

# Corporate Property 2020

## News for Corporate Property employees

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Over the last few weeks as we all try and manage in these most difficult of times, much has rightly been said about nurses, doctors, care workers and those on the front line in the fight against Coronavirus. Every Thursday as I proudly clap for key workers I am moved that as a country we have come together to applaud their contribution. A national gesture that is truly heart warming.

As a local government director I am aware of the considerable contribution that many colleagues across the County Council and partner agencies are making. But more specifically I want to share with you some of this important work and say thank you to my Corporate Property colleagues.

Care homes, schools, depots that are managing PPE supplies and food supplies all work from within clean and safe built assets and it is here that Corporate Property colleagues have been playing a vital role.

This newsletter features an incredible piece of cooperation which saw a huge food distribution unit near Chesterfield, acquired, made statutorily compliant and cleaned to become operational within days. A tremendous accomplishment that might ordinarily have taken months to complete and so from me, a huge thank you to all those involved.

Our new friends in Vertas and Concertus are also busy during this period. Andrew Rowe, Managing Director of Concertus and Ian Surtees, Chief Executive of Vertas share their very personal messages below.

I am aware that some of you have been touched more seriously by this dreadful virus. To all of you my thoughts are with you.

Kind regards

**Dave Massingham**

**Director of Property**

## Corporate Property coronavirus update

Across Corporate Property there are many different groups of staff undertaking a variety of important tasks, most behind the scenes but each vital in keeping buildings open and essential services operating.

Many schools continue to be open providing education for vulnerable children and the children of key workers.

Homes for older people are still providing care to the most vulnerable in our society. There are also depots and offices that are being used to receive and distribute personal protective equipment, food and other essential supplies.

To be open and continue to operate, these properties must be safe and clean. This means essential health and safety statutory testing has to continue with

maintenance repairs and other remedial work undertaken when necessary.

County Hall is still open although with far fewer people in the building and a skeleton facilities management team.

Fire evacuation and the security of people working in buildings that are open is paramount. Corporate Property colleagues are playing an essential role enabling these buildings to stay open.

You are all aware that simple and regular hand washing is one of the main recommendations from Government in how to stop the spread of coronavirus. For buildings, cleaning is equally important. Our cleaning and caretaking colleagues are working hard with new procedures implemented to keep users safe.

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## Food distribution unit

Working with colleagues in other departments, the Government, Chesterfield Borough Council and Public Health England, Corporate Property teams have been crucial to help provide a building where the council can pack up food boxes for those in need.

From asset management finding the property, estates negotiating with the landlord (the Chatsworth Estate), maintenance operatives working through the night repairing and servicing electrical equipment and cleaning staff getting the building ready for use.

Why is this remarkable? The property is bigger than most football pitches. It had been empty for eighteen months and neglected. It required individuals with different skills coming together, working rapidly to make this happen in record time. We also now have Corporate Property colleagues continuing to be involved in making food boxes and deliveries.

Thank you to you all.

## A message from Andrew Rowe, Managing Director, Concertus

At Concertus, we are now all working from home and our office remains closed. Regardless of these business changes, the team spirit continues, with a great sense of comradeship and positive support for everyone to get through this tough time.

We feel proud and rewarded that all colleagues have been able to get on with their work with little disruption, due to the investments we made in our IT systems which has meant everyone has been able to access all the necessary applications, data and systems directly from home.

We have also kept everyone informed with weekly video conference meetings, daily management meetings and frequent team meetings.

Many of our projects are continuing, although some construction works have been halted on some sites, but new enquiries and bids for work continue to come in.

We have started a weekly catch-up with the interim Design management team in Derbyshire and I hope that through this forum we can keep you informed and up-to date about what's happening.

Best wishes and I hope you remain safe and well.

**Andrew Rowe**

## A message from Ian Surtees, Group Chief Executive Officer, Vertas

I hope you and your families are staying safe at this difficult time. With COVID-19 dominating the news I wanted to update you on how we have responded, and share some of the positive steps we've taken to look after our clients, colleagues, and the community.

The whole team at Vertas has rallied together to keep customers, community and colleagues at the heart of everything we do.

As the government issued its guidance on 'furloughing' and the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme the business made the decision to prioritise our colleagues.

We also took the decision to pay 100% salary to those we have furloughed, which includes our zero-hours colleagues. Our internal 'keyworkers' continue to manage the day to day business and provide support as required.

I am incredibly proud of how my teams have responded to this crisis, showing real character, professional planning, and decisive execution.

Please stay home where and when you can, look after your family, support the NHS and stay safe.

**Ian Surtees**