



## A Difficult Balancing Act

“balancing act”, meaning:

- an action that needs a fine balance between different conditions or wishes
- to appease two or more groups having difference of opinion or action
- to move ahead while keeping a balance between two situations at loggerheads with each other

As the lockdown restrictions start to ease, more workers are being asked to return to the work. The government’s advice is clear though; employees should only be asked to go back if they cannot do their job from home.

Locking down the UK was it turns out easy, but unlocking the economy and balancing the growing economic crisis with the ongoing health crisis is going to be difficult to achieve successfully in comparison.

Whilst some service based businesses have been able to continue with workers at home, many businesses haven’t and there is growing awareness that we need to get the economy going again and business leaders have already invested a good deal of time and money planning for this.

One of our clients, Ashridge Group [www.ashridge-group.com](http://www.ashridge-group.com) (a specialist and award winning provider of facilities management and security services to organisations across both the public and private sectors nationwide and across Europe) has produced a 9 point guide designed to give support to employees returning to work and a copy is available here. <https://info.ashridge-group.com/>

Mark Walker, Chairman, comments “We’re dedicated to looking after our employees and building our ‘people first’ ethos. For this reason, we’ve given a great deal of thought to our own return to the workplace. To expand on that thinking and in association with experts and clients, we’ve created this 9 Point Guide. We believe it will provide essential advice to anyone planning to welcome employees back to the workplace as the Coronavirus lockdown eases.”

The guide is focused on the needs of employees to feel part of the decision-making process and addresses the natural concerns that returning to work will bring. Working together has become a feature of the crisis in all walks of life and in the workplace this will be an important feature of returning to work safely and productively.

We have to get the economy going again; that is very clear. Doing it safely and getting the balance right is the challenge.

**Michael Garvey**  
Managing Director

## OCCUPIER SERVICES

### The changing face of office life

The current COVID-19 pandemic has affected every business in some way which could have a lasting impact on the office sector.

In recent years, occupiers have tried to increase the density in their offices by introducing bench desking, hot desks and multi-functional spaces. From 250 sq ft per person in the 1980’s, some serviced office models are around 70 sq ft per person.

In our socially distant world, it is not going to be possible to move the workforce back into offices sitting so close together. There are many options that employers are considering currently including multiple groups of employees who work in the office on rotation so not every desk is occupied. Screens and moving desks into meeting rooms are also being considered.



However one key trend that we have noticed when speaking to many local businesses is how effective home working has been. Many businesses are now considering moving to a home working model almost entirely and undertaking many more meetings virtually which will have a profound impact on the office sector.

## OPEN FOR BUSINESS

During the crisis we have been following the government guidelines and it is important that we all continue to do so.

We have been working from home throughout the crisis and are now able to undertake viewings and property inspections.

The RICS has prepared a guidance note; RICS recommendations on inspections and visits for non-domestic properties COVID-19 (England) which you can read here: <https://chandlergarvey.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/covid-19-guide-rics-recommendations-on-non-domestic-properties.pdf>

### Recommendations before the property inspection or visit include

- We will ascertain if the building is vacant
- We will wear PPE and encourage applicants to do the same
- Adhere to social distancing measures at all times



## COVID dogs’ could sniff out coronavirus

**Buckinghamshire based Charity, Medical Detection Dogs are starting to train six dogs to spot COVID-19 symptoms before they appear.**

The dogs can already detect some cancers, Parkinson’s Disease and malaria and are about to start intensive training after funding from the British Government. Research from Medical Detection Dogs charity shows that dogs can be trained to detect the odour of disease at the equivalent dilution of one teaspoon of sugar in two Olympic-sized swimming pools of water.

The research will be conducted by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), Durham University and the charity Medical Detection Dogs. The funding from the Government will help research

into possible non-invasive ways to detect the virus early.

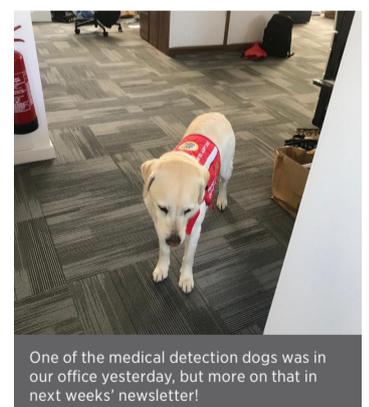
Dr Claire Guest, co-founder and chief executive of Medical Detection Dogs, said: “They have the potential to help by quickly screening people, which could be vital in the future.

“We are sure our dogs will be able to find the odour of COVID-19 and we will

then move into a second phase to test them in live situations, following which we hope to work with other agencies to train more dogs for deployment.

Medical Detection Dogs are currently based in Winslow, Buckinghamshire.

For more information on this charity visit <https://www.medicaldetectiondogs.org.uk/>



One of the medical detection dogs was in our office yesterday, but more on that in next weeks’ newsletter!

**Medical Detection Dogs**

## Mental Health Awareness Week

Hosted by the Mental Health Foundation, Mental Health Awareness Week takes place from 18-24 May 2020. The theme is kindness.

The Foundation has produced a Kindness matters guide <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/campaigns/mental-health-awareness-week/kindness-matters-guide>



The guide references the saying “it is better to give than receive”, and it turns

out that this is backed up by research.

People who are kind and compassionate see clear benefits to their wellbeing and happiness. They may even live longer. Kindness can also help reduce stress and improve our emotional wellbeing.

During the current crisis there have been many acts of kindness, so perhaps out of this crisis there will be something positive.