

DC Lane Risk Assessment and Policy

COVID-19 security.

19th July 2020, Version 3, Dan Collier.

COVID RESTRICTION CHANGES, 19th JULY 2021

Following the lockdown restriction changes on the 19th July 2021, we have reviewed our risk assessment and amended our policies as follows:

1. Please do not visit our office or attend any viewings if you have recently tested positive for COVID 19, been asked to self-isolate, or are waiting for test results.
2. Masks no longer must be worn by visitors to our offices on Mutley Plain.
3. The hatched areas within the office have been removed and visitors are free to approach desks.
4. Posters with Covid guidelines have been removed from the office
5. Viewing in person is now encouraged as this allow buyers and tenants to fully satisfy themselves that a property is suitable for their needs.
6. Restrictions on number of viewers have been removed.
7. Viewings will not be carried out at properties where an occupant has recently tested positive for COVID 19, been asked to self-isolate, or are waiting for test results.
8. In the following order of priority, we will respect preferences for viewers, staff, and contractors to wear masks when visiting any property from:
 - a. Occupier of property
 - b. Visiting member of the public

Therefore, you may be asked to wear a mask for viewings if asked by our team. DC Lane reserve the right to refuse viewings if these guidelines cannot be followed.

9. Routine visits are being carried out as normal unless an occupier has tested positive, been asked to self-isolate, or are waiting for test results.

Background:

As of 13th May 2020, Government advice altered to allow consumers to attend Estate Agent offices, view property to buy or rent and to move home - however strict guidance and measures are expected to be followed.

DC Lane is keen to support the housing plans of our local community while ensuring we go about our business activities in a COVID- Secure manner. We have therefore carried out the following risk assessment prior to resuming our business activities in full.

Understanding of risks:

COVID 19 transmission risk is understood to exist from airborne droplets containing the virus emitted from infectious humans when they cough or sneeze, and through the virus being left on objects they have touched.

DC Lane business activities include the following situations where risk is present:

1. Operate from a high street office space shared with employees of the business and members of the public.
2. Travel by car to other peoples homes for the purposes of carrying out viewings, market appraisals, check in appointments, checkout appointments and routine visits.
3. Instructing 3rd parties to visit properties including maintenance contractors and inventory clerks

Consideration of the following Government guidance has been given while producing this assessment:

- www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/shops-and-branches
- www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/homes
- www.gov.uk/guidance/government-advice-on-home-moving-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak

Publication of this assessment:

DC Lane shall publish this guidance at <https://www.dclane.co.uk/COVID-19> and will also be available on request via email.

The following risk mitigation procedures have been put into place.

1. **Office – 650 sq ft.**

- a. Office opening hours may vary dependent on staffing levels. Where office hours are reduced, phone and email cover will remain in place.
- b. Maximum staffing to be present at any time to be limited to 3 persons in order to maintain distancing at 2m.
- c. Office surfaces including door handles, desks, phones and computers to be thoroughly cleaned daily, prior to closing, using a suitable disinfectant product.
- d. Shared towels replaced with paper disposable towels.
- e. Guidance given to staff to use own crockery and cutlery only.
- f. Staff members to use kitchen and bathroom facilities one at a time and clean all equipment immediately after use.
- g. Desks, phones, and computers not to be shared unless unavoidable and never without thorough cleaning.
- h. 2 separate areas marked by prominent floor markings set out at the front of the office space, allowing a maximum of 2 customer groups of a maximum of 2 people each to be admitted at any one time to maintain a 2 meter gap between any group or staff member (4 customers maximum)
- i. Prominent posters placed on the doors asking all visitors to wait outside until invited into the office. If this procedure is not effective, consideration to keep the door locked should be made, however consideration to other safety risks including fire should be made by keeping the keys in the internal key barrel.
- j. Clients not permitted to approach desks.
- k. Clients not permitted to use the office toilet facilities.
- l. Printed marketing material not to be used.
- m. Sanitiser is provided for the use of staff and customers. All persons to be asked and required to regularly wash or sanitise their hands, particularly after handling or touching any office equipment or furniture that may have been touched by someone else.
- n. All staff to be subject to the companies disciplinary procedure should they knowingly disregard the measures contained within this document.

2. Visits to other peoples homes.

a. VIEWINGS

- i. The need for physical viewings has been minimised through the use of virtual technology including video tours and virtual tours. Some types of digital viewings will be limited to appointment only. Clients should contact the office to discuss their specific needs.
- ii. Physical viewings may only be attended by the persons looking to purchase or rent.
- iii. Viewers will be sent our guidance on attending viewings when we confirm the appointment.
- iv. Staff shall not travel with either other staff or viewers in any mode of transport.
- v. Viewers will be asked and expected to bring with them on the viewing their own masks and gloves and keep them on during the viewing.
- vi. Viewers will always be asked a number of health questions prior to any viewing. Refusal to answer questions or wear appropriate PPE may cause the cancelation of any arrange viewing at short notice.
- vii. Viewings will not occur at any property where current occupants are shielding or self-isolating, or where an occupant is not happy for us to enter the property due to corona virus concerns.
- viii. Where the property is vacant, our staff member will open all doors, windows and any other relevant areas prior to the viewing.
- ix. All viewers will be asked not to touch any part of the property.
- x. Staff will clean any doors or window latches or other surfaces that they have touched at the end of the viewing.
- xi. Where properties are not vacant, we will ask the occupants to leave all doors and other relevant areas open at the start of the viewing.
- xii. Where properties are not vacant, we will ask the current occupant to leave the property while we are conducting the viewing. If this is not possible, Masks and gloves must be used by our staff and any viewer.

b. MARKET APPRAISALS

- i. We will ask all Sellers and Landlords a number of medical questions prior to visits.

- ii. We will not carry out any market appraisals where an occupant is either self-isolating or shielding.
- iii. We will ask Sellers to prepare the property by opening doors and windows prior to our visit.
- iv. We will maintain a 2 meter distance between people at all possible times and will have access to non-surgical masks and gloves if social distancing guidelines cannot be kept.

c. CHECK IN AND OUT APPOINTMENTS

- i. Where possible all paperwork will be completed electronically via e-sign.
- ii. All keys will be cleaned prior to handing out and taking in.
- iii. At the commencement of tenancies, we will avoid the need to visit the property with tenants unless it is impractical to do so. Any questions about the smooth running of the property can be dealt with remotely.
- iv. Where we have been asked to manage the end of tenancy for a Landlord, checkout appointments are usually conducted by our third party contractors, who will be responsible for their own Covid 19 security. We may delay checkout appointments until the tenant has vacated. Keys should be dropped to our office and the report will be compiled as close to the end date as practicable. Tenants who are experiencing symptoms should not move, and should advise us so that we can delay appointments until the risks are lower.
- v. DC Lane will advise all Landlord to ensure properties should be cleaned prior to the commencement of a tenancy and/or leave a 5 day void period between occupiers.

d. ROUTINE VISITS

- i. We have concluded that until the COVID threat is reduced, routine visits will remain on hold.

3. Instructing 3rd Parties

- a. 3rd party contractors will be responsible for risk assessing and taking the appropriate precautions when visiting properties.
- b. Occupants will be asked to vacate the premises where possible when 3rd party contractors need to visit.
- c. Urgent maintenance issues will be given a priority.
- d. Non-urgent maintenance will be carried out, however the contractor will make a decision as to whether delay is the appropriate course of action and advise us if this is the case.
- e. We expect 3rd parties not to enter any property where the occupants are self-isolating, shielding, or unhappy with the risks of virus transmission and report back

to us.

Any party with concerns or questions in relation to our COVID risk assessment and policy document should contact Daniel Collier (partner) on 01752 874185 or dan.collier@dclane.co.uk.

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