



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Department
for International
Development



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

The Rt Hon the Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park
Minister of State

John Parker
Arboricultural Association
The Malthouse, Stroud Green, Standish
Stonehouse, Gloucestershire
GL10 3DL

2 April 2020

Dear John,

Thank you for your letter to the Secretary of State regarding the impacts of coronavirus on arboriculture and your membership. As the minister responsible for domestic forestry I am happy to provide a response.

I understand you have had a constructive conversation with officials regarding concerns over continuing to work under public health guidelines, and I hope this letter can provide clarity and assurance to your members in this uncertain time. As set out in public health guidelines available on gov.uk, which were updated on 29 March:

- You can travel for work purposes, but only where you cannot work from home.
- With the exception of some businesses and venues, the government has not required any other businesses to close – indeed it is important for business to carry on.
- If you cannot work from home then you can still travel for work purposes, provided you are not showing coronavirus symptoms and neither you nor any of your household are self-isolating. No work should be carried out by a tradesperson who has coronavirus symptoms, however mild. At all times, workers should follow the guidance on self-isolation if they or anyone in their household shows symptoms.
- Employers who have people in their offices or onsite should ensure that employees are able to follow Public Health England guidelines including, where possible, maintaining a 2-metre distance from others, and washing their hands with soap and water often for at least 20 seconds (or using hand sanitiser gel if soap and water is not available).

This is directly applicable to your sector, as you say, your work cannot be done from home. Arboriculturalists should therefore be able to continue with outdoor work, where they can continue to follow Public Health England guidelines. I would therefore like to thank the Arboricultural Association for your work done already to disseminate this information to your members and the sector.

I hope that you can similarly help your members and the industry to access the range of employment, financial support, and business support measures, which are being made available by HM Treasury. Please see gov.uk and www.businesssupport.gov.uk/faqs/ for further information.

We face an unprecedented challenge, and government is working as fast as we can to address the issues created by coronavirus. I hope that the measures we are introducing, and guidance we will continue to provide, can deliver greater certainty in this uncertain time.

Thank you once again for your letter.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'R' followed by a long horizontal stroke that curves upwards at the end.

THE RT HON THE LORD GOLDSMITH OF RICHMOND PARK