



Construction Restart Planning – Advice to RIAS Practices and Members

In her announcement of 28th May, the First Minister confirmed that the construction sector will be allowed to implement the first two phases of its restart plan with a decision to move to 'phase 2' of the plan after consulting with government to ensure it is safe to do so in line with public health advice. That will be reliant upon the R rate being maintained at, or dropping from, current levels.

The industry-agreed six-step phased model for the return of the construction sector (at least in Scotland) is as follows:

- Phase 0: Planning
- Phase 1: Covid-19 Pre-start Site prep (from 28th May)
- Phase 2: 'Soft start' to site works (only where physical distancing can be maintained)
- Phase 3: Steady state operation (only where physical distancing can be maintained)
- Phase 4: Steady state operation (where physical distancing can be maintained and/or with PPE use)
- Phase 5: Increasing density/productivity with experience

Scottish Government guidance does not allow work to be undertaken other than in the essential categories outlined previously, focussing on urgent or emergency repairs, healthcare and nationally critical infrastructure.

Returning contractors will, inevitably, have to review their safe working procedures in order to reduce transmissional risk. That is likely, in turn, to require submission of revised health & safety documentation. Architects should be prepared to remind both contractors and clients of their duties under CDM, and to consider the contractual issues around additional costs arising. Particular caution is required where contract administrators are asked to approve, or instruct, amended working practices. Please bear in mind that architects should not approve contractors' proposals.

Practices should also bear in mind their over-arching obligation to ensure, insofar as is practicable, the safety of their own employees. With restart will come requests for architects to visit site. Procedures will need to be in place to manage the risks arising, and RIAS is currently reviewing industry guidance in order to provide further advice to members prior to Phase 2.

Construction Scotland has published [**Working on site during the COVID-19 pandemic - Construction Guidance.**](#)

The Construction Re-start Plan can be found [here.](#)