**RDA UK Covid-19 update to groups as at 20 March 2020**

This bulletin contains:

* Links and information about Government support to businesses
* Reassurance regarding RDA insurance
* Group fundraising information
* Information for groups who own their own horses

We now have a dedicated page on the MyRDA website here: <https://www.myrda.org.uk/runningyourgroup/covid19/> . This contains copies of all the emails we send out as well as any resources, advice or information we have issued specific to the current situation – it will be updated whenever anything changes. Feel free to share the link with your volunteers and coaches.

**Government support for businesses and groups with employees**

Here is the link to the Government advice for businesses. This site will be updated as the situation develops. We expect new guidance on how to access loans and other financial assistance in the next few days: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-employees-employers-and-businesses>

**The expected packages include**:

**For groups with employees**

For businesses with fewer than 250 employees, the cost of providing 14 days of Statutory Sick Pay per employee will be refunded by the government in full.

A dedicated helpline has been set up to help businesses and self-employed individuals in financial distress and with outstanding tax liabilities receive support with their tax affairs. If you are concerned about being able to pay your tax due to COVID-19, call HMRC’s dedicated helpline on 0800 0159 559.

**Groups with premises, or for your riding school**

There will be a £10,000 cash grant to small businesses, delivered by local authorities. Small businesses that pay little or no business rates and are eligible for small business rate relief (SBBR), or rural rate relief will be contacted by their local authority - they do not need to apply. The funding will be provided to local authorities in early April.

The government is introducing a business rates holiday for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses in England for the 2020 to 2021 tax year.

A £25,000 grant will also be provided to retail, hospitality and leisure businesses operating from smaller premises, with a rateable value between £15,000 and £51,000.

Any enquiries on eligibility for, or provision of, the reliefs should be directed to your local authority. Please note that it is not clear, at this stage, if RDA groups, or riding centres, will qualify as ‘leisure businesses’ and we are trying to get clarity on this.

**Loans**

**C**ontact your group’s bank and find out what funds they are making available.

**RDA Insurance**

Please be reassured that your RDA insurance will be renewed on 31 March, even if you have not received the usual paperwork from us in the post.

Although your normal RDA activity may have stopped, remember your RDA insurance still covers your group for historical claims, and your group remains covered in the usual way for help your volunteers may be giving you during closure, or your fundraising activities. Please note that your RDA insurance does not cover you for non-RDA activity, such as renting out your facilities.

**Group fundraising opportunities**

We are continually trying to find useful information - as and when we do we will share this.

If you want to do your own internet search, useful searches are:

‘(UK region/local borough) Covid 19 (or Coronavirus) third sector funding’

‘(UK region/local borough) Covid 19 (or Coronavirus) community funding’

***What we have found is that information seems to fall into three categories:***

* Which funders are currently carrying out emergency appeals to support charities and raise funds. No information, as appeal in progress, on how to access funds.
* Government funding: indications and intentions for emergency relief for charities. However without specific guidance of how to access funds.
* Funders are being flexible in terms of delivery of projects for current grant holders - relaxing reporting etc. (be sure to contact your funder for guidance).

**Useful links:**

* This link has a list of emergency fund opportunities (national and local) which are being added to all the time, so check regularly to see which are relevant to you:<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/coronavirus-charity-funding-announcements-ian-mclintock/?utm_source=Charity+Excellence+Framework+Newsletter&utm_campaign=23735175dc-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_02_26_07_12_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_a42d7084e4-23735175dc-104549977>
* Read our top 10 tips for grant applications here: <https://www.myrda.org.uk/assets/10-Top-Tips-for-Completing-a-Funding-Application.pdf>

**Advice for horse owners**

Regional Vet, Tess Fordham, in partnership with the equine team, has produced some excellent FAQs about Covid-19 and care of horses. There is also a document specifically about farriery. Both of these can be found on MyRDA here in the Horse Welfare section: <https://www.myrda.org.uk/runningyourgroup/covid19/>