

**Subject:** CoronaVirus Update No14  
**Date:** Monday, 6 April 2020 at 11:27:48 British Summer Time  
**From:** EHA Secretary  
**Attachments:** image001.png

Dear Members

The latest news from UKHospitality for your information:

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## Loans

The [Chancellor announced](#) yesterday (*Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April '20*), that the current loan scheme has been extended so more small businesses can benefit. Lenders have been banned from requesting personal guarantees on loans under £250,000. A new scheme was announced to bolster support for larger firms not currently eligible for loans. The Chancellor emphasised the importance of banks moving quickly to support the economy, jobs and businesses.

- PLEASE See: [EHA CoronaVirus Update No15](#), which included a Questionnaire for completion; As we asked, should members continue to experience issues with banks AND insurance companies, to provide us with concrete and detailed case studies, which Caroline Ansell can take to Government on your behalf, via the EBN Cobra Meetings.
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## Online Travel Agents

From the beginning of lockdown, hoteliers and others were informed (with no notice) that the online booking platforms (e.g. booking.com, Expedia, etc.) were activating ‘**force majeure**’ provisions, which in effect allow the platforms to change existing contracts to refund “non-refundable” deposits at the accommodation providers’ expense, without agreement.

UKH (along with the B&B Association and Tourism Alliance) are concerned by the arbitrary ways in which existing contracts were overridden by ‘force majeure’ provisions (there is also a lack of clarity around this legal term in this context) and the lack of support from the platforms for accommodation businesses. UKH has raised the above at the highest levels within BEIS, DCMS and the Competition authority taskforce looking at business practices during this period.

UKH is supporting work being undertaken by HOTREC and others at a European on this matter, as well as issues around credit card chargebacks by card companies which are disadvantaging operators, as a result of cancellations. This has also been raised with the competition authorities by UKH and other bodies.

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## Copyright licence payments

As previously advised, following approaches by UKH and other trade bodies, PPL and PRS have announced the below with regard to music payments/invoicing.

- PPL and PRS will not charge customers for their music usage during the period they are closed (temporarily or permanently) due to COVID-19;
- Announced changes to payment policies to introduce further flexibility, including deferred payments, for customers during this period; and
- Have temporarily suspended late payment surcharges.
- Further information can be found on [their website here](#).

UKH has now heard back from MPLC (television copyright), who have outlined their approach to copyright collection. They have stated they will suspend outbound calls to the hospitality sector about invoices, delay payment of licence fees, closed businesses will be left at 'no financial disadvantage for the closure period' (we are seeking clarification as to what this actually means) and for MPLC licences already paid these will be amended to reflect time closed. MPLC has also frozen any late payment surcharges.

Take care & kind regards

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Association Secretary

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