

COVID-19 AND WORKERS IN THE FORESTRY, WOOD PROCESSING AND NURSERIES SECTOR IN WALES

The Welsh First Minister has provided clear guidance that “with the exception of some non-essential shops and public venues, we are not asking any other businesses to close – indeed it is important for business to carry on.”

The planting, management and harvesting of trees is a largely rural industry, as is the growing of young trees in forest nurseries.

In our daily working lives, there is limited interaction with other people, and the sector is committed to working safely in accordance with government guidelines for employers and businesses on coronavirus (COVID-19)*, including social distancing, and in accordance with all existing health and safety standards.

Where workers can work from home they should. However, many forestry workers simply cannot work from home - including those growing young trees in nurseries and planting new forests and woods. In the longer-term, those young trees will be needed to help many businesses get back on their feet and, lest we forget, to support our ongoing climate change objectives.

It is important that these forestry and forest nursery workers are able to travel to work and to undertake their activities without harassment or obstruction.

The forestry, wood processing and nurseries sector takes its responsibilities seriously during this current outbreak. Further information is available at <http://www.confor.org.uk/covid-19/topics/key-workers/>

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13 May 2020

*<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/guidance-for-employers-and-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19>