

# Astute Safety Thinking

## Welcome

Spring is here and the extra daylight and warmth is making such a difference to my mood. The happiness brought from the regeneration in nature and new growth in the garden this year is boosted with the optimism that the Covid-19 vaccine brings. The feeling of normality is just on the horizon and it feels wonderful. 'What are you looking forward to?'

Holidays, a drink with friends, a chat with people at work, a hug from family members or just being able to do what you like without worrying if you are allowed to or not?

It does sound blissful but remember that not everyone will be as happy. Some people will be anxious about the change and others will be wishing that they can stay in the quieter slower paced world that we have become. What will work for you? What are you looking forward to and what do you hope that we can keep?

The health part of Health and Safety is often overlooked and mental health even less of a priority to many. Will your staff be worried about coming back to the old normality? You really need to do things now to prepare for the end of lockdown. So look after the health of your staff and put plans in place to make the return to work smooth. If you need help then please get in touch.

[paul.sidney@astutesafetyconsulting.com](mailto:paul.sidney@astutesafetyconsulting.com)

## A guide to home working

### 5 tips to avoid burnout out whilst working from home

Business Growth Consultant Daniel Groves runs through five key ways that you, the employee, can avoid becoming burnt out and disengaged while working from home:

1. Maintain your work routine;
2. Recreate the office environment;
3. Take regular breaks & walks;
4. Set boundaries;
5. Don't get hung up on 'normal'.



The British Safety Council has online training courses for home workers as the nation has changed its working habits to meet the threat of coronavirus. As millions of workers in Britain have set themselves up to work from home, they will be adjusting to a whole new

way of working. To support them the British Safety Council is offering courses:

- Remote Workers' Health, Safety and Welfare.
- Mental Health: Start the Conversation

There is also a course on Managing Stress Within Your Team – helpful to managers looking after teams working from different locations at a time of major national crisis. Employers are required to protect the health, safety and welfare of all employees, including those who are working away from the office.

Mike Robinson, British Safety Council, Chief Executive said: “Across Britain people are making big changes to their work routine and millions of people are working from home. Working away from the office has implications for workers and managers.

“Even in normal times it’s important for peoples’ wellbeing to make sure they are connected to their colleagues and their work if they are not coming into the workplace – at a time of serious anxiety in the life of our country keeping an eye on your wellbeing and your colleagues’ wellbeing will be really important.”

“It is our founding mission at the British Safety Council to ensure that nobody is injured or made ill through their work – and that includes people working from home in a national crisis. I hope by offering out our expertise with some accessible online courses people will see some real value.”

Follow the link to the British Safety Council website to find out more.

<https://www.britsafe.org/>

## Bristol pub fined £132k for breaching health and safety rules



A microbrewery in Bristol has been convicted after breaching health and safety regulations which led to a fire in 2018.

Avon Fire and Rescue Service prosecuted the Brewhouse and Kitchen after it was found the pub did not have suitable and sufficient measures in place to reduce risk and spread of fire at its premises in Cotham Hill.

Nobody was hurt during the chimney fire but the firm was found to have a lack of effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of fire safety preventative and protective measures. There was also a failure to ensure there was appropriate fire detection equipment. The microbrewery was fined a total of £120,000 plus £12,000 in costs.

Head of Fire Safety, Station Manager Karl Venn said this case shows the fire service will not hesitate in prosecuting when necessary.

While commending the firm for accepting responsibility, Venn said: “All businesses are required to comply with fire safety legislation

and while prosecution is considered a last resort, we first and foremost have a duty to keep our communities safe and ensure residents aren't put at risk."

"Although Brewhouse and Kitchen had a previous good record of fire safety, the substantial fine handed out by the judge in this case should serve as a warning to any business as to how seriously breaches of fire safety law are taken."

In a statement, Brewhouse and Kitchen said: "There has been a wholesale change of the company's operations team, new systems and processes are now in place, and the company has taken significant learning from this matter. Brewhouse and Kitchen has an excellent record to date on all matters of fire safety, licensing, health and safety and food hygiene."

"The mistakes that were found in this case have already driven senior management focus and substantial, positive changes as to how the company manages fire safety. However, on this occasion the company recognises it could have done better and fully accepts its responsibility in this matter."

ITV News  
February 2021

Astute Safety Consulting will carry out fire risk assessments for you to discover problems at your premises before a fire occurs. Contact [paul.sidney@astutesafetyconsulting.com](mailto:paul.sidney@astutesafetyconsulting.com) to find out more.

## Worle butcher's shop apprentice lost two fingers in accident

The managing director of Worle Village Butchers was given a suspended prison sentence for breaching health and safety.



A butcher's shop director has been given a suspended sentence after an apprentice lost two fingers.

Dylan Jewell-Deverson's fingers had to be amputated when his hand got drawn into a mincer at Worle Village Butchers, Somerset, in 2019. North Somerset Council said the mincer's fixed guard had been removed. Frances Bird pleaded guilty to a health and safety breach and was given an 18 week custodial sentence suspended for 18 months.

The 41 year old, from Weston-super-Mare, was also ordered to pay costs of £5,535 with a surcharge of £115 at North Somerset Magistrates' Court. North Somerset Council, which brought the charges under the Health and Safety at Work Act, said the teenager's fingers had been amputated to "the second knuckle".

The authority said the "fixed guard on the mincer had been forcibly removed over a year previously" which meant the apprentice's hand "could be drawn into the machine". Councillor Mike Bell said the incident had "lifelong effects" on the victim. "He can no longer pursue a career in the armed forces and suffers ongoing pain," he said. "Health and safety is there for a reason - to make sure proper safeguards are in place so that incidents like this can be avoided."

"This case demonstrates that responsibilities must be taken seriously."

## Coronavirus: How to protect your mental health

Coronavirus has plunged the world into uncertainty and the constant news about the pandemic can feel relentless. All of this is taking its toll on people's mental health, particularly those already living with conditions like anxiety and OCD.

The BBC has produced the following article on protecting your mental health during this pandemic.

In May 2020, the Healthy Work Company set out to understand levels of wellbeing and mental health during these uncertain times. With the aid of an online questionnaire, the opinions of 648 people were collected. The sample covers a balance of genders and a wide range of ages and geographies. The report shows a strong swing to extremes in the nation's mental health with one in four (24%) seeing an improvement to mental

health and 8% "flourishing". Of those questioned, 41% feel 'about the same' as usual and a further one in three (32%) reported a decline or negative movement in their mental health.

The Government has launched a major effort to tackle loneliness and social isolation during the coronavirus outbreak and period of social distancing. Led by Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden, the plan aims to ensure that, for people of all ages and backgrounds, staying at home does not need to lead to loneliness.

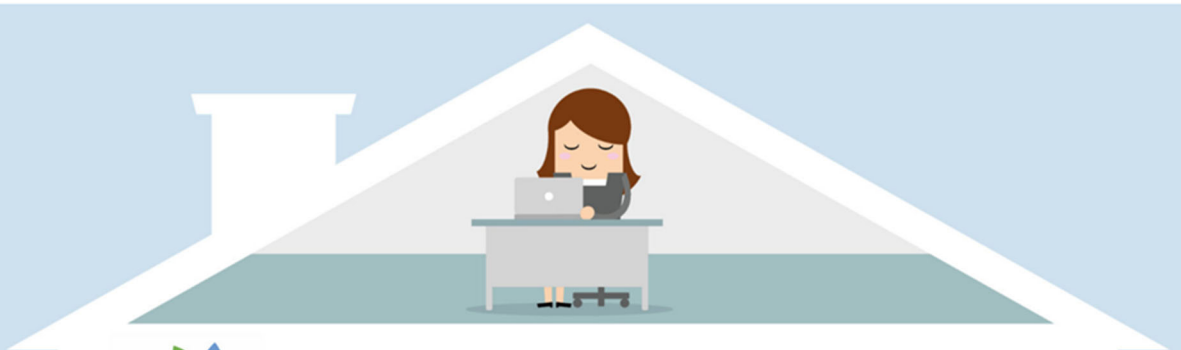


The latest #Let'sTalkLoneliness public campaign has been rolled out to get people talking openly about loneliness, which includes new public guidance offering useful tips and advice on what to do to look after yourself and others safely.

Three tangible actions for anyone feeling lonely and three actions for people wanting to help.

If you are lonely you can:

- Keep in touch with friends, family and neighbours;
- Ask for help if you need shopping, medicine or are feeling lonely;
- Set a routine with online activities, regular tasks or by volunteering.



## HELPING PEOPLE IN DISTRESS WHEN WORKING FROM HOME

### LOOK OUT FOR

- 1 Are they irritable, frustrated, angry or confused?
- 2 How do they seem on screen?
- 3 Keep an eye on their social media posts.
- 4 Do they know when to shut off?
- 5 Have they been visible?
- 6 Are they struggling to produce work?
- 7 Listen out for tone of voice.

### HOW TO HELP

- React quickly. Don't wait for the perfect moment.
- Ask twice how they are feeling.
- Be open and share struggles you may also be facing.
- Don't feel awkward about talking, let them know what you have noticed.

#### LISTEN

Show you understand. Use these tools to support you:

- Body language
- Be careful of tone of voice
- Comfortable eye contact
- Summarise your talk in their words
- Use silence

#### ASK QUESTIONS

1. How is everything going in the current situation?
2. How are you finding balancing home and work life?
3. What support network do you have in place?

#### CREATE A PLAN

- Get emergency help as soon as possible if needed.
- Co-create a plan WITH them, not FOR them.
- Explore appropriate information, support and help.
- Check in with them from time to time but avoid becoming their long term support or a therapist.

IN CRISIS CALL  
**SAMARITANS: 116 123**

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT US:

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- Phone a friend or family member you think may be lonely;
- Smile, wave or chat from a safe distance with a neighbour;
- Help out through volunteering by picking up food, medicine or by offering regular conversation to someone living alone.

BBC News  
February 2021

## 8 tips to combat the negative health effects of social isolation

To help people limit the impact of loneliness on their health and wellbeing during this time, health service provider Cigna Europe has outlined its top eight tips:

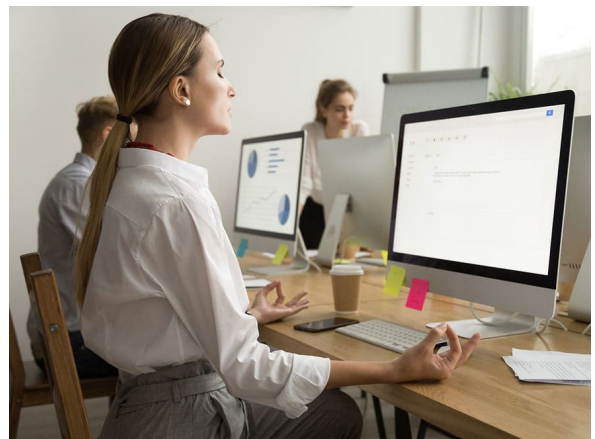
1. **Avoid negative thoughts.** Constantly thinking about the negatives associated with isolation can worsen emotional distress. Accepting the situation is the first step in controlling our emotions and minimising the chances of feeling lonely;



2. **Use technology to create emotional connections.** Social relationships are

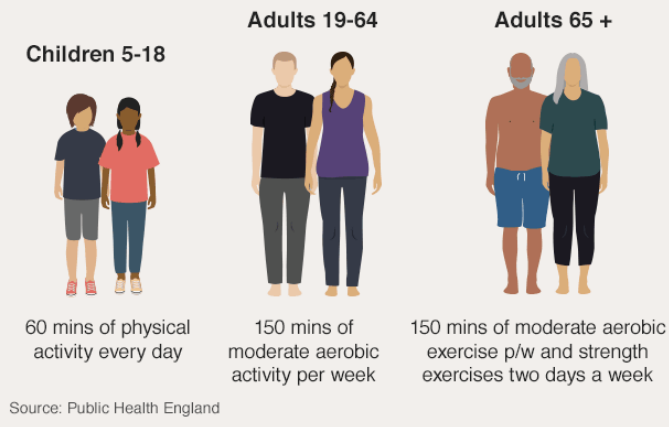
essential for both our physical and mental health. Now it's more important than ever to maintain regular contact with our social circle. This can be done via video calls, instant messaging or phone conversations. However, we must use these means in a healthy way – avoid placing COVID-19 at the centre of all conversations and try to talk about other things that will help distract us;

3. **Practice meditation techniques.** Mindfulness or conscious breathing can become great allies to calm anxiety and reduce stress. Breathing and meditation exercises can even help delay the ageing of our brain, helping the immune system react more strongly in the production of antibodies;



4. **Maintain a certain level of physical activity.** Physical exercise helps release endorphins in the brain, so if a certain level of activity is maintained during this period, the production levels of these hormones will remain high. There are many online resources available to help you exercise safely at home, whatever your fitness level;

## NHS physical activity guidelines



- 5. Watch your diet – it's essential to improve our mood.** Since approximately 95% of serotonin – the hormone that works as a neurotransmitter and regulates sleep, appetite, and mood – is produced in the gastrointestinal tract, a balanced diet will be essential to cope with loneliness, as indicated by Harvard University. In this way, eating more foods such as white meat, eggs, pulses, whole grains, nuts, seeds, bananas or dark chocolate, always within the limits of a balanced diet, will contribute to improving our mood;
- 6. Communicate regularly with colleagues.** Adjusting to working from home can impact people's emotional well-being as the work environment is often a place for social interaction. For this reason, it's important to continue maintaining regular communication with colleagues, either by phone, email or videoconference;

- 7. Get some sun, if possible.** Sunlight strengthens our immune system and improves our mood, as it stimulates the synthesis of vitamin D, a key substance for the central nervous system that helps control depressive symptoms. Sun exposure should last between 10 and 20 minutes a day;



- 8. Establish a routine with regular sleep schedules.** It's important to set schedules and maintain routines, especially regarding hours of sleep, eating and physical exercise. The longer we are busy, the lesser room for loneliness.



## Placing work equipment and machinery on the market after Brexit

Now the UK has left the EU, the requirements for placing work equipment and machinery on the UK and EU markets, including arrangements for conformity assessment, marking and labelling have changed.

The government's priority is to ensure that only safe and compliant products are placed on the market. The changes made to the UK's legal product safety framework will allow it to remain operable.

This guidance gives an overview of what has changed from 1 January 2021, what you need to do and links to further information on the GOV.UK and HSE websites.

### CE marked goods on the UK market

CE marked workplace products will be accepted in the UK until 1 January 2022. This includes workplace goods which have been assessed by an EU-recognised notified body.

GOV.UK - [Placing manufactured goods on the market in Great Britain](#).

[Placing products for use at work on the GB market: a product safety guide \(PDF\)](#).

## The new UK mark

The UK Conformity Assessed (UKCA) mark is the new UK product mark for workplace products and other goods. From 1 January 2021 UKCA marking began to replace CE marking for goods being placed on the UK market.



From 1 January 2022 you must use the UKCA mark on all workplace goods products.

Up until 31 December 2022 the UKCA mark can be placed directly on the product or on an accompanying document. From 1 January 2023 the UKCA mark must be placed directly on the product. You should start building this into your design process so you can meet this requirement in time.

The UKCA mark will not be recognised for products being placed on the EU market.

GOV.UK - [Using the UKCA marking](#)

To receive the latest information and details on how to apply for UKCA marking of your goods [subscribe to this free email newsletter and notifications](#).



## Placing manufactured goods on the market in Northern Ireland

GOV.UK - [Placing manufactured goods on the market in Northern Ireland.](#)

### Using the UKNI marking

GOV.UK - [How to use the UKNI marking.](#)

## Placing workplace products and goods on the EU market

If you placed your goods on the market in an EU country (or in the UK) before 1 January 2021, you do not need to do anything new.

GOV.UK - [Placing manufactured goods on the EU market](#)

[Placing products on the single European market: a product safety guide for the UK \(PDF\)](#)

[EU legislation concerned with the design and supply of new products](#)

## Summary of markings, goods and markets

This useful table from [GOV.UK](#) summarises accepted markings for different goods and markets. The CE and UKCA markings can be placed on the EU market. However, for the EU market the CE mark must appear without the UKNI indication as goods bearing the 'CE and UKNI' marking are not acceptable in the EU market. This means these goods must be manufactured to EU rules and cannot be assessed by a body based in the UK.

	Type of good (see list of product areas below)	Accepted marking or combination of markings*
Placing goods on the market in Northern Ireland	Manufactured goods being placed on the market in NI using an EU conformity assessment body	CE
	Manufactured goods being placed on the market in NI using a UK-based body	CE and UKNI
Placing goods on the market in Great Britain	Manufactured goods being placed on the GB market until the end of 2021	UKCA or CE
	Manufactured goods placed on the GB market from 1 Jan 2022	UKCA
Placing qualifying Northern Ireland goods on the market in Great Britain (unfettered access)	Qualifying Northern Ireland goods being placed on the GB market under unfettered access	CE or CE and UKNI
Placing goods on the EU market	Manufactured goods being placed on the EU market	CE

\*You may use combinations of the product markings listed in each box and your goods may be acceptable with more than one markin.

## Notified Bodies and Conformity Assessments

From 1st January 2021 UK-based 'Notified Bodies', who did not choose to continue to also meet EU requirements, became UK Approved Bodies under UK legislation. UK Approved Bodies are not able to apply a CE mark, but will instead apply the UKCA mark.

GOV.UK - [Conformity assessment and accreditation](#)

## Further HSE guidance

The HSE have updated our [guidance on work equipment and machinery](#) to reflect these changes.

The links below will take you to further new or revised guidance:

- [Manufacture and supply of new work equipment](#)
- [UK law on the design and supply of products](#)
- [Amendments to UK product supply legislation \(PDF\) Format \(PDF\)](#)
- [Supplying new machinery](#)
- [Buying new machinery](#)

Frequently asked questions:

- [CE Marking](#)
- [UK Marking](#)
- [Manufacturers](#)

## It's Up To Me

I want a workplace that's Injury Free,  
And if that's going to happen, then it's up to me.  
I can't take for granted, that anyone,  
Has done all the things, that I should have done.  
I must, take the time, with each task I do,  
To look for the hazards, and think the job through.  
To check the procedures and follow them all,  
And reject taking shortcuts, no matter how small.  
When I walk through the workplace, I must stay alert  
To watch for those things, that could get people hurt.  
And should I see a hazard, I won't rest until,  
I've made the thing safe, or I know someone will.  
I must question each unsafe behaviour I see,  
And encourage all others, to do that for me.  
I will always give safety, the best I can do,  
And expect that performance of all others too.  
I must always remember to let people see,  
That their safe behaviour, is important to me.  
Every act is important, no matter how small,  
For the safety of one, is the safety of all.  
We can all have a workplace that's injury free,  
If we, each one, Commit to Making It Be,  
If we all do our part, and each of us see,  
If It's Going to Happen, – Then It's Up To Me.

**Don Merrell**