

Insights



IN THIS ISSUE

Helping people
live life to the full

Responsible investing
and your future

Facemasks in the
workplace

CORINTHIAN



For now. For the future.



The times of change

Life looks a lot rosier when the sun is out, and boy were we grateful when it arrived. But at long last, there are other reasons to feel genuine optimism for the future, so relax and enjoy our famous (or infamous??) British summer.

Go Team GB!

Not only did we make it to the final of the Euros, but we also smashed it at the Tokyo Olympics as well. Hailed as the “greatest achievement in British Olympic history” after athletes matched their medal haul at London 2012, Team GB came away with 22 Golds, 21 Silver, and 21 Bronze medals. All without family and friends in the stands cheering them on. Well done!

What pandemic?

Although the infection rates initially shot up after Freedom Day causing a flutter of palpitations across the land, thankfully they appear to be taking a downward turn in line with the fantastic uptake in vaccinations. Long may it continue.

At Corinthian we are closely monitoring the situation and are hoping to gradually return to the office at the end of August.

Be ready to embrace change

Significant events like the pandemic can lead to socio-environmental change evoking fear

and anxiety, and with lockdown enforcing us to ‘wfh’ the future looked uncertain. However, for many, it has proven to be a surprising success. Not only can hybrid working allow staff to focus without interruption, promote a healthy work/life balance by eliminating commuter-hell, but it gives people that most precious commodity of all, time. But it doesn’t mean that working from the office is soon to become obsolete, indeed there is great value in office life, such as fluid communication, social interaction and more effective training. So, with innovators already running with the idea, laggards beware!

The final word

Nature has once again reminded us that we are not invincible and although we may never fully return to ‘life before Covid’, it doesn’t mean that we can’t move forwards on a positive step. We can look towards the future with confidence: we have our freedom, sunshine, holidays, friendships, loved ones and most importantly of all... the kids going back to school in September!

Michelle Burt
Office Manager – Corinthian Benefits

Helping people live life to the full

When you got up this morning, you probably didn't have to think too much about what needed to be done. You most likely set about your routine and were on your way.

And after that, whether you went to work, out for the day, away on holiday or caught up on chores, you probably didn't need help to do those things either? But imagine if you did. You'd want the right kind of help for you, wouldn't you? The sort of help where you keep your independence while getting support where you need in equal measure. That's how Stockdales helps people with learning disabilities and life-limiting conditions.

Stockdales is a local charity based in Sale, Manchester who have been offering the 'right kind of help' since 1953. Starting out as a children's service, the charity now supports over 200 children, young people and their families through its Residential and Community Services every year. The aim of these life-changing services is to help people with learning disabilities live like everyone else, despite the challenges they face.

It's in the heart of the local community where Stockdales runs its' 4 care homes for people who need help with almost every aspect of their lives. This could be with everyday living to support with interests, hobbies, going out, relaxing and time with family and friends. Stockdales' belief is straightforward; everyone has an equal and valued place in their community. So, everything is centred around that. And the exciting news is that after several years of fundraising and

behind the scenes work, a 5th care home is on the horizon to support more people and their families. Want to learn to cook? Or grow lots of tasty vegetables on the allotment? Or be part of running a café to gain real experience in the community? These are just some of the things Stockdales supports people from the local area to do. The focus is all about what people can do and giving a supportive hand to help them grow their skills and confidence with a range of activities. In the past people have enjoyed days out and holidays away including camping trips and festivals too.

The weekends at Stockdales HQ are filled with kids doing what they do best: making lots of noise, getting involved in loads of play and generally causing chaos. And Stockdales wouldn't have it any other way. Stockies Juniors is a club for children with additional needs who need extra help that isn't always available in regular clubs. Plus, it gives parents a much needed break too. A chance to put their feet up and have a nice cuppa.

If you'd like to find out more about Stockdales and the wonderful work they do, head over to www.stockdales.org.uk or follow them on Facebook and Twitter (@StockdalesMcr) and Instagram (@StockdalesMcr).

If you're interested in fundraising or giving a donation, please get in touch with **Natalie James-Crumlish** on 0161 973 2296 / 07980 967 293 or email Natalie.james@stockdales.org.uk





Responsible Investing and Your Pension



Maria Nazarova-Doyle, Scottish Widows' Head of Pension Investments, talks about Responsible Investing and its role in saving for your retirement

The concept of Responsible Investing is certainly not new, but in the past few years, it seems to have taken on greater importance than ever before. As the global climate emergency becomes ever more urgent, more than half of individual investors around the world say they want their choice of investments to make a real impact on the world.

Responsible Investing is an investment approach that considers the relevance and financial impact of environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors, and of the long-term health and stability of investment markets as a whole. It aims to reduce risk and improve investment returns for customers by creating long-term, sustainable environmental, social and economic value through integrating ESG factors into investment analysis and decisions.

For Person B to reach the same value of Person A they would have to contribute £13,500 per year. For Person C to reach the same value of Person A they would have to contribute £20,000 per year.

Environmental

Environmental issues, such as climate change, conservation of natural resources, extraction of fossil fuels, waste management and pollution, not only have a measurable impact on the world we live in today – they can also impact the world we will live in tomorrow.

Social

Social issues involve people – from a company's workforce to its customers and suppliers and the people living and working near its operations. They include labour relations, workers' rights and working conditions, slavery, child labour, workforce equality and diversity and health and safety.

Governance

Governance relates to the rules, practices and codes of behaviour that influence how a company is run. The quality of a company's governance can have a big impact on its ability to succeed, prosper and survive. It involves aspects such as financial and risk management, diversity of board and leadership teams, anti-fraud, bribery and corruption measures and data privacy and security.

For pension savers and others who want to grow their savings as much as possible over the long term, what's perhaps most interesting from an investment standpoint is the growing body of evidence that Responsible Investing and robust investment returns are inextricably linked. As it becomes ever more clear that ESG factors have a financial impact on investment risk and returns, pension providers must address the financial risks and opportunities linked to ESG factors that can make a material difference for savers over the long-term.

What is Scottish Widows' approach?

As one of the UK's largest pension providers, we believe we can make a real difference to tackling big issues like climate change while aiming to create sustainable value for our pension customers. That's why we've set ourselves an ambitious goal to halve the carbon footprint of our investments by 2030 and decarbonise all of our investments by 2050. We back climate solutions and use our shareholder rights to drive companies to make the changes necessary within this timescale. We also have reached a new milestone of £1.4bn worth of divestment from companies that do not meet our ESG expectations.

Responsible investment and ESG integration has wide-reaching positive implications for pension default funds, in which the vast majority of workplace scheme members elect to stay. The investment decisions we make today have a significant impact on the financial future of millions of UK workers and it's very important that we do what we can to help savers achieve good retirement outcomes in a world worth retiring in.

Should I stop asking my team to wear face coverings in the workplace now that rules have been relaxed?

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As a business, you still have a duty of care to safeguard health, safety and well-being of your workforce. This has not changed because of fluctuating government advice regarding face coverings.

As a business, you still have a duty of care to safeguard health, safety and well-being of your workforce. This has not changed because of fluctuating government advice regarding face coverings.

In making your decision you should consider the nature of your team and listen to any concerns that were raised that is likely to be employees who welcome not wearing a face covering stop space however face coverings I worn to protect others around an individual rather than the individual themselves.

You may have younger employees who aren't vaccinated yet or clinically vulnerable employees with concerns around other colleagues not wearing face coverings.

Employers need to review the Coronavirus risk assessment in view of these changes. Reviewing your risk assessment will aid in a decision on which measures such as face coverings need to stay for the time being. Moreover, your policy on face coverings in the workplace needs to be updated and communicated to the workforce so that employees understand what the rules are. If you do decide to make face coverings mandatory, remember that some of your workforce may be clinically exempt.

Alternatively, you may want to implement a policy that face coverings are no longer mandatory however if staff feel more comfortable wearing a face covering that they are welcome to do so or face coverings are only required in certain situations, such as large meetings etc.

Be prepared for resistance from employees that haven't got the desired outcome from your new policy. Employees are however expected to comply with any workplace policies set by the employer. However, to manage any resistance to the changes, try to accommodate requests from individuals who are not happy with the outcome, and explain how their requests have been taken into account in your Coronavirus risk assessment.

Also, it's worth bearing in mind that public transport may also be a concern to employees, if others are no longer required to wear a face covering particularly in busy travel periods such as rush-hour.

Summary

It's the Employer's choice whether or not to require the workforce to wear face coverings in the workplace.

Trying to balance the individual circumstances of employees will be a difficult task for employers. Whichever decision employers come to is likely to be met with resistance from employees that oppose your decision. Ensure employee concerns are listened to, and the workplace Coronavirus risk assessment is revised and available for employees to view. Keep your risk assessment under regular review to control measures to combat the virus spreading.

Be prepared to justify your approach to the workforce. If you think you would benefit from assistance with anything discussed in this article, or anything else HR and employment law related, give the Supportis team a ring today on **0161 603 2156** to discuss how we can help.

