

Covid-19 Joint Statement Welsh HAUC and Welsh Government, No2
Date Friday 3rd April 2020

SROH Defects and Covid19 Event

Due to the current unprecedented circumstances, Welsh HAUC would recommend that the usual arrangements for most SROH defects are suspended and that only "urgent" defects are processed as per the HAUC Inspections Code of Practice.

During this interim period all non-urgent defects should be put on "hold" such that no joint site meetings, repeat inspections and their associated charges arise. Once the social restrictions on movement and distancing are lifted all practitioners will be under pressure to resume their normal "modus operandi". It is anticipated that a gradual catch-up period will be needed and we will all need to be reasonable and flexible in managing this transition.

It is recommended that;

1. ALL Defects assessed as "Causing Danger" will be treated as business as usual as per the inspections CoP where possible (please note in some cases, normal landlines used for the logged phone call will not be working), therefore log on ETON as normal **ensuring photographic evidence of the defect is attached or e-mailed** and use existing utility company/highway authority contact lists as appropriate (the defect can then be discussed over the phone rather than a joint site meeting and shortcomings noted on the failed inspection).
2. ALL Defects assessed as "Non-Dangerous" will be served on ETON as normal BUT stating that "***NO JSM*** is needed and ***no rectifications required*** at this point as all non-urgent works are to be put on hold until social restrictions are lifted and a reasonable time given to resume business as usual; no further inspections to be carried out until this time"

We ask that during this time that for any defect that is assessed as "causing danger" the utility company should maintain regular contact with the highway authority in order that the defect is monitored and rectified if further deterioration occurs.

We should also consider that due to some aggregate and other facilities being in "lockdown" alternative but suitable re-instatement materials may be required as like-for-like material matching becomes impractical.

In these circumstances we suggest an interim registration is submitted stating "**interim due to covid19 plant shutdowns**" and that the need for a future discussion is noted, to decide if remedial works are necessary or if the alternative material used is fit for purpose and can remain in-situ.

Social Distancing

It is important that operatives do their best to maintain social distancing in accordance with Public Health Wales guidelines, even though this is often difficult on some sites. In particular operatives should note the following;

- 1) Street works and road works are by their very nature carried out in full view of the public. Complaints have been received (nationally) from other professions in the construction industry saying that they have had to cease work (e.g. self-employed plasterers, or fitters) and yet they are seeing gangs out on site disregarding the social distancing advice. Whilst it is appreciated there is a degree of subjectivity, workers need to be mindful of the public perception of their actions and the effect this has on reputation of their employers and of the street works industry.
- 2) With regard to the layout of sites the Red Book specifies the requirements for pedestrian routes in terms of width. These obviously don't meet social distancing guidelines and it is inappropriate and impractical to amend these criteria. However, site operatives should consider mitigation measures, e.g. short lengths of route, dwell areas, etc. that may enable pedestrians to pass each other and pass the operatives with greater separation. As specified in the red Book operatives should consult with their supervisors if unsure.