zoos and aquariums to keep these records**. However, they are constantly reviewing the scope of the regulations and it may be that zoos and aquariums are brought into scope in the future. You may, therefore, wish to voluntarily keep these records to assist in contact tracing and in case it does become a requirement in the future.

Only hospitality venues have a legal duty to deny entry to those who refuse to provide their contact details. We are still seeking clarification if this includes restaurants/cafes/bars within attractions. Other venues in scope have a legal obligation to ask for these details, but the customer does not have to provide them if they do not wish to do so. **This means that currently zoos and aquariums do not have to deny entry to visitors who refuse to provide contact details, however, this may change in future.** Any errors in the data are the responsibility of the person providing it, not the venue.

In other news, the government has published a [summary of Spring 2021 roadmap reviews](#) including Covid-status certification, global travel, events research and social distancing.

COVID-19 Member Update – 31/03/21

Dear Members,

Following a Cabinet meeting, the **Irish** Government has announced several important dates in the easing of lockdown restrictions. These include:

- 12 April will see a relaxation of travel restrictions to enable travel within own county or within 20km, return to full in-school teaching, and mixing of two households outdoors in public outdoor spaces.
- **From 26 April outdoor visitor attractions including zoos can reopen. Amusement parks are not permitted to reopen.**
- On the 4 May the reopening of museums, galleries and libraries will be considered. All of these dates are subject to the conditions of the pandemic. (*Note: we would expect that this would include indoor areas of zoos and aquariums but will seek clarity here*)

[In England new visitor economy guidance has been published](#). Despite assurances from Government departments this still contains no explicit clarity regarding test and trace within zoos and aquariums.

We will continue to keep you informed as we receive further updates but please don't hesitate to contact us with specific queries and we will do all we can to help.

Covid-19 Member Update – 29/03/21

Dear Members,

Today there are a number of key operational updates members in England must be aware of ahead of reopening. To help your organisation we have put together a step to reopening guidance document, [available here](#).

There is a new requirement for venues to collect the name and contact details of **all visitors over the age of 16** to support NHS Test and Trace. This is a significant change from previous policy which

required venues to collect the details of one member of each group. We have confirmation from Defra that this applies to zoos and aquariums despite not explicitly being listed. You must ask every visitor over the age of 16 to provide their name and contact details or scan the NHS QR code using their NHS COVID-19 app. You must keep these records for 21 days and provide data to NHS Test and Trace if requested.

Clearly this will require significant changes in admissions processes ahead of reopening.

We have new clarity issued by DCMS on the use of displays, talks and presentations:

Tours & trails

From 29 March, outdoor, socially-distanced, organised activities including workshops such as photography, gardening, and crafts at heritage sites and other outside spaces allowed to open will be permitted.

Other outdoor activities such as themed walking trails will also be permitted, including guided walks consisting of either a single permitted group or multiple permitted groups that are kept separate throughout the tour (in line with the gathering limits set out in the Roadmap). The tour guide does not count towards the Rule of 6 or 2 households limit.

Demonstrations/feeding

Zoos and other animal attractions should not be operating demonstrations or any other events, such as feedings sessions scheduled for public viewing, until Step 3. We understand this policy is to prevent the coming together and mixing of different groups, not just at the displays themselves but also as other points in the venue such as toilets, catering and entry/exit points.

BIAZA is seeking clarity with Government departments where this leaves keeper experiences and pop-up displays, as we know these are major areas of concern for many members.

Through-ways & indoor areas

Zoos will be able to reopen outdoor hospitality and non-essential retail at Step 2, provided that these are in self-contained units and are directly accessible from the outdoors (i.e. without going through indoor attraction elements). Although visitor centres and other indoor attractions must remain closed at this step, toilets and through spaces (such as ticket halls) to toilets or to outdoor areas can open. Indoor hospitality within animal attractions will be able to open in Step 3, alongside indoor attractions.

Covid-19 Member Update – 03/03/21

Dear all,

Today the UK Chancellor has announced an extension to the £100m Zoo Animals Fund after intense lobbying from BIAZA, as well as a number of economic measures to continue supporting the nation during this pandemic.

Zoo Animals Fund

The fund will reopen from tomorrow and will continue under its previous conditions (including the problematic 12 week reserves policy) until 30 June.

BIAZA has welcomed this extension and we hope many more of our members will be able to make use of it over the coming months. However, we recognise that this is far from our calls to establish a new Zoo Recovery Fund. The Zoo Animals Fund continues to be a seriously flawed scheme and we will continue to lobby Government to establish a fund that would support the majority of zoo licence holders.

BIAZA understands that over the course of the pandemic zoo licence holders have now been successfully supported in 100 instances (including the Zoo Animals Fund's predecessor the Zoo Support Fund).

We will be meeting with Defra officials for further clarity, including questions regarding existing claimants on the scheme and we look forward to updating you in due course.

Furlough, VAT and other Support

BIAZA welcomed the other forms of support announced in the Budget today and we will seek to ensure these apply as far as possible to the benefit of the sector. They include:

- Extension of the furlough scheme until September. Government will introduce a phased-in system of employer contributions, with cost contributions of 10% in July, 20% in August and September.
- Extension of the 5% VAT rate for another six months and a 12.5% rate for the following six months,
- A business rates holiday until the end of June followed by a two-thirds discount until the end of the financial year.
- Restart grants were announced for some retail, hospitality and leisure businesses – BIAZA will seek clarity on if and how zoos and aquariums may become eligible for this scheme.
- A Recovery Loan Scheme open to all businesses that will provide lenders with an 80% guarantee on eligible loans.

Announcements also included support for the self-employed, an increase on the amount that can be paid through contactless payments to £100, support for apprenticeships and corporation tax rises in 2023.

[The full Budget can be found here.](#)

Covid-19 Member Update – 02/03/21

Dear members,

Today BIAZA brings you updates from Northern Ireland, Scotland and the UK.

The Northern Irish Executive set out its roadmap out of lockdown today. Key information is as follows:

- Page 10 sets out five stages for leisure and entertainment venues: stage two allows for the opening of all outdoor visitor attractions; stage three, indoor visitor attractions will be allowed to open; stage 4 will allow for outdoor events with limited numbers and stage five will allow for large outdoor events such as concerts.
- Page 13 sets out the road map for travel and tourism. Public transport is expected to return to full service with mitigations by the end of stage 3.
- Working from home is set to be a feature throughout the roadmap, although some return to workplaces is expected from stage two. Conferences are expected to return at the end of stage four.
- Non-essential retail will be allowed to reopen by the end of stage two, as well as table-service hospitality.

There are no dates given for any of the five stages, however, the Executive's next review of the Coronavirus Regulations will take place on 16 March and they do not expect the current picture to change significantly before Easter.

We will be seeking clarity on the explicit restrictions that will exist for zoos and aquariums at each stage.

The full roadmap can be found here: <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/execoffice/executives-pathway-out-of-restrictions-summary.pdf>

There was some hopeful news from the Scottish First Minister today, who said that in light of the positive data they will be considering if it might be possible to accelerate the exit from lockdown. Changes to the level 4 restrictions that will take effect from the 15 March will be announced next week.

Tomorrow the UK Chancellor will set out the UK Government budget. We will be watching closely for announcement regarding funding for the sector and hope to update you as soon as we are able tomorrow.

Covid-19 Member Update – 22/02/21

Dear all,

Today the Prime Minister set out his [roadmap for ending lockdown restrictions in England](#). The key dates include:

- Step 1a: 8 March - schools will reopen to all students. People can socialise in public outdoor spaces with 1 other person, otherwise stay at home remains in place.
- Step 1b: 29 March - two households or groups of 6 people are able to meet outdoors. Tennis courts & outdoor sports can resume
- Step 2: 12 April at the earliest – outdoor attractions such as zoos and safari parks will be able to open, alongside non-essential retail, outdoor hospitality and self-catering accommodation
- Step 3: 17 May at the earliest – indoor attractions will be able to open such as cinemas. We expect this will include aquariums but will seek further confirmation. 30 people will be able

to gather outdoors, while rule of 6 or two household limits will apply to indoor socialising. Performances and events, within limits, will become possible.

- Step 4: 21 June at the earliest – final stage of reopening will include removing limits on social contact and the return of large events. A review of social distancing measures, mask wearing and working from home will be completed before this step that will inform when these measures can be lifted.

The Prime Minister was keen to stress that all these dates are contingent on the success of the fight against the pandemic, with at least 5 weeks between each step. He also confirmed that if new variants emerge, localised restrictions may be needed to control their spread.

BIAZA shares the immense disappointment of its members that zoos, safari parks and aquariums in England will continue to be closed to visitors under lockdown restrictions for some time to come. We are particularly disappointed given the lengths we have gone to to impress the importance of reopening for the Easter visitor season to Ministers and officials, and the imminent loss of the extremely limited Zoo Animals Fund.

While we continue to support the national efforts against the coronavirus, UK Government must give zoos and aquariums a path beyond the pandemic with the urgent establishment of an accessible Zoo Recovery Fund. This is more important than ever.

Clearly without the prospect of opening soon, nor any effective financial support for the sector, the currently situation is unsustainable. We will be requesting an emergency meeting with the Zoos Minister and we encourage you to get in touch with your local MP.

Covid-19 Member Update – 16/02/21

Dear members and others,

Following our announcement in BiteSize regarding the re-launch of the [Scottish Zoo and Aquarium Animal Welfare Fund](#), we are pleased that today Scottish Government have announced the launch of a [Zoo and Aquarium Conservation Project Fund](#).

This the first such fund in a BIAZA country with the aim of directly supporting conservation projects in zoos or aquariums. It will offer grants of £400,000 for conservation projects.

The fund is:

- to continue with these vital conservation projects
- to protect Scotland's at-risk native species
- to assist zoos and aquariums that have already receive other forms of government and non-Government support
- not primarily aimed at saving businesses

The eligibility requirements are broad and we hope this will benefit BIAZA members undertaking native species conservation. The deadline for both funds is March 10.

This conservation fund reflects the lobbying efforts of BIAZA and its members in Scotland, and we want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who continues to support our efforts.

Tomorrow, BIAZA will be meeting the new zoos Minister in Scottish Government, Ben Macpherson where we will thank the Minister but also push for funding beyond the current financial year which ends in March.

While this is a significant victory for BIAZA, and one we hope will set a precedent in other BIAZA territories, we know that significant issues remain and will continue our lobbying efforts in Scotland and beyond

Covid-19 Member Update – 06/01/21

Dear members,

Following yesterday's announcements we have some additional updates from England and Northern Ireland, as well as a summary of the situation for zoos and aquariums across the BIAZA region.

In England:

- Today the Chancellor announced that businesses in retail, hospitality and leisure can receive one off grants of up to £9,000 as part of a £4.6bn package of support from the Treasury. The grants are based on the rateable value of the businesses. Funds will also be provided to devolved nations. [More information here.](#)
- The second round of the Cultural Recovery Fund opens on 7 January. This fund can provide grants of £10,000-£3m. We would encourage you to consider applying as the definition of applicable organisations is very broad. [More information & how to apply here.](#)
- We know members will be anxious for information on the status of workers in the arrangement of childcare/education. The definition of critical workers (and therefore eligible for school places) [can be found here](#), you will see that it does not include zoo keepers. However, in previous lockdowns discretionary places were granted by nurseries/schools to keepers and we know that letters from Members explaining their role was helpful, [you can find our template letter here.](#)

In England we are preparing lobbying materials which will become available over the next days, it is critical we secure Government support for zoos, aquariums and safari parks.

In Northern Ireland:

- Stormont Ministers are set to make the order to stay at home legally enforceable in the latest escalation of restrictions.
- COVID—19 Charities Fund opens tomorrow and will receive applications until 22 January. This fund can provide £75,000 for charities that can demonstrate a reduction in fundraising or trading income as a result of the pandemic. [For full details click here.](#)

Summary of BIAZA Region & Available Financial Support:

We thought it would be useful for members to see the current way the community stands across all the nations:

England – zoos, aquariums and safari parks are closed during the current lockdown (in place until mid-February). Sector specific funding is currently available through the [Zoo Animals Fund](#) (29 January deadline) and general financial support through [Local Restrictions Support Scheme](#).

Scotland – only outdoor areas of zoos, aquariums and safari parks can remain open, to the local area only. The sector specific Scottish Zoo and Aquarium Animal Welfare

Fund closed in December; we are lobbying Scottish Government to now provide further support. More general support may be available through the [Strategic Framework Business Fund](#), we are working with ASVA to gain clarity on eligibility for zoos and aquariums. Further announcements regarding visitor attraction specific funding are also expected soon.

Wales – zoos, aquariums and safari parks are closed, support is provided through the Economic Resilience Scheme with the new tourism, hospitality & leisure sector specific element opening for applications on 11 January (for 2 weeks or until fund is allocated so it is recommended to apply ASAP), [check eligibility in advance here](#).

Northern Ireland – zoos, aquariums and safari parks are closed, financial support primarily available through the [Localised Restrictions Support Scheme](#)

Ireland - in Level 5, most zoos and aquariums are currently closed. Eligible zoo licence holders should have received some sector specific funding towards the end of 2020, other financial support may be available through the [Covid Restrictions Support Scheme](#) and [Wage Subsidy Scheme](#).

Crown Dependencies & Overseas Territories – most, but not all, of our members in these areas are currently able to open with restrictions in place.

Further information on available financial support across the BIAZA region can be found in our updated [funding summary document](#).

Covid-19 Member Update – 04/01/21

Dear Members,

The UK Prime Minister has this evening announced that England will enter another full lockdown with people required to stay at home apart from for essential activities. The guidance covering what this will entail can be seen [here](#). **It includes the forced closure of all ‘animal attractions’ including zoos, safari parks, aquariums and wildlife reserves.** This will become law early on Wednesday, but the PM has strongly requested people and businesses to implement the new restrictions with immediate effect.

Today’s announcements from Scotland and England, along with ongoing restrictions already in place across the rest of the UK and Ireland mean that the majority of BIAZA members will be closed. Over the next few days BIAZA will be preparing our lobbying efforts to call for new and better packages of tailored financial support for zoos and aquariums as the pandemic continues to have a devastating impact, as well as continuing to position zoos for reopening as early in the reopening process as possible. We will be sharing further information on this as well as any clarifications of restrictions and reminders of currently available financial support over the coming days. In the meantime, please do get in touch if you need any further specific support.

Dear Members,

As the new variant(s) of Covid-19 spreads we are continuing to see tightening of restrictions across the UK & Ireland, including news today from Scotland and further announcements expected for Wales & England.

Scottish Lockdown

First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has this afternoon announced that [Scotland will go into lockdown from midnight tonight](#) for the duration of January. This will be underpinned by a legal requirement to stay at home apart from for essential activities which includes “local outdoor recreation, sport or exercise, walking, cycling, golf, or running that starts and finishes at the same place (**which can be up to 5 miles from the boundary of your local authority area**) as long as you abide by the rules on meeting other households”.

Updated guidance on the new restrictions can be found [here](#). Regarding visitor attractions including zoos it states:

“All indoor visitor attractions such as museums, galleries, heritage attractions, indoor areas of zoos and aquariums are closed.

Outdoor visitor attractions, such as parks and gardens and the outdoor areas of zoos may remain open, to enable exercise and recreation to be undertaken with appropriate physical distancing in place, but should only be visited in line with travel restrictions.

Visitor attractions’ retail and hospitality facilities will be closed.

Public and customer toilets can be opened, as long as it is safe to do so. Where toilets are part of a larger premises e.g. a shop, face coverings must be worn.”

Other relevant restrictions include that work must take place from home (unless that is not possible), schools are closed, and a change to socializing rules that means a maximum of two people from two households may meet outside (mixing of households indoors is not allowed, apart from permitted exceptions).

We appreciate that although outdoor spaces of zoos are legally able to open, these restrictions may not make this financially viable for all members. BIAZA supports all members in making their own decisions regarding opening during this time.

Scotland - Coronavirus (COVID-19): Strategic Framework Business Fund

From 1 January 2021 there will no longer be an upper limit of £15,000 for eligible business operating multiple premises. Businesses already in receipt of payments need not reapply. Business applying for the first time on or after 1 January should submit individual applications to each relevant local authority for all relevant premises in that area. More information is available [here](#).

Welsh Lockdown Expected to be Extended

The Welsh Health Minister has today made it clear that it is very unlikely that the current lockdown style restrictions in place in Wales will be loosened when they are reviewed later this week. It is now expected that the Welsh Government will extend current restrictions throughout January. We will share further news on this when an official announcement is made.

UK Prime Minister Announcement this Evening

Boris Johnson will be making a public statement at 8pm this evening. He is similarly expected to announce further restrictions across England. We will share further updates on any changes announced.

Current restrictions in Ireland and Northern Ireland are expected to remain in place for some time. We continue to monitor the situation in all BIAZA regions and are preparing for further lobbying around short- and long-term funding and other support as needed in each country.

Covid-19 Member Update – 31/12/20

Dear Members,

Covid

We are aware that there is a lack of public understanding that zoos in England may legally open outdoor areas within Tier 4. For clarity, the [green spaces guidance](#) and the full [Coronavirus Restrictions SI document](#) have now been updated with the correct information. We have been assured that the public-facing [Tier 4 Guidance](#) will also be amended shortly.

In addition, Defra has asked us to highlight these following points which apply to outdoor animal attractions which open in Tier 4 in England:

- *In Tier 4, individuals can visit outdoor animal attractions on their own or with their household or support bubble. Only where the attraction is free to enter may they visit one-on-one with someone from another household, subject to compliance with social distancing rules.*
- *The indoor elements of zoos and other animal attractions cannot open. This includes visitor centres, but toilets may remain open.*
- *Any hospitality venues on site must follow the rules for hospitality in Tier 4. This means that they must only offer food and drink for takeaway, and must close entirely if they cannot be accessed through a separate entrance, for example where a cafe is situated next to an indoor animal exhibit.*
- *Operators of these businesses must take reasonable steps to ensure that bookings and admissions follow the social contact rules, and that groups do not mix within the premises.*
- ***These businesses should not be operating demonstrations or any other events, such as feeding sessions, during this time.***

The first 4 points above are incorporated into the [Visitor Economy Guidelines](#). Please take particular note of the 5th point relating to demonstrations and events such as feeding sessions, which Defra have asked us to incorporate within our [Local Restriction Tier Guidance \(England\)](#) and our [Operating Walkthroughs and Animal Contact Experiences Guidance](#), attached. We understand that for some, particularly our falconry centres, this will have a significant impact, and have communicated that to Defra.

Regardless of tier/level, it is obviously especially critical now that all who do choose to open, adhere closely to their relevant regional Government guidelines and our own [Covid Operating Guidance](#),

attached. We would strongly recommend regular review of Covid risk assessments in light of changes to local infection rates.

We fully support all of our collections in deciding whether reopening is safe and viable for their own sites, and have released social media posts today and a [news piece](#) on our website to reflect that. It also links to the relevant legislation, which may be useful in your own messaging.

Brexit

We would like to remind all our zoo registrars that the BIAZA Records Working Group maintains an email group and [Facebook page](#) for sharing new information and troubleshooting queries, which will no doubt prove especially useful as we navigate new administrative processes (especially in animal transport) through these first few months post-Brexit. The email Google group and the Facebook page are open to any interested BIAZA staff member. To join the email group, please contact [Frankie](#).

We're signing off now for this year and will be back in the virtual office on Monday 4th. Our sincere thanks to everyone for the efforts made to bring our community through this, and looking forward to a positive start to 2021 for us all.

Covid-19 Member Update – 30/12/20

Dear Members,

A brief update to summarise a number of changes which have come into effect this week.

England

In addition to the positive news of the Oxford vaccine today, the Health Secretary today announced changes which effectively mean that as of tomorrow, almost all of England will be either in Tier 3 or Tier 4. The full list of local restrictions in England can be viewed [here](#) and the BIAZA guidance on local Restriction Tiers (England) can be found [here](#).

Moving into Tier 3 (where indoor areas of attractions must close although shops, through-ways and public toilets can remain open) are:

- Rutland
- Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin
- Worcestershire
- Herefordshire
- Liverpool City Region
- York and North Yorkshire

- Bath and North East Somerset
- Devon
- Cornwall
- Dorset
- Wiltshire

Moving into Tier 4 tomorrow are:

- Brighton and Hove
- Cambridgeshire
- remaining parts of East Sussex not already in Tier 4
- remaining parts of Essex not already in Tier 4
- Hampshire (Basingstoke and Deane Borough, East Hampshire District, Eastleigh Borough, Fareham Borough, Hart District, Rushmoor Borough, Test Valley Borough, Winchester City Councils)
- Norfolk
- Oxfordshire
- Southampton
- Suffolk
- Waverley Borough
- West Sussex

As per my previous update, the Government released an [amended SI](#) on Christmas Eve stating that in Tier 4 outdoor areas of “an aquarium, zoo or safari park or outdoor animal attractions at a farm, wildlife centre or any other place where animals are exhibited to the public as an attraction;” may open. This is confirmed again on today’s tier review update [here](#). We are aware that this information is not yet reflected in the [Tier Guidance](#) and [Visitor Economy Guidelines](#), and we are working with Defra and DCMS to amend this asap, in order to provide complete clarity. We would like to thank colleagues at Tourism Alliance and ALVA for their support here and will update you as soon as we are able.

We would ask that those members in Tier 4 which elect not to open, consider their public messaging very carefully, and how it may reflect on others within the community who must make different decisions.

Wales

Wales is in national Alert Level 4, under which all visitor attractions must be closed. Our full guide to the Welsh alert levels can be found [here](#).

Scotland

All of the Scottish Mainland is now in Level 4, meaning that all indoor areas of visitor attractions must close. Our full guide to the Scottish Covid protection levels can be found [here](#).

Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland is now in lockdown for a period of six weeks from 26th December, with a review to take place after four weeks. All indoor and outdoor attractions must remain closed. Read more on current restrictions [here](#).

Ireland

Ireland is at Level 5. Read our summary of the Framework Levels [here](#) and further Government information [here](#).

Brexit

On 24th December, the European Commission and the UK Government announced that a trade agreement had been reached. You can read the agreement on the Gov.UK website [here](#), which includes a [summary explainer](#). EU Parliament will vote on the trade deal in the coming days, and our own MPs voted in Westminster today to ratify the deal.

One of the most immediate impacts on our sector is likely to be additional complications and delays in animal transfers and also potentially in diagnostic sample transfers, between GB and the EU and also between GB and Northern Ireland. Over the past few weeks and months we have been working with Defra, APHA and CITES to attempt to mitigate these impacts, and have shared updates with the relevant groups within our community. Please bear in mind the likelihood of delays now though in planning transfers. Over the coming weeks and months it would be extremely helpful if you can keep us informed of any specific challenges which you experience here, in order that we can continue to support the authorities in laying out new processes to make animal and sample transport as straightforward as possible.

Wishing everyone the best and looking forward to a more positive 2021!

Covid-19 Member Update – 24/12/20

Dear Members,

I'm pleased to confirm that UK Government have today published an [amending SI](#) which permits the opening of outdoor attractions at "an aquarium, zoo or safari park or outdoor animal attractions at a farm, wildlife centre or any other place where animals are exhibited to the public as an attraction;" in Tier 4 in England, from Boxing Day.

I hope this will be good news for some of those zoos that are located within Tier 4.

Covid-19 Member Update – 23/12/20

Dear Members,

Given significant upcoming changes, today's update contains information on impacts to our sector from both Covid and Brexit.

Changes to Tier Levels in England

A briefing this afternoon announced [changes in the Tier levels that will come into effect in England](#) from 26th December:

- Moving to Tier 4: Sussex, Oxfordshire, Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, those parts in Essex not already in tier four, Waverley in Surrey, and Hampshire - including Portsmouth and Southampton but with the exception of the New Forest. All indoor and outdoor areas of zoos and other animal attractions in Tier 4 must close.
- Moving to Tier 3: Bristol, Gloucestershire, Somerset (including the North Somerset area), Swindon, Isle of Wight, New Forest, Northamptonshire, Cheshire and Warrington. Outdoor areas of zoos, safari parks and aquariums may remain open, indoor areas must close.
- Moving to Tier 2: Cornwall and Herefordshire. Indoor and outdoor areas can remain open.

DCMS have also updated the [Visitor Economy Guidance](#) to create a new section on restrictions in Tier 4.

Brexit – Exports of animals from GB to NI

Guidance on changes to the movement of live animals between GB and Northern Ireland (NI) from 1st January has been updated [here](#).

Brexit - Movement of CITES specimens

Following another meeting with Defra today, we would also like to ensure you are aware of significant changes to the processes around [CITES-listed species](#) transfers from 1st January. In real terms, you must not only plan further in advance for live animal transfer CITES documentation, but also expect that in these first few months post-transition, veterinary samples for CITES-listed species (for both diagnostic and research purposes) could take significantly longer to process if they must travel between GB and EU/NI laboratories.

We are aware that there are significant welfare implications here, particularly around rapid diagnosis, and will continue to work with Defra and CITES towards a system to facilitate a speedier process. I would be extremely grateful if you could inform us of any specific examples of challenges which this presents for your sites. Please also share the following information from Defra with your vets to ensure they are aware of possible increased turnaround times, especially for diagnostic samples:

From Jan 1st, movement of CITES specimens between GB and EU, and between GB and NI will require import and export /re- permits from the UK Management Authority and the relevant Member State Management Authority, and that the specimen travel through a CITES designated point of entry/exit. Documentation must be presented for inspection and endorsement by Border Force officials at the border.

Below are links to our main guidance pages that you may find useful:

Guidance on newly applicable CITES rules: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/trading-and-moving-endangered-species-protected-by-cites-from-1-january-2021>

Guidance on how to apply for a CITES permit: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/cites-imports-and-exports>

Guidance on fees: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-cites-permits-and-certificates-to-trade-endangered-species>

Guidance on the ports that will be designated for CITES movements:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/trading-cites-listed-species-through-uk-ports-and-airports-after-brexite>

Northern Ireland

Permits **will** be required for movements between NI and GB. Additional CITES documents will not be required for movements of specimens between NI and ROI or NI and the EU27. For the movement of CITES specimens between GB to NI, and NI to GB, the import and export checks will all happen (i.e. be co-located) in Northern Ireland. This means you may use any point of exit/entry in GB (e.g. Cairnryan or Liverpool Birkenhead etc) but you must use one of the CITES-designated points of entry and exit in NI. In NI the relevant ports will be Belfast seaport and Belfast International Airport.

Please note that the limited transit exemption is not available to use GB as a 'land bridge' between the island of Ireland and the continent.

You can send any specific operational queries relating to applying for and using CITES permits to: wildlife.licensing@apha.gov.uk and any specific end of transition period queries to: EUExitCITES@defra.gov.uk.

Covid-19 Member Update – 22/12/20

Dear members,

Our latest update on Covid and other news relevant to zoos and aquariums:

Closures, Restrictions and Funding for Zoos and Aquariums

Wherever possible we are endeavouring to keep the summaries of restrictions that impact on zoos and aquariums in each county updated on our [website](#) and have today updated the documents for [England](#), [Scotland](#) and [Wales](#) to reflect the changes announced over the last few days.

Given the once more widespread closures or otherwise limiting restrictions on zoo and aquarium operations across the BIAZA region we wanted to remind you of some key potential funding sources available currently or opening in the new year:

- [Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme](#) is available across the UK and has been extended until the end of April 2021.
- [English Zoo Animals Fund](#) – Defra has staff working on applications to this fund through the holidays (apart from weekends and bank holidays) so can respond to urgent situations.
- [Welsh Economic Resilience Fund](#) – the next phase of this fund, including a tourism sector specific element, is due to open early next year
- Scotland – [further funding for tourism and hospitality sector](#) was announced by Scottish Government yesterday, including a £5 million fund for visitor attractions. We are working with our colleagues in ASVA to share more information on this as soon as possible.
- Northern Ireland – the [Localised Restrictions Support Scheme](#) is open for eligible businesses forced to close by restrictions. A full list of financial support in NI can be found [here](#).
- Ireland – eligible zoo licence holders should now have received some zoo and aquarium specific funding from Government (if you have not please let us know). A full list of financial support in Ireland can be found [here](#), including the [Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme](#).

Letters to Governments

Following the recent spate of tightening restrictions across the UK, as well as ongoing restrictions still in place in Ireland and the remaining uncertainties around EU Exit, we have sent letters early this week to the UK, Irish and Devolved Nation Governments. In these letters we have set out concerns and challenges that the zoo and aquarium sector faces as we head into 2021, emphasized the importance of additional financial support and early reopening where applicable, and committed to continuing to work closely with each government to achieve this.

Transport Restrictions

Numerous countries have stopped entry from the UK in response to the new variant of Covid. In particular, this includes France closing to entry for accompanied freight, preventing animal transports from taking place. It is expected that announcements regarding reversing this will be made soon. If you have animal transports planned please keep up to date with the current status of travel and have clear contingency plans for any disruptions. Do get in touch with us in the event of any urgent problems.

UK SARS-CoV-2 Guidance for Ferrets

APHA has developed guidance regarding Covid and ferrets given their close relatedness to mink, which have demonstrated susceptibility to infection: <http://apha.defra.gov.uk/documents/guidance-sars-cov-2-ferrets.pdf>

BIAZA Secret Santa Videos

For some zoo-themed Christmas cheer, check out the festive videos and messages being shared on [Facebook](#) by BIAZA members participating in our Secret Santa exchange! If you are sharing your own posts about your gifts remember to use #BIAZASecretSanta2020

BIAZA Office Christmas Working Hours

The BIAZA Office is closed for Christmas from 5pm 22 December until 8:30am 30 December for 2020. During this time all staff are away from emails, including the Admin email account. If you need urgent assistance though, please contact Nicky (07593 580591) or Cerian (07593 580599). Nicky and Cerian will also continue to monitor and update members on any urgent news regarding Covid, Brexit, Avian Influenza and anything else throughout the holidays.

We wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Covid-19 Member Update – 19/12/20

Dear all,

Following on from our earlier update, the Government has now released guidance for the restrictions in tier 4 areas. Unfortunately it confirms that zoos and animal attractions in tier 4 areas must close from tonight. The full guidance to restrictions in each tier and which areas are in which tier can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tier-4-stay-at-home>.

The full list of tier 4 areas is:

London

- All 32 London boroughs plus City of London

South East

- Kent and Medway
- Buckinghamshire
- Berkshire (Bracknell Forest, Reading, Slough, Wokingham, Windsor and Maidenhead and West Berkshire)
- Surrey (excluding Waverley)
- Hastings and Rother
- Havant, Gosport and Portsmouth

East of England

- Hertfordshire
- Essex (excluding Tendring, Uttlesford and Colchester)
- Central Bedfordshire, Bedford, Milton Keynes, Luton
- Peterborough

Other areas remain in the tiers assigned on Thursday.

Dear Members,

Unfortunately we have to update you today with bad news as Governments across the UK have announced tighter restrictions in response to increasing infection rates being driven by a new variant of the Covid virus.

England

The Prime Minister has announced a new tier 4, with restrictions roughly equivalent to the national lockdown in November. The areas around London, the South East and East of England currently in tier 3 will move into tier 4 at midnight tonight. In tier 4 areas non-essential retail must close, along with hairdressers, nail bars, indoor gyms and leisure facilities. Indoor areas of visitor attractions are already closed under tier 3 but we expect outdoor visitor attractions will likely also be required to close but we are awaiting the release of the guidance to confirm this. People from tier 4 areas should not travel or mix with other households, only seeing 1 other person outside. These restrictions will be reviewed in two weeks on 30th December.

Christmas arrangements in England have also changed with those from tier 4 areas no longer able to form Christmas bubbles at all and those from other tiers only able to form Christmas bubbles on Christmas day itself, rather than the previously set out 5 day period.

The Prime Minister's full statement can be read [here](#).

Wales

The Welsh First Minister has similarly announced that [Wales will move to a national alert level of 4 from midnight tonight](#), earlier than originally planned, for 3 weeks. Under level 4 in Wales all visitor attractions must be closed. Our full guidance to the Welsh alert levels can be found [here](#).

Christmas arrangements are also changing, with Christmas bubbles and other loosening of restrictions on socialising now only applying on Christmas day.

Scotland

The First Minister has this evening announced that [Scotland will also be tightening its Covid restrictions](#), placing all of mainland Scotland into level 4 from 26th December. In level 4 indoor areas of visitor attractions must close. Our full guide to the Scottish Covid protection levels can be found [here](#).

Christmas bubbles are also restricted to only Christmas day in Scotland and travel between Scotland and the rest of the UK will not be allowed over the Christmas period.

Northern Ireland

No changes to the planned restrictions in Northern Ireland across the Christmas period have been announced at this point. Northern Ireland is already due to begin a [6-week lockdown](#) from 26th December.

We fully appreciate how challenging these short notice changes and closures are at an important time of year for our members and will be watching closely for any further news and guidance from across the UK, Ireland and other territories ready to share with you as soon as possible.

Covid-19 Member Update – 18/12/20

Dear Members,

We have a number of new Covid updates to share with you today:

Welsh Lockdown

The First Minister has [announced that Wales will enter Level 4](#), equivalent to national lockdown, from 28 December (after the festive period relaxation). Zoos and aquariums in Wales are currently closed in level 3, and this confirms that closures will continue into the new year. We have been liaising with the Animal Health team and the Welsh Cross-Party group to make the argument that zoos should be able to open with Covid safety measures in place and for sector focused financial support while closures are ongoing. We will be continuing this work into the new year.

[Our guidance to the alert levels in Wales can be found here.](#)

Tier Changes in England

The Health Secretary has today announced the outcomes of the latest review of tiers across England. Several areas, particularly in the south and south east, will move into tier 3 from 00:01 am on Saturday 19 December: Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Peterborough, Hertfordshire, Surrey (except Waverley), Hastings & Rother, Portsmouth, Gosport & Havant. A key impact for any zoos and aquariums in these areas is that indoor visitor attractions and indoor spaces in otherwise outdoor attractions must close. Our full guidance to the local restriction tiers can be found [here](#). In better news, a few areas are moving to lower tiers: Bristol and North Somerset to tier 2 & Herefordshire to tier 1.

The tiers are due for their next formal review in two weeks' time, although Matt Hancock confirmed they are reviewing weekly and will make changes earlier if possible.

UK Christmas

The UK, Welsh and Scottish Governments have released a [joint statement](#) providing further guidance on the easing of some restrictions over a 5-day period (23- 27 Dec) to allow families to meet for Christmas. They strongly emphasise the importance of Covid precautions given the increasing infection rates in many areas.

UK Business Support Extended

The UK Chancellor has today [extended several UK-wide support schemes](#) including the job retention scheme. The Bounce Back Loan Scheme, CBIL Scheme and CLBIL Scheme will now all remain open for applications until the end of March 2021. The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme is extended until the end of April 2021 with the UK government continuing to pay 80% of wages for unworked hours. The Chancellor also confirmed the 2021/22 budget will be announced on the 3 March.

Covid-19 Member Update – 15/12/20

Dear Members,

We are emailing you early in the week to collate a number of communications that were shared over the weekend and provide some latest updates.

Welsh Visitor Attractions Closed

Following on from the announcement over the weekend that [all visitor attractions must close](#) from today, the Welsh Government has subsequently released its new [Coronavirus Control Plan](#). Under this plan Wales moves to a system of 4 alert levels that place varying restrictions on activities in response to a number of Covid risk criteria. Key information for zoos and aquariums includes:

- Indoor and outdoor attractions must close at levels 3 & 4
- Rule of four applies for people meeting outdoors from level 2
- Rule of six applies for people meeting indoors in level 1 and rule of four in level 2
- Varying restrictions apply to indoor and outdoor organised activities at each level
- Non-essential retail can remain open, except at level 4 (click and collect only)
- Hospitality services must close at level 4 and have varying restrictions for operating at other levels

Wales is currently on a national alert level of 3 (high risk), which further confirms that zoos and aquariums must currently be closed, alongside all other visitor attractions. In the future alert levels may be implemented at a more local scale but no timescale for this has been announced.

We are very aware on the challenges presented by such short notice closures, particularly for those collections that had Christmas events planned. We will be lobbying the Welsh Government for increased support, communication and to enable reopening as soon as possible.

In the meantime, the Economic Resilience Fund is the Welsh Government's main vehicle for providing financial support to businesses at this time. It has two main streams:

- [The Restrictions Business Fund](#) - this applies to hospitality businesses with a rateable value of £12,001 - £150,000 or in receipt of small business rate relief that have had a greater than 40% reduction in turnover during the restriction period. Businesses that received the Lockdown Business Grant in October will automatically receive payments in December, other businesses will need to register – more information will be provided soon.
- [The Sector Specific Fund](#) - this fund is targeted at Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure businesses who have a greater than 60% impact on turnover as a result of the restrictions. Businesses that apply for the Restrictions Business Fund can also apply to this fund if eligible. Grants of £2,500 to £150,000 are available under this scheme. It opens for applications in week commencing 11th January but an eligibility checker is available [here](#).

Changes to Tiers in England

Today Government announced changes to the Tier system in reaction to the rising levels of the coronavirus. Health Secretary Matt Hancock confirmed that London, south and west Essex and the

south of Hertfordshire (Three Rivers, Watford, Hertsmere and Broxbourne) are going into tier three from 00:01 on Wednesday. The parts of Essex are: Basildon, Brentwood, Harlow, Epping Forest, Castle Point, Rochford, Maldon, Braintree, Chelmsford, Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea. The changes announced today will require, among other restrictions, that indoor areas of zoos, aquariums and safari parks in Tier 3 close. [Our guide to the Tier system In England can be found here.](#)

We are expecting further changes as a result of the review occurring on Wednesday which will still go ahead.

Avian Influenza

Following a number of incidences of highly pathogenic strains of avian influenza the GB wide bird housing order applies from today. Over the weekend we shared a number of further resources to support you in implementing the order including the new Avian Influenza Prevention Zone declarations for each nation, the Biosecurity Guidance and checklist for avian influenza which can be found [here](#). Please take note of the requirements and work with your vets and EHOs to ensure you are doing all you can to mitigate the spread of disease on your sites.

Additionally, there is updated information on Avian Influenza vaccination for those members in England [here](#). This guidance also includes a link to the AIV(Z)02 form that zoos need to complete and email back to APHA at CSCOneHealthAISurvey@apha.gov.uk to request authorisation to vaccinate.

If you have any queries which aren't answered within these documents then please get in touch with [Nicky](#) and we will respond as soon as we are able.

Primates as Pets

BIAZA welcomes the [consultation on restrictions on primates as pets](#) in England. BIAZA has been working with Government and our associate members on this matter and we will continue to do our best to guide policy. We will be responding in full to the consultation and will provide some guidance to our members on responding in the near future.

VAT Campaign Survey

The Cut Tourism VAT Campaign are conducting a preliminary survey of tourism businesses to determine how they have benefitted from the VAT reduction and what the impact of reverting back to the 20% rate on 1 April 2021 would have on their future viability. If this is relevant to your collection please do complete it. It should take no more than 5 to 10 minutes and will greatly assist efforts to campaign for a permanent reduction. All responses will be treated as confidential and anonymised. Responses are required by end-of-business on **FRIDAY 18th DECEMBER**.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9CHZNCO>

Covid-19 Member Update – 10/12/20

Dear Members,

Today we wanted to draw your attention to some funding news from Scottish Government. Yesterday the Finance Secretary [announced a £185m coronavirus support package for businesses](#). This includes one off payments to hospitality businesses and £60m to support the Tourism sector. We await more details on how this will be allocated but we will endeavour to keep you aware when we have clarity on the funding schemes.

On Tuesday, Government announced an easing of restrictions coming into effect tomorrow (11 December). The 11 Level 4 local authority areas which will now drop down to Level 3. Angus, Inverclyde and Falkirk will drop a

level going from 3 to 2. Dumfries and Galloway and Borders Councils will drop to Level 1. All other areas remain unchanged in their levels. [For a full list of the levels click here.](#)

We also want to issue a reminder that the deadline for the [Scottish Zoo and Aquarium Welfare Fund](#) is tomorrow. Do send in your applications.

Covid-19 Member Update – 30/11/20

Dear Members,

Today BIAZA wanted to update you on new information in Wales and England.

In Wales, today First Minister Mark Drakeford announced a new tightening of restrictions as well as changes to their Economic Resilience Fund. [The First Minister's statement can be found here.](#)

From Friday (4 December), new restrictions will see:

- Pubs, bars, restaurants and cafes must close by 6pm and they will not be allowed to serve alcohol. After 6pm they will only be able to provide takeaway services.
- Indoor entertainment venues, including cinemas, bingo halls, bowling alleys, soft play centres, casinos, skating rinks and amusement arcades, must close.
- **Indoor visitor attractions, such as museums, galleries and heritage sites will also have to close. Outdoor visitor attractions will remain open.**

For BIAZA members this means outdoor attractions (or those outdoor areas) will be allowed to open.

With regards to funding, the Welsh Government is adding further resources to the Economic Resilience Fund. This includes a £180m fund targeted at hospitality and tourism businesses. [Details on the funding can be found here.](#)

In England, BIAZA is aware that many members have found the application process to the Zoo Animals Fund difficult, this is something we have also made Defra aware of. As such Defra have now established a telephone helpline which can assist with general enquiries. It cannot provide details on the specifics of each application. The helpline will be available 9-12 and 2-4 on weekdays, until 29 January.

The number to call is +442087201512

[On other matters. Today is the deadline for submissions to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme \(CJRS\) relating to periods ending on or before 31 October 2020.](#)

Tomorrow, there will be a vote in UK parliament on the proposed new Tier system in England. If for some reason the system is changed or struck down we will endeavour to keep you informed.

Covid-19 Member Update – 28/11/20

Dear Members,

An extra update this weekend to share some important further Covid announcements made at the end of the week.

Ireland Update

As expected, the Taoiseach announced an easing of restrictions in Ireland with the Covid level reducing to level 3 from Tuesday 1st December (with some exceptions). Alongside this the level 3 restrictions have also altered from previous so we recommend you look closely at the latest guidance. A key change is that cultural and heritage attractions can open with protective measures in place from 1st December under the new guidance so we are hopeful that all zoos and aquariums should also be able to reopen. All retail may also open. However, travel is still restricted with people needing to stay within their own counties. Staff should continue to work from home wherever possible.

Further easing of restrictions will occur from Friday 4th December, when restaurants and pubs operating as restaurants can reopen, and from 18th December when Christmas measures are introduced until the 6th January. These include allowing some indoor socialisation (maximum 2 other households) and allowing people to travel outside of their home counties. Decisions about travel across the NI border are expected to be made later in December.

The full Government guidance on the new restrictions can be read [here](#) and we will update you with any further information we receive regarding reopening and the publication of the Statutory Instrument.

Scotland: Guidance for Santa Experiences at Attractions for Immediate Implementation

The Scottish Government has provided guidance and clarification for Santa related experiences that is operational with immediate effect. The decision has been taken that all Santa experiences (indoors and outdoors) can go ahead in levels 0, 1 & 2, subject to suitable mitigations being in place. In level 3, only outdoor Santa experiences should go ahead, again with suitable mitigations being in place. In level 4, all Santa experiences should be closed, in line with restrictions for all other visitor attractions and non-essential retail.

Full information can be found in the [Tourism and Hospitality Sector Guidance](#).

England: Updated Heritage Attraction Guidance

DCMS has updated the [guidance for heritage locations](#) which provides some additional information on interpreting the new Tier guidance that may be relevant to some members. One area of the guidance we are currently seeking clarification on through our Government contacts is the definition of a 'large event' in Tier 3 as we know this has implications for several members and we will update you as soon as we hear more. We will also be reviewing the Statutory Instrument when it is published to confirm any relevant additional details.

Covid-19 Member Update – 26/11/20

Dear members,

Tiers in England

The UK Health Secretary today announced the tiers each region in England will emerge into on 2 December when the current lockdown ends. The full list has been published [here](#) and a postcode checker is available [here](#).

We are aware that many of our collections will find themselves in Tiers 2 or 3 and be impacted by ongoing restrictions. We have created a summary table of restrictions in each tier for you [here](#) and the full details of restrictions can be read [here](#). Of particular importance to zoos and aquariums are:

- Outdoor areas of license holders can open in all Tiers, from 2 December
- All indoor attractions and indoor areas of otherwise outdoor attractions must close in Tier 3 areas. They may open in Tier 1 & 2 areas.
- Shops may open in all Tiers.
- Hospitality venues must close in Tier 3 areas, only operating to provide food and drink via take-away, click and collect, drive-through or delivery services. In Tier 2 areas pubs and bars can only open if they serve food and a number of restrictions are in place in Tiers 1 & 2 including need for table service where consumption is taking place on premises and curfews on when service must stop. Please see our summary table for further details.
- Accommodation can only operate for specified purposes in Tier 3 areas.
- People in Tier 3 areas should avoid travelling outside of their area. Those in Tiers 1 & 2 should avoid travel to Tier 3 areas.
- There are varying restrictions on events according to Tier, including that no indoor events or group activities should take place in Tier 3 areas and large events are limited to drive-in events only. Please see our summary table for further details.

The Health Secretary confirmed that Tiers will be reviewed on a regular basis and at least fortnightly.

Earlier this week it was also confirmed that local authorities will be given greater powers to close businesses not following the restrictions or formally request rapid improvements (within 48 hours) through issuing notices. BIAZA would like to remind you that our full guidance of operating under restrictions is available on our website.

Covid-19 Member Update – 25/11/20

Dear members,

This update summarises some headline information from the UK Chancellors spending review as well as outlining some updates on restrictions across the devolved nations.

UK 2020 Spending Review

The Chancellor today announced his 2020 spending review including spending commitments for 2021. The Government press release can be seen [here](#) and the full review can be read [here](#). There were no zoo sector specific announcements included but we provide an overview of some of the key information for your interest.

Overview:

- UK economy set to contract by 11.3% this year but growth is predicted from next year, although output is not predicted to return to pre-Covid levels until final quarter of 2022
- Unemployment set to increase next year
- UK Govt will continue to spend heavily to fight against coronavirus, fulfil election promises and invest in UK's recovery. This includes:

- Billions of pounds to tackle Covid-19 in 2021
- Increased funding to deliver public services
- £100 billion capital spending including infrastructure to drive UK's recovery and support jobs.

Points of potential interest to members:

- National Living Wage will rise by 2.2% to £8.91 per hour from April 2021. The National Minimum Wage for other age categories will also rise from April 2021:
 - by 2.0 per cent from £8.20 to £8.36 per hour for 21 to 22-year-olds
 - by 1.7 per cent from £6.45 to £6.56 per hour for 18 to 20-year-olds
 - by 1.5 per cent from £4.55 to £4.62 per hour for 16 to 17-year-olds
 - by 3.6 per cent from £4.15 to £4.30 per hour for apprentices
- Business rates multiplier frozen in 2021-22, and Govt is considering options for further Covid-19 related support through business rates reliefs
- £4bn Levelling Up Fund to which local areas can bid for the funding of local projects (with equivalent amounts for the devolved nations). The [Green Book](#) has also been refreshed to reflect the 'levelling up' priorities.
- £3.6bn of funding in 2021-22 for DWP to deliver labour support including:
 - a new 3-year long £2.9 billion Restart programme to provide intensive and tailored support to over 1 million unemployed people and help them find work
 - work search support measures announced in the Plan for Jobs
 - the £2 billion Kickstart Scheme to create hundreds of thousands of new, fully subsidised jobs for young people across the country, confirming funding for over 250,000 kickstart jobs.
- Government departments given additional funding. Defra awarded almost £1bn additional budget that will allow them to move forward on several high priority projects including the Nature for Climate Fund and flagship Environment Bill measures.

We will continue to review the outcomes of the Spending Review and keep you updated with any relevant information for our sector. We will also be working to ensure that there are opportunities for zoos and aquariums to be involved in Defra plans for environmental projects, including at our upcoming meeting with Minister Goldsmith.

Northern Ireland Circuit Breaker

The Northern Irish Executive has agreed to introduce a [2-week circuit breaker](#) beginning on Friday 27 November and yesterday released [further details on the restrictions](#) that will be put in place which includes the closure of visitor attractions.

Welsh Restrictions Update

The Welsh First Minister has confirmed that [current restrictions in Wales](#) will remain in place until at least the 7 December. Visitor attractions continue to be able to open under these restrictions.

UK Christmas Restriction Plans

Last night the government announced plans for the Christmas period covering 23 to 27 December, allowing people to form a 'Christmas bubble' composed of people from no more than three households that can meet in each other's homes or in private rented accommodation. However, rules on meeting people indoors and outdoors in other settings will still be based on the tier restrictions. The full information can be read [here](#).

We are expecting the UK Government to announce further information about the Tiers in England that will apply from the 2nd December tomorrow and will be providing further updates on this. We are also continuing our lobbying work in Ireland regarding reopening.

Covid-19 Member Update – 24/11/20

Dear all,

The UK Prime Minister has this afternoon announced plans for controlling Covid in England after the current lockdown ends on 2nd December. He confirmed the lockdown will not be extended and instead England will return to a three Tier system. These tiers will have uniform restrictions and Government hopes to release information about which areas will fall into which tiers later this week.

It appears that outdoor areas of zoos and aquariums can open across all tiers, but indoor areas must close in Tier 3.

Regardless of which tier an area is:

- The stay at home requirement will end and travel will be permitted within the conditions set by tier guidance
- Shops, personal care, gyms and the wider leisure sector will reopen.
- Collective worship, weddings and outdoor sports can resume.
- People will no longer be limited to seeing only one other person in outdoor public spaces - the rule of 6 will apply outdoors as it did in the previous set of tiers.

Summary information on the control measures can be found [here](#) and more detailed information on each tier [here](#). Under these restrictions indoor attractions and the indoor areas of otherwise outdoor attractions must be closed in Tier 3 areas. Hospitality must also be closed in Tier 3 areas other than for take-aways and no events other than drive-in events can be held. There are also restrictions on travel between areas, with those in Tier 3 advised not to travel outside of their area, and those in Tiers 1 & 2 advised to avoid Tier 3 areas. Staff who can work from home should continue to do so across all areas. We will be looking closely at these new documents and providing further guidance as to the implications for our members soon.

The Prime Minister also referenced a planned easing of restrictions on social mixing over the Christmas period which will be implemented across the UK. He hopes to announce details of this later in the week once it has been fully agreed with the devolved administrations.

The full details of the UK Government's winter plan for managing Covid-19, including information on testing and vaccination programmes can be found [here](#).

Covid-19 Member Update – 01/11/20

Dear Members,

A brief further update this morning following news of the lockdown in England which will begin at 00:01 this Thursday 5th November.

It has been confirmed that “zoos and other animal attractions” are amongst the businesses and venues which must close. Additionally all non-essential retail and hospitality must close, although click and collect and take-away services can continue. There is more information [here](#).

The guidance also is clear that [those who can work from home must do so](#), with only those who cannot work from home continuing to go to their workplaces.

There is also some information regarding people who are clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable [here](#). The Government is not returning these groups to full shielding at this time, but does advise they take extra precautions and that clinically extremely vulnerable who cannot work from home should not go to work. Further guidance for these groups is expected on Monday.

There has been some more limited information provided on the extension of furlough until the end of December, as well as other financial support, [here](#). Key points are:

- 80% staff salaries will be covered up to a maximum of £2500
- Flexi-furlough will be available (i.e. staff do not need to be on full time furlough)
- They will need to be furloughed for a minimum of 7 consecutive days
- Eligible staff must have been on the payroll before October 31st 2020
- Information released so far does not state that staff need to have been furloughed under the original furlough scheme to be eligible
- The Job Support Scheme, due to launch this week, will now not begin until the furlough scheme ends

We expect more detailed guidance in the following days and will share further relevant information when we can.

Covid-19 Member Update – 31/10/20

Dear Members,

This is to update you on the Prime Minister's announcements today of an all-England lockdown. The lockdown will start at midnight Thursday 5th November and is expected to end on 2nd December, although lifting of these new restrictions may be staggered in different areas. We are expecting further information on Tuesday and Wednesday when new regulations will be published.

Key points from the announcement include:

- **Visitor attractions (we assume this will include zoos and aquariums) will have to close.**
- All should stay at home, and work at home wherever possible. Where it is not possible to work at home, it is permissible to travel to and work at your place of work.
- All pubs, cafes and restaurants, 'leisure and entertainment services' will have to close, though takeaways and deliveries will be permitted.
- All non-essential retail will close.
- There will be no mixing of people inside homes, except for childcare and other forms of support, apart from those within a support bubble.
- Outbound international travel will be banned, except for work.
- Courts, schools and universities will remain open.
- Outdoor exercise and recreation will be encouraged.
- 'Furlough' will be extended until December.

We will continue to keep you updated as soon as we have any further information. Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have specific queries at this point.

BIAZA is naturally disappointed that so many of our members, across 4 countries, have closed or will have to close their doors to the public. BIAZA has not stopped lobbying but we want to reassure you that will once again be picking up our arguments for a new support fund for the sector and to empower our members to open their doors as soon as possible. We have been told by ministers that our previous lobbying around reopening were compelling and effective. We are hoping that with your help we will once again convince Government to take action on behalf of zoos and aquariums.

Wishing you and your teams all the best and as ever are here to offer any support that we can.

Covid-19 Member Update – 21/10/20

Dear members,

This update summarises the latest news on restrictions from Ireland and Scotland.

Ireland Moves to Level 5

The Taoiseach announced earlier this week that Ireland will move to Level 5 at midnight tonight. This is the highest level of restrictions in the [Plan for Living with Covid-19](#) and includes:

- People are asked to stay at home other than for certain exceptions.
- No social gatherings of households may take place indoors (some exemptions apply). It is possible to meet with 1 other household in an outdoor setting which is not a home or garden, such as a park, including for exercise.
- No organised indoor or outdoor gatherings should take place.

- There are penalties for travelling further than 5km outside of home except for specified purposes (including caring for animals and work that is essential).
- Museums, galleries, cultural attractions and non-essential retail must close.
- Bars, cafes and restaurants can only open for take-aways and deliveries.

Further details on the restrictions can be found [here](#), along with lists of [essential retail](#) and [essential services](#). We send our support to our Irish members that need to close (& those that have already been closed for some time under the previous restrictions) and will be meeting with them later this week to discuss their situations.

Information on current Government support available in Ireland can be found [here](#).

Hospitality Restrictions in Scotland Extended

Today, the First Minister has announced that the [current temporary restrictions](#) in place in Scotland will apply for a further week until 6am on Monday 2nd November. This includes the additional measures in place across the Central Belt of Scotland.

She also announced that a new strategic framework for managing and living with the virus will be published on Friday 23rd October. This will include different levels of restrictions that can be applied nationally or regionally as needed. Following parliamentary approval, it is intended the new framework will come into play from 2nd November. We will be watching for further news about the framework and levels being applied in each area and how this impacts zoos and aquariums.

The full speech can be seen [here](#).

Covid-19 Member Update – 19/10/20

Dear Members,

We are providing a short Covid-19 update given the significant announcements about a ‘fire-break’ lockdown in Wales made earlier today.

Welsh fire-break lockdown

At lunchtime today the First Minister Mark Drakeford announced that Wales will undertake a 17 day fire-break lockdown from 6pm on Friday 23rd October until Monday 9th November. The Welsh Government hopes this will quickly and effectively reduce Covid-19 infections in Wales back to a manageable level. This lockdown is extensive and includes:

- A general requirement for people in Wales to stay at home. Working should be from home apart from critical workers and those completely unable to do their work from home.
- Closure of all non-essential retail and all leisure, hospitality and tourism businesses. As far as we are aware this includes zoos and aquariums. We have reached out to the Animal Health

team for any further information and a full list of businesses required to be closed is expected to be published.

- People must not visit other households or meet other people they do not live with either indoors and outdoors (except adults living alone and single parents who can join with one other household for support)

It applies across the entirety of Wales and replaces any current local restrictions.

A number of new and extended support funds were also announced, including:

- Every business covered by the small business rates relief will receive a £1,000 payment.
- Small and medium-sized retail, leisure and hospitality businesses, which have to close will receive a one-off payment of up to £5,000.
- There will also be additional discretionary grants and support for smaller businesses, which are struggling.
- The £80 million fund announced last week to help businesses develop in the longer term, will be increased to £100 million, which includes £20 million ring-fenced for tourism and hospitality.
- Enhancing the Economic Resilience Fund third phase to provide further support.

The FM has also asked for the UK Government to allow early access to the new Job Support Scheme. We will keep you updated as further details of funding are announced.

Further detail on the announcement can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

We are also aware that Government discussions are ongoing about increasing restrictions across Ireland and will be watching closely for news here and across the rest of the UK.

Covid-19 Member Update – 14/10/20

Dear Members,

We are bringing you this update today following significant changes in COVID restrictions across various BIAZA nations.

Ireland

In the budget announced this week, Minister for Finance Paschal Donohoe announced a number of financial measures. This included the establishment of the Coronavirus Restrictions Support Scheme to help businesses suffering as a result of the pandemic. A VAT reduction was also announced; the rate for the hospitality sector will be reduced from 13.5% to 9% from 1 November and remain in place until December 2021. [The full range of the Minister's financial announcements can be found here.](#)

Although we are not aware of any sector-specific support funds included within these announcements, we are aware that there is a small amount of funding soon to be administered by NPWS and Irish members will receive more information on this shortly.

Last week Taoiseach Micheál Martin moved all of Ireland into level three restrictions. This included that ["Museums, galleries and other cultural attractions must close" for level three](#), we know this has already affected some members.

Other restrictions include:

- Visitors to private homes and gardens should be limited to a maximum number of six from one other household
- No social/family gatherings should take place, with exemptions to this for weddings and funerals
- No organised indoor gatherings should take place. Organised outdoor gatherings are permitted, up to a maximum of 15 people
- People should remain in their county with the exception of those who must travel for work, education and other essential purposes
- People are advised to work from home unless absolutely necessary
- Schools, early learning and childcare services should remain open.

We are continuing to liaise with central Government to provide further support and will of course keep you updated as soon as we have any further information. Please do keep in touch with us regarding the developing situation at your collections.

England

In England government has introduced a three-tier system in an attempt to simplify local lockdown rules. BIAZA has produced a guide to these different rules which we hope will provide clarity to members. Click [here](#) to see our guide.

Currently it appears zoos and aquariums do not need to shut unless additional interventions in consultation with local authorities are agreed for those in the Very High tier, but you will need to speak to your LA to confirm this. Find out more about specific local restrictions [here](#).

Can we also take this opportunity to remind members in England who are thinking about applying to the Zoo Animals Fund to do so as soon as possible, bearing in mind that if you forecast that you will reach your last 12 weeks of reserve funds at some point before 31 March 2021, you should put in your application as soon as possible before the deadline of 16 November.

[Details of the launch of the tiered system can be found here.](#)

Northern Ireland

New restrictions include:

- From Friday pubs and restaurants will be limited to takeaway and deliveries for four weeks
- From Monday schools will close for two weeks, there will not be additional restrictions on childcare providers such as creches
- The sale of alcohol will not be permitted after 20:00
- No mass events involving more than 15 people
- From Monday, weddings, civil services and funerals will be limited to 25 people

Wales

Welsh Government has, this afternoon, [banned travel from UK Covid 'hotspots'](#). This means, for examples, that visitors cannot travel to Wales from places in England, which are under Tier 2 or Tier 3 restrictions. This comes into force on Friday. Zoos and aquariums in Wales (and the other nations) will want to consider what this means for your visitors.

As ever BIAZA continues to work across all our nations for our members at this time of crisis. Do not hesitate to [get in touch](#) if you have any questions.

Covid-19 Member Update – 24/09/20

Dear Members,

This update follows the announcement by the UK Chancellor of a UK-wide winter package of financial support for the economy.

The main announcements include:

Jobs

- A new Jobs support scheme – supporting the wages of those in work, keeping employees in their jobs but on shorter hours. The Government will top up the wages of jobs which are made part time. This scheme operates on a number of principles: employees supported by the scheme must work at least a third of their normal hours and be paid for that time by their employers. Two thirds of their pay would be covered by Gov and employers. All small & medium sized businesses will be eligible, and bigger organisations will be eligible only if they can demonstrate a decline of revenues. The scheme will be open to businesses even if they haven't previously claimed furlough. And the Job retention bonus can be claimed in addition to this scheme.
- In addition to the job support scheme, the Chancellor announced an extension of self-employment grants.

Cashflow/loans

- The Chancellor announced that businesses have more time to repay bounceback loans via a scheme called 'pay as you grow'. The repayment on these loans will be extended to 6-10 years without affecting credit rating.
- The government guarantee on Coronavirus Business Interruption Loans (CBILs) will be extended to 10 years.
- Deadline for all loan schemes is extended to the end of this year.
- New loan scheme expected in January

VAT

- Deferred VAT bill can be spread over 11 smaller repayments.
- The Chancellor announced the lower 5% Vat reduction for tourism & hospitality will be kept until march 31st 2021, with the planned increase cancelled.

BIAZA hopes that our members will be able to make use of a number of these measures as we continue our lobbying efforts to open up and ring fence the £100 million zoo fund for wide use across the sector.

In Ireland we continue to push to establish sector specific support and have provided template letters to all our Irish members to contact their TDs.

Covid-19 Member Update – 23/09/20

Dear Members,

This is a reminder that from tomorrow (Thursday 24th September) you may need to implement some changes announced recently depending on where you are located:

- NHS Covid-19 App QR codes – businesses in England & Wales must clearly [display their QR codes](#) for app users to scan. This is in addition to collecting contact data to support NHS Test and Trace, you must continue to collect these.
- Face coverings – staff as well as customers must wear face coverings in [England](#) & [Wales](#). This includes retail, hospitality and other indoor spaces including zoos and aquariums. BIAZA believes this includes keeping staff in public areas.
- Table service only – restaurants and bars must be table service or take-away only in [England](#) & [Wales](#)

As expected, the Welsh First Minister Mark Drakeford, made a full statement on the changes in Wales today which can be seen [here](#). Please see yesterday's email update for further details on changes announced in other areas of the UK.

The UK Chancellor Rishi Sunak is due to make a statement to the House of Commons setting out his winter economy plan tomorrow.

Covid-19 Member Update – 22/09/20

Dear Members,

As you know the UK and Ireland have seen a recent increase in local lockdowns in response to rising Covid-19 infection rates. We are now seeing the announcement of further national restrictions, with clear warnings that if this does not reduce the current infection trends, stronger measures will be needed to keep the pandemic under control through the winter months. Fortunately, so far measures do not require the closure of any of our members, but they may have implications for your operations. We therefore wanted to give you an update setting out the situation in each country.

England:

The Prime Minister has today announced a set of national Covid-19 restrictions including:

- Those that can work from home without disrupting business operations should do so. Those that need to be present at their workplace to do their jobs should continue to attend work.
- From Thursday, all pubs, bars and restaurants must be table service only (except take-aways) and must close by 10pm.
- Face coverings must be worn by retail staff and by staff and customers in indoor hospitality, other than while eating and drinking.
- Government Covid-secure guidelines for several sectors including tourism and leisure will become legal obligations with new fines and closures for businesses breaching these.
- From Monday, weddings are restricted to a maximum of 15 people, and business conferences and exhibitions will not be able to restart from 1 October as previously planned.
- Various actions are being taken to strengthen enforcement and policing including increased fines (e.g. up to £10,000 for businesses breaking Covid rules)
- Local lockdowns will continue, applying further measures to reduce infection in hotspot areas.

He also stated that it is expected these measures will remain in place for 6 months unless clear progress is made. The full speech can be read [here](#) and the Prime Minister is expected to also announce these changes in a public briefing at 8pm tonight (22 Sept).

Northern Ireland:

Yesterday, First Minister Arlene Foster announced that existing local lockdown restrictions that focus on domestic settings were being expanded to apply across NI from 6pm tonight (22 Sept). This includes:

- No mixing of households in private dwellings (excluding specified exemptions)
- No more than six people gathering from no more than two households in private gardens. Children under 12 from the two households are not counted.

The full changes can be seen [here](#).

Scotland:

First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has announced similar restrictions across Scotland. This includes:

- Those that can work from home should do so and employers who have encouraged staff back to work should review this now. The requirement for businesses to allow working from home remains voluntary but that may change if needed.
- From Friday, pubs, bars and restaurants must close by 10pm
- From Tomorrow, visiting other households indoors is not permitted (excluding specified exemptions). This will be reviewed in 3 weeks. Current strict guidance on public indoor spaces and outdoor spaces continues to apply unchanged – no more than six people from no more than two households. Children under 12 years are not included in outdoor measures and young people (12-18yrs) outdoors are exempt from the two household limit.
- Inspection and enforcement of regulations in indoor public spaces will continue to be strengthened with closure possible if businesses are breaching the requirements.
- Car sharing outside your household is not recommended.

The FM also confirmed the Scottish Government is keeping options for a potential ‘circuit breaker’ implementation under review and will take further action if needed. The full speech can be read [here](#).

Wales:

Four further areas of [local restrictions in Wales](#) have been announced earlier this week and begin at 6pm tonight. The Welsh Government is currently deciding on additional measures that may be implemented across Wales, similar to those elsewhere in the UK. The First Minister will be providing further information in a press briefing tomorrow at 12:30pm, and has already stated it will include encouraging people to only make essential journeys.

Ireland:

The Irish Government continues to implement and review its [Plan for Living with Covid-19](#). Dublin is currently at level 3 on the plan with the rest of Ireland at level 2. We are aware further review is expected and it is possible levels may be raised, increasing restrictions in other areas, including further limits on visitors’ ability to travel and operation of indoor attractions and hospitality services. The latest briefing from the Taoiseach’s office can be seen [here](#).

We will continue to closely monitor the situation in each country and will increase the frequency of these updates to ensure all collections are fully aware of the restrictions in their area if needed. We are also continuing lobbying activities in each country to push for support that is needed now and as the situation evolves, including upcoming meetings with Minister Goldsmith in UK/England and Minister Noonan in Ireland and the inaugural meeting of the Welsh Cross Party Group for Zoos and Aquariums.

Covid-19 Member Update – 07/08/20

Dear Members and others,

Hoping this finds you well, below is our roundup of key COVID points from the week.

Funding Update

Defra launched the Zoo Animals Fund last week providing animal welfare grants of up to £730,000 for zoos and aquariums in England. For more information and to apply please see [here](#). Those collections who successfully applied for the Zoo Support Fund may still be eligible for the Zoo Animals Fund.

To assist us in our lobbying efforts for further support we would be extremely grateful if those members who have reopened could complete our reopening data survey [here](#).

Furlough, Eat Out to Help Out and Sick Pay Rebate

HMRC are running webinars on the [Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and flexible furloughing](#), [Eat Out to Help Out Scheme](#) and Coronavirus (COVID-19) [Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme](#). Click on the links above to register.

The UK Government's [online calculator for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme](#) has been updated. This aims to help employers determine how much to pay furloughed employees, how much to claim for employer NICs and pension schemes and how much to claim back for claim periods ending on or before 31 October 2020.

Roadmap to recovery resumes

The Prime Minister has [announced](#) that in England from Saturday 15 August (except for specific areas where local restrictions are in place) indoor play and indoor soft play will be permitted to reopen, indoor performance venues will be able to reopen with socially distanced audiences and [wedding receptions](#) with a sit-down meal for up to 30 guests will be permitted.

Hotels and accommodation in England

The guidance for people who work in or run [hotels and other guest accommodation](#) in England has been updated to include advice on local restrictions, what to be aware of and your responsibilities.

Tourism and hospitality in Scotland

The Scottish [tourism and hospitality sector guidance](#) has been updated to include statutory guidance that applies from today (14 August 2020). This includes noise control (no background music, televisions on mute and no shouting or singing from customers), queue management (except for take-away services where queueing must be managed with physical distancing, there should be no queueing inside premises, such as at bars) and [mandatory collection of customer/visitor contact details](#) to support Test and Protect. The guidance for [retail, tourism and hospitality customers](#) has also been updated.

Getting tested

The guidance on [coronavirus testing](#) has been updated to add a step-by-step guide on home testing.

VisitBritain Consumer Tracker Report

The results of the latest Covid-19 Consumer Sentiment Tracker are available to [read here](#).

Covid-19 Member Update – 07/08/20

Dear members and others,

This is our roundup of key COVID points from the week.

Funding Update

Defra launched the Zoo Animals Fund at the start of this week. Replacing the Zoo Support Fund, this similar scheme still focusses on assisting zoo licence holders in England who are facing financial difficulties in providing essential animal care but has changed in a few key ways including increasing the available funding to the EU state aid limit (£730,000 across all eligible Govt funding received), expanding which costs are covered (e.g. enclosure maintenance, professional membership subscriptions) and increasing the criteria so that those with reserves of 12 weeks or

fewer operating costs are eligible. The new scheme also accepts early applications so you can confirm eligibility in advance. For more information and to apply please see [here](#).

We are aware that many collections remain ineligible for this fund and we continue to work to get further support for all. In the meantime, we have also pulled together a [quick signposting document detailing funding sources](#) we are aware of at this time to help you ensure you have accessed everything you are eligible for. Our hope is that we will be able to keep updating it as we become aware of further funding opportunities so please do contact us if you see anything we have missed.

Local Lockdowns

Following lockdowns in Leicester and the Manchester areas, we have now also seen a local lockdown put in place in Aberdeen and Preston. Particular sectors are being singled out as contributing to local transmission rises, and leading to discussions in England over potentially closing one sector (pubs) in order to reopen others (schools). These discussions highlight the ongoing risks of further restrictions and lockdowns.

We have already been laying the lobbying groundwork to establish the clear arguments for zoos remaining open, as a precaution in case the Government decide it needs to consider implementing further restrictions. You can support us in this by continuing to closely follow Government and BIAZA guidance, and by thoroughly implementing Covid transmission risk reduction measures, collectively demonstrating that the sector is safe and should remain open. We encourage all collections to update their contingency plans to prepare for any further lockdown situations.

Reminder: Face Coverings in England – from 8 August

The [extension of the requirement to wear a face covering](#) to other indoor settings where you are likely to come into contact with people you do not normally meet will become enforceable in law from 8 August. The [guidance](#) states this applies to aquariums and indoor zoos amongst many other settings. We have confirmed with Defra that there is no further guidance coming regarding whether this applies to indoor spaces in otherwise outdoor zoos but the guidance does state in multiple places a recommendation for wearing face coverings in any indoor space where you are likely to mix with non-household members, so overall our suggestion is to encourage mask-wearing in these spaces wherever possible. It is also worth noting that the emphasis of the guidance (we haven't seen the legislation itself) is on individuals to wear face coverings, rather than on businesses to enforce it.

Events, tours and groups

In England, guided tours of up to 30 people can take place provided you undertake risk assessments in line with [the guidance](#) and put any necessary mitigations in place. Events for groups larger than 30 may take place in public outdoor spaces, provided you take reasonable steps to mitigate the risk of transmission, in line with Covid-19 secure guidance, including completing a risk assessment. Meetings of up to 30 people indoors are allowed in permitted venues if social distancing can be maintained and the venue can demonstrate it has followed the Covid-19 guidance.

Coach tours are restarting with limited capacity and increased cleaning regimes. The Confederation of Passenger Transport UK and the Coach Tourism Association are compiling a database of group-ready attractions and are happy to promote group-ready attractions and venues via their regional newsletters. If you would like to be included contact [Alex](#).

Holiday clubs

Zoos and aquariums running activities for groups of children may find this guidance from [England](#) and [Scotland](#) helpful.

Changes to UK CJRS

The CBI have produced an [extremely comprehensive factsheet](#) for businesses on the changes to the CJRS and how it applies. This covers everything from the simple questions regarding rates through to how it interacts with the Apprenticeship Levy. It is an excellent reference guide for businesses.

Get in touch with your DMO

Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) in England manage and develop tourism. They may provide marketing opportunities, training courses, networking events and industry expertise to help develop your business. They are also reporting back to UK Government regarding the ongoing impact of Covid-19 on the tourism sector so we encourage you to liaise with yours and make sure they are aware of the challenges you are facing as a tourism attraction. [Find your DMO here](#).

Filming and broadcasting at permitted visitor economy venues update

The Business Visits & Events Partnership has sought guidance on filming and broadcasting at permitted visitor economy venues and can share that both can take place subject to those using the premises following the guidance issued for filming from the [British Film Commission](#) or in the case of TV production [the BBC](#).

Improving access

Disabled access charity, [Euan's Guide](#) has surveyed people's top concerns and expectations when visiting attractions. The top concerns are people not social distancing, not having access to toilets, and having to queue or wait, particularly if the weather is bad. The top requirements are sanitising stations that are at an accessible height, an accessible route that can be navigated independently and clear markings to ensure people social distance. The report includes [suggestions for venues to improve access](#). It is free to [list your attraction](#) on Euan's Guide.

Covid-19 Member Update – 03/08/20

Dear all,

A quick update following some recent announcements that have implications for zoos and aquariums in Scotland and England.

Scottish funfairs

In Scotland the reopening of funfairs has been given an indicative start date of 24 August, to be confirmed at the review taking place on 20 August so, with immediate effect, [all fairground rides within attractions are to close](#). Attractions with funfair rides do not have to fully close, only the funfair rides themselves.

Face coverings in England – from 8 August

The UK government has announced they will [extend the requirement to wear a face covering](#) to other indoor settings where you are likely to come into contact with people you do not normally meet, such as museums, galleries, cinemas and places of worship. They now recommend face coverings are worn in these settings, and this will become enforceable in law from 8 August. The [updated guidance](#) states this applies to aquariums and indoor zoos amongst many other settings. We are clarifying whether it impacts on indoor spaces within otherwise outdoor zoos and will update you when we have further details.

Covid-19 Member Update – 31/07/20

Dear Members and others,

Responding to Covid-19

New restrictions are in place if you live, work or travel in the [North-West of England](#). Visitor attractions should take steps to ensure people do not interact with people they do not live with, in line with COVID-19 secure guidance.

PHE have produced a series of action cards for different business types to spell out how to identify and respond to a local Covid outbreak. The card for Tourist Attractions is attached – the full range can be downloaded [here](#).

The self-isolation period for those who have coronavirus symptoms or a positive test result has been [extended to 10 days](#).

Funding

We have had disappointing news from Northern Ireland this week that the Minister feels there is insufficient evidence of a risk to animal welfare as a result of Covid-19, and therefore will not be providing zoo/aquarium-specific funding at this point. We will be continuing to [gather reopening data](#) and to use this to demonstrate the challenges which we will face through winter, and will share this with the Minister who will be reviewing the case in the Autumn. We will continue to press to meet with him urgently.

The Welsh Government has announced [a £53m Cultural Recovery Fund](#). Further details, including guidance for applicants, will be announced later in August.

The Scottish Government has established [a funding package of £10 million](#) to help the events sector recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Funding streams will be set up to provide direct support to organisers of cultural, community, and sporting events. The [Scottish Events Sector Guidance](#) has also been updated.

In England the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has announced details of the £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund, which includes a £88m Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage distributed by the [National Lottery Heritage Fund](#) in partnership with [Historic England](#). Grants are from £10,000 to £3 million, for organisations in England to help them recover from the economic impact of COVID-19, and assess and adapt their business models to become financially viable. 'Heritage' can be anything from the past that you value and want to pass on to future generations including historic buildings, monuments, parks, gardens, collections of objects, cultural traditions, histories of people and communities, oral history and language. The Minister for Regional Growth and Local Government has separately announced [grants of between £1,000 - £5,000](#) for small and medium sized businesses to access new technology/equipment or professional, legal and financial advice.

Scotland and Wales reopening dates

The Scottish First Minister has announced phase 3 [indicative dates for reopening](#) of Monday 24 August for live outdoor events and Monday 14 September for soft play and live indoor events (with physical distancing, enhanced hygiene, restricted numbers and following guidance).

In Wales on Monday 3 August restaurants and cafes can open indoors and wedding venues reopen, from Monday 10 August children's indoor play areas can reopen.

Updated online tools

The Government has updated three Online Assessment Tools to help businesses:

[Business Support Finder](#). This tool allows employers and the self-employed, including sole traders and limited company directors to determine their eligibility for loans, tax relief and cash grants. Changes to State Aid rules mean more small businesses can apply for the **[Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme](#)** (CBILS). Previously businesses which were classed as 'undertakings in difficulty' were unable to access CBILS but now businesses in this category and which have fewer than 50 employees and a turnover of less than £9 million can apply.

[Business Risk Assessment](#). This tool is to help business operators develop a risk assessment tailored to the specific circumstances of their business and provides advice on how work practices can be changed to mitigate any risks identified.

[Employee Risk Assessment](#). This tool is to help employees determine whether they should be going back to work or whether they should continue to work from home and includes advice specifically for tourism related businesses.

Claiming money from the 'Eat Out to Help Out' scheme

The Government has produced **[new guidance](#)** for businesses on the Eat Out to Help Out scheme which includes details on when businesses can claim reimbursements and the records that businesses will need to keep. The reimbursement service will be available from 7 August to 30 September. It is important to note that VAT needs to be paid on the full amount of the customer's bill before the discount is applied.

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

Find out what you need to do if you've claimed too much or not enough from the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme **[here](#)**. Furloughed employees who are then made redundant will receive redundancy pay based on their normal wage, under **[new laws](#)** brought in Thursday 30 July. HMRC have also published **[Job Retention Bonus eligibility requirements](#)** and what employers need to do now to claim the bonus.

Piscine Energetics Save Your Aquarium Campaign

A reminder that you can share the direct link for your individual page from here: **www.saveyouraquarium.com/europe** on social media or in other communications to encourage donations for your collections. You can also personalise your page by filling in the spreadsheet **[here](#)** and returning it to **[Andy Lister](#)** from Piscine Energetics. Please contact Andy directly for any issues or queries.

Covid-19 Member Update – 24/07/20

Dear Members and others,

As previously mentioned, in place of our daily update we will now be providing a weekly roundup of the key COVID points from the week just gone. Please see below for updates:

Lobbying update

We want to reassure members that our intense lobbying has not ceased. This week, BIAZA met with officials or politicians from three nations. In each we continue to press the case for better support for our zoos and aquariums. This has presented a number of opportunities that we hope will benefit the sector going forward. We plan to let you know more when we can.

Irish Domestic Marketing Campaign

Fáilte Ireland have launched a domestic marketing campaign: “Ireland, make a break for it” - more information available on this [here](#).

VisitScotland to Launch Marketing Campaign

On Monday 27 July, VisitScotland are going live with marketing campaigns on TripAdvisor and Expedia. If your business is listed on these platforms, please update your profile/listing to [highlight any new safety measures](#). Update your VisitScotland.com web-listing to show you are ‘Open’ and ‘Good to Go’ by [ticking the new boxes](#).

Coronavirus restrictions relaxed further in Wales

First Minister Mark Drakeford announced today that tourist accommodation with shared facilities, such as camping sites, all hotels, and underground attractions will be able to re-open from Saturday 25 July. Cinemas, museums and beauty salons can reopen from Monday. The full announcement can be read [here](#).

In related news new guidance on the reopening of playgrounds in Wales has been published and this can be found [here](#).

Conferences in England

It was announced that in England, business events and conferences can restart from October, assuming that the current infection levels remain stable. More information on this can be found [here](#) and updated Visitor Economy guidance can be read [here](#).

Customer Logging Toolkit

Public Health England have published a new customer logging toolkit for Track and Trace purposes. This can be found [here](#).

Local Restrictions

The UK Government has [laid out a new framework](#) giving national and local authorities additional powers to slow the spread of COVID-19. National and local government will have the power to restrict local public gatherings and events, and close local businesses premises and outdoor spaces. The new powers went into effect on 18 July.

Business Rates System Review: Call for Evidence

As part of a fundamental review of the business rates system, the Government has put out a [call for evidence](#) from the industry. This call for evidence seeks views on how the business rates system currently works, issues to be addressed, ideas for change and a number of alternative taxes. Responses should be [submitted online](#) and will be collected in two stages. Views on the multiplier and reliefs sections are requested by 18 September in order to inform an interim report in the autumn. Responses on all other sections are due by 31 October.

Eat Out to Help Out Scheme

Confused about Eat Out to Help Out? HMRC are running webinars providing an overview of the scheme, including: how the scheme works, eligible establishments, registering and making a claim, and what happens after you’ve claimed. Register for the next live webinar [here](#).

Covid-19 Member Update – 17/07/20

Dear Members and others,

We are pleased to bring our Covid update, as a reminder these will no longer be on a daily basis, but when we receive information we think it will be useful to share.

Save Your Aquarium campaign

Piscine Energetics have launched their European version of the Save Your Aquarium campaign, having already successfully rolled this out across Canada and the United States. It is a 'buy one give one' initiative, allowing individuals or organizations to purchase a bucket of Piscine Energetics Fish Food for a collection of their choice, which Piscine Energetics will then match with a second bucket of feed for that collection free of charge. The campaign is open to the public and will run indefinitely. To spread the word and encourage people to choose your collection, simply visit www.saveyouraquarium.com/europe and share the page directly. If you have any questions, or to add your collection to the list, please complete this [spreadsheet](#) and email back to [Andy](#) from Piscine Energetics.

Holiday season changes.

In Scotland the First Minister has announced that from today those in Scotland can stay in holiday accommodation as well as visit markets and public gardens. While in England the UK Government has announced new guidance with the intention of allowing caravan parks to extend their season. We hope both of these will be useful to members.

Eat Out to Help Out

UK Government has announced further guidance on this scheme, including useful information on how to apply the discount in different circumstances. [Click here to view the guidance.](#) If you intend to use this scheme at your site we would be interested in hearing how you get on.

Cautious customers

ALVA have shared their most recent visitor sentiment tracker data [here](#). It shows some of the challenges remaining for attractions with customers remaining cautious about visiting sites and particularly anxious around the use of indoor facilities.

Swings and roundabouts in Wales

In welcome news for Welsh members today, Wales First Minister Mark Drakeford confirmed playgrounds and funfairs in Wales can reopen on Monday. [Click here for more information.](#)

BIAZA members – reopening data collection

We would be extremely grateful if those BIAZA members who have reopened could complete our reopening data survey [here](#), in order to support our lobbying work on your behalf.

Hoping you get a little time for a break at some point this weekend!

Covid-19 Member Update – 15/07/20

Dear members and others,

A moment of celebration

Members may be aware that today marks the first day all our collections are able to open their doors to the public, with Scottish aquariums and indoor zoo areas able to now reopen. This is a huge

achievement for BIAZA, coming after many months of lobbying, even including recent ‘bans’ on zoos reopening.

While we take a moment to celebrate this achievement, we are under no illusions about the scale of the challenge ahead and we continue to press forward for the sake of the entire sector.

This also marks a point where we will be scaling down our daily communications. These were designed as an emergency response to the pandemic and we hope you have found them useful. As Governments are issuing less advice relevant to members and we prioritise longer-term lobbying outcomes, we will be issuing COVID’ communications only where there is relevant news. We expect this will still be several times a week and we will continue to send a roundup of all relevant news at least once a week.

Masks in UK

UK Government has updated their [guidance for the public on wearing masks](#), including when it is compulsory to do so. In England this will include inside shops from 24th July. Several members have queried whether this impacts on other indoor areas – the guidance is clear it is only compulsory in shops (but that will include shops within visitor attractions) and on public transport. A number of exemptions are also included in the updated guidance, as well as links to the relevant guidance in the devolved nations.

Emergency Gift Aid Relief Campaign

A coalition of leading voices in UK charities has called on the UK Government to temporarily increase the level of Gift Aid that can be claimed on donations. The coalition is being led by the Charities Aid Foundation and the group are calling for the increase to be in place for two years while charities work to recover from the crisis. As a result, the Gift Aid claimed on every eligible donation would increase by one-third, up from the current one-quarter.

If you are a charitable organisation that uses Gift Aid, you can find out more about the Gift Aid Emergency Relief Package and how you can add your voice to the campaign at [this link](#).

Consumer Trackers

There are currently a number of organisations carrying out ongoing consumer attitude tracking in response to the pandemic. They look at things like intention to travel, intention to visit attractions, expectations of when normality will resume and can be very useful for supporting your financial and contingency planning, as well as highlighting areas of concern amongst potential visitors that you should aim to reassure them about via your communication channels. A couple of interest to keep an eye on is the [Visit Britain tracker](#) and the [BVA BDRC tracker](#). We will continue to monitor these and update you on any key changes.

VisitScotland Launches ‘Only in Scotland’ Campaign

VisitScotland launched a new marketing campaign today focused on getting Scots to holiday at home. The message is “Only in Scotland can travelling so little make such a big difference”. Share the [film](#) using the hashtags #OnlyInScotland and #Take5forTourism.

Collection of Customer Data at Visitor Attractions in Scotland

The Scottish Government has confirmed that tourism businesses, including visitor attractions, that provide an on-site service must now collect visitor contact information to support NHS Scotland’s Tack & Trace service. Guidance has been published which states that businesses should gather minimum contact details for all customers and visitors, as well as staff and volunteers. You can view the guidance at [this link](#).

Covid-19 Member Update – 14/07/20

Dear members and others,

Lobbying devolved Governments

Today BIAZA took action to further our lobbying efforts in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. We are asking the Government of each for greater financial support for the sector to ensure our members are 'match-fit' to go into the next tourist season.

To this end we have written to the First Ministers of each Government and politicians in each nation. Today alone we have reached out to nearly 40 politicians about this pressing issue.

Tomorrow we will share a template letter with members in each nation so that you can help amplify our calls for a tailored package in each nation that supports the zoo and aquarium sector, by contacting your own MSP/MLA/MS.

Face Coverings in England

The Health Secretary has announced that it will be compulsory to wear a mask or face-covering in shops in England from the 24th July. It is expected this will apply to retail within visitor attractions, although guidance on this has not yet been published. There will be fines of up to £100 for people not following this. Children under 11 years and those with certain disabilities will be exempt. We will share more information on this when it is published.

Defra and Zoo Support Fund in England

The current Zoo Support Fund in England finishes at the end of this month. The deadline for applications is 19 July.

Defra have meanwhile been contacting zoo licence holders to gather information as they work on developing the next phase of the support fund. We encourage members to engage with them if you are contacted.

Covid-19 Member Update – 13/07/20

Dear members and others,

Welsh Indoor Attractions Reopening

We have this afternoon received confirmation from Welsh Government officials that the reopening of most indoor visitor attractions from today does include indoor elements of zoos and aquariums. We wish our Welsh members well as they start to fully reopen.

Eat Out to Help Out Registration

The Eat Out to Help Out registration went live this morning on GOV.UK, allowing businesses to join the scheme. You can use the Eat Out to Help Out Scheme to offer a 50% discount, up to a maximum of £10 per person, all day, every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 3 to 31 August 2020 (excluding alcoholic drinks) and claim the money back from the government. Register here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/register-your-establishment-for-the-eat-out-to-help-out-scheme>

Recovery Advice for Small Businesses

The UK Government supported Recovery Advice for Business Scheme has now launched. It gives small firms access to free one-to-one advice from an expert advisor to help them plan their recovery from the pandemic. Advice will be available in a range of areas including accountancy, legal, marketing and digital. You can sign up to the scheme here: <https://www.enterprisenation.com/freesupport/>

Covid-19 Member Update – 10/07/20

Dear members and others,

Welsh Roadmap Update

The Welsh First Minister has today made further announcements regarding easing lockdown in Wales. This includes stating that most indoor visitor attractions can open from Monday alongside the outdoor spaces of pubs and restaurants. The guidance for hospitality and tourism businesses has also been updated and states that indoor visitor attractions excluding any part of an attraction that is underground can reopen on 13 July. We see no reason so far this should not include aquariums and indoor spaces at zoos, but have also reached out to our contacts in the Welsh Government to get this confirmed. We will share news of this as soon as we have any.



Keep Wales Safe

Date	Activities
July 11	Self-contained accommodation opens
July 13	Hairdressers, most indoor attractions and outdoor areas for pubs, bars, cafes and restaurants open
July 20	Playgrounds and community centres open
July 27	Beauty salons and tattoo parlours, accommodation with shared facilities, cinemas, museums and galleries open*

* to be confirmed – preparations to open can start now

 **Diogelu Cymru gyda'n gilydd**
Together we'll keep Wales safe

Irish Letters

Yesterday we sent an introductory letter to the new minister overseeing zoos and aquariums in Ireland, Macolm Noonan TD. In this letter we took the opportunity to introduce BIAZA and its members, set out the ongoing and urgent need for financial support for the sector in Ireland and invite the Minister to meet with us to discuss further.

Today we have also contacted our Irish members to share an updated template letter to local TDs that can be used to request their support in also making the case for financial support for zoos and aquariums to the new minister. If any collection has not received that email, please let us know.

UK Eat Out to Help Out Scheme

The Government has released more details on this scheme which confirms that restaurants and cafes within tourist attractions that sell food for immediate consumption are eligible to participate. The scheme will allow customers to get 50% off food and non-alcoholic drinks up to £10 per person at participating venues on Mondays-Wednesdays. The discount can be claimed back from the Government. For more information on this scheme please see [here](#) and you can register [here](#). We would love you to let us know if you sign up to this scheme so we can see how useful it is for our sector.

Reminder – Animal Care T Level Qualification Consultation

The Institute for Apprenticeships currently has a [consultation survey](#) running to review its new animal care and management T Level (Technical Levels – a new set of level 3 qualifications in England). Deadline for comment is Monday 13 July. BIAZA has been involved in the design of this qualification and a number of zoos and aquariums have fed into earlier focus groups, but it would still be good to get diverse input from across the sector.

Covid-19 Member Update – 09/07/20

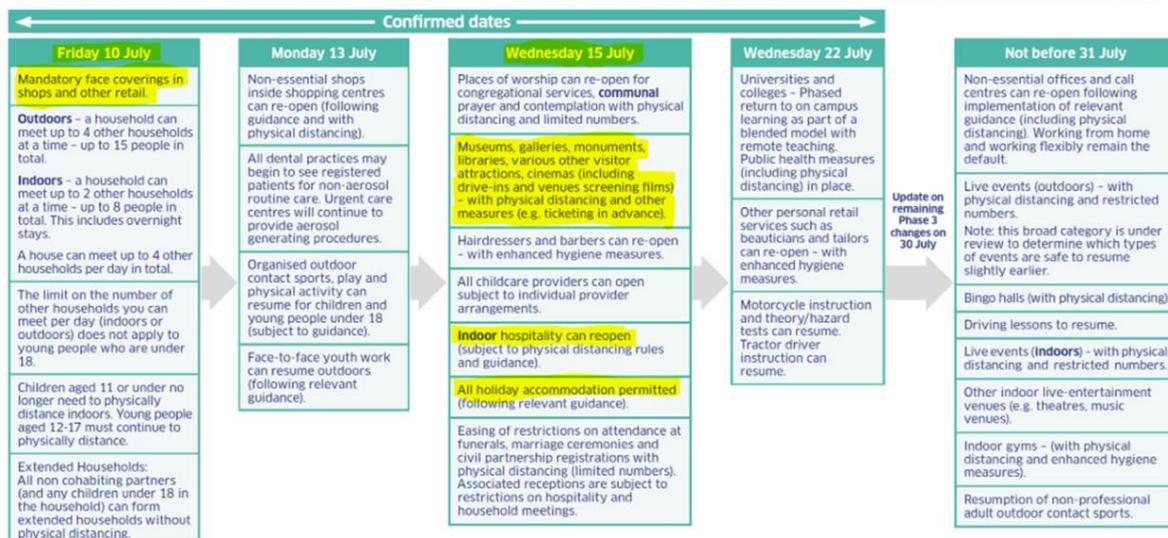
Dear members and others,

Scottish Roadmap Update

Further elements of the [Scottish Roadmap](#) for easing lockdown have been refined and updated. The below summary highlights areas of particular relevance to Scottish zoos and aquariums.

From 10 July it will be compulsory (with some exceptions) to wear face coverings in shops in Scotland.

Guide to re-opening and scaling up over Phase 3. Not all details are shown. Please refer to guidance and Q&A for more details. Relevant guidance and public health advice (such as physical distancing rules and enhanced hygiene measures) will apply to all changes shown below.



Animal Collection Dispersal or Reduction

We would like to remind all members that we are here to support you if your current situation means you need to plan for dispersing your animal collection, either to reduce operating costs or in the case of potential closure. We have created a guide to collection dispersal we can share to guide you through the process, can put you in touch with relevant experts within the community and can help to make discrete initial rehoming enquiries.

We are also aware that many members are being targeted by brokers who are looking to take advantage of the situation. If you are unsure about the reputation of anyone approaching you offering to support you with collection dispersal please do get in touch with us. We would also remind all members that they need to follow the [BIAZA Animal Transfer Policy](#) if they are dispersing their collection, and we are happy to clarify any areas of this you may be unclear on.

UK VAT Reduction for Attractions

[Further guidance](#) on this has now been released following the Chancellor's summer statement yesterday.

We have also received some queries about whether zoos and aquariums should pass this reduction on to their visitors. This is a decision for each collection to decide for themselves after weighing up the pros and cons of reducing costs and potentially increasing visitor numbers or their additional spend overall or keeping the saving to feed into your business recovery plans. Bernard Donoghue, the Director of [ALVA](#), shared some useful additional information on this in their update email yesterday. His communications with Ministers confirm that they do hope attractions will pass on all or some of the savings to their customers but this is a commercial decision for businesses to make and Ministers will not criticise those that chose to respond differently. Bernard also flagged the [consumer sentiment trackers](#) that so far suggest visitors are not generally looking for discounts as they appreciate the impact of Covid-19 on their favourite attractions.

DHSC Coronavirus Testing Guidance

The Department for Health and Social Care in the UK Government has updated its [guidance on coronavirus testing](#). Of particular relevance to members is the requirement for business operators to report to HSE any instances of employees catching Covid-19 from a work-related exposure under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013.

Covid-19 Member Update – 08/07/20

Dear members and others,

Today we have exciting news on the UK's Summer Statement and progress being made in Ireland.

Raft of measures introduced in Summer Statement

In a 'Summer Statement' today the UK Chancellor, Rishi Sunak, introduced a wide range of new measures, some of which look to benefit our members. Of most interest to our members are:

- VAT reduction from 20% to 5% for attractions such as zoos in England. A VAT reduction was a direct BIAZA call and we are pleased action is being taken to support the sector.
- Job Retention Bonus will be introduced to help firms keep furloughed workers. UK Employers will receive a one-off bonus of £1,000 for each furloughed employee who is still employed as of 31 January 2021.
- A £2 billion 'Kickstart' Scheme launched to fully subsidise jobs for young people in England. Those aged 16-24, claiming Universal Credit and at risk of long-term unemployment, will be eligible. Funding available for each six-month job placement will cover 100% of the National Minimum Wage for 25 hours a week – and employers will be able to top this wage up.
- £1.6 billion apprenticeship scheme where Gov provide an additional £2,000 for each new apprentice they hire under the age of 25.
- To stimulate demand a new Eat Out to Help Out discount scheme will provide a 50% reduction for sit-down meals in cafes, restaurants and pubs across the UK from Monday to

Wednesday every week throughout August 2020. We will seek clarity about how this might apply to our members' catering facilities.

BIAZA welcomes the potential support these schemes could offer. We are particularly pleased to see our call to adjust VAT to help our members has been heeded by the Treasury.

We will be seeking clarity on how a number of these schemes may be applied to our sector but we hope a wide number of our members will be able to make good use of these new schemes. Meanwhile, the Government press release can be seen [here](#) and the policy paper [here](#).

Lobbying steps up in Ireland

Today, BIAZA held a constructive meeting with officials from Irish Government where the case for financial aid to zoos and aquariums was made clear. We will be taking forward a number of new lobbying actions now that the Ministerial positions in the new Government are becoming finalised. We will be reaching out to our Irish members to collaborate on this over the coming days.

UK Small Charity Funding Opportunity

[Julia and Hans Rausing Trust Charity Survival Fund](#). This £10m fund is open to UK registered charities with an annual income below £5m that operate across one of the three priority areas (Health and Wellbeing, Welfare and Education, Arts and Culture) and have lost (or are forecast to lose) income due to Covid-19. Deadline for applications is 5pm Monday 27 July.

Covid-19 Member Update – 07/07/20

Dear members and others,

Communication Advice Updated

We have updated our COVID-19 communication guidance which we hope will be useful to you and your teams. We recognise the huge pressures our members are under and so we hope this will be a useful tool to steer your messaging at this tricky time. The new guidance is part of our COVID-19 resources and [can be found here](#).

On a similar note we continue to push for positive stories as part of #BIAZABrightside, share your stories with [Andy](#) and help us share the incredible work taking place.

Today's Meetings

The BIAZA Office had meetings today with the Animal Welfare Officer in Scotland where we were updated on steady progress towards implementation of the emergency support fund for zoos and aquariums. We hope more details of this fund will be released soon. We were also able to discuss potential opportunities for securing further funds in Scotland, particularly following the £100 million announcement in England and will be working to follow up on these.

We also had a meeting with Simon Girling as Chair of the UK's Zoo Expert Committee. Here we primarily discussed the challenges surrounding the £100 million fund in England and identified areas of clear agreement in approach between ZEC and BIAZA. We will continue to collaborate with ZEC as appropriate in order to maximise the value of the expanded fund for our sector.

Grants for Natura2000 sites in Wales

Welsh Government has made £4m available to improve sites of natural significance around Wales. Organisations and individuals who can demonstrate action to improve Natura 2000 sites by March 2021 are encouraged to apply. The grant window will be open for five weeks. [More information can be found here.](#)

Local Restrictions in Dumfries and Galloway Lifted

These restrictions, implemented as part of the test and protect scheme in Scotland, have now be lifted. This is the first full example of a local lockdown process in Scotland. Further details are available [here](#).

Covid-19 Member Update – 06/07/20

Dear members and others,

Today we would like to take a moment to celebrate the gradual reopening of our aquariums that started in Ireland on 29th June and has now been possible in Northern Ireland (3rd July) and England (4th July). We wish them well with their reopening plans and look forward to later this month when all zoos and aquariums across the BIAZA region will hopefully have the option to reopen if that is the best action for them.

Physical Distancing in Scottish Visitor Attractions

Our colleagues at ASVA have been following up on the implications of the Scottish Government's new [guidelines on physical distancing](#). Fergus Ewing, Cabinet Secretary for Tourism, has confirmed that the option to have a 1m distance with mitigation measures does not apply to visitor attractions currently and they must continue to apply the 2m distance. We extend our thanks to Gordon Morrison and the ASVA team for sharing this information with us.

Educational visits in England

The UK Government continues to advise against domestic (UK) overnight and overseas educational visits at this stage see [coronavirus: travel guidance for educational settings](#).

In the autumn term, schools can resume non-overnight domestic educational visits. These trips should include any trips for pupils with SEND connected with their preparation for adulthood (for example, workplace visits, travel training etc.). This should be done in line with protective measures, such as keeping children within their consistent group, and the coronavirus (COVID-19) secure measures in place at the destination. Schools should also make use of outdoor spaces in the local area to support delivery of the curriculum. As normal, schools should undertake full and thorough risk assessments in relation to all educational visits to ensure they can be done safely. As part of this risk assessment, schools will need to consider what control measures need to be used and ensure they are aware of wider advice on visiting indoor and outdoor venues. Schools should consult the [health and safety guidance on educational visits](#) when considering visits.

Say thank you to the NHS

You can say thank you by offering free and discounted tickets via Blue Light Tickets. There is no charge to zoos and the number of tickets you offer is completely up to you. Blue Light Tickets has access to over 2 million registered members who work in the NHS and emergency services. To find out more please contact Will Campbell-Lamerton at: william@bluelighttickets.co.uk We would like to know if you are able to use Blue Light Tickets – so let us know how you get on!

Finally, our Research Committee held their virtual research conference today. It has been very popular and the talks can be viewed at your leisure on their Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/biazaresearch>

Covid-19 Member Update – 04/07/20

Dear Members and Others,

This is a brief update to confirm the removal (as expected) of the reference included within the UK coronavirus [Guidance Advice on Accessing Green Spaces Safely](#) which prevented animal contact experiences in England's zoos, and also the reopening of petting farms.

In England petting farms may therefore now reopen and animal experiences etc can operate again within zoos, following "industry best practice and [HSE guidance](#) to maintain good hygiene".

To remind you that we have produced a new advice document (BIAZA Advice on Reopening Walkthroughs and Animal Contact Experiences) to support safe reopening of animal experiences. This is available [here](#) on the BIAZA website.

Covid-19 Member Update – 03/07/20

Dear members and others,

Welsh Announcement:

First Minister Mark Drakeford confirmed today the [requirement to stay local will be lifted from Monday 6 July](#). This is great news as it was required for outdoor attractions to also be able to reopen then.

Indoor Reopening in England:

The Statutory Instrument requiring indoor attractions to remain closed has now been updated to remove this requirement from tonight, allowing reopening from 4th July. The full SI can be viewed [here](#).

Animal Contact Areas and Experiences in England:

We are expecting that the current restrictions on animal contact experiences will be removed from the Government Guidance for England's zoos and aquariums very shortly. In anticipation of this we have produced an advice document on Reopening Walkthroughs and Animal Contact Experiences, to support you in managing these areas. This is available [here](#) on our website alongside our other COVID-19 resources. Thanks to all involved in developing this.

Guidance on Staff and Customer Data Collection Requirements for Track and Trace in England:

We have added three new UK Government documents to our Covid-19 resource library: [Customer Login Example Messaging](#), [FAQ on Maintaining Records for Track and Trace](#) and [Guidance on Maintaining Records](#).

UKInBound have identified that “the guidance applies to any establishment that provides an onsite service and to any events that take place on its premises. It doesn’t not apply where services can be taken offsite immediately, e.g. a food and drink outlet which only provides takeaways. If a business offers a mixture of a sit-in and takeaway service, contact information only needs to be collected for customers who are dining in. It does not apply to drop-off deliveries” - accordingly this covers zoos and aquariums.

The data that needs to be collected is:

Staff:

- The names of staff who work at the premises
- A contact phone number for each member of staff
- The dates and times that staff are at work

Customers and visitors

- The name of the customer or visitor. If there is more than one person, the name of the ‘lead member’ of the group can be recorded, along with the number of people in the group
- A phone number for each customer/visitor, or for the lead member of a group
- Date of visit and arrival, and where possible, departure time
- If a customer interacts with only one member of staff, the name of the assigned staff member should be recorded alongside the name of the customer (or lead member of a group). **The data needs to be kept for 21 days.**

The ICO has also published a statement and a short data protection checklist on customer logs, you can view their [Checklist](#) and [Statement](#).

£10 Million Kickstarting Tourism Package Announced by UK Government

The [£10 million Kick-starting Tourism Package](#) will give small businesses in tourist destinations grants of up to £5,000 to help them adapt their businesses following the coronavirus pandemic. Businesses can use the funding to pay for specialist professional advice such as human resources, legal or financial expertise, to adopt new technology and online systems or to purchase new equipment. 100% of the money will come from government with no obligation for businesses to contribute financially.

Covid-19 Member Update – 02/07/20

Dear members and others,

Meetings with Defra and Minister

Today we held productive meetings with Defra officials and the Minister for Zoos, Lord Goldsmith. We were able to convey both our gratitude for an exceptional expansion of the Zoo Support Fund as well as our deep concerns for how the scheme may operate and its applicability across the sector. We secured commitments to an ongoing dialogue with the Minister as we seek solutions going forward for members in England.

England Zoo Support Fund Application Deadline

We would like to alert collections in England that the deadline for applications under phase 1 of the Zoo Support Fund is the 19th July. We strongly encourage any zoo licence holding collection with around 6 weeks reserves or less remaining to apply. Information on doing so is provided [here](#), but do get in touch if you have any questions.

Scotland – Phase 2 Announcement

Today the Scottish Government confirmed the final phase 2 measures: <https://www.gov.scot/news/final-phase-2-measures-confirmed/>

The five-mile limit for leisure travel will be lifted for the majority of the country from tomorrow (Friday, 3 July) as will restrictions on self-catering, self-contained accommodation. The First Minister also confirmed that outdoor hospitality will be able to start trading from Monday, 6 July.

Following the introduction of mandatory face coverings on public transport, the measure will be extended to include retail settings from Friday, 10 July.

The Scottish Government will retain 2 metres as the default physical distancing requirement for Phase 3 but introduce exceptions to this requirement if practicable mitigating measures can be implemented. Update on the approach to physical distancing in Scotland can be found [here](#).

Do also note the news that relaxation of lockdown restrictions in parts of Dumfries and Galloway is being delayed as part of efforts to control a local outbreak. More details on this can be seen [here](#).

BIAZA also met with Gordon Morrison from ASVA to share updates on each association's lobbying activities. We will continue to collaborate with ASVA to maximise the impact of our collective activities in Scotland.

Wales – Timetable for phased reopening of tourism sector

If the requirement to stay local is lifted in Wales on 6 July, outdoor visitor attractions will be able to reopen from Monday. Future decisions about indoor re-opening will be made later and will depend on the success of the first phase of outdoor opening.

The full press release from the Welsh Government can be read [here](#).

Fundraising initiative

We have been contacted by TWIN-ASSOCIATES, an Ex-BBC creative team who are interested in setting up a social media campaign aimed at getting school children involved (for example through sponsored challenges) to help fundraise for zoos and aquariums. They are looking at creating social media posts for Zoos/Aquariums and Zoom class packs for schools and have some downloadable assets ready. If you are interested in working with them please [contact](#) Amy and Ian.

Covid-19 Member Update – 01/07/20

Dear members and others,

Sustainable Innovation Fund

This week businesses can apply for the UK Government's Sustainable Innovation Fund. This fund, totaling £200m, is aimed at research and development (R&D) intensive businesses but might

apply to some of our member's innovative projects. Applications close on 29 July. [For more details including how to apply click here.](#)

Tech Toolkit from Scottish Government

A technological toolkit has been published for use of Scottish visitor attractions. This includes a range of advice on technological solutions including online booking systems and social distancing. We hope our members in Scotland find this useful. [Click here for the toolkit](#)

Job Retention Scheme

Today marks the first day of the new Job Retention Scheme. This allows employees to work part time while using the furlough scheme. This scheme will close on 31 October. [Click here for further details.](#)

UK Government has produced a series of videos about the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, covering eligibility, how to make a claim, the extension of the scheme and flexible furloughing. The videos are available at [this link](#).

A webinar about the extension of the scheme and flexible furloughing is being run by HMRC on 2nd, 3rd, 6th and 7th July. You can [register here](#).

Reopening Research

Dr Jess Rendle, Dr Anne Carter and Dr Ellen Williams are researching the impact of Covid-19 zoo closure and subsequent reopening on animal behaviour. If your collection is interested in getting involved you can contact the researchers directly on ellen.williams@ntu.ac.uk or 0115 848 5205 for more information. The project team plan to collate data and send regular updates to the study zoos throughout the project to ensure this can be used actively in management during phased reopening.

Covid-19 Member Update – 30/06/20

Dear members and others,

Reopening Promotion

In order to promote the reopening of your sites as best as possible we have edited our members page list. Please check the list here: <https://biaza.org.uk/members/all> and let [Frankie](#) know if it's correct for your collection. If you haven't opened yet, please email Frankie to confirm your opening date so we can ensure the list is updated accurately ASAP.

Leicester lockdown

You may be aware that an area of Leicester has been the first place in England to be placed under local lockdown in response to a COVID-19 outbreak. This may have a knock-on effect on business in the region. Downing street has confirmed that employers who have to shut their doors under local lockdown will be able to re-furlough staff if they have used the scheme before. Members may want to prepare for further such outbreaks in their areas.

Welsh Visitor Economy Guidance

The Welsh Government has released [guidance for tourism and hospitality businesses for a phased and safe reopening](#). This again confirms the reopening date of 6th July for outdoor attractions, but

does not yet set a date for indoor attractions. It provides some good top level guidance before directing zoos and aquariums to the BIAZA reopening resources.

UKHospitality Cymru has also provided [reopening guidance for hospitality businesses in Wales](#) that you may find useful.

Flushed with advice - Scottish Guidance on Toilets

We know many of you are putting considerable effort into safely managing your toilets. This guidance document from the Scottish Government specifically on [opening public and customer toilets](#) may be a useful resource for your planning.

Movement for Good award

Last year one of our corporate members, Lycetts, highlighted the Movement for Good awards. Phase 2 for this year (10 charities each receive a £50,000 grant) is open for applications, closing Friday 24 July 2020. They are looking to fund projects which aim to advance education and skills; citizenship or community development; arts, culture or heritage. Open to charities registered in the UK and Republic of Ireland with an income of less than £5million. Find out more: <https://www.ecclesiastical.com/movement-for-good/>

Meat availability for carnivore feeds

We have been contacted with the offer of a number of fresh roe and muntjac carcasses, in fur, free of charge but for collection in the Hampshire area. If you might be interested then please contact [Nicky](#) for further details.

Zoos Support Fund – current recipients revealed

We wanted to make members aware that Government has published a list of the recipients of the Zoo Support Fund so far, in response to a question submitted by Alex Sobel MP, in case this information impacts your fundraising or communication plans.

This is Written Parliamentary Question [63487](#)

Request for Information

A reminder of some questions we would appreciate responses from our members to support our lobbying work around the criteria for the newly announced fund in England, and arguing for similar funds to be established in the devolved nations and Ireland:

1. As we reach the end of June, how many weeks of operating costs do you now have remaining?
2. If you are a charity, what level of reserves does your reserves policy state you should have?
3. CBILS – do you have any evidence or experience of commercial loans (with better terms) being pulled and instead replaced with CBIL instead? We know a few members have raised issues like this, and Defra are interested in us providing more detailed examples and information so they can ask Treasury to take action.

Covid-19 Member Update – 29/06/20

Dear members and others,

Today we share some small announcements with you and also request information that will feed directly into a meeting we have with Minister Goldsmith later this week:

Scottish Reopenings

We are excited to see the first of our Scottish members able to reopen today. Please join us in wishing them well. We continue to work with the Scottish Government as they finalise the details of their support fund, and confirm the reopening schedule for aquariums and indoor zoos (hopefully from 15th July).

Reopening Guidance

[BIAZA's reopening guidance](#) has been updated once more today. This is to incorporate additional information and feedback from the UK Cabinet Office. Please do keep an eye on this document, it is very much a working document and frequently updated as more information becomes available or the situation changes.

Don't forget you can also now find our collected [reopening top tips](#) on our website too.

English Funding Announcement

On Friday we shared the news that the UK Government has committed to launching an expanded version of the Zoo Support Fund in England with a total value of £100 million that will operate until March 2021. We are pleased to see this level of recognition and commitment from the Government but do also have some concerns about its implementation. More information on our response can be found [here](#).

Request for Information

We have a few questions it would be helpful to get responses to from a wide range of members. We will be using this information in our upcoming meeting with Minister Goldsmith to ensure the newly announced support fund in England is as useful across our membership as possible, and to continue to highlight other challenges Government needs to address:

1. As we reach the end of June, how many weeks of operating costs do you now have remaining?
2. If you are a charity, what level of reserves does your reserves policy state you should have?
3. CBILS – do you have any evidence or experience of commercial loans (with better terms) being pulled and instead replaced with CBIL instead? We know a few members have raised issues like this, and Defra are interested in us providing more detailed examples and information so they can ask Treasury to take action.

Covid-19 Member Update – 27/06/20

Dear members and others,

We hope you will excuse the lateness of this email as we learned today of major changes to the Zoo Support Fund in England and wanted to share this information with you as soon as possible. The Government announcement includes:

- The expansion of the existing Zoo Support Fund from £14million to £100 million
- Extension of the Zoo Support Fund until March 2021

BIAZA is pleased to have helped secure these substantial changes and we hope it will provide some optimism to our members. We know how vital additional financial support is for our members and

we hope you will agree that this is a huge step in the right direction, reflecting the intensive lobbying of BIAZA, the depth of public support and the work of our members.

However we do still have a number of concerns about the implementation of the scheme and we await further detail on this. Despite the size of this funding (we understand this is one of largest support funds for our sector in the world), we are concerned that many of our members still may not be able to access it due to limitations on eligibility criteria, restrictions on what costs are covered and caps on payment amounts. We are disappointed a number of points we have raised in our meetings with officials and politicians have not yet been clearly addressed. We will be continuing to lobby to maximise the usefulness of this fund for all zoos and aquariums.

In the statement released by Government we particularly welcome the Minister's commitment to ongoing meetings with the sector to get Government support right. We are pleased that we will be meeting with the Minister next week where we will raise our concerns in the hope of securing changes to the scheme before it is (re)launched later this year.

We will also be working with the Devolved Administrations and the future Irish Government to request they similarly commit to further financial support for zoos and aquariums.

Covid-19 Member Update – 26/06/20

Dear members and others,

We are awaiting an announcement by the UK Government with further news for zoos and aquariums in England late tonight and will be sending out an additional update after that. In the meantime, read on for the latest news on social distancing, hospitality business guidelines and animal experiences:

Northern Ireland Social Distancing

It has been announced that required social distancing in NI will be reduced down to 1m from 29th June. This is a few days in advance of the reopening of visitor attractions so zoos and aquariums can plan their reopening safety measures around this 1m distance, although do also consider any impact this may have on visitor confidence.

UK Hospitality Guidelines

[Covid 19 secure advice and risk assessments for hospitality businesses](#) has now been published. Pulled together by UKHospitality and a number of collaborators across the hospitality sector, this guidance document contains useful advice for our sector, particularly in the sections on family entertainment centres and amusement parks. While our BIAZA reopening guidelines are in alignment with this document, it covers broader topics beyond the scope of our sector specific guidance which may still be valuable advice for zoos and aquariums.

Animal Experiences

Many members have been in touch to ask questions about when it will be possible to open exhibits where visitors and animals can come into contact, or restart animal feeds and experiences. These

activities are currently against UK Government guidance. For example, the [guidance on accessing green spaces](#) states: *“Indoor attractions and activities where people come into contact with other people, surfaces or animals (for example, children’s play areas and petting farms) must stay closed.”*

We are aware how frustrating this is for many of our members, and it is an area we are currently actively lobbying for change. Nicky is in discussion with our Veterinary Focus Group to put together some advice on this and Defra are working for clarity and timescales on Cabinet clearance on removal of the reference to animal contact in the Guidance. We are hoping it will soon become possible for zoos to make their own decisions based on their veterinary and animal care expertise and risk/disease management assessments and we will update you as soon as any change takes place.

Play areas

New [guidance on managing playgrounds](#) has just been published by UK Government. We know this is an area that many of you have questions about so hopefully this guidance will provide some clarity on how to safely manage play areas, and we will be reviewing how it interacts with our reopening guidelines in the coming days.

Also a quick reminder that the easing of lockdown restrictions in England on 4th July does leave some facilities still needing to remain closed including soft play areas.

Visit England promotional opportunity

As a partner of the Visit Britain’s ‘Good to Go’ scheme we have been offered an opportunity to feature in a promotional video by Visit England. This scheme has been developed in partnership with BIAZA and other partners to reinforce safety messages as attractions seek to open.

The video will showcasing multiple tourism business and destinations across England as being ‘ready to go’ and able to welcome visitors as well as show how you’re helping visitors keep safe during their visit. They would welcome zoos and aquariums to submit short video clips for consideration for inclusion in the video by the 29th June if possible (they apologise it is a tight turnaround).

To take part and for the appropriate forms please contact: Ronan.Francis@visitbritain.org

Covid-19 Member Update – 25/06/20

Dear members and others,

Another busy day for the office with meetings with Defra, and also Lord Goldsmith (Minister for Animal Welfare) and Andrew Rosindell, MP and Chair of the APPG Zoos and Aquariums. Lord Goldsmith conveyed his support and understanding that the financial pressure which zoos and aquariums are under will not simply be resolved by reopening. We are hoping for news over the coming days of further support for our English members from Treasury, and will be meeting again with Lord Goldsmith to review any further lobbying requirements, following that announcement.

Northern Ireland Reopening

Agricultural Minister Edwin Poots has this afternoon announced that all zoo licence holders in Northern Ireland may reopen from 3rd July. The animal welfare team at DEARA have contacted all licence holders to update them. More information on the announcement can be seen [here](#).

New [guidance for attractions, venues and experiences](#) has been published by the Northern Ireland Department for the Economy. Created in partnership with Tourism NI, it provides advice for tourism businesses to prepare for reopening. It also references the [BIAZA Reopening Guidelines](#) for additional sector specific guidance.

Visit Britain Good to Go Launch

Today VisitBritain have launched the 'Good to Go' mark, allowing organisations in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales to demonstrate that they are adhering to the respective Government and public health guidance, have carried out a COVID-19 risk assessment and checked that they have the required processes in place - you can view the full press release [here](#). The scheme is free to join and open to all businesses across the tourism industry.

As a partner organisation, BIAZA members will undergo a streamlined assessment process. In order to register, you will need to enter the website and answer a series of questions (including whether you are a BIAZA member). Once all of this has been confirmed by Visit Britain, an email will be issued to you with your logo, certificate and a set of guidelines to help you. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call the Visit Britain team on 0345 873 8050.

Irish Safety Charter

Fáilte Ireland are launching a system where businesses can apply for a seal of approval that all staff are Covid safety trained. The Safety Charter demonstrates to your customers and employees that you, as a tourism and hospitality business, are operating in line with current Government public health advice and with safety and cleaning protocols in place. More info [here](#).

New Reopening Resources

In addition to the thorough [reopening guidelines](#), we have combined lessons learnt from attractions that have reopened (including Zoos, Aquariums, Botanical gardens, Historic houses, Castles, Museums, Places of worship and Parks), and visitor research from ALVA and ASVA into [handy top tips for reopening](#).

Our reopening webinar tomorrow at 11am will include discussion and case studies of reopening indoor spaces, reopening from a small zoos' perspective and experiences from those already open. Contact [Frankie](#) to register ASAP.

Economic Resilience Fund in Wales

The Welsh Government has extended the Economic Resilience Fund support for businesses in Wales. Eligible businesses can claim up to £690,000 for large businesses. The [online eligibility checker](#) is open for companies to prepare their applications in advance, applications will open on 29 June 2020.

Covid-19 Member Update – 24/06/20

Dear members and others,

This week is turning out to be another busy one with further lockdown easing being announced, including the great news from yesterday that aquariums and indoor zoo spaces can reopen in England from 4th July.

Reopening in England

Following the Prime Ministers announcement yesterday that a wider range of visitor attractions, and other businesses, could reopen from 4th July, we are pleased to see indoor zoos and aquariums

specifically included in the published list of [reopening businesses](#). This also includes the indoor areas of outdoor zoos too. Our reopening webinar on Friday will include discussion of reopening indoor spaces. Contact [Frankie](#) to register.

One element of the announcement we need to explore further is the requirement for businesses to keep records of their customers to support the test and trace efforts and what this means for our sector. We will update you when we have more information on this.

Alongside this, the [Visitor Economy Guidance for working safely during coronavirus](#) has been published. This applies to zoos and aquariums so we encourage you to use it. It includes guidance on topics such as balancing social distancing measures with security measures against terrorist attacks (e.g. in queue management). You will also see it refers to the [BIAZA Reopening Guidelines](#) for further detailed guidance for our sector.

Updated guidance has also been published for [restaurants, pubs, bars and takeaway services](#) reflecting the changes announced there. This is applicable to your catering facilities so you should refer to it where needed.

Social Distancing in England

Another big announcement made by the Prime Minister yesterday was the movement towards Government guidance rather than legislation on social distancing, and increasing flexibility around the 2m distance through what he referred to as '1m+'. He stated that 2m distancing should still be used where possible, but it will be acceptable to have distances of 1m as long as additional risk mitigation measures are used (e.g. masks, perspex barriers).

Reopening in Scotland

Further announcements have been made by the First Minister about the timescales for various phases of reopening. They are summarised in the table below, with the zoo and aquariums relevant elements highlighted. It is currently still expected that indoor attractions will be able to reopen from 15th July and we anticipate that this should include aquariums and indoor zoos, but are seeking firm confirmation. The next review point in Scotland is the 2nd July.

We had a meeting today with Bev Williams from the Animal Welfare team where we were able to thank her for her support in securing earlier reopening for zoos in Scotland and a financial support package, offer our ongoing assistance as they work to implement that financial package and gain clarity on a few areas of query from our members. We have also worked with Bev to update our [Reopening Guidance](#) to incorporate feedback from Scottish Government.

Guide to re-opening and scaling up over the rest of Phase 2 and early Phase 3. Indicative dates: confirmation subject to and phase criteria being met. Not all detail is shown below. Please refer to any relevant guidance.

Monday 29 June	Phase 2 - Indicative Dates	Phase 3 - Indicative Dates
Indoor (non-office) workplaces resume once relevant guidance is implemented. <i>Includes:</i> factories, warehouses, labs and research facilities. <i>Excludes:</i> indoor workplaces due to open in Phase 3 (e.g. non-essential offices and call-centres).	Travel distance restriction relaxed - 3 July	People can meet in extended groups outdoors (with physical distancing) - 10 July
Street-access retail can re-open once guidance is implemented. Interiors of shopping centres/malls remain closed for non-essential shops until Phase 3.	Self-catering accommodation and second homes (without shared facilities) permitted - 3 July	Households can meet indoors with up to a maximum of two other households (with physical distancing) - 10 July
Outdoor markets can re-open once guidance is implemented.	Outdoor hospitality (subject to physical distancing rules and public health advice) - 6 July	Organised outdoor contact sports can resume for children and young people (subject to guidance) - 13 July
Relaxation on restrictions on housing moves.		All dental practices begin to see registered patients for non-aerosol routine care. Work will begin to return aerosol generating procedures to practice safely - 13 July
Outdoor sports courts can re-open.		Increasing capacity within community optometry practices for emergency and essential eye care - 13 July
Playgrounds can re-open.		Non-essential shops inside shopping centres can re-open (following guidance and with physical distancing) - 13 July
Registration offices open for high priority tasks.		All holiday accommodation permitted (following relevant guidance) - 15 July
Marriages & civil partnerships allowed with minimal attendees - outdoors only.		Indoor hospitality (subject to physical distancing rules and public health advice) - 15 July
Zoos and garden attractions can open for local access only (broadly within 5 miles) in this phase.		Hairdressers and barbers - with enhanced hygiene measures - 15 July
		Museums, galleries, cinemas, monuments, libraries - with physical distancing and other measures (e.g. ticketing in advance) - 15 July
		All childcare providers can open subject to individual provider arrangements - 15 July

APPG Meeting

BIAZA was delighted that around 16 MPs and Peers joined us today to hear from BIAZA and industry leaders about the enormous challenge facing our members and the urgent need for long-term funding and support.

Special thanks go to Sharon Redrobe and Roger Maslin for their presentations to parliamentarians; together with BIAZA's own Nicky Needham, they did a fantastic job representing our diverse sector and the extraordinary challenges we face.

BIAZA is very grateful to Andrew Rosindell MP for chairing such an informative, timely and well attended meeting. We are hopeful this meeting marks another important step as we lobby on behalf of zoos and aquariums during this crisis.

PPE

Thank you to everyone who recommended a supplier of PPE. The BIAZA Corporate Member Covid-19 Offers and Opportunities sheet [available here](#) has been updated to add (in a new tab) any companies that have been recommended by members and responded to say they have stock available. This will be updated as more respond.

BIAZA x Blue Light Tickets

Blue Light Tickets is a new initiative by Blue Light Card; providing an easy way to say thank you to the health, social care and emergency services community by offering free tickets to attractions and

events. There is no charge to zoos for using the service, and no charge to the blue light community. The number of tickets you offer is completely up to you. You can choose to have them allocated by ballot or on a first come first served basis and you can choose to offer additional discounted tickets. Blue Light Card has access to over 2 million registered members, over half of which work within the NHS. To find out more please contact Will Campbell-Lamerton at: william@bluelighttickets.co.uk

We would like to know if you are able to use Blue Light Tickets – so let us know how you get on!

Covid-19 Member Update – 22/06/20

Dear members and others,

BIAZA is looking forward to another busy week meeting with officials and politicians, including an extraordinary meeting of the APPG for Zoos and Aquariums, as we navigate the COVID-19 crisis.

Feedback for BEIS

BEIS (Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy) are gathering feedback on how coronavirus is impacting your business and is inviting businesses to provide feedback using the following address - intel@beis.gov.uk

Reopening webinar

Thanks to those of you who have already signed up for our next Reopening Webinar this Friday 26th at 11am. Registration will be open until Friday morning, please email Frankie to register. We are also looking for two speakers to be panelists at the webinar – one from a collection which has already opened, and one from an enclosed collection (e.g. an aquarium or tropical house) as these are the two areas this webinar will look to focus on. Again, if you would be willing to speak to represent either of these for your collection please contact Frankie.

ALVA Recovery Tracker Wave 3

The latest webinar from ALVA highlighted how to build confidence with visitors. People are concerned about other visitors not following the social distancing rules, crowds and long queues and are reassured by advance booking to limit numbers and distancing measures onsite. Pre-visit information on websites is key – particularly toilets, catering and pre-booking. More than half would not visit if the toilets are closed and they are also what people are anxious about using, so it is important to communicate safety measures taken.

Finally, please can we remind you that if you have specific questions about another member's reopening approach, it is best to contact them in the first instance before coming to us as they will usually be better placed to respond.

Covid-19 Member Update – 19/06/20

Dear members and others,

It has been another busy week for our sector from the sad news about the permanent closure of one of our members Living Coasts to the excitement of seeing some reopening announcements for Scotland and Wales. Read on for a round-up of the latest news:

Scotland Announcements

Many of you will have seen we have put out a statement on the announcement by Nicola Sturgeon of an [earlier reopening date for zoos](#), alongside gardens and similar outdoor attractions from 29th June. This is good news for some of our Scottish members, although others remain unable to reopen until later in July.

Following this the [Scottish tourism sector reopening guidance](#) was also published, and members should refer closely to it while implementing their reopening plans. Members should also note the FM stated that restrictions on travel remain in place for visiting attractions (I.e. broadly within 5 miles only) and that where they are ticketed, tickets must be purchased online in advance only.

Excitingly a second announcement was also made committing the Government to establishing [a zoo support fund in Scotland](#), although the full details of this are yet to be released so we are unable to assess its real value for our members. This is something we have been closely supporting the Animal Welfare team to pursue so it is great to see that commitment being made and we will watch closely for any further news.

Welsh Announcement

Welsh First Minister Mark Drakeford today announced the [next steps in easing lockdown restrictions in Wales](#). This includes the intention to both allow reopening of visitor attractions from 6th July and to ease the local travel only restrictions on the same date. While these are contingent on the control of Covid-19 in Wales, the FM told visitor attractions they should now be preparing for both of those elements to come into place on 6th July.

Subsequent communication with Welsh Government Officials confirmed that zoos are included as visitor attractions within that announcement. Again, this is good news for our Welsh members, particularly if those travel restrictions are also eased, but we are mindful that the need for financial support has not gone away.

Reopening across BIAZA

We have been following our members' reopening announcements and have made a spreadsheet with information on this available to BIAZA members on the website [here](#) (you will need to log in first to see it). Please keep sending us your plans and we will keep this document updated.

We have also created the attached infographic summarising the reopening situation across the BIAZA region.

We also remind you that we have another reopening webinar taking place on 26th June at 11am. Please contact [Frankie](#) to register.

UK VAT Deferral

The VAT payment deferrals put in place due to the pandemic are due to end on 30th June. The Government has updated the [guidance documents](#) surrounding this, including instructions for what you will need to do in advance of that date.

Working across five nations



BIAZA has met with every Government officials in every nation...



BIAZA is working hard across five nations to ensure zoos and aquariums are able to face the unprecedented challenge of COVID-19. Together we are stronger.

Covid-19 Member Update – 17/06/20

Dear members and others,

Provision of picnic benches and tables adjacent to catering outlets offering takeaways (England)

Unfortunately, we received notice today of a necessary amendment to our Reopening Guidelines, preventing the provision of picnic benches and tables adjacent to catering outlets on those sites in England which have reopened this week. We understand that this presents operational challenges and potentially reduced revenue for some collections and will raise these issues with BEIS and

update you on any changes here. Please see the amended draft of the [BIAZA Reopening Guidelines](#) for clarity.

PPE Supplies

We are being made aware that many collections are struggling to source affordable, high quality PPE. We would be very grateful to anyone who might be able to share details of any reliable and reputable suppliers.

UK lobbying continues

Members will be aware of our progress lobbying in the UK Government. Next Tuesday will see an extraordinary meeting of the APPG for Zoos and Aquariums – this meeting is for all parliamentarians to hear about the case for financial support for the sector. We once again urge you to contact your local MP and ask them to attend this meeting.

We have also received confirmation that we have secured a meeting with the minister in addition to our regular meetings with the Defra team.

We are hugely grateful for everyone who has been in contact with your representatives – together we have proven to be an effective lobbying force and this will be vital in the current and future circumstances. Today we got welcome news that the Shadow Minister for Tourism has enjoyed a fantastic day out at Knowsley Safari Park (picture attached)!

Just Keep Swimming

The Aquarium Working Group is planning a week of special activities to support aquariums and their staff from 22nd June. Each day there will be a talk from an aquarium expert focused on different aspects of preparing to reopen and lessons learned being shared by some who have already reopened, finally culminating in a pub quiz session on the Friday. We'll share links to the talks when we have them, but in the meantime you can learn more by joining their [Facebook page](#).

Covid-19 Member Update – 16/06/20

Dear members and others,

NI Reopening Brought Forward

It has been announced that the reopening of tourism-related businesses in Northern Ireland is to be conditionally brought forward to include reopening of visitor attractions from July 3rd. This includes reference to museums, historic houses, culture and heritage venues, and outdoor attractions (the outdoor areas of some attractions are already open). It is likely that this will be a phased re-opening in line with site or building specific risk assessments.

Crew Training Session

Thanks to all those who took part in today's excellent webinar delivered by Adam Senior (Crew Training), focusing on how your staff can effectively manage visitors under new Covid restrictions. For those who missed it, Adam has kindly shared his slides and a video of the 30 min webinar is available on request. If you would like to get in touch with Adam with any queries, or for further information on training opportunities available then do email him directly at [<adam@crew.uk.net>](mailto:adam@crew.uk.net).

Financial Support Open Letter

On Sunday, the attached open letter signed by MPs and Lords was published in The Telegraph. It focused on drawing attention to the ongoing and urgent need for significant financial support for zoos and aquariums. We are again grateful to Andrew Rosindell MP for giving us the opportunity to work with him on this.

Covid-19 Member Update – 15/06/20

Dear members and others,

Living Coasts Closure

We are very sad to share news that BIAZA member [Living Coasts will not be reopening](#). Wild Planet Trust announced the news earlier today. This is a huge blow to the conservation community and another devastating impact of the coronavirus. BIAZA's thoughts are with everyone at Living Coasts and the Wild Planet Trust at this challenging time.

We are asking Governments to take action to prevent further closures through providing urgent and long-term financial support and giving clarity on reopening dates for all those currently not able to do so.

UK Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme Updates

The UK Government has now updated much of its CJRS/furloughing scheme guidance to reflect the changes that take effect from 1st July as the new flexible version of the scheme commences. The changes under the new flexible scheme include:

- Only staff who have been previously furloughed and claimed for (therefore registered on the scheme) are eligible
- Runs from 1st July to 31st October 2020
- Employers will have greater flexibility to bring furloughed staff back to work part-time from 1st July – this is for any quantity of hours and any shift pattern
- Employers will have to pay an increasing proportion of the furlough salary (which remains at 80% normal salary capped at £2500 per month minimum, though employers can choose to top this up to 100%):
 - July – employers will pay staff for any hours worked, but can claim as now for any furloughed hours (i.e. 80% or £2500 per month, with ER NICS & pension contributions covered too)
 - August – employers will pay ER NICS & pension contributions, as well as pay for any hours worked, Government continues to refund 80% of remaining hours up to £2500 per month
 - September – Government will refund 70% of furloughed hours up to £2187.50 per month, employers must pay for any hours worked, top up furloughed hours to 80% salary (or £2500) and ER NICS & pension
 - October – Government will refund 60% of furloughed hours up to £1875 per month, employers must pay for any hours worked, top up furloughed hours to 80% salary (or £2500) and ER NICS & pension

Virtual Zoos & Aquariums APPG Meeting

BIAZA is pleased to follow last week's parliamentary debate with an extraordinary meeting for the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Zoos and Aquariums, chaired by Andrew Rosindell MP. This meeting will be remarkable, not only being our first virtual version of this APPG but it will also

give us an opportunity to demonstrate the importance of financial support for the sector across Great Britain.

Invitations to parliamentarians will be issued over the coming days. We ask you to once again get in contact with your Member of Parliament and attend what is bound to be an eye-opening meeting. This will take place June 24th 16.00-17.00, MPs interested in attending should contact Scott Sherlock: SHERLOCKS@parliament.uk.

Upcoming training and webinar opportunities

BIAZA and the wider community are hosting a number of webinars in the coming days that you may be interested in:

- Adam Senior of Crew is hosting a brief session on Social Distancing Management and Visitor Engagement Strategies and Skills Training tomorrow (16th June) at 2pm
- Second BIAZA reopening webinar on 26th June at 11am
- BIAZA Conservation Education committee - Practical considerations for delivering education on Thursday 18th at 4pm

Covid-19 Member Update – 14/06/20

Dear members and others,

UK (England) Accessing Green Spaces Public Advice

This is a quick update to let you know the updated [UK Government advice on accessing green spaces](#) safely has been published this afternoon. This document is aimed at the public in England, and has been updated to clarify they are now (from tomorrow) able to visit outdoor zoos. It now states that in England the public can:

“visit outdoor animal attractions, including safari parks, the outdoor parts of zoos and animal attractions on farms, but you must follow strict social distancing guidelines”

A further section on outdoor animal attractions has also been added to the end of the advice which states the following:

“Animal attractions can reopen outdoor areas for visitors. This includes zoos, safari parks, farms, wildlife centres and any place where animals are exhibited to the public as an attraction.

Visitors must follow social distancing guidelines.

Indoor attractions and activities where people come into contact with other people, surfaces or animals (for example, children’s play areas and petting farms) must stay closed.

See [BIAZA \(British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums\) resources and guidance for zoos and aquariums.](#)”

Let us know if you have any queries about this latest guidance update and we will be able to request clarity.

Covid-19 Member Update – 12/06/20

Dear BIAZA Members and others,

Publication of Amendments to Statutory Instrument (SI), allowing opening of some zoos in England from June 15th

This is to inform you that the expected amendments to the SI were published late this afternoon which will allow the opening of outside animal attractions from Monday 15th June.

The SI is here: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2020/588/regulation/2/made>

And the Explanatory notes are here:

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2020/588/pdfs/uksiem_20200588_en.pdf

Key points are:

1. Outside of animal attractions removed from closed list – this includes outdoor areas of otherwise indoors attractions.
2. Retail & catering (as take-away) can be opened (following the specific guidance on this) even if attraction must remain closed, as long as it can be accessed from the street (not via routes through the closed attraction).

As you know we are continuing our lobbying efforts for aquariums and other enclosed attractions in England, and for those sites still closed in the devolved nations and Ireland.

Reopening Guidance

We are now waiting for the publication of two key guidance documents (Visitor Economy Guidance and Hospitality sector-specific guidance) from UK Government which will further inform our reopening requirements and we will share those as soon as they are available, hopefully later this weekend. In the meantime we are sharing the attached, updated draft of our own guidance which has had some small amends this week, as requested by PHE, DCMS and Defra, in order that they are fully aligned. This draft is not yet complete as we are awaiting the reference links to the above, but we are aware that many collections will be working through the weekend so it may be of use at this point.

Reopening Meeting and Staff Training

Thanks to all those who joined the discussions in today's successful Reopening Webinar. We have scheduled another Reopening Meeting on Friday June 26th, between 11-12. Do let [Frankie](#) know if you'd like to attend.

Adam Senior (CREW Training) has also kindly agreed to provide a free half hour training session next week on 'Social Distancing Management and Visitor Engagement Strategies and Skills Training', Tuesday 16th June at 2pm. Please see the attached flyer for more information and let [Frankie](#) know if you'd like to attend.

Covid-19 Member Update – 11/06/20

Dear members and others,

Members will be aware of today's parliamentary debate. It has been an incredible week and we want to share our full thoughts with you in a statement tomorrow. If you missed it you can view it here: <https://parliamentlive.tv/Event/Index/bce17d1e-1b0a-4964-9c6f-a65e0da78262>

Scottish Reopening

Scotland's tourism businesses have been told to [prepare to reopen](#) on 15 July. Tourism Secretary Fergus Ewing said the date was conditional on moving to the third phase of the route map for easing lockdown restrictions. We will update on this as there are further announcements. Additionally, the First Minister answered a question about Edinburgh Zoo in FMQs indicating her government will take a slower approach to reopening.

We are continuing to lobby hard for our Scottish members and have really appreciated the support of those members. We have also today sent a direct email out to our Scottish members with a further update.

Irish Guidelines:

Fáilte Ireland has published operational guidelines for the tourism industry to ensure the safe reopening of tourism businesses on 29 June. Sector-specific guidelines are available for [Visitor Attractions](#).

Furloughing for Parents

People on paternity and maternity leave who return to work in the coming months will be eligible for the government's furlough scheme – see [here](#) for detail.

Track and Trace in England

Just a quick reminder to members about the changes to the testing regime. Specifically, everyone is now eligible for testing through the [NHS portal](#). Priority testing for essential workers is still available through the [employer portal](#) and [self-referral portal](#) - please note it is particularly important to remind BAME and hard to reach groups that they can and should get a test if they have symptoms.

NFAN Webinar

The National Farm Attractions Network are hosting a webinar on 'Reopening your Attraction' taking place tomorrow Friday 12 June from 7pm. There will be four breakout rooms - The Future of Larger Events, Learning from attractions who are open, HR 'Ask the Expert' Q&A and Practical Social Distancing Solutions. All registered attendees will obtain recordings of each breakout room. To register please click [here](#).

Reopening Webinar & Data

We are looking forward to seeing many of you tomorrow in our first re-opening webinar.

It would be extremely helpful for us to be able to track planned opening dates from across the membership to better understand the developing overall picture. If you are able, please email [Frankie](#) your intended reopening date, along with any further notes you wish to provide about your strategies for doing so. This will help us promote reopening members whilst also targeting support for those who are not able to do so currently.

Covid-19 Member Update – 10/06/20

Dear members and others,

UK Prime Minister's Announcement

As expected, in the daily coronavirus briefing today, the UK Prime Minister announced that outdoor areas of zoos and safari parks are able to open from the 15th June in England, as long as they can do so safely. We were pleased the Prime Minister felt able to remark on our hard work to achieve this outcome.

Further details on demonstrating safety for reopening are expected to be released before the 15th and we will update members on this as soon as possible. In the meantime, we strongly recommend you consult and follow the [BIAZA Reopening Guidance](#). You may also wish to join our reopening webinar on Friday – see below for more info.

Whilst this is good news for many of our members, we know it is not the end of the impact of Covid-19 on our sector. Many remain unable to reopen yet; our aquariums and indoor collections, those in the devolved nations and those collections for whom it is not yet financially viable. Since yesterday we have progressed our work to gain financial support and reopening clarity across the sector and will continue to do so, including through the parliamentary debate.

Parliamentary Debate

The debate tomorrow 11 June is going ahead. Although we are delighted at the reopening news for English zoos and safari parks, we are continuing to push the need for further financial support for all collections, and greater clarity and support for reopening for our aquariums, tropical houses and devolved nation collections. This has been the focus of our briefing to MPs.

We would strongly recommend you to still encourage your MP to attend tomorrow, particularly if you are a collection which cannot currently reopen.

Aquariums & Theme Parks in Ireland

Unfortunately, while we have had good news in England, we have also had frustrating news from Ireland. We have been made aware of a change to the legislation (via a Statutory Instrument) in Ireland which places aquariums and theme parks on the list of business that must remain closed. This is a disappointing development for many of our Irish members who were preparing to open and there has been a lack of central Government communication about it. We have reached out to our impacted members and will continue to seek the reasons for this change and clarity from Irish Government. Currently it would appear that this is a temporary measure until the 29th June. If you have any queries, please contact [Nicky](#).

Reopening Data

It would be extremely helpful for us to be able to track planned opening dates from across the membership to better understand the developing overall picture. If you are able, please email [Frankie](#) your intended reopening date, along with any further notes you wish to provide about your strategies for doing so. This will help us promote reopening members whilst also targeting support for those who are not able to do so currently.

Reopening Communications

We know how pleased many of you who are able to reopen will be and do encourage you to celebrate your reopenings where you are able to, but it is also critical to continue pushing messages reminding of the ongoing need for financial support for all zoos and aquariums, especially while many are still unable to reopen. If you need support with your communications, please contact [Andy](#).

Reopening Webinar

A reminder that the reopening webinar is still taking place this Friday 12 June at 10am with lots of discussion on strategies. If you have not yet booked on but are interested in attending, please email [Frankie](#).

Economic Resilience Fund in Wales

Yesterday the Welsh Government released further information on the second phase of the ERF. Some of our members have had success in accessing the first phase of this fund. This new phase provides a further £100 million in financial support for eligible businesses that have not yet had funding from the ERF. For more information please [click here](#).

Covid-19 Member Update – 09/06/20

Dear members and others,

Irish Update

We are happy to be able to share the good news that our Irish members are now all progressing well towards reopening under the accelerated roadmap. We would like to send the best wishes of the community to those opening this week, including our first member aquarium to reopen, Galway Atlantaquaria.

We also had a meeting earlier today with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). We reiterated the need to press for funding as soon as the political situation allows, and stressed that although Irish zoos and aquariums are now starting to reopen, the financial challenges will remain and extra support will be needed to maintain animal welfare as collections enter the winter period with significant shortfalls. We will be looking to collate some requested additional evidence to support future funding bids with our Irish members and will be in touch on this soon.

UK Update

Momentum around the adjournment debate about the reopening of zoos being led by Andrew Rosindell MP is quickly growing. We have had several direct meetings, and numerous email exchanges with MPs reaching out to support the UK's zoos and aquariums. Many thanks to everyone that has contacted local MPs, pushed out communications about the debate and encouraged their supporters to also get involved.

UK Furloughing Deadline

Remember that the deadline for furloughing any member of staff that has not yet completed a three-week period of furlough leave is tomorrow, the 10th June, so they can complete that initial period by the end of the month. After this point it will not be possible to register any new staff to the scheme, as it moves into the next phase of flexible furlough from 1st July. [Click here](#) for more information.

Covid-19 Member Update – 08/06/20

Dear members and others,

International Support

We are hugely encouraged to have received strong support for our community from our international colleagues at WAZA, EAZA and the IUCN SSC, who have supplied statements echoing our requests for support for BIAZA zoos and aquariums from the Government. EAZA's letter of support has been sent direct to the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. These are available on the website with the other [Covid resources](#).

#YourZoosNeedYou

Our lobbying work aimed at MPs continues at a pace. Tomorrow we hope to bring you more details, but today we want to thank all those members who have contacted their MPs and are encouraging their public to do so. We would urge all members in the UK to continue to do so.

The aim of the debate on June 11th is to articulate to government the huge challenges faced by the sector. We hope the pressure from public and from MPs across the house will demonstrate the breadth of support for zoos and aquariums.

[Click here for template resources.](#)

Opening Retail or Catering Elements (UK/England)

We are aware that whilst unable to open their main sites, some collections are considering opening parts of their (e.g. café, gift shop etc). We just wanted to draw everyone's attention to Section 23E(2) of the mandated list of businesses which must close (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2020/350/schedule/2>) which states that those parts of attractions which are enclosed or substantially enclosed, including shops or visitor centres (but not toilets) must remain closed until further notice. Defra are seeking clarity on this from their lawyers, and we will share this as soon as we have it, but please exercise caution if considering early opening of enclosed, indoor food outlets etc. If you would like to discuss this further then do email [nicky](#).

Green Spaces Guidance in England

This [guidance](#) has now been updated to reflect the recent legal changes. The key quote for our sector is:

"Zoos, including safari parks, must close under the Regulations. A zoo is a business whose main activity is keeping animals not normally domesticated in England for exhibition to the public. Other businesses that keep and exhibit those types of animals, for example nature reserves, may open. They should ensure that areas where these types of animals are exhibited are restricted where possible. All possible steps should be taken to reduce risk of visitors gathering at particular animal or other attractions in the establishment. As with other visitor attractions, indoor areas must remain closed."

Track, Trace and Protect in Wales

Further guidance on the implementation of this scheme in Wales has now been released. A summary of the process being used in Wales can be found [here](#) and additional guidance for employers is [here](#).

Happy World Ocean Day!

Finally, we want to wish all our members a fantastic World Ocean Day. We took the opportunity to provide a message of support to all our aquarium members through the National Marine Aquarium.

If you have other communication opportunities which can be aligned with our lobbying activities please get in touch with Andy.

Covid-19 Member Update – 04/06/20

Dear members and others,

Today has been a busy day for us and many of our members as greater media, public and political attention is being paid to the serious situation facing zoos and aquariums. Read on for news of an upcoming debate in parliament we have secured and how you can get involved:

Westminster Adjournment Debate - #YourZoosNeedYou!

We are pleased to announce that we have been able to secure a debate in UK parliament about the crisis facing zoos, aquariums and organisations dedicated to animal welfare and conservation. This debate will be held on Thursday 11 June.

The debate was secured through the efforts of BIAZA's Public Affairs Working Group (PAWG) and the APPG for zoos and aquariums led by Andrew Rosindell MP. It is now essential that MPs speak up for zoos and aquariums in this crisis and should use the debate on 11th of June to do so.

We need your support to ensure this debate pushes for the financial support and flexibility to reopen that our sector desperately needs. We have created a [template letter for BIAZA members to ask their local MP to participate](#).

We are also launching a media campaign ' #YourZoosNeedYou ' to generate further attention around the debate and the issues it will cover. We want to encourage as many of you as possible to take part – please try and generate attention for the debate and the specific issues facing your collection. We hope in this way to build up towards releasing a collaborative BIAZA statement responding to the debate with contributions from across our diverse membership.

Additionally, we will be drawing upon the support of the public for zoos and aquariums, asking them to also reach out to their MP to attend the debate using this [template letter](#). You will see social media communications on the BIAZA channels reflecting this. Again, we encourage you to similarly harness your public support.

Letter to UK PM

Earlier today we issued another letter to the Prime Minister's office from the BIAZA Chair, Dr Christoph Schwitzer. This highlighted the worsening financial situation of our members and the urgent need for government action. The letter also elaborated on the important public health role that our members could play as highly controlled environments.

Petitions

We are aware that a number of zoo and aquarium focused petitions have taken off in the last day or two, and some members have asked why BIAZA hasn't taken this route. Petitions can be excellent ways of demonstrating public support, but typically their focus is to secure parliamentary debates. As this is something we have already achieved we have decided to focus our lobbying efforts on other actions at this time.

However, the challenges faced by our sector at this time will need a diversity of solutions so you may wish to also support some of the petitions as appropriate to your collection.

Daily Briefing Questions

We have been approached by some creative and enthusiastic keepers (from our members & beyond) who wanted to support the sector by submitting questions to be asked at the Westminster daily briefings. It's great to have engagement, suggestions and collaboration coming from across the sector.

If anyone would like to support this effort to have zoos and aquariums highlighted during the briefings then you can submit questions [here](#). We suggest asking something similar to this: *When uncontrolled outdoor areas and non-essential retail can open, why won't the Government allow zoos and safari parks which can offer controlled outdoor experiences the flexibility to open and the financial support they need?*

BIAZA Member Reopenings

It is cheering to see the small number of members reopening or planning to open soon, as we work hard to support all those members not able to be open. Dublin Zoo opened on 2nd June and is providing a great example of the successful reopening of a large, capital city zoo. It joins Jersey Zoo, Fota Wildlife Park and Curragh's Wildlife Park as open BIAZA members, and all of these collections are supporting others through helping us to continuously refine our reopening guidance based on their lessons learned, and providing case studies to Governments on what is possible.

We are aware of a few more members soon to join them, including our first England based members as the WWT sites reopen next week. These sites are opening as nature reserves in line with the guidance on green spaces and advice from Defra. If any other collections feel they may fit the description of nature reserve, [contact us](#) and we can give you more information on this. Our thanks go out to the WWT team for supporting other members in this too.

Covid-19 Member Update – 1/06/20

Dear members and others,

Today's update has a quick recap of the news from the weekend as well as updates regarding ongoing activities this week:

Reopening in England

As you will be aware, there was a significant change to the legislation in the UK yesterday that moves zoos, safari parks and aquariums onto the legally 'must remain closed' list in England. Both BIAZA and Defra put out updates on this yesterday. We are frustrated and disappointed by this

decision and will be putting out further communications regarding our next steps in this area later this week.

However, we have not stood still. Already today we reiterated to Defra the devastating impact this decision will have on our affected members and pushed the now even higher importance of further Government support for zoos and aquariums. We have also worked with Andrew Rosindell MP to submit an urgent parliamentary question to keep our sector firmly on the parliamentary agenda.

Defra Survey and Zoo Support Work

License holders in England should have last week received a further email communication about the Zoo Support Fund from Defra Zoos Policy Team. This also included a questionnaire covering financial information. Whilst we appreciate that many of you have already provided Defra with detailed information regarding your situations, we can confirm the requested information is feeding into ongoing active work by Defra as they look to hold further discussions with Treasury about support for our sector. Therefore, we encourage you to engage with the questionnaire if you have any additional relevant information you can share with that team. If you have not received their email please let them know by contacting Zoos.Branch@defra.gov.uk.

Scottish Government Letter

On Friday, we sent a further letter to the Scottish Government again setting out details of the need for sector specific financial support and clear, prompt inclusion in the Scottish reopening plans. We have also drafted a further template email for any Scottish members looking to engage with their local MSP (& MP too). This can be found on our website [here](#). Please let us know if you use it, and we are also happy to give advice and support if you are writing your own letters to Scottish Government and MSPs too.

BIAZA Reopening Webinar – 12th June

We will be holding an online webinar for interested BIAZA members to discuss reopening strategies on 12th June (10am). If you would be interested in participating, then please contact Frankie (Frankie.Lawrence-Thompson@biaza.org.uk) as soon as possible to express your interest.

Finally, looking ahead to the rest of this week, we have a number of meetings arranged, including with Government departments across the devolved administrations and Ireland to continue our lobbying work on behalf of all BIAZA members, and will keep you updated on their outcomes.

Covid-19 Member Update – 31/05/20

Dear Members,

We wanted to update you as we have just had an urgent meeting with Defra who have provided us with some new and unwelcome information. At midnight tonight a [new Statutory Instrument \(SI\)](#) will come into effect which puts several significant amendments in place to implement Step 2 of the UK Recovery Roadmap. **We are sorry to report that this will include the addition of zoos, aquariums and safari parks and farm attractions on the list of businesses which must remain closed, alongside a significant range of other outdoor visitor attractions.**

The decision to restrict more organisations and businesses is being taken at a point when restrictions on individuals are easing, in order to contain the increased virus transmission risks. The next review point will be June 18th for an implementation of July 4th.

We wish we had more positive news to share and can assure you that we are working with the full support of Defra, the Minister the Secretary of State and Andrew Rosindell, MP and our APPG, to press the urgency of reopening for all our sites to be able to open safely.

Covid-19 Member Update – 30/05/20

Dear Members,

Today, the UK (Westminster) Government published [further guidance](#) covering what the public can and can't do in England in step two of the roadmap beginning on 1st June. This guidance has changed significantly from that for step one and the blanket prohibition on the public visiting "ticketed outdoor attractions" has been removed. A number of new sections are relevant to our sector so we recommend you review the full document closely to assess it in relation to your site.

Key points of the guidance are:

"From Monday 1 June, there are a limited number of things you will be able to do in England that you could not do before:

- *spend time outdoors, including private gardens and other outdoor spaces, in groups of up to six people from different households, following social distancing guidelines"*

Section 1.17 ("Can I visit outdoor tourist sites?") states:

"Yes, you can still travel to outdoor areas, such as National Parks or beaches. Some venues are not allowed to be open so it is advisable to check ahead to ensure the venue is open to visitors. Indoor sites and some outdoor attractions are still not allowed to re-open."

Our interpretation of this new guidance is that zoos, as outdoor attractions which are not on the [closed businesses list](#), should now be able to reopen with appropriate social distancing and safety measures in place from 1st June.

However, it should be noted there is no specific reference to zoos and we have not had confirmation from Government that it is intended to include zoos. Also keep in mind the guidance is regularly updated and it is possible this wording could change, or further guidance be released, that alters this interpretation. We will of course update you as soon as we are aware of any changes.

Therefore, we strongly encourage you to look closely at all the relevant latest guidance, and to liaise with your Local Authority for advice regarding the interpretation of the Government guidelines in the local context to inform your decision making. Please also keep us updated on your plans.

We want to assure you will be continuing in our lobbying efforts to secure the flexibility for these collections to reopen and to request ongoing financial support for the sector in recognition of the wide impacts of Covid-19.

Covid-19 Member Update – 29/05/20

Dear members and others,

We have a longer update for you today reflecting the range of announcements that have been made this week, please read on for information on reopening including a member webinar, the furlough scheme changes and UK track and trace employer guidance:

Changes from 1 June in England

Last night the Prime Minister gave an update on the progression against the five tests, and the changes to lockdown rules from 1 June. The text of this update can be read [here](#). The changes included reopening of outdoor markets and car showrooms, followed by all other non-essential retail from 15 June. Also announced was from 1 June up to six people from different households can meet outside, including in gardens and other private outdoor spaces. We are awaiting the publication of the guidance to accompany these changes in lockdown restrictions and will provide further comment once those are released. In the meantime, we encourage members to liaise with their Local Authorities about their reopening plans in order to get their advice and support.

Wales Update

Easing of lockdown restrictions were announced by the First Minister earlier today. Mixing of two households outside will be allowed from Monday, as will limited local travel. FM Mark Drakeford also looked ahead to the next phase of their plan which will allow some businesses to reopen from 18th June. The summary of this announcement can be read [here](#).

A Welsh language version of the UK Government's COVID-19 strategy has now been produced and made available by the Westminster Government. [Click here to view this guidance](#).

Reopening Webinar

BIAZA Members: If you would be interested in attending an online BIAZA webinar within the next 2 weeks to discuss reopening strategies then please contact Nicky (nicky.needham@biaza.org.uk) as soon as possible to express your interest.

UK Furloughing Announcement

The Chancellor Rishi Sunak announced further details of the furloughing scheme changes. A summary of the key changes can be found [here](#) and full guidance is [here](#). These include greater flexibility to allow part time working from 1st July (with employers covering salary for hours worked) and increasing employer contributions starting with covering National Insurance and pension contributions from August and moving to employers contributing 10% of furloughed staff wages in September and 20% in October, the final month of the scheme. A key thing to note is that the current scheme is closing to new entrants on 30th June with the last three-week furloughs before that point commencing on 10th June.

Track & Trace in the UK – implications for employers

As we reported yesterday, the Government launched the Track and Trace system across England, whereby any individual deemed to be at risk of catching COVID-19 due to contact with an infected person, will be instructed to self-isolate for 14 days. As a result, entitlement to statutory sick pay has been extended so that any employee who is asked to self-isolate by the Test and Trace team, because they have been notified that they have had contact with a person with coronavirus, will be eligible for Statutory Sick Pay at the current rate of £95.85, if they cannot work from home. According to

the [workplace guidance](#), for the system to be effective, employers should insist that a member of staff tells you if the Track and Trace team have contacted them and that they self-isolate if requested. This will ensure your other members of staff are not put under unnecessary risk. If they can work from home during the self-isolation period, you should let them do so. If they can't, they will have to be paid either SSP or contractual sick pay.

Defra Communication

License holders in England should have received a further email communication about the Zoo Support Fund from Defra Zoos Policy Team. If you have not received this email please let them know by contacting Zoos.Branch@defra.gov.uk.

Scottish Tourism

Visit Scotland have been monitoring the impact of Covid-19 on the tourism and events sector. Click [here](#) to see their results from industry surveys, their latest intelligence marketing reports and feedback from events industry consultation. The Scottish Tourism Emergency Response Group (STERG) has also published the final stages of its [National Action Plan](#), which is focused on how to safely reopen the tourism industry, including marketing, events and reassuring visitors of safety. There are also calls for Scottish tourist attractions with a rateable value is £51k or above to assist the tourism minister by completing a [survey](#).

Covid-19 Member Update – 28/05/20

Dear members and others,

Today's update covers some relevant announcements from the last 24 hours:

Scotland Lockdown Update

Nicola Sturgeon has confirmed today that lockdown restrictions will undergo their first period of easing in Scotland as they move into [Phase One of their route map](#) tomorrow. Phase One still places the emphasis in Scotland on 'Stay at Home' but allows travel for leisure purposes within 5 miles of home, wider leisure and exercise opportunities and greater ability to see family and friends (allowing two households to meet outdoors). It also allows for outdoor work roles that have stopped under lockdown to resume and for some businesses to reopen such as garden centres and drive-through takeaways. A good summary of the First Minister's announcement can be found [here](#). We will be reviewing the announcement and any further published guidance closely.

Northern Ireland Lockdown Update

The Northern Ireland Executive has also just announced this afternoon that they are expecting to further ease lockdown restrictions from 8th June including reopening more retail businesses and outdoor sports facilities. The full details of this announcement are still being released, and we will keep you updated on any news relevant to zoos and aquariums.

Track and Trace in UK

Starting today the Government has launched the new [Track and Trace system](#) meaning that anyone who has been in close contact with someone testing positive for Covid-19 must self-isolate for 14 days, even if they have no symptoms. Detailed guidance on this can be found [here](#) and detailed guidance specific for the workplace can be found [here](#). The Welsh statement regarding Track and Trace can be read [here](#) and the Scottish statement [here](#).

Covid-19 Member Update – 27/05/20

Dear members and others,

Today's update focuses on some new information about lockdown regulations, reopening guidelines and a new video project from BIAZA:

Reopening Guidance

Our reopening guidance has been updated to reflect latest Government advice. The latest version can be found on our website [here](#).

Earlier today several BIAZA members assisted us in demonstrating to the Defra Zoos Policy Team the significant steps zoos and aquariums have taken to implement and manage social distancing in line with BIAZA and Government guidelines. The Defra team stated it is invaluable for them to have this detailed understanding of our sector's reopening preparations and we extend our thanks to those who participated.

Local lockdowns in England

In England, the Government has announced their intention to use local lockdowns to control local outbreaks of COVID-19 as measures ease in. This will be part of the test and trace strategy which will start next week, although no specific timescale for local lockdowns has been released. This has the potential to impact our members which may be instructed to close during these local lockdowns. As ever, we will keep you up to date on further relevant details as they arise.

Stand shoulder to shoulder in BIAZA's COVID-19 video.

Earlier today communication colleagues received details of our new video project, with the aim of demonstrating the incredible spirit of the zoo and aquarium community during lockdown. Called 'rising to the challenge' we are asking for as many members to be as involved as possible. If your communications contact has not received this information and you would like to take part, please contact [Andy](#) for further details.

Reopening research

Dr Jess Rendle, Dr Anne Carter and Dr Ellen Williams are planning to research the impact of Covid-19 zoo closure and subsequent reopening on animal behaviour. The Research Committee cannot currently review this but if your collection is interested in getting involved you can contact the researchers directly on ellen.williams@ntu.ac.uk or 0115 848 5205 for more information. The project team plan to collate data and send regular updates to the study zoos throughout the project, to ensure this can be used actively in management during phased reopening.

Covid-19 Member Update – 26/05/20

Dear members and others,

Work towards reopening is a key priority for us at the moment and there have been a number of relevant updates over the bank holiday weekend so today's update focuses mostly on that topic:

Reopening in UK

Following the changes to guidance for green spaces on Saturday, allowing ticketed gardens to reopen, the [Prime Minister yesterday started to look towards moving into Step 2 of the Roadmap in England](#) in early June, announcing the reopening of outdoor markets and car showrooms from 1st June, and other non-essential retail from the 15th June, as well as partial reopening of schools on similar timescales.

The formal review of the Government's five tests for moving to Step 2 must take place by Thursday so we expect more information and detail of what the public will be able to do to be released later this week when that review has taken place. We are continuing to actively lobby Government on this both directly and in collaboration with Andrew Rosindell MP and other key associations. Although disappointed that the restriction on the public visiting ticketed attractions remains in place so far, we remain confident that we have made the strongest possible case on behalf of members and that this has reached the highest levels of the Government. We are optimistic that the new guidelines will allow more flexibility but are also preparing to take further actions if this is not forthcoming.

In the meantime, the [guidance for retail businesses working safely during Covid-19](#) contains some information relevant to preparing zoos and aquariums for reopening, particularly their retail elements. We are incorporating useful points into our BIAZA reopening guidance and will share our updated guidance soon.

The various exit strategies announced by the Devolved Administrations also follow similar routes to those in England, although operating on different timescales. We are in touch with relevant departments in each nation and are presenting the arguments and evidence for giving zoos the opportunity to play an early role in their reopening plans.

Reopening in Ireland

Ireland is also making good progress through phase 1 of its roadmap, with the start date for phase 2 still currently set for the 8th June. The roadmap does not explicitly include zoos and aquariums and as such we are liaising with the NPWS and Dept for the Taoiseach to ensure we have the most up to date information on reopening process to share with you as details get released and updated. For the time-being we continue to recommend you submit your reopening plans to both departments as part of your preparations.

Fota Wildlife Park reopened last week and this has so far been successful. Sean McKeown and the team there are sharing their experiences with us and we are using this information to tweak our reopening guidance. We encourage our Irish members to keep in touch with us about their reopening plans.

Ireland Restart Grant

Irish Government has recently announced that this scheme, which provides grants to micro and small businesses to help them with the costs associated with reopening, has now launched via [local authority websites](#). The grant is available to businesses with a turnover of less than €5m employing up to 50 people, which were closed or impacted by at least a 25% projected reduction in turnover to the end of June 2020. The grants will be equivalent to the rates bill of the business in 2019, or a minimum grant of €2,000, with a maximum grant of €10,000.

International Travel & UK Border

On Friday the [Home Secretary announced](#) further details about plans for quarantine of people entering the UK as part of future measures to control the spread of Covid-19. From 8th June, international arrivals into the UK will need to self-isolate for 14 days on arrival. While these measures are in place, they may be relevant to any workers you have that undertake international travel as part of their roles or to staff travelling for leisure purposes (if still in place when such travel becomes possible). More information can be found [here](#). Some travellers will be [exempt from the self-isolation period](#), including those travelling to the UK from Ireland, Isle of Man and the Channel Islands.

Finally, we would like to remind you that our CEO Madelon Willemsen is currently on leave. For the time-being, please contact myself or Nicky Needham (nicky.needham@biaza.org.uk) should you need any support.

Covid-19 Member Update – 23/05/20

Dear Members,

This is to confirm that there has been no further official clarification today regarding this morning's update on the amendments to the UK Government Guidance (see update below). However, we have been working throughout the day to press for more details and the interactions we have had with Government officials indicates that this update has unfortunately not changed the situation for zoos in England.

We have also been in discussion with other leading sector organisations including ALVA, BALPPA and UK Hospitality who will all be advising their zoo members to remain closed, as per the requirements of the [Recovery Roadmap](#) and [FAQs](#), until more information is forthcoming. We will of course send an update as soon as we get any more clarification here. We understand how frustrating and disappointing this will be for those of you ready to reopen, but we remain optimistic that it will be possible soon, and we will continue to lobby Government to achieve this.

We also wanted to share [ALVA's second wave Visitor Sentiment Research](#) which includes some valuable insights to inform your reopening strategy, including the following:

- Since the government's announcement around lockdown easing, the market has become even more cautious about visits than before, especially to indoor attractions
- General concern over crowds and distancing is still the major visit barrier, but people are becoming more focussed on the safety measures they expect from attractions when they re-open,
- Impact of a 'charter mark / industry standard' is likely to be high, (e.g. the kitemark initiative which will be supported through Visit Britain)
- In the eyes of the public, top safety priorities are;
 - Limiting visitor numbers on-site, primarily at indoor attractions
 - Be seen to be implementing and monitoring / policing distancing measures on-site toilets and indoor cafés
 - Interactive exhibits or anything that visitors touch
 - Hand sanitiser around the site and staff visibly cleaning
 - Moving elements of the visit experience outside, where possible, will undoubtedly help generate visits – outdoor kiosks, tours, small events, picnic areas. Outdoor, open spaces are increasingly recognised by the public as safer than indoor, enclosed spaces
- There is an increased acceptance of PPE among potential visitors, with very little pushback to either staff or visitors wearing face masks
- Visitor-facing staff can have a hugely positive impact – providing a warm welcome and showing patience with visitor anxieties – but they will need a new skill set to proactively deal with the public's adherence to distancing protocols in place
- Concerns around using public transport to visit attractions is high, particular underground trains and buses

- Visitors are not expecting blanket admissions price discounting, with notable proportions of 'members', families and younger people (aged under 35yrs) expecting to pay more on re-opening

Covid-19 Member Update – 22/05/20

Dear members and others,

We have been busy working to bring you new tools to aid your communications at this time as well as pressing for further support.

Communicating safety – developing an industry standard

We have been hard at work developing a series of resources to support members in preparing to re-open. As part of that we have been in touch with Visit Britain and ALVA about the development of an industry standard which would help communicate the precautions our members are taking. This would be a mark which would indicate every precaution possible has been taken to make your site as safe as possible.

We have been reassured on the concerns around self-enforcement and administration, concerns that we know you share. We continue to feed into the development and look forward to bringing you more details.

If you have specific ideas about how BIAZA's communications can support your re-opening preparation please get in touch with [Andy](#).

Submit your communication questions

In response to some feedback from members we have used BIAZA's private [Communications and Marketing Group Facebook Page](#) to establish a members' discussion forum. This will enable communication teams to ask questions and work through issues they are facing. Questions can be sent to Andy via email or to the BIAZA Facebook messenger to be anonymised and submitted to the group, so no one feels pressure posting as themselves.

Staff Wellbeing Resource

Finally, as you may be aware, it is Mental Health Week – therefore we are sharing this resource (via the Scottish Government Business Support updates) on [supporting your staff's mental wellbeing during Covid-19](#).

Covid-19 Member Update – 21/05/20

Dear members and others,

Today there are some announcements from the Scottish Government which are the focus of this update along with our work on the Zoo Support Fund in England.

Update from Scottish Government

Today the Scottish Government [has published a new 5-phased \(including current lockdown\) route map](#), with the intention of initiating Phase 1 on the 28 of May. According to the route map, Phase 1 may include the opening of outdoor places of work and cultural, leisure and recreation facilities

under social distancing (page 22). We will seek further clarity with Scottish Government on what this will mean for our members. The route map also contains a commitment to publish sector specific guidance which may well answer some of our outstanding questions.

The further phases detailed in the route map consist of the gradual easing of lockdown and precautions. Also introduced in the document is the announcement of a 'Test and Protect' strategy that will consist of contact tracing. BIAZA continues to assist the Animal Health and Welfare Division of Scottish Government in establishing the arguments in support of giving zoos and aquariums the flexibility to reopen when appropriate for their own sites.

As ever we will keep you abreast of the developing situation in Scotland.

Zoo Support Fund in England

We continue to liaise frequently with the Zoos Policy Team at Defra on a number of topics, including the Zoo Support Fund. We continue to encourage collections who are in financial difficulty due to Covid-19 and reaching the point of having reserves amounting to operating costs of 6 weeks or less to apply to this fund. We are aware of some difficulties arising in access to the fund, please do continue to let us know if you apply to the fund and what outcome you receive as this feeds into our ongoing discussions with Defra.

One point that has led to some delays in processing applications is where applicants have not provided full information on whether they have accessed other Government financial support including the available loans (e.g. CBIL, Bounce-Back). Please note that you can still apply for the Zoo Support Fund where you have decided not to apply for those loans due to evaluating them to be inappropriate for your organisation but you need to include your reasons for these decisions (e.g. don't meet eligibility criteria, inability to repay loan) on your application to evidence that you have considered all available support.

Covid-19 Member Update – 20/05/20

Dear members and others,

Today's update focusses on a number of small announcements from Westminster.

CBIL loan extension

The UK Government has announced an extension of the maximum loan size available through the Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBLS) from £50 million to £200 million. Since lockdown several members have been successful in securing a CLBLS loan. For more information [click here](#).

Sick pay rebate and holiday entitlement

The government has made further announcements on issues of sick pay and holiday entitlement during this pandemic. This includes advice to employers when necessitating holiday from their furloughed staff. [Click here](#) for more information on holiday entitlement.

A coronavirus-specific service has been established to allow small-medium sized employers (fewer than 250 employees) to claim the cost of SSP due to coronavirus from HMRC. This [service will be launched online on the 26th of May](#).

You may need to inform you staff and colleagues of these changes. We hope this might be useful to some of you and will keep you informed of further changes.

Changes to employment allowance eligibility

The eligibility criteria for employment allowance has been updated. Probably the most relevant concerns companies which are part of a group of charities and companies which can now claim employment allowance where the total employers' Class 1 National Insurance liabilities for the group are less than £100,000. For full criteria and condition please [click here](#).

Covid-19 Member Update – 19/05/20

Dear members & others,

Another quick update for you today:

Andrew Rosindell MP Letter to the UK Prime Minister

Andrew Rosindell MP, Chair of the Zoo and Aquarium APPG, has written a letter to the Prime Minister supporting our calls for zoos and aquariums to be given the flexibility to reopen when they feel appropriate (based on their site, ability to implement social distancing measures & economic viability). His letter can be seen on our website [here](#). His team will also be reaching out to other MPs with members in their constituencies to add their support.

Updated BIAZA Covid-19 Resources

We have updated the [Covid-19 resources](#) on our website to ensure they remain as up to date as possible and have removed some of the older resources to make it easier to find what you are looking for. Most of the resources are accessible to everyone, but there are a few resources that only members can access (you can find these by logging in to the [members area](#) before using the resources link). Recently updated resources include [BIAZA Covid-19 Advice document](#) and the template letters for members to send to their local [MPs](#) and [TDs](#) regarding reopening. Please keep letting us know whenever there are further resources you would find useful.

Finally, we would like to wish Irish members [Fota Wildlife Park](#) the best of luck for their reopening tomorrow!

Covid-19 Member Update – 18/05/20

Dear members & others,

A short update email summarising today's Covid-19 related news:

Reopening Updates – Devolved Nations

More information is being released regarding the reopening plans across the devolved nations of the UK. Last week saw the publication of the Welsh Government's [traffic light guide to moving out of lockdown](#) and the Northern Ireland Executive's [summary of their approach to decision-making](#) (with further announcements on details expected this week). This week has begun with Nicola Sturgeon announcing that the [Scottish Route Map](#) will be published on Thursday and will include information on the first phase of lifting restrictions which will start on 28th May. We will keep you informed of any changes and will work with members in each nation on appropriate reopening lobbying.

Covid-19 Symptoms & Testing

Please note that the UK Chief Medical Officers have today announced that anosmia, the loss of normal sense of smell (which can also affect sense of taste) should be regarded as a symptom of Covid-19. This means that from today anyone (in UK) who develops a new continuous cough, a fever OR anosmia should self-isolate (for 7 days) and their households should also self-isolate (14

days). You may need to update any Covid-19 policies and guidance for your staff etc. The announcement can be seen [here](#).

Testing regimes also continue to be expanded. For example, today it has been announced that shortly anyone in Scotland over 5 years with symptoms will be able to access testing.

Finally, please note that Madelon is currently out of the office, if you need to get in touch with us please email me (Cerian.Tatchley@biaza.org.uk) and Nicky (Nicky.Needham@biaza.org.uk).

Covid-19 Member Update – 15/05/20

Dear members & others,

Reopening in England – template letter for members to send to MPs

As stated in previous updates, we are currently lobbying the Westminster Government regarding the UK Recovery Strategy and the restrictions preventing the public from visiting ‘ticketed outdoor attractions’ such as zoos. We are requesting the removal of the ticketed attractions restriction in step two of the roadmap, which will then provide the flexibility for collections to open when appropriate for each site. Following our letter sent yesterday to the Prime Minister, this [new template letter](#) can be used by our members to send to your local MP to encourage them to voice their support on this issue.

Welsh Roadmap & Update

This morning we had a meeting with members of the Welsh Government’s Animal Welfare & Animal By-Products Team. They acknowledged the challenges being faced by our Welsh collections and provided an overview of the current support available to Welsh zoos and aquariums, including that of the Economic Resilience Fund (ERF) and Third Sector Resilience Fund (TSRF). Their analysis of the financial data which has been provided by zoos and aquariums suggests that currently the ERF and TSRF should be sufficient to meet essential animal welfare funding requirements in the short term, but they are continuing to assess this situation and any need to bid for more sector-specific funding. All Welsh licence holders should receive communication from the Animal Welfare Team today. We will be continuing to lobby the Welsh Government and will be in touch with our Welsh Members regarding this soon.

Additionally, the Welsh Government published their own [Roadmap out of lockdown](#) earlier today. It presents a traffic light guide to their approach to easing restrictions over the coming weeks but does not give detail of timescales, or explicitly reference zoos and aquariums, so it remains unclear when visitors will be able to return. The roadmap highlights the Government’s intention to create more specific guidance over the next few weeks in consultation with various sectors and we are looking to feed into this. Can our Welsh members therefore please email Nicky (Nicky.Needham@biaza.org.uk) with details regarding their reopening plans and preparedness to enable us to work on reopening lobbying specific to Wales.

Jersey Zoo Reopening

We are sure that many of you are watching closely the progress of fellow member Jersey Zoo as it reopens. This [video](#) posted by the Zoo and the Government of Jersey shows some of the social distancing measures they have successfully put in place in action.

Public Engagement Campaigns in Ireland

There are currently several public campaigns that may be of interest to our Irish members as opportunities for public engagement and conservation education during lockdown. Follow the links for further information:

- [Cruiniú na nÓg](#) - Ireland's national day of free creativity for children and young people on 13th June
- [Knowyour5k](#) - a new initiative from the Heritage Council and National Museum of Ireland which provides an opportunity to share discoveries about our hidden heritage (including flora & fauna)
- [NPWS Kids Biodiversity and Nature Art Competition](#)

We've also been helpfully reminded by Noirin Burke at Galway Atlantaquaria that you can share resources with teachers in Ireland at <https://www.scoilnet.ie/>

Covid-19 Member Update – 14/05/20

Dear members & others,

Today's update brings news of letters sent today to key ministers in the UK and Ireland regarding reopening plans, and other support requests:

UK/England Reopening

We continue to work for clarity on Government guidance in all regions here and are extremely grateful to those of you who have already submitted your reopening plans and details on readiness to Nicky. Today we submitted a letter to the Prime Minister, as well as the Secretary of State for the Environment and the Minister for Animal Welfare, expressing our concern at the restriction on visiting "ticketed outdoor venues" in the UK Recovery Strategy published on Monday, and setting out our request for removing this restriction for step two of the strategy given how well prepared and able many zoos and aquariums are to reopen with careful social distancing measures. We will update members as soon as we have any new information.

Irish Lobbying Update

Following our meeting with NPWS and the updated template letter for members to send to their TDs, we have now sent further letters directly from BIAZA to several Ministers in order to raise the profile of our sector and its collective support and reopening requests amongst those directly involved in decision-making.

Scotland Update

This morning we had a constructive meeting with Dr Beverley Williams (Scottish Government – Animal Health and Welfare Division). We will be working with her in supporting the bid for Scottish zoo and aquarium funding, and in ensuring that zoos and aquariums are considered appropriately within the Scottish Reopening and Recovery Plans. We encourage members and other licenced zoos in Scotland to complete the Government zoo support questionnaires so they have data available to assist in their bid.

Covid-19 Member Update – 13/05/20

Dear members and other recipients,

Today's update focuses on reopening and a call for information from you all to support lobbying on this topic:

UK/England Reopening Update

We are continuing to stress to Government officials that members have plans in place to re-open safely, whilst adhering to social distancing guidelines, and lobbying to ensure they are able to do so soon as possible. We are confident that Defra are sympathetic towards the arguments we are

making and want to provide them with as much information and evidence as possible. We are also broadening our lobbying efforts in an attempt to influence other departments and No.10, who have overall responsibility for drawing up re-opening guidelines.

Call for Information:

We will need information to be able to confidently lobby that our members are ready for reopening (across all of the BIAZA region).

Can you please let us know as soon as possible, whether you are, or when you can be ready to re-open in accordance with the BIAZA Reopening Guidelines or your own? If you have developed your own reopening plans, please let us know as well. If re-opening does not make sense for your organisation, until e.g. all restrictions are lifted, or furlough support ends, we would like to hear this as well.

Please email this information to nicky.needham@biaza.org.uk (with 'Reopening' in the subject header) as soon as you can.

Irish Lobbying

As per yesterday's update, the new template letter for Irish members to send to their TD is on our website [here](#). Please let us know if you use it so we can include that information in our lobbying activities.

Covid-19 Member Update – 12/05/20

Dear Members and other recipients,

As you will be aware there have been some big announcements in the UK so far this week, our email today provides updates on these, as well as a new resource for our Irish members:

UK Government's Covid-19 Recovery Strategy

Further detail on the [Government's Recovery Strategy](#) were published yesterday (see also accompanying [FAQ document](#)). The guidance is currently applicable in England, with the devolved administrations producing their own guidance (which we are also watching closely).

The Recovery Strategy includes a Roadmap with three steps for the loosening of lockdown restrictions. Step one begins tomorrow and although there is greater freedom for people to visit outdoor spaces, **the Roadmap is clear that visiting ticketed outdoor attractions is not allowed** (page 27, under Public Spaces). Workers are encouraged if they that cannot work from home to return to work (if their workplace is able to follow [workplace social distancing guidance](#) also released yesterday).

We are collaborating with Defra and other relevant associations and departments, on the interpretation and the removal of the restriction on 'ticketed' attractions in Step two, which is envisioned to start 1st of June.

UK Furloughing Scheme Extension

The UK Chancellor today announced that the [furloughing scheme is being extended](#). It will continue unchanged (Gov providing 80% salary up to £2500 per month, same eligibility requirements) until the end of July. The scheme will then continue from August to October with changes that allow greater flexibility to support transitions back to work including ability for part-time working. We now await the publication of the full details of this extension.

Zoo Support Fund in England

Reminder that the Zoo Support Fund is open for applications from licensed zoos in England. Defra reports that they can process applications quickly (within a week) and encourage collections to apply as soon as possible once they have around 6 weeks of operational funds remaining. They are also able to signpost zoos to any other potential funding support they may not yet have accessed.

Irish Lobbying Work – Template letter to TDs

Following our recent meeting with NPWS and the input from our Irish members, we have now updated [our template letter to support members in contacting their local TDs](#) to request their assistance. This is going to be essential for raising the profile of zoos and aquariums and applying pressure for greater support to be provided for the sector – we thus need the help of all our Irish members to utilise the template letter and reach out to their TD in support of our lobbying work.

Covid-19 Member Update – 11/05/20

Dear members & other recipients,

Today's update focuses on two big topics: an update on lobbying work in Ireland following our meeting with NPWS this morning, and of course the announcements regarding lockdown and reopening across the UK.

Lobbying in Ireland

This morning we have had a meeting with staff from National Parks and Wildlife Services involved in zoo licencing in Ireland. They are very aware of the importance of zoos and aquariums to the Irish economy (e.g. through tourism and associated spends) and to local communities (e.g. through provision of green and blue spaces for wellbeing, local employment) and we were able to provide further insights into how Covid-19 and associated restrictions are impacting our members. They have been paying close attention to the support packages being implemented in other countries and are making recommendations to relevant departments regarding support that is needed in Ireland. We will be continuing to support them in doing this.

We also discussed reopening, the Irish Roadmap and the role that zoos and aquariums can play in restarting economies and allowing people to safely return to leisure activities in settings that are carefully implementing social distancing measures. It was recommended that collections looking to reopen should submit their back to action plans to both the Dept. of the Taoiseach (Elizabeth.Canavan@Taoiseach.Gov.IE) and to NPWS (Amanda.Maguire@chg.gov.ie). There was no further clarity at this point as to whether the Dept. of the Taoiseach expects zoos and aquariums to open within specific phases of the Roadmap, so plans can be put forward on a case by case basis that reflects the individual nature of the sites of each of our Irish members. We will update you if this changes. The [BIAZA Reopening Guidance](#) contains advice on social distancing measures you may wish to consider when developing your plans.

Over the next few days we will be actioning our next steps for lobbying work in Ireland, including producing new template letters for members to send to their local TDs to raise the profile of zoo and aquarium support needs.

Lockdown Restrictions in UK

Following from the announcement by Boris Johnson yesterday evening, we are sure many of you will have further questions about reopening your collections. We will be looking closely at the guidance

expected to be released by the Government later today and requesting further clarity where it is needed during our meetings this week with Defra.

We are also paying close attention to the different exit strategies now emerging in the devolved nations. We have meetings arranged over the next week with the animal welfare and zoo policy teams within each administration where we will be discussing reopening, as well as the Zoo Support Fund, and will provide updates as these meetings take place.

Covid-19 Member Update – 08/05/20

Dear all,

During the Bank holiday for the UK we wanted to send you a brief update on the BIAZA Task Forces and their progress:

BIAZA's Task Forces:

- Reopening Task Force – has compiled feedback from across the membership and from Defra, and is now available [here](#) on the Covid Resources page of the BIAZA website. This guidance will continue to be updated as and when more information is made available from relevant Government Departments. We will continue to liaise with the relevant Government departments on this and will now be working on a comms strategy to support our members as they reopen.
- Permanent Closure Task Force – is working proactively on guidance documents to offer support to zoos and aquariums, Local Authorities, and the relevant Government Departments in the case of closures due to the direct impact of COVID-19. Madelon and Andy, our Snr Comms and Public Affairs Officer, will be working on the development of communication strategies and messages as well.
- Financial Forecasting & Viability Task Force – will be kicking off with a meeting on Tuesday to identify and model means (e.g. tax deferrals, loan period extensions/pay-back holidays etc.) to tackle the long-term cashflow challenges impacting on the financial viability of our zoos and aquariums into the future.
- Public Affairs Working Group – is continuing to work with Defra with regards to administration of the Zoos Support Fund and support for larger zoos, and is starting to discuss longer time support requirements. We are also meeting with representatives from Irish Gov NPWS, Scottish Government and Welsh Government over the next week to ensure our members in these regions are being properly supported. We will continue to keep you informed of any developments.

We will be checking the admin@biaza.org.uk email today and during the weekend, so please do get in touch with any urgent queries.

Covid-19 Member Update – 06/05/20

Dear all,

Today's email includes updates on work on reopening strategies and lobbying in Ireland:

[Reopening Strategies](#)

BIAZA has strengthened its' networks and partnerships, with meetings in place with BALPPA, NFAN and ALVA to ensure that our lobbying efforts and guidance are aligned. Collaborating with other sectors will provide lobbying benefits, but we continue to point out the uniqueness of our zoos and aquariums; despite loss of income and visitors we need to continue to provide statutory requirements. Most of our members will be ready to open as soon as restrictions are lifted. Look out for an update on the work of our new Task Forces, including the Reopening TF, in tomorrow's update.

Lobbying for our Irish Members

Ireland has announced the [road map](#) to ease COVID-19 restrictions. BIAZA will be meeting with the Irish National Parks & Wildlife Services early next week. We will ask how NPWS sees the Irish zoos as reopening and share our BIAZA reopening guidelines where necessary. We will also take this opportunity to clearly set out the support needs of zoos and aquariums in Ireland. Please get in this week touch if you have any further suggestions for useful government support (financial and other, short and longer term) as an Irish collection. We would also appreciate any updates on the situations facing our Irish members that may help us to illustrate the essential and urgent nature of our requests for support, case studies and specific examples of challenges have proven valuable in our work with Defra.

Reminder – Invitation for Financial Forecasting and Viability Task Force : BIAZA is initiating another Task Force; are you a whizz in business aspects such as taxes, loans (and their terms) and other measures which could be used to secure longer-term financial viability for our sector, please contact [Madelon](#). The first meeting will be held on Tuesday.

EAZA Guidance - Impact of Covid-19 on Population Management

Those collections who support EEP species should be aware that EAZA has produced a new document "Reducing negative implications of Covid-19-related economic challenges for Members on population management in EAZA", which will support your contingency planning and is now available on the EAZA Sharepoint.

Covid-19 Member Update – 05/05/20

Dear all,

Please find below updates on the Zoos Support Fund and lobbying work to secure support beyond this for members across the BIAZA region, and a call for financial experts to assist with some of this lobbying work:

Defra Zoos Support Fund Announcement

Yesterday we sent out a communique about the further details released on the [Zoos Support Fund](#) being coordinated by Defra for licensed zoos in England, which is now open for applications.

We have also received the following update on work on zoo support in the devolved nations: *Government officials are actively considering the needs of zoos in Scotland and Northern Ireland. The Welsh Government has recently written to zoos in Wales about existing COVID-19 business support schemes and a questionnaire to identify key animal welfare concerns and whether any funding gaps exist which may need to be addressed.*

We will be following up directly with the relevant policy teams in each devolved administration and we are working with our members in Ireland to ensure they also receive the support needed and will provide further updates as soon as possible.

We have met with the Defra team today and continue to work closely with them as the Fund is being rolled out. Defra is also acutely aware that this Fund won't be able to provide the level of assistance required by some members and we continue to lobby in consultation with those needing further support in order to develop frameworks into the future for good zoos.

Call for experts for BIAZA's Financial Forecasting Task Force

We are calling for astute financial experts (from within our membership or extended networks) to join this BIAZA Task Force. We will be identifying and modeling ways (e.g. tax deferrals, loan period extensions/pay-back holidays etc.) to tackle the long-term cashflow challenges impacting on the financial viability of our zoos and aquariums into the future. Please contact [Madelon](#) if you would like to join or know someone who may be willing to participate. We will be kicking off our first meeting on Tuesday 12 May.

Covid-19 Testing in Scotland

Covid-19 testing in Scotland has now been extended to include those that need to work outside the home, which will include essential zoo and aquarium staff. For further information see the Scottish gov website [here](#).

UK Bounce Back Loans

This loan scheme opened for applications yesterday. For more information see [here](#).

Covid-19 Member Update – 01/05/20

Dear members,

As we reach the end of another week, today's update gives a summary of key information from the last 5 days, as well as looking ahead to next week:

Key Updates from this Week:

- [UK Bounce Back Loan Scheme](#) details were released. This scheme is expected to go live on Monday morning.
- [Covid-19 testing](#) was extended in England to include anyone who needs to work out of home that has symptoms (& their households).
- Irish member update – a communique updating our Irish members on lobbying work we are undertaking in Ireland was sent out at the start of this week. We were pleased to report that we then also received a response to our letter from the office of Mr Paschal Donohoe TD, Minister for Finance and are preparing to follow up through further communications with the Minister for Culture, Heritage and Gaeltacht and the NPWS Biodiversity Policy Unit.
- Defra zoo guidance and questionnaire – all UK licenced zoos should now have heard from Defra or the relevant devolved administration, if you haven't let us know ASAP. Please remember to include us when sending back your questionnaire if possible so we can use the information to lobby on your behalf.
- ALVA Reopening After Lockdown webinars and public sentiment tracker – further information on this useful research from ALVA can now be found [here](#).

You can catch up on any missed updates on our website [here](#).

Focuses for Next Week:

- We are expecting that more information on the Zoos Support Fund will be released very soon and will be updating you all when that happens. In the meantime, we have been preparing for how we can support our sector in accessing this fund when it is launched.

- BIAZA's Reopening Task Force will be continuing to work on guidance for members and with their support, the Office will be lobbying to position zoos and aquariums to be first in the queue when restrictions are being lifted.
- As well as lobbying work around reopening, we will also be continuing efforts to secure further long-term support for our sector in both the UK and Ireland.

Covid-19 Member Update – 30/04/20

Dear members,

Today's Covid-19 update is fairly short, focusing on some research by ALVA looking at public attitudes towards attractions' reopening, as well as the latest business support to be launched in Scotland.

ALVA Reopening after Lockdown Webinars

Today we have participated in a series of webinars hosted by the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions on the topic of reopening. Of particular interest was a session focused on public sentiment around visitor attractions reopening, underpinned by some interesting research tracking public attitudes amongst UK attraction visiting adults. This has provided a range of useful insights into current UK public attitudes towards visiting attractions, specifically including zoos, in the context of the pandemic such as intentions to visit attractions and key anxieties and expectations about aspects of visiting attractions. We are utilising these insights in our developing reopening strategies and guidance. We hope to be able to share more insights from this work with you in the future, but in the meantime we continue to collaborate with other relevant bodies to represent our sector.

Business Support Funding in Scotland

Applications for the [Creative, Tourism and Hospitality Enterprises Hardship Fund](#) are now live. This Fund provides grants of up to £25,000 for small (up to 49 employees) creative, tourism and hospitality companies that are experiencing hardship because they are ineligible for other Covid-19 Government grant support.

Covid-19 Member Update – 29/04/20

Dear members,

Today's update focuses on the expansion of Covid-19 testing in England and a response from the Irish Minister for Finance:

Covid-19 Testing

The Westminster government yesterday announced an expansion of the testing regime in England to include, amongst other things, those with symptoms whose work cannot be done from home. As the government has confirmed several times that zookeepers cannot work from home, our interpretation of this announcement is that those staff are eligible for testing if they develop Covid-19 symptoms. This also applies to members of their household. It is also reasonable to assume this extends to other essential animal care and zoo and aquarium staff that are not able to do their work from home. For more information and to find out how to arrange testing see [here](#). We will try to get official confirmation of this interpretation, but in the meantime please let us know if your essential animal care staff have any difficulties accessing testing when they need it.

There are different rules in place across the rest of the UK that do not so far appear to include animal care staff needing to work outside the home (for further details go to: [Wales](#), [Scotland](#), [Northern Ireland](#)).

Ireland also has their own testing regime in place, with greater focus on contact tracing. Key workers are still prioritised, but others may also be referred for testing by their GP if they experience symptoms, particularly if exposed to others known to be infected. Information on Ireland's testing rules can be found [here](#).

Response from Irish Minister for Finance

We have received a response to our letter from the office of Mr Paschal Donohoe TD, Minister for Finance acknowledging the "excellent and valuable contribution" our members make to Irish society. We now intend to follow up, as recommended, with the Minister for Culture, Heritage and Gaeltacht, Ms Josepha Madigan TD (who also received our earlier letter), using the latest information received from our Irish members highlighting the further support needed to complement measures already introduced, including looking towards reopening.

Medimark Scientific Presentation

BIAZA corporate members Medimark have put together a short presentation on Covid-19 and hygiene measures that may be of interest to you: <https://prezi.com/view/v0tMurks84oFgepieUqw/>

Covid-19 Member Update – 28/04/20

Dear members,

Please find today's Covid-19 email which includes further details on the Bounce Back Loans and updates on a number of other ongoing activities:

Irish Member Update

We have this afternoon sent out a specific communique updating our Irish members on lobbying work and requesting input from those members to help us plan and implement our next steps of this work. If you are an Irish collection and have not received this communication, please let us know.

UK Bounce Back Loan Scheme

Further details on this scheme announced by the Chancellor yesterday can be found [here](#). Small and medium sized businesses will be able to apply for loans of between £2,000 - £50,000 with no fees, interest or repayments due in the first 12 months. To be eligible the business must be based in the UK and have been negatively impacted by coronavirus. Note that you cannot use this scheme if you are already using the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS), although if you have received up to £50,000 via CBILS you can transfer instead to the Bounce Back Loan Scheme if you arrange this with your lender by 4th November 2020. The scheme opens for applications on 4th May at 9am.

Parliamentary Question

A written parliamentary question, tabled by Selaine Saxby, MP for North Devon, asking the Secretary of State for the Environment and Rural Affairs what he is doing to ensure the welfare of animals in zoos is safeguarded during the pandemic was answered yesterday. The response can be seen [here](#). Although it does not contain new information, it is very positive to see the plight of our sector is being kept high on the agenda in parliament, and we encourage collections to keep liaising with their local politicians. If you have not yet reached out to your local MP, TD or devolved

government equivalent and would like to, you can find template letters to support you in doing this on our website: <https://biaza.org.uk/covid-19-guidance-for-zoos-and-aquariums>

Free Wild Boar Carcasses

We have been contacted by an organisation which is able to supply a number of in-fur wild boar carcasses, free of charge but collection to be arranged in the Gloucestershire area. Any collections who are interested can email admin@biaza.org.uk and contact details will be provided.

Visit Britain Code of Practice for Visitor Messaging

BIAZA was invited by Visit Britain to represent zoos and aquariums in their virtual meetings to discuss the possible value of some form of Code of Practice that could help with consumer messaging across the tourism sector. We will keep you updated as this progresses.

Insurance

It has been highlighted to us that some collections may be able to negotiate a reduction in insurance premiums due to lack of public presence reducing risks. Our direct discussion with an insurance broker suggests any reduction may be minimal and therefore not worth cost of administration fees, but it may be something you wish to consider checking with your own insurance provider directly. Chris Moiser from Tropiquaria has also helpfully let us know their insurance provider has indicated they may be due a premium reduction as their staff wage bill, which is included in their insurance calculation, has been reduced following the cost cutting measures they have implemented as a result of the Covid-19 restrictions. Thanks to Chris for passing this on, and please do let us know if you have any similar successes that may benefit other collections.

We have also had this reference link regarding Business Interruption Insurance from the Association of British Insurers passed on to us that may be of interest: <https://www.abi.org.uk/products-and-issues/topics-and-issues/coronavirus-hub/business-insurance/>

Covid-19 Member Update – 27/04/20

Dear members,

Defra Meeting Update

We continue to have regular meetings with Defra. During today's meeting we were able to provide some input into the intended processes for implementing the Zoo Support Fund and push for Defra to release more details of the Fund as soon as possible, reiterating the urgency of the situation for many zoos and aquariums. While the Zoo Support Fund focuses on supporting collections in maintaining animal welfare during the pandemic restrictions, we were also pleased to hear Defra acknowledge the broader impacts of our sector and the need to also work in collaboration with other departments in the future to support zoos and aquariums given their roles as visitor attractions, conservation organisations and community engagement and recreation centres.

Bounce Back Loans

The Chancellor, Rishi Sunak, has this afternoon announced a new type of loan in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Bounce Back Loans are micro-loans of up to £50,000, or 25% of turnover and government will pay the interest for the first 12 months. These loans are intended to launch for applications next Monday, and be quickly accessible with no complex eligibility criteria and money arriving within 24 hours of approval. Information on these loans is so far limited, and it is not yet clear whether zoos and aquariums will be eligible. We will be monitoring for further announcements and details in order to assess their value and accessibility for our sector, and will update you as soon as possible, but information released so far can be seen on the Chancellor's twitter account: <https://twitter.com/RishiSunak/status/1254782809157169157>

Defra Guidance and Questionnaire

Hopefully all zoo licence holders in England, Scotland & Northern Ireland have now received the information from Defra regarding support for zoos and aquariums. Contact us asap if not and we will connect you to the Zoo Policy Team. Please do also spread awareness of the Defra resources to other relevant zoo and aquarium operators you are in contact with.

Please try to include the BIAZA Office (admin@biaza.org.uk) when you respond to the Defra questionnaire, as we will use this information to support our lobbying work and continue to push for appropriate support for our sector.

Covid-19 Member Update – 24/04/20

Essential Worker Testing in UK

Yesterday the government advised that employers of essential workers will be able to obtain a test for any of their workers, and also that essential workers themselves will be able to book their own appointments for testing. We've sought clarification once again regarding the definition of "essential" workers and established that in this instance it applies only to those already defined as "key" workers, as listed [here](#), so testing is not currently available for zoo and aquarium staff. Please be assured that we are monitoring government information as it is issued and will advise of any changes to this guidance.

Defra Zoo Guidance & Zoo Support Fund

This week Defra released specific Government guidance for zoos and aquariums during the pandemic, communicating their commitment to establishing a Zoo Support Fund to provide emergency funding to collections. If you have not already received it, please see our [membership communique](#) for our full comments on this announcement.

Communications Round Up

We are seeing increased media interest in stories about the impact of Covid-19 on zoos and aquariums and have been able to contribute to several articles and news items. For example, Christoph Schwitzer, our Chair of Council, was this week interviewed by Sky News and Madelon has done an interview with Al Jazeera today. We will be using these opportunities to increase awareness of the unique situation our sector faces and generate public support for zoos and aquariums.

We also released the latest edition of BIAZA BiteSize this week, our monthly membership newsletter. In this issue we were pleased to introduce our new Snr Communications and Public Affairs Officer Andy Hall who has now been with us in the (virtual) office for a month. Andy has settled well into the team and is now managing our social media accounts and coordinating our responses to media requests. Andy is also able to support members with their media enquiries so do contact him directly if you need any support at Andy.Hall@biaza.org.uk

Fundraising Opportunity – the 2.6 Challenge

Open to all UK charities, the [2.6 Challenge](#) aims to help plug the current gap in normal fundraising, particularly in this case from the London Marathon. Encourage your supporters to help you fundraise as part of this challenge, but be quick, it launches this weekend. More information can also be found [here](#).

Thanks go to Lynn Whitnall from Paradise Wildlife Park for sharing this with us and also giving us the below list of possible 2.6 themed activities you or your supporters could quickly do to help get you started:

Any type of sport they can do around their local area or in the garden; jogging, cycling, walking, skipping, hopping

If people are not fit they could sit in their arm chair and raise one leg at a time – 26 times!

So it could be 2.6 kilometres / 2.6 miles up to 44k or 26.2 miles (and anything in-between or new ideas)

Or 26 burpees x 26 times with 26 sec break in between!!

26 Golf chips

Pancake tossing 😊

Juggle 26 times or 26 reps of 26

Belly rolling

26 times around your garden

26 times up and down stairs

26 minutes of dancing

We wish those of you participating the best of luck, let us know what you do.

We will be continuing to monitor government announcements over the weekend and will keep you updated if there are any important developments. If you need urgent support with anything over the weekend please contact Nicky, Madelon or I and we will get back to you as soon as we can.

Covid-19 Member Update – 21/04/20

Conservative Home Article

Andrew Rosindell, MP, Chair of the APPG for Zoos and Aquariums, has published an article calling for more support from government on the Conservative Home website. This article complements our own lobbying work with similar focusses on securing additional urgent financial support for zoos and aquariums during the pandemic, as well as looking to the future and ensuring that our sector is included in the re-opening strategies. You can read the article [here](#).

UK Government Business Support Finder

The UK Government has launched a new online tool to help businesses identify what business and financial support is available to them. If you have been struggling to navigate the myriad schemes available or you simply want to check that you haven't missed any possible sources of support from Government then you can use the tool [here](#).

HMRC Furloughing Webinars

Now that the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme is open for applications (see here), HMRC is also running webinars to support businesses in making their claims through this scheme. There are three sessions taking place tomorrow (Wed 22nd) at 12, 1 & 2pm. You can register to participate [here](#).

BIAZA Covid-19 Resources

We continue to keep our library of Covid-19 resources updated and accessible to all on our website: <https://biaza.org.uk/covid-19-guidance-for-zoos-and-aquariums> (BIAZA members continue to have access to a wider range of resources by logging into the members' area)

Covid-19 Member Update – 20/04/20

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

The HMRC registration portal for the furloughing scheme went live earlier today and can now be used to claim reimbursement for 80% wages of eligible furloughed staff. Find out how to make a claim [here](#). Employers should receive the money within six working days of making an application.

Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme

This scheme, providing government backed loans for large businesses, has also gone live today. Applications should be made directly to the British Business Bank's accredited lenders. For more information on how to do this please see [here](#).

Please keep letting us know of your successes and failures accessing financial and business support. We continue to highlight any barriers to access that we are made aware of directly to Defra and other government contacts.

Answering Call for Feedback from UK Government

We are taking every opportunity available to provide information to government that illustrates the unique challenges facing our sector and strengthens our calls for greater support. There are several consultations, calls for evidence and inquiries taking place now and we will be responding on behalf of our members and all zoos and aquariums. If you come across any that you think we may not be aware of, please do send them our way. We have today responded to a [call for feedback](#) from the attractions sector to the Department of International Trade and the Department of Culture, Media and Sports, using statistics gathered via our annual questionnaire and from the financial impact information many of you have sent to us over the past weeks.

Finally, a reminder that we are using a new, expanded contact list for these updates to hopefully increase their reach across the zoo and aquarium sector - let us know if you are aware of anyone else from the sector who would like to be added to this mailing list, and similarly if you would prefer not to receive these updates from us.

Covid-19 Member Update – 17/04/20

Here is today's update with the latest Covid-19 developments. Please note we are using a new, expanded contact list for these updates to hopefully increase their reach across the zoo and aquarium sector. Do let us know if you are aware of anyone else from the sector who would like to be added to this mailing list, and similarly if you would prefer not to receive these updates from us.

UK Lockdown Extension

The social distancing measures currently in place in the UK have been extended for at least a further 3 weeks in an announcement made by Dominic Raab yesterday. For more information please look [here](#).

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme Extended

The Treasury has announced this afternoon that following the Government's extension of social distancing measures, the furloughing scheme has also been extended. The scheme will now be open until the end of June. Further information is available [here](#). The HMRC portal for this scheme is expected to open on Monday.

Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan

The Chancellor yesterday released further details on this new loan scheme which launches on Monday. This government-backed loan scheme is open to applications from large businesses with a turnover of more than £45 million affected by coronavirus. The details of the announcement can be seen [here](#). It is designed to complement the existing [Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan](#) for SMEs and the [Covid Corporate Financing Facility](#).

Contingency Plans

Thank you to those that have been able to share details of their contingency plans with us. We are establishing a task group to provide further guidance on contingency plans and to assist in supporting collections that need to implement such plans. Please do share your contingency plans with us and keep us informed about actions you are taking so we can provide all possible support to you.

Reopening Plans

Several of you have contacted us about reopening plans. We would like to reassure you, that while our priority at the moment is our lobbying work to secure additional support from government for zoos and aquariums during this crisis, we are also looking to the future including working, and lobbying, on reopening plans.

We will be monitoring emails and government announcements over the weekend and will update you on any important developments as soon as possible.

Covid-19 Member Update – 16/04/20

The impact of COVID-19 on British and Irish Zoos and Aquariums

Following our update yesterday regarding putting together some key talking points for media enquiries related to the impact of Covid-19 on zoos and aquariums, we have also now released a public update on this topic on our website which can be viewed [here](#). Please feel free to utilise this update for your own communications as needed and get in touch with us if you want any support with media enquiries or other communications.

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

Please note that some further changes have been made to this scheme, including adjusting the eligibility cut-off date for when an employee had to be on your PAYE payroll to the 19th March. The scheme is expected to be fully operational next week. More information on this announcement can be found [here](#).

Zoo and Aquarium APPG Lobbying Efforts

The BIAZA Office continues to have regular contact with Andrew Rosindell, MP, Chair of this APPG, and he is fully aware of the key needs of our sector at this time. Mr Rosindell continues to take action and has today contacted key ministers, including the Prime Minister, the Chancellor and the EFRA Minister, to support BIAZA's calls within government.

Updates from the Devolved Administrations

We have now received responses to our letters from both the Welsh and Scottish Governments confirming that they are aware of the key needs of zoos and aquariums and are including them within their support packages and plans. Both responses also confirm they are

collaborating with Defra where appropriate and appreciate the work we have done as a community to provide Defra with important information and updates to clearly illustrate challenges.

Please keep letting us know of any devolved administration specific requests for support and changes to implementation of existing support so we can include these in our discussions with these governments.

Covid-19 Member Update – 15/04/20

Covid-19 Mitigation Media Talking Points

The BIAZA Office team have drafted a set of key talking points for responding to journalist requests for updates on how UK zoos and aquariums are coping with the Covid-19 restrictions. We have seen an increase in journalists contacting us following some news stories being reported around comments made by a zoo in Germany. While it is important that any statements made by zoos at this time are carefully presented and sensitive to the wider impacts of Covid-19 on people's lives, they do offer an opportunity to clearly communicate the serious and unique challenges facing zoos and aquariums at this time, while emphasising the high standards of animal welfare that you are all working hard to maintain.

We are happy to share these with talking points and to support you if you are similarly contacted by journalists. You can also see the quick top tips communications guidance created for us by members of our Communications Working Group on the website [here](#).

New Business Support Announced in Scotland

The Scottish Government earlier today announced some additional financial support for businesses including:

- £100m fund for SME businesses that are so far ineligible for previously announced Scottish & UK Government support
- £120m additional funding to extend the existing grant scheme to be on a per property basis
- Widening eligibility for the original grant scheme

Visit the [Scottish Government website](#) for more information.

Political Lobbying Communiqué

We sent out a communiqué on Friday to our members summarising BIAZA's political lobbying activities and successes to date, as well as our current focuses. Any members who have not seen this can additionally access it on our website [here](#).

BIAZA Committee & Working Group Activities

Following furloughing of BIAZA Office staff, and also new amendments to the Government Guidance on volunteering during furlough, we will be pausing the majority of Committee and Working Group activities until further notice and recommending that furloughed staff from our members do not voluntarily continue to undertake activities on behalf of BIAZA. We are hugely appreciative of all those who contribute their expertise to BIAZA work and look forward to picking up these projects again in the near future.

Covid-19 Member Update – 14/04/20

Dear Members and other recipients,

We hope that you all managed to take some time out to recuperate over the Easter weekend and spend some time (virtually or otherwise) with family and friends. We continued to monitor the

announcements by Government, and maintained our regular communications with the Zoos team at Defra, and, as expected, no significant further news was released over the weekend.

Furloughing Reminder

We are continuing to lobby both HMRC and Treasury for clarity here as a matter of urgency and will update you of any change as soon as possible, but please be reminded that (although some collections have received specific permission from HMRC) the Government Guidance still states that furloughed employees cannot volunteer for their collections. Also, to reiterate, normal employment rights such as sick leave and holiday are retained during a period of furlough. Further guidance can be found [here](#) on the members area of the website.

Insurance: Call for information

We are assessing whether any collections have successfully made a claim through business interruption insurance policies. We would be extremely grateful if you could let us know if your insurers have responded (positively or otherwise) to any claim you have made as a result of this pandemic, with their reasonings.

PPE

Please contact us in the office if you are either experiencing difficulties in sourcing enough PPE (gloves and facemasks) for your vet teams and keepers, or have plenty of PPE to spare. We will put collections in touch with each other wherever it may be possible to usefully redistribute these items.

Covid-19 Member Update – 9/04/20

Defra Meeting

We have had another constructive meeting with the Zoos Policy Team at Defra today and continue to make progress in raising the concerns and needs of our sector. Defra have prioritised zoos and aquariums in their activities and our concerns are being escalated to the highest possible level. The information that many of you have provided us with over the last few days has been critical in achieving this and we again thank you all for your support. We will continue to collaborate closely with Defra for the benefit of our sector at this time.

Updated Government Guidance Documents

We have been asked by Defra to share with you the following updated Government Covid-19 guidance documents. The first is PHE's [Guidance for employers and businesses on staying open safely during coronavirus](#) and the second is sector specific guidance from BEIS on [social distancing in the workplace](#).

BIAZA Office Bank Holiday Arrangements

BIAZA staff will be working across the bank holiday weekend in order to monitor any developments and continue to support you with any urgent issues. We will send out update emails if there are any significant announcements or changes of relevance to our sector, and tomorrow will also be sending out a special communiqué to our members summarising the political lobbying activities we have been undertaking on your behalf and the key successes achieved so far. If you need to contact us over the weekend, please email [Nicky](#) or [Cerian](#) and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

Covid-19 Member Update – 8/04/20

Dear Members,

Thank you to all those who have been in touch to provide their financial figures as requested yesterday and updates on your situation. Your input has been invaluable and significantly strengthens our ability to fight for crucial support our sector.

Economic Value of BIAZA members

Please find attached our infograph on the economic value of BIAZA members to the economy, conservation and community. We have been using this in our lobbying efforts and it may be helpful for you as well when you talking to your MPs or TDs.

Animal Collection Contingency Planning

In these challenging times we expect that all collections are reviewing their contingency plans, and potentially exit strategies. We anticipate that Defra and Treasury will soon be requesting information regarding the processes surrounding animal management in the event of zoo and aquarium closure and we expect them to enquire specifically on the methods used to prioritise species or specimens for potential rehoming/management. We would therefore be extremely grateful if you would be prepared to **share your collection contingency plan** with us, and/or the manner in which you will determine the purpose and value of the species and specimens within your collection. We would like to compile these so we can provide examples to Defra and ensure we have the necessary support from the authorities if and when it is required.

Reiteration of our key points of clarification:

Tomorrow we have another meeting with Defra officials and we hope to receive more clarity on our following main asks:

- The developments of the emergency funding for zoos and aquariums – ensuring our zoos and aquariums can continue to provide the statutory requirements of animal welfare while on lock-down
- Whether furloughed keepers can volunteer to provide animal welfare activities at their organisations/ and or whether animal welfare staff can be otherwise subsidised.
- The status of keeping staff – can they be considered as key workers considering they provide life-supporting activities?

We will of course keep you informed of any further developments. Please continue to contact us if you have any concerns or comments of focus areas.

Covid-19 Member Update - 7/04/20

Dear Members,

We are delayed sending you today's update as we have been working to quickly respond to a request from Defra in support of their activities – more information is below.

Request for Information - Thank You!

We would like to extend our deepest thanks to those who shared the information we requested in yesterday's update, and those who at short noticed today were able to provide further information. We were contacted by a Defra economist this morning requesting exactly this kind of information to use in their ongoing work with the Treasury to develop frameworks around financial support for zoos and aquariums.

Continue to seek information

We have another meeting with the Defra Zoos Policy Team scheduled for Thursday and will keep you abreast of any developments.

For collections who have not yet done this, please provide us with the answers to the below questions – it really helps to make a strong case to the Minister and Chancellor for support:

1. What are your current monthly operating costs? (after you have adjusted your operations to the current situation of being closed etc.)
2. What proportion of your staff have you furloughed? (if possible also the number of staff furloughed)
3. Based on your collection's current financial situation, how long can you continue to operate under the current conditions?

Furloughed Staff and Volunteering

Current [Government Guidance](#) states that furloughed staff cannot volunteer for their own employers to provide services or generate income. Furlough records must be kept for 5 years and can be audited at any point in those 5 years so (as things stand) any companies that go against this guidance may have to repay funds if found to be in breach of this guidance. Some collections have been successful in contacting HMRC through the HMRC PAYE webchat and asking for permission to bring a portion of furloughed staff back in to provide essential animal care and welfare. In these cases they are given a reference number which is attached to their unique PAYE number, and have kept transcripts of the webchat in case of future audits. We continue to lobby with authorities to clarify that furloughed zoo staff can volunteer at their organisation to provide animal welfare activities only, and we will notify you as soon as we receive confirmation.

WAZA Webinar

WAZA have made available a [video of a webinar session](#) with Michael Boos, Executive Director of Ocean Park in Hong Kong. Mr Boos is able to give a perspective on operating under long-term pandemic restrictions, with Ocean Park having closed to visitors on 26th January.

Covid-19 Member Update - 6/04/20

Dear Members,

We start the week with a few Covid-19 updates from over the weekend including more on furloughing, the changes to the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme and our response to the news of a captive tiger in the US testing positive for the virus. We also include a request for information that will help us to illustrate the severity of the challenges zoos and aquariums are facing at this time.

Request for Information

In order to assist our lobbying efforts, we request your help to provide us with some information on how your organisation is currently impacted by the pandemic. This information will be confidential and used only to enable us to more clearly and accurately represent the challenges facing our membership from the Covid-19 pandemic to Defra and other Government departments (information shared with Government will be summarised and anonymised). If you are able to support us in this way, please can you email us the following information:

1. What are your current monthly operating costs? (after you have adjusted your operations to the current situation of being closed etc.)
2. What proportion of your staff have you furloughed? (if possible also the number of staff furloughed)
3. Based on your collection's financial situation, how long can you continue to operate under the current conditions?

Further Furloughing Guidance

The UK Government made some additions to their [guidance on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme](#) which gives greater clarity on a few points:

- You must keep documentation related to furloughing, including signed furlough agreements for 5 years.
- HMRC retains the right to retrospectively audit all aspects of your furloughing refund claim.
- Employees can be furloughed multiple times, allowing you to take them on and off furlough if needed, but each furlough period must be at least 3 weeks duration.

In direct liaison with HMRC and the Defra Zoos Team we are pursuing clarity on whether furloughed staff can return as volunteers to perform essential animal welfare activities, and we will provide further updates as soon as we can. If you are also liaising with HMRC about this, please continue to keep us informed about what guidance and outcomes you receive; it helps us to inform our lobbying efforts and drive clarity through the current ambiguity.

Changes to the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme

Our lobbying efforts and those of other sectors have resulted in changes to CBIL scheme as formally announced by the Chancellor. The changes give access to more businesses and removes the requirement to demonstrate that you cannot access commercial loans, as well as banning lenders from asking for personal guarantees for loans of under £250,000. For full information on this scheme see the [British Bank website](#).

The Chancellor also announced the [Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme](#), for businesses with an annual turnover between £45 -£500 million.

A full up-to-date summary of all available financial support to UK businesses can be found on the Government's [Business Support website](#).

Covid-19 Infection of Captive Big Cats

The USDA has confirmed a tiger at the Bronx Zoo is infected with Covid-19. This is the first confirmed infection of a zoo animal. The statement from the USDA, which includes some FAQs for the public, can be found [here](#) and the statement from the Wildlife Conservation Society which runs the Bronx Zoo [here](#). We have worked with our Vet Focus Group to update our advice in light of these developments and would recommend that extra biosecurity measures are taken wherever possible by those keepers working in direct contact with primates, felids and mustelids, and we recommend you update your own risk assessments and protocols to reflect this new information. We have also drafted our own short [statement](#) ready for any media and public enquiries.

Covid-19 Member Update - 4/04/20

Dear Members,

This is just a brief update to report on a couple of points.

Firstly, the Chancellor yesterday announced changes which should make the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme more accessible. The changes are summarised [here](#).

Secondly, a small collection has successfully petitioned HMRC directly for permission to bring a portion of furloughed staff back in to volunteer for their organisations. To be clear, the Government Guidance currently states that volunteering for your own collection during a period of furlough is not allowed, but this example does suggest that HMRC are able to provide dispensations in special cases. FYI the manager of the collection involved went through the following process:

- Initiated a web meeting with HMRC via the PAYE webchat. Provided their unique PAYE Reference and address.
- Explained situation, emphasised that there was currently zero income and that staff could not be paid, therefore they could not carry out their statutory responsibility of animal care. Animal welfare was thus being impacted.
- Was officially informed that they would be able to furlough staff, then bring back a portion of animal care staff to perform 'life protecting services'.
- Obtained a meeting reference which was immediately applied by HMRC to their PAYE Reference.
- Saved a print out of the web chat dialogue.

If you do choose to petition HMRC in a similar way we'd be extremely grateful if you could let us know in the Office if you have been successful, as this will inform our continued lobbying efforts. As ever, please do get in touch with any queries or anything else we might be able to support you with at this time.

Covid-19 Member Update - 3/04/20

Dear Members,

A short update today from the BIAZA Office to share some new resources we have made available on our website to support you at this time.

Fundraising Resources

Many of you are developing your fundraising processes and providing new opportunities for the public to support your collections with emergency donations. In order to support you in this we have worked with John Regan Associates, to create a brief Fundraising Advice document available [here](#) on the website.

Staff Accommodation

Some of our collections are now housing staff on site, in order to reduce their chances of infection and facilitate ongoing operations with a reduced staff. To that end, the Zoological Society of

Hertfordshire have kindly shared a template [Staff Accommodation Agreement](#) document to help in managing staff accommodation.

If there are any other resources or templates which may be of value to you at this point, please get in touch with the BIAZA Office and we will do what we can to help locate or develop them for you.

Over the weekend, the BIAZA Office Team will be continuing to monitor any announcements from Government but we will only be sending out a members' update if there is urgent news to share with you. The Senior Team will also still be checking our emails across the weekend so you can continue to contact us with any issues you need support with.

Covid-19 Member Update - 2/04/20

Dear Members,

We have had another meeting with the Defra Zoos Policy Team so our update today contains information about that, as well as some small updates on access to Covid-19 loans and grants, and an offer to help you with accessing livefood.

Update from Defra Zoos Policy Team Meeting

Today we had another meeting with the Defra Zoos Policy Team. They updated us on their recent meetings with HMT and Lord Goldsmith, Animal Welfare Minister, which we have supported by providing information and case studies on the impacts of Covid-19 on zoos and aquariums and by making clear requests for necessary additional support from Government.

They were able to confirm that the Minister has set supporting zoos and aquariums as a Defra priority at this time, and the Zoos Policy Team has been significantly expanded to provide the staffing resource to work on doing this. They also confirmed that HMT are developing an emergency circumstance fund to provide support in urgent cases where other Covid-19 support measures and direct fundraising options are not sufficient. Our lobbying work means that zoos are being included within this fund as a priority sector.

Funding will be assessed by HM Treasury on a case by case basis, with Defra supporting eligible zoos with the application process. No further information is available yet but we once again stressed the need for urgency and expect more details soon. The Defra team are working to create guidance and signposting documents to highlight all support measures accessible to zoos and aquariums, and to gather required information to assess additional support needs. They will be contacting all zoo licence holders with this information next week.

While this work is ongoing, we are continuing our activities to highlight the need for support for zoos and aquariums through working with Andrew Rosindell MP on parliamentary questions, and remain in regular contact with the Defra team.

Access to the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loans

We are aware that some members have had difficulty accessing these loans with banks pushing them towards other commercial loans with fees attached instead. This has also been the case in other sectors. Yesterday, Business Secretary Alok Sharma told banks they must not be unfairly

refusing access to these loans. It is reported that HMT are also changing the rules on accessing the loans so that banks are able to roll them out faster. His full statement can be read [here](#) and wider news coverage including regarding rule changes [here](#). Please do continue to let us know if you have problems (or successes) in accessing the Government's Covid-19 support measures.

Eligibility for Small Business and Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Grants in England

Additional guidance for local authorities in administering these grants has been published [here](#), including information on eligibility criteria. The criteria for the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality (RHL) grants is also expanded on further [here](#), which includes tourist attractions as part of the definition of a leisure business. We have had confirmation that eligibility is ultimately determined by the Local Authority, so we recommend that if you are otherwise eligible (i.e. rateable value below £51,000) you contact your LA to seek access to these grants.

Livefood Offer

Peregrine Livefoods have responded to the recent challenges faced by zoos and aquariums with a generous offer of support. Peregrine will offer all BIAZA member zoos and aquariums up to £250 worth of free livefood (locusts and silent brown crickets) per week, for the next 4 weeks. This offer is to help those in need the most on a temporary basis. There is [more information](#) available with the other Coronavirus resources on the BIAZA Members' area of the website. Please contact Peregrine on 01279 438 658 after 10am for further information on how you may be able to benefit, or email zoosupport@peregrine-livefoods.co.uk with your contact details and one of the team will give you a call.

Covid-19 Member Update - 1/04/20

Dear Members,

Today's update includes some clarification on animal care staff as essential workers, access to childcare for essential workers and takes a moment to celebrate our community and its response to this pandemic.

Status of Animal Care Staff in Zoos & Aquariums

Yesterday Government confirmed that although zookeepers are not classified as key workers, they are seen as essential staff and will not be prevented from travelling to and from their work. This clarity was provided via a formal written question to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs submitted by Dr Luke Evans, local MP to BIAZA member Twycross Zoo. The full response can be seen [here](#).

We have also been advised, that although not automatically entitled to access childcare, essential workers are able to approach their local authorities and childcare providers to identify suitable spaces available for their children where it is not possible for them to be cared for at home. A template letter from BIAZA that can be used in support of making such a request is now available to download from our [website](#).

Thank You to Our Members

We continue to hear from many of you about actions you are taking to encourage political support for the financial and other business support requests we are making to the Government on your behalf. We know that lots of you have contacted your local MPs calling for them to support our requests and putting them in touch with us or Andrew Rosindell. These actions have led to MPs sending their own communications to the Chancellor and other key Ministers asking them to take action for zoos and aquariums, as well as tabling questions in parliament too such as the one by Dr Luke Evans above. There has also been a joint letter to the Chancellor from a consortium of zoos, on behalf of BIAZA member zoos and aquariums, putting further weight behind our requests. When there is not much positivity, seeing our community come together, raising our voices and influence from different angles, sharing expertise and resources, and working for greater support for all through this crisis, is definitely one we should celebrate.

Covid-19 Member Update - 31/03/20

Dear Members,

Here is today's update from the BIAZA Office team on Covid-19 related news including a request for you to share with us any experience you have had of food supply disruption due to the pandemic.

Zoo and Aquarium APPG

Andrew Rosindell MP, Chair of the Zoo and Aquarium APPG, is following up his letters to the PM, Chancellor and EFRA Minister with letters to each MP with a BIAZA zoo or aquarium in their constituency as part of further efforts to encourage wider political engagement with our requests for further support from the Government at this time.

Request for Information on Food Supplies

We have been asked to compile information on any disruptions to food supply chains zoos and aquariums are experiencing. Please get in touch and let us know if there are specific feed types or items which are already less available to you, or are a potential concern. We will be sharing this information with Defra.

UK Zoo Licence Inspections

Defra are working with APHA and Local Authority representatives to produce guidance for Zoo Inspectors and develop a plan for those inspections that are due imminently. Any collections expecting an inspection soon should be provided with further information shortly.

Grant for Small Charities

Charities Aid Foundation has launched a [Coronavirus Emergency Fund](#). Grants of up to £10,000 can be applied for through this rapid response fund to smaller charitable organisations (income of £1 million or less) affected by the impact of Covid-19 in the UK.

Covid-19 Member Update - 30/03/20

Dear Members,

We have a short update for you to start the new week off, mostly regarding our second meeting with the Defra Zoos Policy Team earlier today.

UK Lobbying Efforts

The BIAZA Exec Team and Gareth Siddorn, Public Affairs Manager from Chester Zoo, heard from the Defra team this morning that access to emergency funding for zoos and aquariums will be discussed with Lord Goldsmith, Animal Welfare Minister, and the Treasury in the next couple of days. The Defra team are also following up on needed clarity on a number of issues including whether zoos and aquariums are being considered as leisure sector businesses (opening up more access to [funding opportunities](#)) and that keepers are identified as essential staff. We are sure these requests are helped by our letters to the Chancellor and the letters from the Zoo & Aquarium APPG Chair, Andrew Rosindell MP to the [PM](#), [the Chancellor](#) and EFRA [Minister George Eustice](#). We will have further meetings with the Defra team soon and will keep you posted as soon as there is any further news to share.

Furloughed staff & Volunteering

Furloughed staff ([Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme](#)) are not able to volunteer for their own organisations. However, the [government guidance](#) does allow for volunteering to be carried out for other organisations. If any furloughed member of staff from a BIAZA collection wishes to continue to carry out BIAZA-related activities (e.g. Committee or Working Group members and/or award judges) during their period of furlough, please ensure to get approval from your organisation's HR department first, and then get in touch with the [BIAZA Office](#). We are, as ever, grateful for your expertise and support.

BIAZA Covid-19 Resources

The full set of BIAZA resources continues to be available to our members [here](#), but we have now made some of these resources additionally available to non-member zoos and aquariums through a link from the homepage of our website: www.biaza.org.uk.

Covid-19 Member Update - 29/03/20

Dear all,

Today we provide you with a summary of last week's BIAZA's key information on Covid-19:

BIAZA zoos have now closed to the public. The lack of income is after this first week already causing some serious concerns for some of our members, fearing for their continued operation until lockdown restrictions are lifted.

BIAZA, supported by members and others who are actively lobbying their MPs, are stressing the urgent need for flexibility in loans, access to grants and designation of animal keepers as Essential Workers, in order to get past this critical time of (undetermined) weeks with no income. Letters have been sent either directly by BIAZA or the APPG, and others, to the UK Chancellor, Environment Minister and Minister for Animal welfare, as well as to the Irish Oireachtas, Northern Ireland Executive, Welsh Assembly and Scottish Parliament. These letters outline how unique our

sector is and that we need urgent help to ensure we can deliver on the statutory requirement of caring for our animals.

Please find all our resources via this [link](#). We have information on furloughing, on the Coronavirus Bill, template letters to MPs, etc. We have also updated the [Member advice on Coronavirus](#) to include more detail on financial support for all countries and regions. For direct links to the UK government initiatives go [here](#).

Covid-19 Member Update - 28/03/20

Dear all, please find below a summary of our Covid-19 related efforts – today with a bit more information for our Irish members. Please feel free to share this update far and wide.

Corvid-19 measures in Ireland

The Irish Government is now implementing further measures aiming to delay the spread of Covid-19. Taoiseach Leo Varadkar announced yesterday evening that for the next two weeks people should stay at home, limiting exercise to within 2km of their home, and only travelling further away if necessary, for food shopping or essential work that cannot be done at home. All public gatherings are banned, and most businesses must remain closed. For more information please see [here](#).

Ireland Political Lobbying

With the feedback from our Irish members we have sent a letter to the Minister for Finance, Paschal Donohoe TD, with in Cc. Josepha Madigan TD, the Minister in charge of charge of NPWS, highlighting the biggest challenges facing zoos and aquariums in Ireland at this time and additional support measures, and areas of clarification, that are needed. For our Irish members, please contact us as we are happy to provide a template.

UK Political Lobbying

Having sent our second letter to the Chancellor and HMT this week, BIAZA has now also sent similar letters to the Scottish Government, Welsh Assembly and Northern Ireland Executive. These letters again highlight the specific challenges facing zoos and aquariums from Covid-19 and make further requests for support, focusing on those areas where implementation is devolved such as business rates relief and some grants.

We have another meeting with the DEFRA team on Monday morning to provide them with an update on the situation concerning zoos for DEFRA's update to Lord Goldsmith, Minister for Animal Welfare, on Tuesday. We will be sure to (continue to) stress the urgent financial support that is required to be able to provide the statutory requirements for the animals in your care.

Communication resources: the Dutch Zoo Association (NVD) has created a list Covid-19 and Zoos FAQs for answering questions from the public or the media. We have translated it into English and the NVD is happy for our members to use this – please have a look [here](#). We have been sharing any good news stories and the new initiatives of our members to keep in touch with the public on our social media – it brightens everyone day and may give others ideas too.

Please let Nicky, Cerian or Madelon know if you have any questions or comments.

Covid-19 Member Update - 27/03/20

We are providing you with these daily updates in order to summarise our Covid-19 related efforts and highlight support and resources available to you at this time. We are receiving feedback that these emails are extremely helpful, especially to those with smaller teams, which is great to hear. Please feel free to forward far and wide to your teams.

Please do not hesitate to contact Cerian, Nicky and Madelon, if you have any questions/comments or suggestions of other actions we can carry out to support you.

Political Lobbying

We are taking every opportunity of communicating to the authorities the seriousness of this situation and uncertain future now faced by many of our collections. The letter sent to the UK Chancellor, DEFRA, the APPG and ZEC really hones down on securing the critical financial support and frameworks for flexibility in loans that the sector needs. We received a response from the [Chair of the APPG, Andrew Rosindell](#) today and have provided support in finalising the APPG Chair's letter. Andrew's office has confirmed that their letter will be sent to the Prime Minister, the Chancellor and Secretary of State of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs today.

Our key asks:

- Additional financial support for salaries for staff who cannot be furloughed and other essential costs related to animal welfare
- Ensuring access to the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme for all in our sector (even if there are already outstanding loans/debts)
- Confirming the essential worker status of animal welfare staff
- The need for access to additional emergency funding in some situations
- A special exemption that furloughed employees can volunteer at their own employer (due to their specialist expertise and need to deliver animal welfare standards).

We know members have been in touch with their MPs and we continue to encourage you to use these key asks ensuring we are aligned. Please find [here](#) a template letter for those members who would like to contact their local MPs to encourage them to support these asks on behalf of our sector.

UK Furloughing updates:

The UK Government updated their furloughing guidance last night: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wage-costs-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>.

New key points include are:

- The minimum period of furloughing is 3 weeks
- Staff on variable hours and zero hours contracts can be furloughed
- Pensions can be based on 80% of salary during furlough
- Seemingly no work or volunteering for their own employer is allowed by furloughed

staff, although current wording suggests that volunteering for other organisations may be permissible.

Our BIAZA guidance including templates for managers is updated and available with our other [coronavirus resources](#). Thanks to all those who have contributed, especially Chester and Wildwood.

Cerian, Nicky and Madelon will be checking any changes over the weekend and will provide you with an update on both Saturday and Sunday.

Covid-19 Member Update - 26/03/20

Dear Members,

Our update today includes more information on our follow up letter to the Chancellor and news of a significant additional financial support scheme for our members in Ireland.

Political Lobbying

We have sent a follow up letter to the UK Chancellor today providing further information on the impacts of Covid-19 on our sector and support measures, and areas of clarification, that are urgently needed to assist our members at this time including additional financial support for essential costs related to animal welfare, ensuring access to the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, confirming the essential worker status of animal welfare staff and the need for access to additional emergency funding in some situations. We will be sending similar letters to the devolved Governments imminently regarding their business support measures. We are updating our template letter for those members who would like to contact their local MPs to encourage them to support these additional requests on behalf of our sector and will make this available shortly.

We have also been continuing our discussions with the Defra Zoos Policy Team and the Zoos Expert Committee who are working on further contingency planning as well as updating the Chair of the Zoo and Aquarium APPG.

Wage Support in Ireland

The Irish Government has updated its previous support package for businesses to now include the Temporary Covid-19 Wage Subsidy Scheme to help employers pay their employees during the pandemic. Employers will be refunded up to 70% of an employee's wages (up to €410). Any employer who can show they have lost at least 25% of their trade due to Covid-19 is eligible. Further information is available [here](#). If any Irish members have concerns or need clarifications regarding this scheme, or have requests for additional support needed from the Irish Government, please let us know as soon as possible. We intend to send a letter to the Irish Government shortly and will include these where possible.

UK Furloughing Support Materials

We are making good progress with these documents, thanks to significant contributions from the team at Chester Zoo, as well as additional input from several other members regarding their experiences implementing furloughing. We expect to have general guidance, FAQs and template

letters and agreements uploaded to the members' area of our website within the next 24 hours. We will include links to these in our next update, but you can also keep an eye out for them [here](#). We have also been supporting members with specific questions where we can in collaboration with HR and employment law experts from our community, so if you do have questions that are not covered in these documents then do ask us.

Covid-19 Member Update - 25/03/20

Dear Members,

We are a bit later in sending this communication out today because we have had a busy but productive morning in the BIAZA Office with several meetings working on political lobbying to raise the profile of the challenges facing our members, including a meeting with the Zoos Policy Team at Defra. Our email today contains updates on these lobbying activities and other developments related to the pandemic.

Developments in Ireland

Taoiseach Leo Varadkar announced further protective measures against Covid-19 yesterday. These included requesting people stay at home, restricting gatherings to no more than four people, and closing non-essential retail outlets and many other businesses such as theatres, gyms and leisure centres, while social distancing guidance must be followed everywhere else. These restrictions have initially been put in place until 19th April. More information is available [here](#).

Political Lobbying

Earlier today BIAZA had a successful meeting with the Zoos Policy team at Defra and the Chair of the Zoos Expert Committee. Having received our earlier letter, the purpose of the meeting was to share more information on how the pandemic and associated restrictions are impacting zoos and aquariums and how well our members are able to access the current business support packages introduced by the Government. We were able to highlight the biggest challenges facing our sector at this time and make requests for additional support packages, as well as seeking clarification on several details relating to implementation of current support and restrictions. The Defra team are now reporting this information back to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Minister for Animal Welfare and are working to be able to respond to our requests. We will have further meetings with them in the next week.

Based on the feedback we have received from you all over the last few days, as well as our discussions with Defra and others, we are also currently drafting follow up communications with the Chancellor and HMT, to refine our requests for financial and other support for zoos and aquariums. These will be sent imminently and we will update you further on this in future emails.

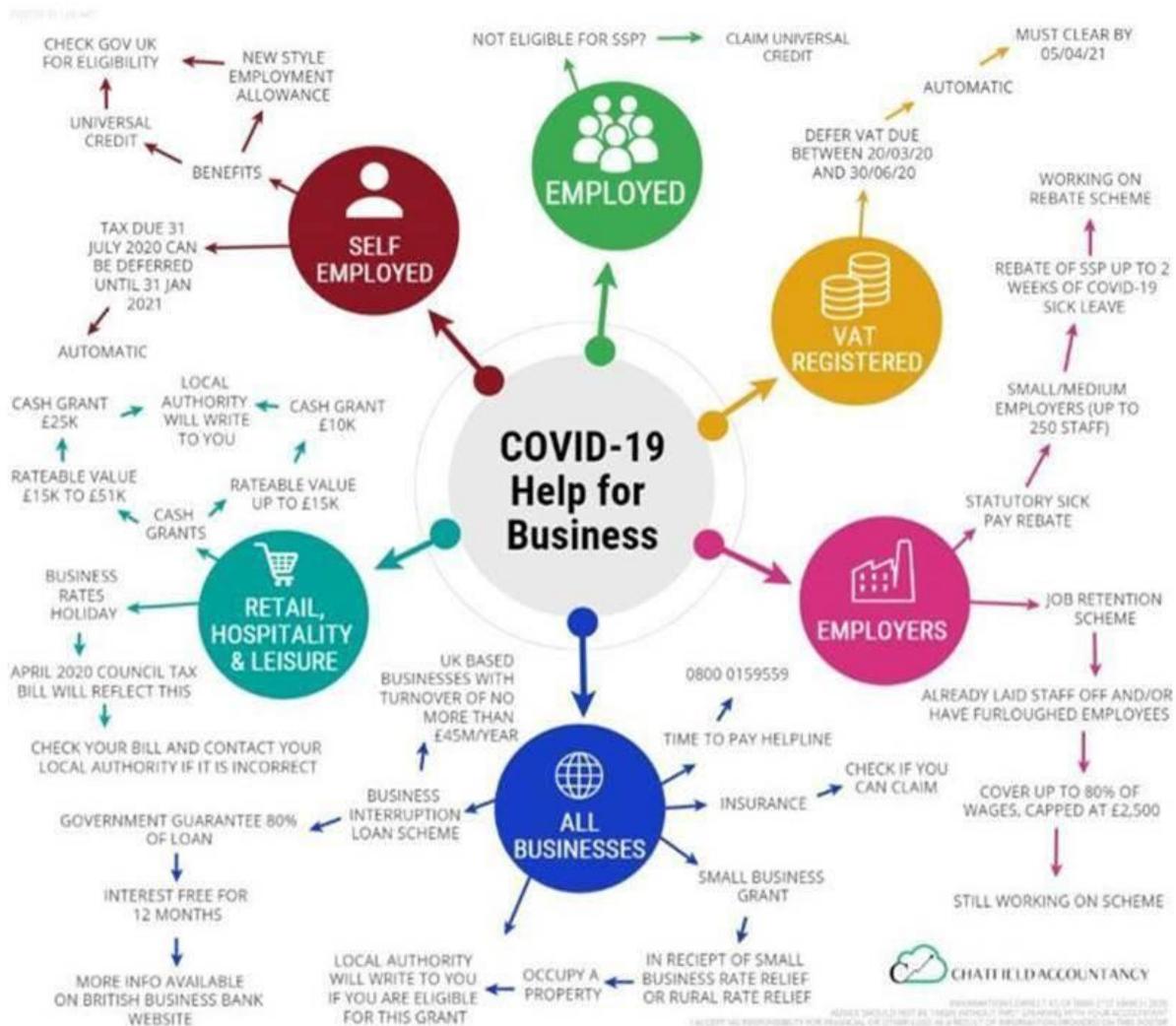
Business Support

We have come across this visual representation of the current support packages in place in the UK which some of you may find useful as a quick summary of what is available at the moment:



RIAZA

IRISH ASSOCIATION
OF AQUARIUMS



Furloughing Staff

We are aware that many of you have questions about how to implement furloughing. The team at Chester Zoo have kindly agreed to put together some information and template resources on how they have approached it and we hope to be able to share this soon. We are also putting together some FAQs for employers on this topic, so if you have questions and queries about furloughing, or you have useful advice on it that you are willing to share with BIAZA members, please get in touch and we will endeavour to include it.

BIAZA Collections

We continue to update our spreadsheet tracking the status of BIAZA collections which can be found on our website. Currently 121 of our members are closed.

Finally, a reminder that all of our resources and guidance related to Covid-19 can be found on our website [here](#), including the co-signed template essential worker travel letter and communications advice.

Covid-19 Member Update - 24/03/20

Dear all,

In today's update from the BIAZA Office we provide information of the further Covid-19 control measures and restrictions as announced by the UK Prime Minister yesterday evening as well as some new resources we have prepared to support you.

If you have any questions or comments make sure to hit 'Reply All' as Nicky, Cerian and myself are all working slightly different office hours and we want to make sure that we can respond swiftly to your comments and questions.

We are ramping up our political lobbying efforts to push for greater support for Zoos and Aquariums, particularly around additional financial support for your operation expenses (providing care for your collection and ensuring the upkeep of animal welfare standards). If there are specific support packages that would be of benefit to your collection (whether you are in the UK, Ireland, Northern-Ireland and devolved Gvts.) as well as the wider zoo and aquarium community, make sure to continue to let us know so we can include these in communication with the authorities and Ministers.

Business Closures

The UK Government has now stated that non-essential businesses and premises must now close and remain closed until further notice. Initial measures are in place for 3 weeks. Further information on this can be found [here](#).

Essential Workers

The UK has now changed its guidance to clearly state that people should stay at home except for to carry out some specific activities. The majority of people should no longer be travelling for work purposes. However, travel for essential work is still permitted. It is our interpretation that providing animal care is essential work, so staff involved directly in this can continue to do so. We recommend you provide any essential staff with identification and a letter explaining their status as essential workers. As a BIAZA member you can use this joint template letter [here](#) (as adapted from the letter from the Ocean Conservation Trust)

Communications Advice

Together with Caroline Sanger-Davies (Chester Zoo) and the other experts of the Communication Working Group we have compiled some key pointers to help you manage your communications at this time. The document is available [here](#).

Other Resources and Guidance

You can find all of the resources we have put together for members on Covid-19 [here](#). This includes our general guidance document on the virus, the spreadsheet of member status, template letter to your local MP, guidance on risk assessments and resources from other associations we have been given permission to share. Key information about Government support for businesses in the UK can be found [here](#), and in Ireland [here](#).

Covid-19 Member Update - 23/03/20

Dear all,

In these fast changing times we are committed to continue to update our members regularly. We have summarised the UK Government's critical updates over the weekend including implementing additional precautions in place to slow the spread of Covid-19 and providing further financial support to businesses and outline some of the BIAZA initiatives ensuring that we raise our collective influence and we can support each other in these challenging.

Government Closures of Businesses

On Friday 20th March Boris Johnson announced further closures of businesses including pubs, cinemas, museums and indoor leisure centres, as well as stopping the sale of food and drink for consumption on the premises (for the full list see [here](#)).

Zoos and aquariums are not included in the list of businesses that must close and it is the decision of the individual collections to decide on the most appropriate course of action. If you decide to continue to be open to the public we recommend that you take the following actions:

- Have thorough and frequently updated risk assessments and risk management plans that clearly specify actions in place to minimise any risks of infection to visitors and staff and ensuring animal welfare standards can be maintained at all times.
- Have a communications plan that includes clearly communicating the measures you are taking to minimise risks to your staff and the public and responses to criticisms of the public or others

BIAZA Member Closures & Responses to Coronavirus

We have been following all of your updates on your collections through your websites and social media channels and have compiled a spreadsheet regarding the [status of BIAZA member collections](#). We hope this document, along with discussions on our member only Facebook groups, will help the community come together to support each other at this time. Currently, the majority of our members are now closed, or operating with significant restrictions in place (e.g. safari park elements only). We would also like to start sharing case studies of how members have responded to the pandemic, in order to share expertise and ideas.

Business and Financial Support

The new UK Government business support measures begin today. This includes the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, providing loans to small and medium businesses which are interest free for 12 months, and the Bank of England's Covid Corporate Financing Facility. For more information see [here](#).

The Chancellor Rishi Sunak provided a [statement](#) on additional financial support measures for businesses on 20th March which included the establishment of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. This will provide Government grants to cover 80% the wages of staff who are furloughed (not working, but kept on payroll rather than being laid off) up to a total of £2500 a month, backdated to 1st March. All employers are eligible for this scheme, which will be administered by HMRC. It is initially opened for 3 months, but Government intends to extend it if necessary. The Chancellor also deferred the next quarter of VAT payments. Full information on all UK Government business support measures can be found [here](#).

We are aware that this is welcome support for many of our members, however there are many other challenges. In particular, the issue of needing to continue to pay wage bills and other costs related to providing good animal care for your collections even if closed to visitors. This is something we are continuing to work towards finding solutions for through many channels including the Zoos and Aquariums APPG and other visitor attraction and animal welfare groups.

Actions to Support Irish Members & those in the Devolved Nations

We are also actively working at the moment to refine our messaging from Westminster targeted communications to similarly engage with the Irish and UK Devolved Governments. If you have key issues that you feel need additionally raising in these regions please let [Nicky](#) know ASAP and we will incorporate them where possible.

Coronavirus Guidance from the Charity Commission

The Charity Commission has published some guidance on postponing AGMs and other key meetings, or holding them via video or teleconferencing in response to Coronavirus, available [here](#).

BIAZA Social Media Communications

We intend to use our social media channels to encourage public support for our members and share good news stories – something we are all in need of. As the majority of collections are now closed to visitors, we will now switch to predominantly promoting alternative ways the public can engage with you and provide proactive support for their local BIAZA member. If you have special activities, webcams & virtual tours, educational materials and fundraising campaigns you would like us to promote, please email information to admin@biaza.org.uk

If you have any questions or comments, please make sure to send us ([Cerian](#), [Nicky](#) or [Madelon](#)) an email.

Covid-19 Member Update - 20/03/20

Dear Members,

Further to today's special issue of BIAZA Bitesize we wanted to provide some more details regarding the steps we are taking to support the BIAZA membership in this challenging period.

A BIAZA Covid-19 Public Affairs Working Group has been formed to make direct representations to key political stakeholders in order to highlight the concerns and challenges faced by zoos and aquariums. A letter has been sent highlighting these concerns to the Chancellor, the Secretary of State for the Environment and Andrew Rosindell, MP, as Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Zoos and Aquariums. Similar letters will be sent to the Scottish and Welsh Assemblies and the Irish Parliament. We are also strengthening connections with other tourism sector groups in order that we can work together on lobbying and share political intelligence.

Please find attached a template letter which is available should you wish to engage your own local MP and ask for their support on this matter. You may wish to edit it to include your own contingency plans and highlight specific challenges. [the latest version of this is [available here](#)]

We are also aware of the concerns surrounding the issue of Key Workers. The Government has now published its list of professions which qualify for 'key worker' status, which is available [here](#). Those meeting the criteria, as well as all vulnerable children, will be able to continue to access statutory childcare provision (although, where possible, key workers are still encouraged to keep children at home). Whilst somewhat broader than previous definitions of key workers, this new interpretation focuses on those involved in the front-line response to the COVID-19 public health crisis. At present it does not include people with responsibility for ensuring animal welfare, with the exception of those vets involved in the production and supply of veterinary medicine, involved in food production or providing emergency care. The RCVS and BVA have produced a statement [here](#).

The intention of the Government's policy appears to be two-fold:

1. To ensure as many front-line workers are available to respond to the immediate crisis as possible.
2. To still limit those included on the list so as to promote social distancing.

We are seeking urgent clarification from Government about the status of essential employees within the zoo and aquarium community, principally keepers and veterinary staff. Whilst it is unlikely that the Government will significantly broaden their definition of key workers we are seeking reassurances that, in the event of further travel restrictions and closures of buildings and public spaces, zoo keepers and vets are considered to be essential workers and can continue to care for our animals.

We are pursuing this directly with the Government, as well as via tourism trade bodies (such as ALVA and UKinbound) and in dialogue with other animal welfare organisations.

We will provide regular updates as this situation develops, but in the meantime please feel free to contact us if there is anything else we can be doing to support you at this time.

Covid-19 News from BIAZA BiteSize March 2020 - 20/03/20

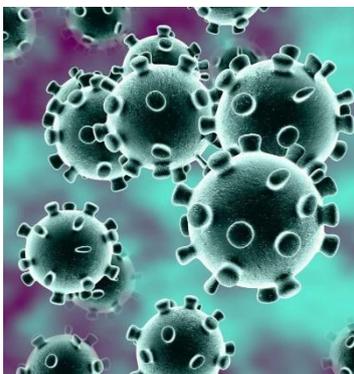
FROM THE OFFICE

We are entering into an extremely challenging period and would like to remind all our members that we are here to support you however we can. We will continue to update our [advice to members](#) regarding management of Covid-19, and to provide helpful resources and forums for discussion wherever possible. Through a new Covid-19 Public Affairs Focus Group we will also be liaising with Government officials over the coming days and weeks to represent the interests of our community as new policies are implemented to manage this situation. We will keep [this page](#) updated with the latest information.

Madelon hopes to be back with the Office in early April, but in the meantime please do continue to contact us if you need anything. The team are currently working from home and

unable to answer the phones at this time or receive post, so please use our email addresses to get in touch for the time being. (admin@biaza.org.uk)

Nicky & Cerian



BIAZA BUSINESS – COVID-19 MANAGEMENT

Coronavirus Guidance

There is a guidance document on the [BIAZA website](#) providing basic advice and some useful links. If you have any specific queries which are not addressed within the document or on the links then please get in touch with [Nicky](#). If you have lost your login details or need help accessing this area, [ask Alex](#).

BIAZA Covid-19 Public Affairs Focus Group

This Focus Group will work with the Office to lead on making direct representations to key political stakeholders (MPs, Whitehall, HMT Select Committee) in order to highlight concerns and challenges faced by zoos and aquariums. We have submitted a letter highlighting our concerns to the Chancellor, George Eustace and the All Party Parliamentary Group for Zoos and Aquariums. Similar letters will be sent to the Irish Parliament and Scottish and Welsh Assemblies. We will also be lobbying through wider tourism sector bodies to ensure the voice and needs of zoos and aquariums are represented in their ongoing conversations with the Government.

A template letter will be shared for individual members to write to their constituency MP's in order to update on the work being put into contingency plans, highlight specific challenges, and ask for their support.

Business & Budget

A major new scheme has been launched by the Bank of England to help businesses through this difficult financial period. Businesses can borrow up to £5 million through the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, with the first 6 months of that interest free. All retail, hospitality and leisure businesses in England will receive a 100% business rates holiday for the next 12 months. There will be grants up to £10,000 for small businesses eligible for Small Business Rate Relief and £25,000 grants to leisure businesses operating from smaller premises, with a rateable value over £15,000 and below £51,000.

The government advice to avoid pubs and theatres etc. is sufficient for businesses to claim on their insurance where they have appropriate business interruption cover for pandemics in place. [Read more](#) and [watch the speech](#).

Further financial support measures are expected to be announced by the Chancellor later today.



Covid-19 Guidance for HR staff

ACAS are holding sessions for businesses on how to handle the impacts of Coronavirus - [Coronavirus, an advisory webinar for employers](#) - This free webinar will provide practical advice for employers to help manage the impact of Coronavirus in the workplace. Multiple dates available. [Register to attend](#)

Covid-19 Communications

Optimism on Social Media! #BIAZABrightSide

In these uncertain times, we would like to share as much positivity as possible. We will be aiming to post regularly on our social media featuring fun facts, fabulous animal photos, live webcam footage and any virtual tours available of your sites and interesting stories or projects currently happening. If you have anything at all you think might be an interesting or useful positive social media feature, please email [Frankie](#)

Facebook Groups

We work best as a community, so we are encouraging our members to keep in touch, both with the office and with each other on forums such as our Committee and Working Group closed Facebook groups. Please use these spaces to share concerns, plans, ideas on how to manage this situation and even requests for help in these exceptional circumstances. For a full list of BIAZA closed Facebook groups please see the bottom of this newsletter.

Utilising Social Media

Alongside our own #BIAZABrightSide there are lots of zoo hashtags going round including #ClosedButStillCaring and #BringingTheZooToYou which you can use to promote your posts.



Digital outreach

If schools are unable to travel to your site you could use skype to run sessions instead. You can head outdoors with a tripod [like ZSL here](#), get creative with resources they can print to use during the session, and go places you wouldn't be able to fit a whole class. Another idea is offering online resources for school groups, like [ZSL](#), [Dublin](#) and [Chester](#). Now is a great time to utilise your collection's social media channels to connect with schools and families. If you would like more detail on any of these ideas we can help put you in touch with collections already using them to get advice – [email the BIAZA Office](#).

Love Your Zoo

Love Your Zoo week is an annual nationwide event and an opportunity to remind our visitors of the amazingly important work you do in terms of animal care, conservation, education and research. We will be adapting this year in light of the pandemic, so when you choose to celebrate is up to you. You may find it useful to hold your LYZ campaign online during closure, or it could be a useful tool in recovering your visitor numbers as we come to the end of this pandemic and are able to reopen our gates. If you do choose to participate this year then [let us know](#) so we can help promote it and support you.



Key Dates

The BIAZA Annual Conference, scheduled to take place 8-10 June at Dublin Zoo, is likely to be postponed until later in 2020. We will provide more information on this as soon as possible.

The Reptile and Amphibian Working Group conference, scheduled for May, has been cancelled. We will continue to assess the situation in relation to our many other Committee and Working Group conferences scheduled for later this year and will update [the events page](#) with more information on these once available.

If you need to update your event on the BIAZA website to reflect that it has been cancelled, postponed or moved online please contact [Frankie](#).

Covid-19 Member Update - 18/03/20

Dear Members,

I hope you are all staying well.

Please see the attached, updated advice on how best to manage and mitigate risks presented by Covid-19. [[Latest version available here](#)] Please note that at this stage we would recommend that all collections have a plan for enforced closure and lockdown, which could be implemented at short notice over the next few days/weeks.

As a community and as individual organisations we are facing a challenging time. Please do keep in touch and let us know how we can best support you.

Covid-19 Member Update - 17/03/20

Dear BIAZA Member,

As a precaution against the spread of COVID-19 the BIAZA Office staff will be following Government advice and working from home until further notice. This means it is likely you will not be able to reach anyone at the office by telephone.

If you need to contact a member of staff, please do so via their email address (which you can find here: <https://biaza.org.uk/biaza-office>) or via admin@biaza.org.uk. If you have an urgent concern you can contact Nicky on 07789 038565.

We will continue to work to support you throughout this challenging time. Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have queries or concerns which we may be able to help with. There is Coronavirus Advice on the members' dashboard of our website (<https://biaza.org.uk/members/dashboard#page>) which we will keep updated.

Wishing you all the best,
The BIAZA Office Team