

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Risk Assessment and Control Plan - Stores / Locations



This Risk Assessment details the way in which Wickes Building Supplies Ltd is managing the risks associated with operating in light of the Coronavirus (also called COVID-19) outbreak, via person to person proximity, and/or surface contamination throughout operations. Wickes operates a store network, the majority of which remains open to the public as an essential retailer, in addition to providing a click and collect and a delivered service. Full details of store opening hours are available via our website. As the situation changes, and as the legal position changes across the UK, we will evaluate our operation and make suitable amendments to trading to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all of our colleagues and customers.

This assessment covers the following groups of people:

- Colleagues;
- Customers;
- Members of the public;
- External visitors; and,
- Suppliers drivers.

Wickes is following the UK Government regulations and trade body guidance, i.e. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) in addition to the Coronavirus Act 2020 whilst respecting regional Government variations in relation to safe working during the Coronavirus outbreak and regularly reviews its position in light of any changes or advances in thinking. The business is supported by a team of competent Health and Safety professionals who are an integral part of our business and decision making process in relation to operational changes and the impact on safe working generally as well as in respect to Coronavirus.

Should anyone be concerned that our stores or locations are not following the controls detailed in this Risk Assessment, they should in first instance raise it with their Store / Location / Line Manager who will record it on our Incident Reporting System and investigate the matter accordingly putting in place corrective action where necessary.

David Wood
Chief Executive Officer

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Hazards / Potential Point of Transmission	Existing Company Controls
<p>As of the 19th July 2021, social distancing requirements and the need to wear a mask will no longer be a legal requirement in England, however legal requirements remain in Scotland and Wales. The wearing of masks on our sales floors in England is recommended but not mandatory and measures to ensure 2m separation have been removed. The following risk control measures remain in place for the rest of the UK.</p>	
<p>Risk of contracting COVID-19 in higher risk areas</p>	<p>Wickes has fully adopted Government Local Covid Alerts Levels to manage the controls to reduce the risk of transmission for all stores / locations in medium, high, very high areas / Tier numbering systems.</p> <p>Where required signage displayed in entrance and public areas displaying the requirement to wear face coverings and observing social distancing of at least 2 metres.</p> <p>Where required all areas of the business have adopted and maintain the Government “Hands, Face, Space” guidance</p>
<p>Risk of contracting COVID-19 whilst travelling to and from work</p>	<p>Colleagues are encouraged to use their own private transport to get to work where possible.</p> <p>Car sharing is avoided although it may be preferable to using Public Transport. In such cases keeping windows open to allow natural ventilation and try to keep car sharing with the same people as much as possible. A face covering must be used when using public transport in Scotland an Wales and is recommended in England (15th June England Government update) (27th July 2020 Wales Government update).</p> <p>Where possible, shift patterns enabling travel outside of peak times and provision antiseptic wipes and hand sanitiser in place.</p> <p>Consideration will be made locally on how colleagues will get to and from work. Locations will, where possible provide facilities to enable colleagues to walk, run or cycle to work.</p>
<p>Risk of contracting COVID-19 on route to or at customer sites during deliveries / collections</p>	<p>Where required 2 metre social distancing measures in place throughout the full process i.e. politely declining handshakes, customers not to assist in unloading/ loading products, contact free confirmations of acceptance of delivery/ collections, contact free product familiarisation.</p> <p>Clear customer and colleague communication of amended safe working practices in advance of deliveries/ collection.</p> <p>Colleagues are empowered to stop work if they feel safe conditions are not in place.</p>

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	<p>Social distance measures in place for 2 person delivery crews including use of ventilation, fixed partnering etc</p> <p>In England there is no requirement to wear masks or a 2m distance (England Government guidance updated 12th July 2021)</p>
<p>Risk of contracting COVID-19 during click & collect / return transactions</p>	<p>Store set up in accordance with the latest company social distancing principles which is conversant with the government guidance. Click and collect system implemented according to social distancing principles.</p> <p>2 metre social distancing measures in place throughout the full process i.e. politely declining handshakes, customers not to assist in unloading/ loading products, contact free confirmations of acceptance of delivery/ collections, contact free product familiarisation.</p> <p>Safely segregated collection / return bays set up to facilitate contact free collections/ returns.</p> <p>Customers to load their own vehicles in Scotland and Wales, assistance can be provided only where 2m distancing can be maintained.</p> <p>Any Material Handling Equipment (MHE) used is suitably cleaned and disinfected prior and after use.</p> <p>A returns process; cleaning of returned products system in place.</p> <p>Disposal gloves and hand sanitising methods in place for customer and colleague use.</p> <p>A face covering must be used when in public areas in shops in Wales and Scotland.</p>
<p>Risk of contracting COVID-19 during counter / payment transactions</p>	<p>Store set up in accordance with the latest company social distancing principles which is conversant with the government guidance.</p> <p>Card, account and contactless payments are encouraged and preferred, max contactless amount increased - Cash payments may be restricted in locations within regional lockdown areas.</p> <p>Disposal gloves and hand sanitising methods in place for customer and colleague use. Normal gloves worn when handling products.</p>

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	<p>Locally defined systems in place in Scotland and Wales to ensure 2 metre social distancing measures in place throughout the full process i.e. one way systems, 2m distancing markers, crowd control barriers / skipper tapes, politely declining handshakes, customers not to assist in unloading / loading products, increased hygiene methods, contact free confirmations of acceptance of delivery/ collections, contact free product familiarisation.</p> <p>Regular washing of hands using soap and warm water for 20 seconds. Colleagues and customers are reminded to not touch eyes, nose or mouth if hands are not clean and to sneeze or cough into a tissue and bin it immediately.</p> <p>Strict social distancing measures in place throughout all working areas. One workstation / telephone / desk policy in place. Systems are in place locally to ensure workstations are socially distanced. This is a blend of options including 2m distance, desks facing different directions or screens depending on the locals constraints. Desks cleaned before and after use.</p> <p>All essential visitors or contractors will have an induction which includes our social distancing principles and safe ways of working, locations to sign visitors in on their behalf. All visitors will wear a face covering, in addition to customers mandatory requirement from 24th July 2020.</p> <p>A face covering must be used when in public areas in shops in Wales and Scotland.</p>
<p>Risk of contracting COVID-19 from work and trade areas inc shop floors, workstations, workshops, and product preparation areas</p>	<p>Store set up in accordance with the latest company social distancing principles which is conversant with the government guidance.</p> <p>Increased cleaning and disinfection stations and methods in place to reduce risk of contamination.</p> <p>External visitors including suppliers etc. limited dependant on operating model and essential requirements. Strict social distancing measures in place throughout all working areas i.e. workstation / telephone / desk policy in place. All visitors will wear a face covering, in addition to customers mandatory requirement from 24th July 2020.</p> <p>A face covering must be used when in public areas in shops in Wales and Scotland. (</p> <p>Wipe down desks and counters regularly - including credit card readers - with antibacterial wipes (Big Wipes etc).</p>

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	<p>Colleagues regularly wash hands for 20 seconds with soap and warm water. Colleagues briefed on avoiding touching their eyes, nose or mouth unnecessarily or when their hands are unclean.</p> <p>Strict social distancing measures in place throughout all working areas. One workstation / telephone/ desk policy in place. Systems are in place locally to ensure workstations are socially distanced. This is a blend of options including 2m distance, desks facing different directions or screens depending on the locals constraints. Desks cleaned before and after use.</p> <p>Any essential visitors or contractors will have an induction which includes our social distancing principles and safe ways of working, sign in system completed on their behalf.</p> <p>Team briefings or meetings are held outdoors or in well ventilated rooms.</p>
<p>Risk of contracting COVID-19 from shared welfare facilities</p>	<p>Break times staggered and shared seating areas, toilets and smoking arrangements rearranged where possible to ensure 2m social distancing can be maintained.</p> <p>Increased hygiene in shared areas. Tables and worktops wiped down with antibacterial spray after every use. Frequently touched shared equipment i.e. kettles, refrigerators, microwaves etc to be frequently cleaned using standard cleaning products.</p> <p>Colleagues encouraged to bring their own food and drinks, and use their own cutlery.</p> <p>Tables and contact surfaces such as door handles cleaned regularly</p> <p>Any external catering i.e burger vans may remain open providing food to be consumed offsite and following strict safety procedures.</p> <p>POS in place to remind colleagues, customers, drivers to wash their hands thoroughly following using the facilities.</p> <p>Where possible paper towels are provided as an alternative to hand dryers. Urinals, cubicles, additional sinks etc marked out of use to prevent close contact and minimise essential cleaning requirements where necessary.</p>

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Risk of contracting COVID-19 during movement of equipment requiring a 2 person, close proximity lift	<p>2-person lifts within 2 metre of each other are only allowed following a safe system of work established to minimise essential lifts, time and use of cohort teams</p> <p>Use of Manual Handling Equipment to minimise the requirement of handling products.</p>
Reopening of locations following shut down period	<p>Continual communication to colleagues during any location shutdown / furlough. Colleagues briefed on all changes to standard procedures in advance of return and confirmation that no one is displaying COVID- 19 symptoms, or has been in contact with anyone who has before returning.</p> <p>Store including access and yard areas set up in accordance to the latest company Social Distancing Principles.</p> <p>Clear customer and supplier reopening communications to be managed sensitively at agreed timescales.</p> <p>Method of 2 way communication in place for colleague, customer, supplier or visitor concerns to be raised and addressed accordingly.</p>
Refuelling vehicles	<p>Drivers and colleagues briefed to ensure use of disposable gloves when refueling vehicles at fuel stations. High levels of hygiene must be in place.</p> <p>Safe system of work for essential mobile / peripatetic workers.</p>
Completion of paperwork	<p>In Scotland and Wales Paperwork is not passed between individuals to obtain customer signatures. A safe contact free process has been created and all colleagues briefed to prevent potential contamination and spread of the virus.</p>
Cleaning and disinfection	<p>Full company guidance which is conversant with current government and World Health Organisation guidance in place and communicated to all colleagues. This includes increased cleaning and disinfection of work areas, work equipment, vehicles and shared facilities.</p>
Disposal of cleaning materials and potential contaminated materials	<p>Safe disposal procedures in place and communicated to all. Verbal and visual reminders of hygiene processes in work areas and to colleagues, customers and visitors.</p>
Colleague health & wellbeing	<p>Methods of 2 way communication in place for colleagues in work but also for furloughed colleagues.</p> <p>Wellbeing support channels available to all.</p>

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	<p>Regular checks in with all colleagues to communicate changes, support concerns and to ensure people do not feel isolated or fearful of changes to standard working practices.</p> <p>Unless there are exceptional circumstances or for assurance visits (authorised by line management) colleagues will not be staying away from home.</p> <p>Company wide offering of flu jabs so as not to confuse symptoms of seasonal flu with Covid and vice versa. Colleagues encouraged to attend site clinics or request a voucher for an immunisation at a high street bookable clinic.</p>
<p>Transmission of virus from person displaying the symptoms of COVID-19</p>	<p>Colleagues who are displaying symptoms (namely high temperature or a new, continuous cough) do not attend work. Escalation process in place and PHE advised to undertake proximity evaluation.</p> <p>If a colleague starts to display the symptoms at work, they must leave the workplace as soon as is possible and the store must implement the 'cleaning and disinfection post Covid-19 case' protocol</p> <p>Signs displayed advising customers with the symptoms not to enter the buildings. Customers displaying symptoms or behaving inappropriately will be respectfully asked to leave.</p> <p>Colleagues returning to work following a period of self isolation due to displaying COVID-19 symptoms or being in contact with someone who has, are assessed prior to returning and monitored to ensure full recovery, are fit to resume normal activities and risk of passing infection to others is avoided.</p>
<p>Colleagues who are vulnerable or have underlying health issues becoming seriously ill due to contact with COVID-19 in work</p>	<p>Vulnerable colleagues or those living with someone who is shielding should not be asked to come into work. They must work from home or if this is not possible, furloughed.</p>
<p>Risk of contracting COVID-19 (from people not displaying symptoms) through air due to two persons being in close proximity</p>	<p>In Scotland and Wales, customers will be required to wear a face covering in line with government legislation requirements from 24th July 2020, unless they are exempt for a physical, mental health or breathing condition, or are disabled and a face covering would be inappropriate because it would cause difficulty, pain or severe distress or anxiety.</p> <p>A face covering must be used when in public areas in shops in Scotland and Wales.</p> <p>In Scotland and Wales all Colleagues are required to wear a face covering (or visor if exempt from a face covering but would feel more comfortable in doing so, and recognising that visors are not as effective and</p>

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	<p>social distancing must be maintained) when in public facing areas, unless they are exempt for health or medical reasons. There is also an exemption for colleagues where 2m social distancing is achieved and physical distancing or perspex screens are in place, such as DC pods and checkouts.</p> <p>Physical barriers are being installed at some customer service areas (depending on customer access)</p> <p>Implementation of social distancing principles reminders. This includes repositioning desks, marking 2 metre zones on the floor.</p> <p>Any coughs or sneezes are into tissues (which are binned immediately) or into the crook of the arm</p> <p>Products are moved with handling equipment or dragged as appropriate to avoid two person lifts where possible. 2-person lifts within 2m of each other are allowed following a safe system of work established to minimise essential lifts, time and use of cohort teams. Where possible, complete packs are sold of products so they can be moved by plant rather than handled.</p> <p>Any colleagues returning to work should be given a full induction which includes our social distancing principles and any business unit safe ways of working guidance on our new operating models</p> <p>Children are permitted to visit branches on the understanding that their parents will ensure they comply with social distancing principles. If these principles are not adhered to, the family will be respectfully asked to leave</p> <p>Guidance on the use of facemasks and face coverings is in place and is in line with government guidance - all stores will continue to follow the WHO and government guidelines in this regard.</p> <p>Signage to request customers contact a colleague prior to trying on any workwear, PPE or other wearable products within the store environment, these and returned products will be quarantined.</p> <p>Stores / Locations will reduce the amount of movement around branches by using phones or radios where possible</p> <p>Where applicable, customers are briefed on social distancing principles on entry to the store / location</p>
<p>Risk of contracting COVID-19 (from people who are / not displaying symptoms) through acts of violence or aggression i.e. purposely sneezing / coughing on another person</p>	<p>Physical barriers are being installed at some customer service areas (depending on customer access)</p> <p>Colleagues are trained and are aware to remove themselves immediately from any persons displaying signs of violence and aggression in any way, and a process to follow in case of real life situations. Escalation</p>

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<p>Risk of acts of physical and / or verbal aggression i.e. customer refusal to wear a mandatory face mask (from 24th July 2020)</p>	<p>process in place to line management and police.</p> <p>Equipment installed at store to monitor, raise alarm and alert assistance i.e. CCTV, panic alarm, headsets and lone working devices to instigate external regulatory support where necessary.</p> <p>Signage displayed in public areas supporting Wickes zero tolerance stance on adverse verbal and physical behaviour.</p> <p>Signage displayed in entrance and public areas displaying the requirement to wear face coverings and observing social distancing of 2 metres.</p>
<p>Risk of contracting the virus from contractors or suppliers attending site</p>	<p>St John Ambulance have extended the refresher period on certificates. They have also introduced online e-learning refresher booster</p> <p>New operators of forklifts are being trained under social distancing rules but refreshers have been extended until June under the recommendation of the accrediting body. Refreshers needed for safety reasons will continue (under social distancing rules) as they are business critical.</p> <p>For PPM our suppliers have produced specific systems of work</p> <p>Range of measures introduced for our suppliers to adhere to ahead of deliveries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supplier calls ahead ● Suppliers prepare load for unloading and retreat to 2 metre distance ● Signing of paperwork has ceased, names of colleagues responsible for the unloading is given instead ● If supplier self-unloads, they do so in a segregated area <p>Our stores are keen to support suppliers in their COVID-19 mitigation controls and so our toilet facilities and handwashing facilities are available to them.</p> <p>Statutory inspection engineers required to attend customer sites briefed on COVID-19 specific controls that must be adhered to at all times.</p> <p>Where possible, deliveries are scheduled to avoid exposure to large crowds and rush hour.</p> <p>Where possible vehicle guides and or reminders on social distancing have been installed</p>

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<p>Risk of transmission due to unavoidable contact between two people in a first aid emergency or fire / other emergency evacuation or situation.</p>	<p>Higher risk activities such as using woodworking saws and use of engineering equipment have been ceased to ease the likely burden on first aiders.</p> <p>Whilst our first aiders will never refuse to provide treatment, where possible, the first aider should provide a means of treatment (such as a plaster) to the injured person for them to self-administer. First aiders should, if possible limit their interactions with ill or injured colleagues to those who have serious conditions only. Colleagues are encouraged to treat their own minor injuries. First aiders will limit their treatment of injuries to critical cases and wear a fask mask for close proximity emergencies.</p> <p>In an emergency, e.g fire or an accident. People do not have to stay 2m apart if it would be more unsafe to do so.</p>
<p>Risk of Covid-19 transmission from ineffective or poorly planned social distance systems</p>	<p>In locations where the site is shared with other businesses, there are locally agreed social distancing principles with other tenants or occupants. These are regularly checked to ensure that they are being maintained. Poor practices is reported and escalated.</p> <p>All Stores will review Covid secure rules regularly, and formally every month.</p>
<p>Potential increase in existing 'non COVID-19' risks</p>	<p>Stores have evaluated their existing risk assessments including traffic management in line with the expectations of social distancing principles to ensure there have been no additional risks created. Stores conduct a local monthly covid risk assessment.</p>