

Creating a Covid-safe environment

Every industry has had to learn to adapt to new working measures in a socially distanced Covid world.

John Kendall investigates how FORS members acted

Although many organisations had started to sense that the country was facing something very serious in the run-up to the first lockdown on 26 March last year, companies still had minimal time to make preparations. For those carrying out essential work in the transport and service sectors, action was vital.

Plans were needed to ensure that rigorous hygiene requirements could be met, effective social distancing was observed and the necessary arrangements were made for staff to work from home where they could. Of course, it all had to be done in a way that ensured that work continued as smoothly as possible.

Actions to be taken

FORS members cover a wide variety of businesses, with each affected by the pandemic in different ways.

FORS Bronze member Cemgate specialises in the supply, mixing and delivery of concrete and screed. The company operates throughout West London, Berkshire and Surrey, as well as Oxford, Reading and High Wycombe. It operates a fleet of concrete mixers and other vehicles.

For Cemgate, lockdown meant a strong focus on its truck drivers and the measures it needed to take to ensure safety. "We supplied every driver with two face masks each. This was imperative so that both they and our customers are safe on site," explains Transport Manager Dee Gill.

"We also purchased and supplied each driver with refillable sanitising hand gel bottles. These can be replenished at any time when back at base as we have a large tub with access for everyone to refill the bottles."

The company expected that lockdown would bring changes to working practices.

Fortunately, these proved to be fairly straightforward to implement, particularly where social distancing and mask wearing around members of the public and customers was concerned. "As we wished to inhibit contact by any means, we also ensured that our drivers wore gloves when getting tickets signed," says Gill. It wasn't difficult to implement the measures either, because the workforce took on board the importance of keeping themselves and their customers safe. Everyone welcomed the changes and ensured they followed the new rules."

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