

ESFA Update: 13 May 2020

[unable to retrieve full-text content] Latest information and actions from the Education and Skills Funding Agency for academies, schools, colleges, local authorities and further education providers

Recovered appeal: land at Moor Lane, Woodthorpe, York (ref: 3233973 – 13 May 2020)

Decision letter and Inspector's Report for a recovered appeal for 516 residential units, a local centre, a sports pavilion and associated infrastructure, the demolition of existing buildings and structures, and creation of an Ecological Protection and Enhancement Zone and vehicular access arrangements.

Windrush online engagement events

To ensure those affected by Windrush can continue to access help and support during the coronavirus pandemic, the Home Office will be running a series of online engagement events.

These will start later this month and will follow a similar format to the engagement events that have already been held around the country.

Those affected can get advice from members of the Commonwealth Citizens' Taskforce and the Windrush Compensation Scheme, who will explain what help and support is available and how to make a claim for compensation.

The digital solution has been devised to ensure vital outreach and engagement can continue on Windrush. The government continues to be absolutely committed to righting the wrongs experienced by the Windrush generation and ensure nothing like this happens again.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

Reaching all those affected by Windrush is a priority and these

online events make sure that the vital outreach and engagement on Windrush continues during the pandemic.

This will help ensure that all those who need help applying for compensation or to the Windrush Taskforce can continue to get any support they need.

The Home Office will work closely with stakeholders who will host or co-host the events using their own online conferencing channels and manage any registration for the event.

This will be guided by stakeholders, who will identify the most effective platforms for the communities they work with, subject to those channels meeting security requirements.

These measures have been put in place whilst the UK continues to observe social distancing, but the Home Office plans to revert to face-to-face events as soon as it is safe to do so. So far, the Home Office has held or attended over 30 events across the country since April 2019.

The department continues to work closely with stakeholders and partners trusted by the community to develop and deliver communications activity to raise awareness of the Windrush Taskforce and Windrush Compensation Scheme.

The events will be promoted using a range of methods, including adverts on social media and through trusted community networks. Details on the timings of online engagement events will be [available here](#).

The Home Office continues its work to right the wrongs experienced by the Windrush generation, which is shown by the fact that over 12,000 people have been provided with documentation confirming their status so far.

The Windrush Compensation Scheme also continues to make payments to compensate for those who suffered.

Citizens Advice, funded by the Home Office, are continuing to provide free, independent claimant assistance during the pandemic for those wishing to apply to the Compensation Scheme. This can be accessed by referral through the Windrush Helpline: 0800 678 1925.

As announced by the Home Secretary in March, the Home Office will shortly launch a separate £500k fund for grassroots organisations to promote the Windrush Schemes and provide advice services. We will work with stakeholders to co-design the fund.

The Wendy Williams Lessons Learned review was published in March 2020. The Home Secretary made clear in her statement to the House of Commons on the day of publication that the department will carefully consider the detail of the report and its recommendations to develop a comprehensive plan for changing the ways of working of the Home Office.

[New guidance on moving home](#)

Anyone in England can now move home as long as health guidance can be followed. This applies to both renters and buyers.

The law previously only allowed moving home if you had reasonable grounds for doing so at this time.

That restriction was necessary and appropriate at the time, but we are now able to change the rules so that people are free to start looking for a new home, and builders, developers and other property professionals are supported to return to work.

This can be done while minimising the risk of spreading the virus through continued observance of hygiene measures and social distancing.

The government has published [new guidance on moving home](#) which you are encouraged to read in full.

It is important that everyone knows how to stay alert, contain the virus and save lives. Our success containing the virus so far has been hard fought and hard won. We must proceed with the utmost care in the next phase, and avoid undoing what we have achieved.

One of the simplest steps you can take when moving home is to wash your hands frequently and wherever possible stay at least 2 metres apart from people who are not members of your household.

The process of finding and moving into a new home is likely to be different given the need to reduce spreading coronavirus.

This will include doing more of the process online, such as virtual initial viewings; vacating your current property whilst other people are shown around; and ensuring your property is thoroughly cleaned before someone else moves in.

Removal firms are able to operate, although they may need to adjust usual procedures in order to ensure moves happen as safely as possible.

Your legal representative should be able to carry out searches on your property online in order to progress your transaction and you can contact them to discuss likely timescales.

Your surveyor can undertake surveys of the property you wish to purchase, in line with health guidance. This includes surveyors only entering a property if members of the household are not showing symptoms of coronavirus or self-isolating.

We encourage all parties involved to be as flexible as possible and be

prepared to reschedule moves if someone becomes ill with coronavirus or must self-isolate.

The government introduced a temporary ban on evictions last March and this remains in place.

Changes to the planning system

The government has announced a [number of changes to the planning system](#) to help support safe construction work.

Builders will also be allowed to agree more flexible construction site working hours with their local council. This will make it easier to follow public health guidance onsite and stagger builders' arrival times, making public transport less busy and so reducing the risk of infection.

Additionally, new regulations will allow planning authorities and developers to publicise planning applications through social media instead of having to rely on posters and letters, helping unblock the service and allowing it to support new development.

The government is also providing local councils with more flexibility to support smaller developers by allowing them to defer Community Infrastructure Levy payments.

This will help smaller developers struggling with their cashflow due to the pandemic while ensuring communities still receive funding towards local infrastructure in the longer term.

Safe Working Charter

A new [Charter](#) has been launched by the government and the Home Builders Federation, helping construction sites reopen in line with health guidance.

Construction companies signing up to the Charter commit to returning to work safely, including working with their subcontractors to develop detailed safe working practices.

The Charter enables housebuilders to make a common commitment to operate in line with safe working guidance. This helps give confidence to employees working on sites, and comfort to the public that work is being undertaken safely.

Signatories to the Charter have publicly committed to safe working practices in accordance with Government and Construction Leadership Council guidance.

The Charter is for housebuilders of all size, including small and medium-sized enterprises.

Message from David Wallace, Deputy CEO of the Student Loans Company

Absolutely everyone has had to come to terms with change this year. The feeling that life has been placed “on hold” is understandable – but it also provides an opportunity to get things done.

So many people are finding creative and flexible ways to use time to their advantage, and one of the things we’d urge students in England who may be considering going to University this year to do, is to make sure they get their applications for student funding in as early as possible.

It doesn’t matter if you are not certain of which course or in which University you will ultimately enrol. The main thing is to invest time now to ensure funding will not be an issue later on. Everything else can be altered once your University place is confirmed.

There’s lots of help available for new students (see links below) and applications can be completed online at www.gov.uk/studentfinance

Returning SLC customers; those not requesting student finance for the first time, are also urged to get their funding renewal applications in as soon as possible. New and Returning students can apply at www.gov.uk/studentfinance.

I can’t stress enough that there are good reasons to get applications in early – not least that it’s the best way to ensure your funding will be in place for the start of the new term.

Like everyone else, the Student Loans Company has had to radically change how things are done and I’m immensely grateful to colleagues who have shifted their location and way of working, allowing us to continue processing and administering the millions of loan applications we receive each year.

It’s what we do and our work is ongoing, but we are aware that some people have experienced delays in getting online at busy times of day. We know this is frustrating and appreciate your patience and understanding. We are usually less busy after 5pm so if you are unable to get online right away, please try again later.

SLC exists to enable students to invest in their future through access to further and higher education.

Information for new students in England applying for student finance online

The easiest way to apply is online at gov.uk/studentfinance and SLC has produced the following guide and a video to help with the process: [student finance quickguide](#)

[How to Apply](#)

There is also a dedicated resource for parents and partners who are supporting applications here <https://studentfinance.campaign.gov.uk/>

Student Finance England has more information on the online student community forum, [the student room](#) and also on a dedicated area on the [UCAS website](#)

Students can also follow SFE at [facebook.com/SFEngland](https://www.facebook.com/SFEngland), twitter.com/SF_England or [youtube/SFEFILM](https://www.youtube.com/SFEFILM) to keep up with all the latest news alerts.