



Sub-Regional Covid-19 Business Intelligence

21st July – 3rd August 2020

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1. Executive Summary

The recommendations and findings of this week's report are based on intelligence gathered across the CWLEP Growth Hub's business engagements and survey data, and information provided by Coventry City Council, Warwickshire County Council and CWLEP. Sources include the Warwickshire County Council's Weekly Business and Economic Update and other reports by WCC's Warwickshire Economics, Coventry City Council's Business and Economy briefing, Coventry & Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce, the Midlands Engine, the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), Make UK and Economic Growth Solutions.

This report focuses on intelligence gathered since 21st July 2020. Our sector spotlight will be Manufacturing with a focus on recovery measures.

Key Findings

- The ICAEW has forecast that the West Midlands **will see the sharpest fall in economic output of all English regions in 2020** (due to its sectoral composition), and although it will see the most rapid rise in 2021, employment levels are expected to take longer to return to 2019 levels.
- **41% of businesses reported positive to very positive effects from Covid-19** on their businesses and cited diversification as the leading reason for this trend
- **85% of respondents** across the West Midlands expect either no change or a reduction in their employee numbers over the next 3 months.
- According to the Manufacturing Barometer, **44% of manufacturers have indicated that there has been a reduction in staff** numbers.
- The West Midlands had **146,600 workers furloughed in the manufacturing sector**. The take-up rate for furlough across the West Midlands lies at 49%.
- According to Make UK, **53% of manufacturing companies expect to make redundancies over the next 6 months**
- The compounded issues of Covid-19 and the EU Exit will put **significant pressure on the manufacturing industry in the West Midlands, which already exports at a rate of 44% to the EU**.

2. Macroeconomic Insights

2.1 Observed Economic Trends

The latest Coventry City Council (CCC) Business and Economy briefing collated the latest economic trends. Between February and April 2020, the Purchasing Managers Index ([PMI](#)) declined sharply nationally, from a score of 53.0 in February 2020 to 37.1 in March and just 12.9 in April 2020 across both products and services, although reflecting trends in the Eurozone, it increased to 47.6 by June and 57.1 in [July](#). In terms of GDP, the UK recorded a [2.2% contraction](#) in Q1 2020 and a [20.4%](#) contraction in

April 2020 alone, following 0.0% growth in Q4 2019. In May, UK GDP increased by [1.8%](#), thereby suggesting modest recovery.

2.2 Future Economic Projections

CCC's briefing also outlined the latest projections. This included the [OBR](#)'s most updated economic projections which suggest a contraction in GDP of 21% for Q2 2020, and a fall of 12.4% for 2020 as a whole (potentially as high as 14.3% in worst case scenario). In its central scenario, the OBR also projects unemployment to peak at 12% in Q4 2020 or 13% in early 2021 in worst case scenario. [The ICAEW](#) has forecast that the West Midlands will see the sharpest fall in economic output of all English regions in 2020 (due to its sectoral composition), and although it will see the most rapid rise in 2021, employment levels are expected to take longer to return to 2019 levels. Nationally, the economic recovery will be slower than forecast in Spring 2020, with the [OBR](#) not expecting the economy to return to 2019 levels until late 2022 (2024 in the worst case scenario). In terms of international comparisons, forecasts from the [OECD](#) suggest that the UK will experience the highest GDP contraction of all developed economies but will experience the highest growth rate in 2021.

2.3 Job Market

Job Losses

- 200 jobs cut at Liberty Pressing Solutions in Coventry. Previously known as CovPress. It specialises in commodities, metals recycling, manufacture of steel, aluminium and engineering products. ([Full story here](#))
- Nationwide 163 jobs at risk at Oak Furnitureland ([Full story here](#))
- TUI closing nationwide 166 high street stores ([Full story here](#))

Job Wins/Safeguarded

- 100 FTE jobs to be created in Coleshill as plans to build an outdoor wave park. ([Full story here](#))
- 20 jobs safeguarded at Fire Protection Coatings through discretionary and Innovation grants schemes administered by Coventry City Council ([Full story here](#))

3. Business Insights

3.1 CWLEP Growth Hub – Trends

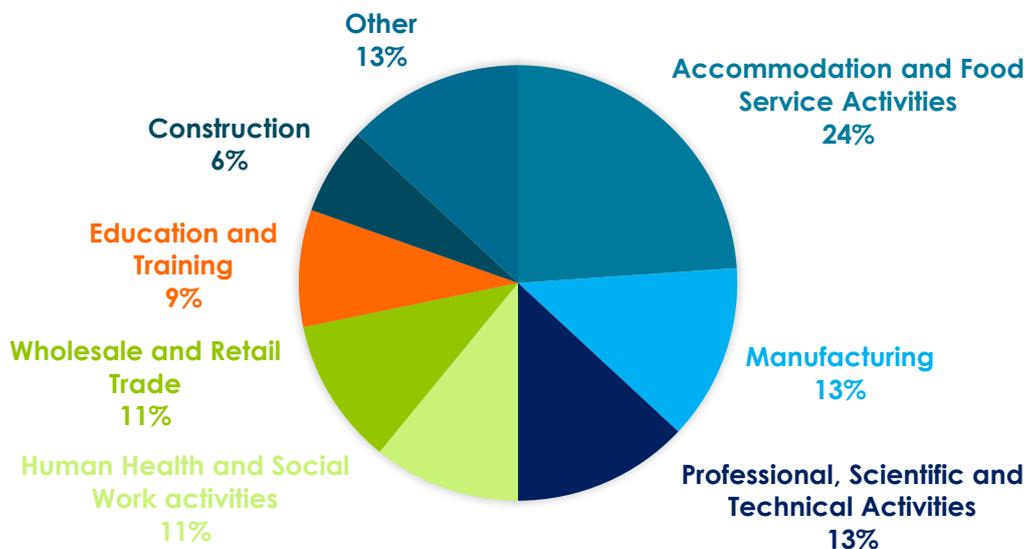
This week's business insights are taken from intelligence gathered from supported businesses since 21st July 2020. To date **the Growth Hub has supported 2,857 businesses since 1st March and has had substantive discussions with 1,067 businesses**. 47 including C&W responses to the current West Midlands Cluster Telemarketing survey were received over the period between 21st July – 3rd August.

During this period, we have changed our data sources – we have launched a telemarketing survey and we are including data from our business support enquiry form, and our COVID19 restart survey. We are still receiving a small amount of entries from our previous COVID19 survey but are moving to the new questions. This also changes the way we will present data below going forward. This will still enable us to draw comparisons throughout the different phases of COVID19 impact on businesses.

3.1.1 Overview

The top sectors supported by the Growth Hub over this time frame were **Accommodation and Food Service Activities (24%); Manufacturing (13%); Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities (13%)**. The size profile of the businesses supported this week consisted of **51% of sole employees, 35% of micro businesses (2-9 employees) and 14% small businesses (10-49)**. Some respondents have not included information on business size.

BUSINESSES SUPPORTED BY INDUSTRY

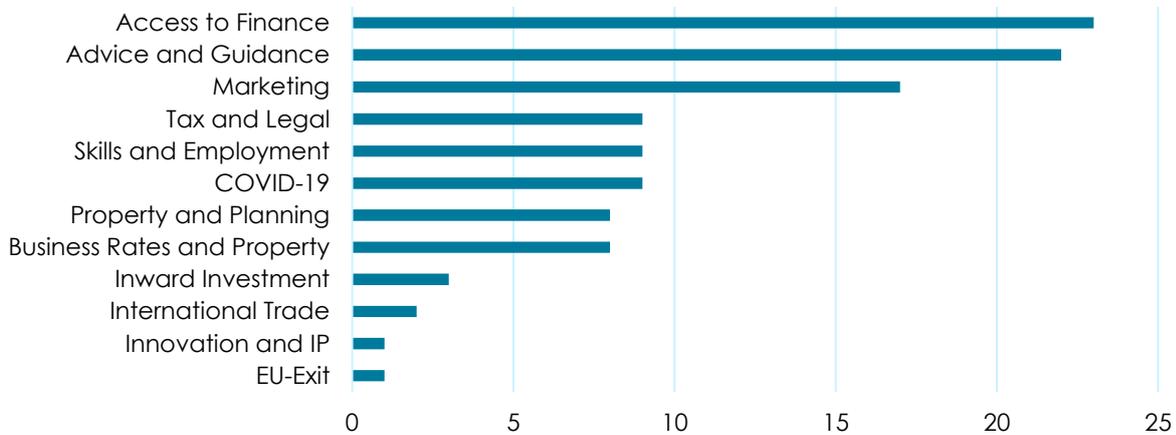


Access to Finance is, as previously, the main business support need. Next to **general Advice and Guidance**, this is closely followed by **Marketing support needs**. This is in line with the upward trend of our previous reports as businesses have

increasingly looked at operational activity (including growing sales) and ensuring business continuity which includes implementing new products and services.

We have changed our categories as we are seeing a severe increase in need for **specialist advice, including tax and legal, skills and employment and general advice around COVID19** which includes making business premises COVID-safe.

What Support Would Be Most Helpful To Your Business Now?



Whereas **50% of businesses we spoke to have overwhelmingly felt a negative effect of COVID19 on their business, 41% of businesses reported positive to very positive effects on their businesses.** Most of those that have reported a positive impact have mentioned **diversification as a key factor to their positive experience over the last months.**

Negative impacts mentioned in the most recent business interactions was surrounding a **severe reduction of income, social distancing and the inability to offer products and services due to COVID-safety guidelines.** Events businesses have fed back that their sales have completely stopped, with some reporting that all 2020 orders had to be cancelled. Other industries reporting negative impacts included construction (due to loss of contracts), accommodation (due to social distancing restrictions, business closure and event cancellation) and human health & social care (in particular personal training and gyms unable to get clients or provide training with social distancing measures).

On the positive side, we had several personal training providers reported an increase in clients due to tailored 1 to 1 approaches of their services. **Manufacturers in general reported a very positive view of their business, almost exclusively due to expansion of their offer,** either in terms of new services and products to suit different markets or moving their offer online.

3.1.2 Key Trends

- Some businesses planning to recruit which is encouraging, but outnumbered five to one by businesses probably going to make redundancies over coming weeks and months
- Significant increase in enquiries from businesses looking to move forward with projects put on hold due to lockdown, new investments, diversification, digital projects inc. eCommerce projects for Retail
- Forthcoming specialist support grants are generating interest
- Continued concerns due to uncertainty surrounding EU Exit discussions, reported delays to US Trade discussions, and apparent breakdown in relations with China. Double whammy effect with Covid-19 impact.
- Encouraging to see increased levels of start-up enquiries pushing ahead with plans regarding delays. General feeling is that the level of enquiries for start-up support is rising from people expecting to lose their jobs to redundancies
- Tourism businesses that are reopening are seeing an increasing need for support, especially around costs in marketing, signage and enabling social distancing measures
- Forthcoming specialist support grants are generating interest
- Companies are announcing investments in Coventry & Warwickshire, including logistics businesses Wincanton and LPR
- Early indications from the telemarketing campaign are seeing that most businesses are expecting either no change or a likely reduction in their businesses over the next 3 months
- Business enquiries reflect a growing interest and confidence in digitalisation

West Midlands Telemarketing

- **85% of respondents** across the West Midlands expect either no change or a reduction in their employee numbers over the next 3 months.
- **14% of respondents** across the West Midlands expect to see an increase in employee numbers over the next 3 months.
- **79% of respondents** across the West Midlands have taken advantage of Covid-19 financial support schemes.

Recruitment

- Starting to see some companies consider recruitment campaigns & planning to employ staff from September, but still concerns about future.
- Companies considering part time hours & home-based workers when they start recruiting.
- Companies working through new government advice regarding furlough scheme
- General view from Recruitment Agencies, that some signs market picking up, but most agency staff still furloughed at least for another months, with expectation they will start in September.

- Sectors which appear to be increasing requirements are Part Time Admin/Office Manager, Finance & skilled warehouse roles. Also starting to see slight increase in demand for IT and digital sector, with these roles being predominately software systems & web development experience
- Feeling across businesses in all sectors is that there will likely be more redundancies in the next 6 months, especially once furlough scheme ends, and would welcome any assistance from a central point, rather than them searching across different partners.

3.1.3 Emerging Themes

HR, Legal and Health & Safety – businesses related to activity in HR, Legal and Health & Safety are performing well and have seen a positive upturn in business since, and partly due to, the Covid-19 pandemic. Increases in sales have been related to dealing with common issues such as furlough (CJRS) and redundancies as well as other ad hoc issues.

BAU & Inbound Enquiries – the C&W Growth Hub team is seeing a sharp rise in inbound enquiries as business start to recover and continue to diversify indicating a return to business as usual. Apprenticeships, innovation, digital projects, food and capital purchases are common themes and some businesses are seeking grants. Enquiries regarding projects that were shelved at the start of the outbreak are resurfacing, particularly ones that were already in receipt of planning approval. Conversations around specialist support grants are generating interest and are being received positively. Financial support sought by almost all businesses. Interest in the new consultancy grants is increasing particularly now officially launched by government. Large scale projects that were underway, such as management buyouts and large capital purchases, continuing despite the effects of COVID-19.

Retail to Online Diversification – with a significant and immediate decline in footfall, more retail businesses are creating or enhancing an online eCommerce presence to improve their offering and find alternatives to relying solely on a physical presence with a retail outlet. Retail businesses reporting that social distancing measures and the reluctance of shoppers to visit town centres is slowing the speed of a recovery.

FinditinCW Portal – frequent conversations promoting the FinditinCW opportunities portal which is generating a lot of interest amongst local businesses as they seek to widen their reach and benefit from a presence on a regional platform.

Premises and WFH – continued downsizing of office space and an offloading of premises continues and will affect the commercial and professional rental market. However, those looking to expand to bigger premises are hopeful of favourable rental terms or more appealing options to purchase.

Discretionary Grants – situation again remains largely unchanged from previous reports with local authorities at differing stages of roll out. Those that have fully allocated their fund are completing payment cycles although it is likely that there will be a level of underspend in some local authorities. Further phases expected to ensure funds are allocated to businesses that need it. Following government announcement to close all three grant schemes by Friday 28th August those local authorities with remaining funds have launched further phases of their schemes with revised eligibility criteria.

Mental Health and Obesity – some businesses addressing the increase of mental health and obesity, not just for their employees, but as solutions providers to companies looking to combat the problem. As we continue to work from home and recover from the effect of the pandemic this is a longer-term issue that requires a thoughtful approach and national strategy. Not limited to adults, these businesses are looking to address the problem amongst families, younger people and school children as they near a return to school in September.

Events Industry - desperate to get going again and news of the proposed relaxing of measures 1st October have been well received although the lack of confirmation and detail reported as disappointing and frustrating. Some events companies looking to diversify to “virtual” events although this is only viewed as a temporary solution. Event and hospitality businesses actively seeking any available financial and grant support.

Hospitality Voucher Scheme – more activity from hospitality businesses looking to take full advantage of the Eat Out to Help Out scheme valid between 3rd and 31st August. Venues reporting strong bookings between these dates and hope that it is sufficient to kickstart food and beverage sales.

Planning and Property – businesses having serious conversations reconsidering options on property some of which include reducing stock or rental obligations. This further highlights the success and obvious flexibility and financial benefits of working from home, for those that can. Other businesses using the opportunity to offer redundant spaces for short term storage and warehousing.

Redundancies (post CJRS Furlough) – increased conversations around redundancies when the CJRS furlough scheme changes as of 1st August at which point employers will have to contribute to wages. It is anticipated that there will be a spike in the number of businesses making, or preparing for, redundancies. The full effect of this remains to be seen.

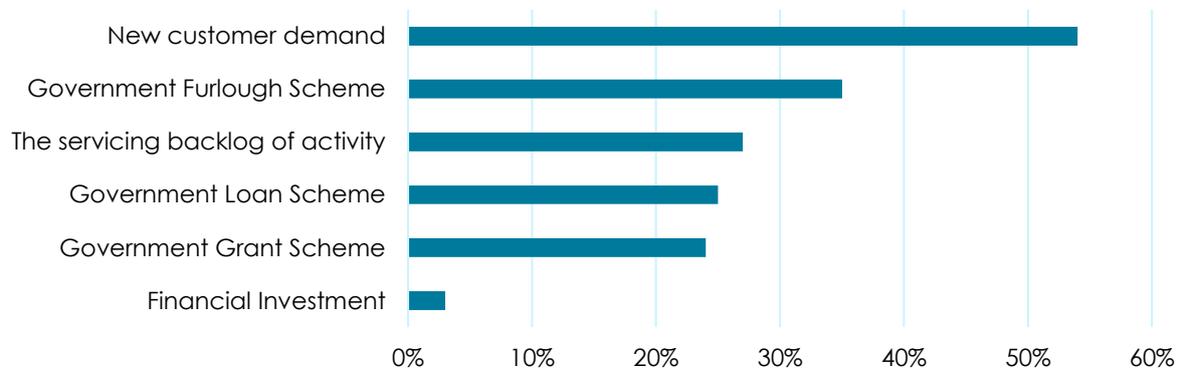
3.2 CW Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber of Commerce provided information on the **BCC Impacts Tracker Tranche 10** -

Highlights

- Modest Improvements in underlying business conditions
- B2C Firms now more likely to report improvements in UK revenue
- New Businesses is most cited as the top factor for improved cash reserves
- Government support most accessed: Furlough, Loan scheme & Grant funding
- Grant funding has the highest proportion of firms struggling to access
- Summer statement: Majority of firms intend to use Job retention bonus
- 43% of firms say they have cash reserves for three months or less
- 43% intended to use Job retention bonus
- **77% business won't make use of eat out to help out**
- 6% of businesses intend to make use of the Kickstarter - 18% intend to use the grant for hiring new apprentices

Which of these factors have helped increase cash reserves?



Over the next twelve months, what percentage change, if any, will your business make to staff salaries overall (2018 compared with 2020):

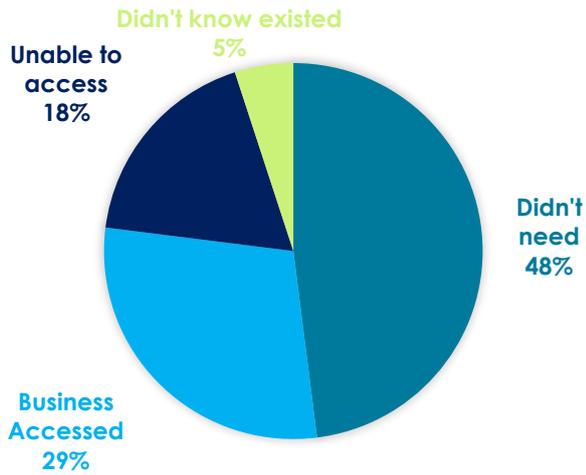
	2018	2020
Increase more than 5%	6%	5%
Increase by 2% - 5%	32%	17%
No Change	23%	44%
Decrease by 2-5%	1%	4%
Decrease by 5% or more	1%	22%

Compared to a month ago, has your business seen a change in the following:

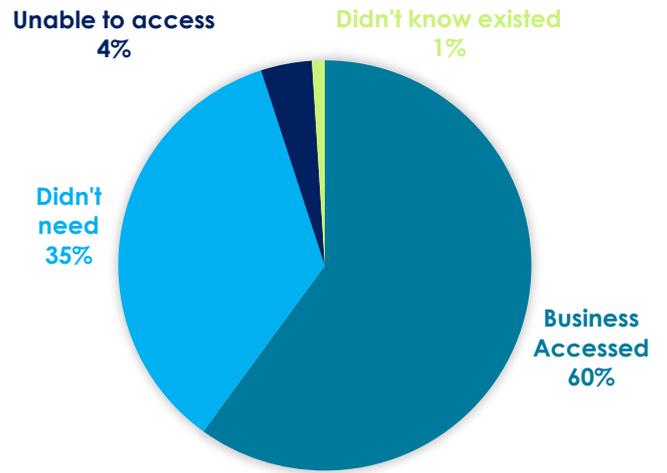
	Significantly increased	Slightly increased	No change	Slightly decreased	Significantly decreased
Revenue from UK customers:	10%	24%	24%	19%	23%
Revenue from overseas customers:	3%	22%	42%	13%	20%
Cash Reserves:	4%	17%	23%	34%	21%

Government Support Schemes

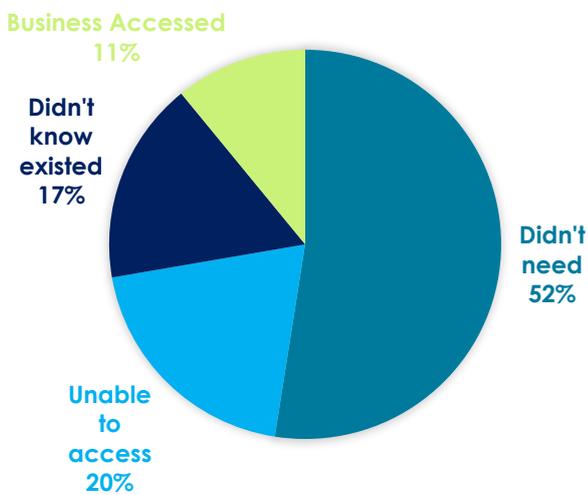
SMALL BUSINESS GRANT / HOSPITALITY GRANT



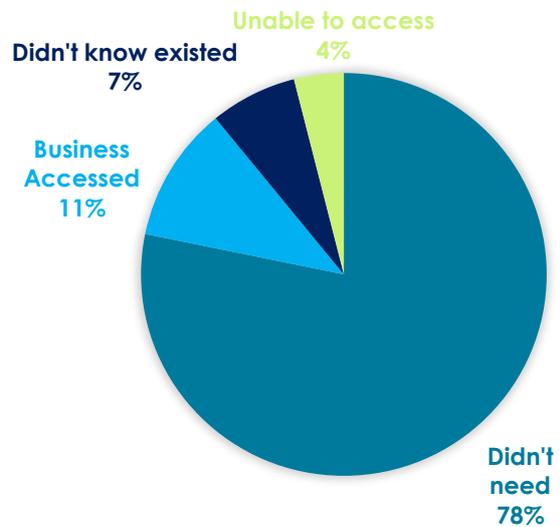
JOB RETENTION SCHEME



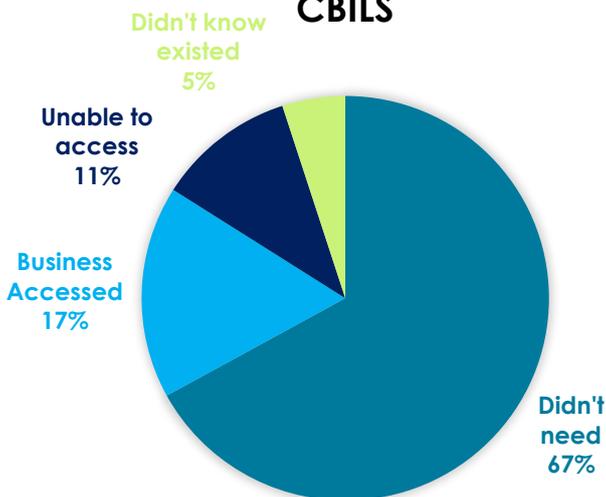
DISCRETIONARY GRANT



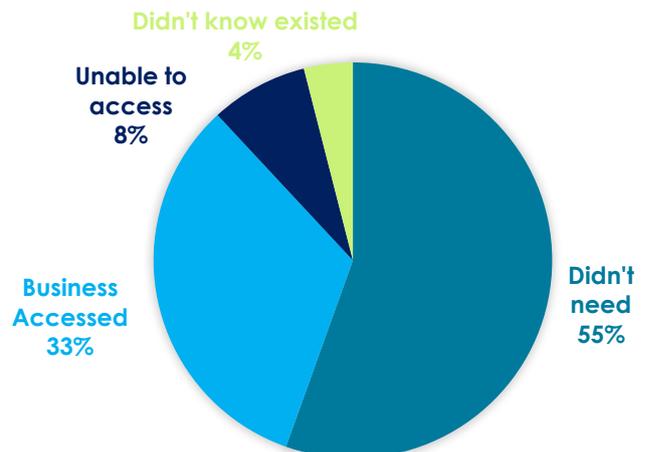
SSP PAY



CBILS



BOUNCE BACK LOAN



3.3 Case Studies



IC Solutions 24/7 – A forward-thinking infection control business has moved to new premises as part of its expansion plans. IC Solutions 24/7 Limited supplies environmental infection control products and services to the NHS including University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire, Warwick Hospital and Stratford Hospital and other health authorities around the world as well as businesses including hotels.

The “Whole Room” Disinfection Service provider supplies decontamination products and services to keep hospitals, patients, staff and visitors safe by disinfecting wards and rooms by using environmentally friendly Hydrogen Peroxide and UV Light methods.

The business was launched in 2010 by former Nuneaton resident Oliver Canty at the Centenary Business Centre on the Attleborough Fields Industrial Estate, which is run by Warwickshire County Council.

But with a rapid rise in orders – including securing a year’s worth of business in a four-week spell between March and April – IC Solutions 24/7 has moved from 1,500 sq ft premises to a 5,100 sq ft unit at the Henley Industrial Estate in Henley Road, Coventry.

And with help from the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) Growth Hub, the company has secured a £7,772 Investment Fund grant for IT equipment, a racking system, office furniture, partitioning and building works. This project forms part of the Coventry & Warwickshire Business Support Programme which is part funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

Fire Protection Coatings Ltd – A
Coventry business that manufactures and distributes fire protective products, has been able to continue operating and safeguard jobs during the pandemic after securing funding.

The business was founded in 2002 and employs 20 staff. It moulds specialist coatings for the hydrocarbon industry and the sale of coatings and fire barriers to the construction industry. Following a successful year, the pandemic has hit the company hard, with sales down by 70%.

Fire Protection Coatings applied for funding through the discretionary grant scheme which Coventry City Council is administering and received £10,000 which will help the business retain staff returning to work after being furloughed.

Yvonne Atkins, HR manager, Fire Protection Coatings, said: “The funding is a valuable lifeline to our business and employees. We got the grant decision within a week; it was really quick.

“Although we will see some recovery by October, it is likely to take 12 months for our supply-chain to get back to normal. The funding will enable us to put additional resources into our distribution as we can see the construction industry recovering more quickly with Government funding. We are planning to diversify and are already introducing a new range of fire extinguishers and protective timber coating to our range.”

Cllr Jim O'Boyle, cabinet member for jobs and regeneration at Coventry City Council, added: “This is a great example of the necessity for the support to local companies. We know that there are still businesses that clearly need help, and we want to make sure as many Coventry businesses as possible benefit.”



4. Sector Spotlight – Manufacturing

International / National Trends

The latest national report from the [Manufacturing Barometer](#) shows that, whilst manufacturers are still in negative territory since the COVID-19 crisis began, there has been a marked improvement since the previous Barometer in March, which showed “the bleakest outlook in over a decade”. **Whilst 48% still expect sales to reduce in the coming months, this has almost halved from the 85% who predicted this in March.** However, when surveyed in January prior to the pandemic, **only 17% saw a drop in sales on the horizon**, showing that, whilst things are indeed improving, the SME manufacturing sector is still not back to its pre COVID-19 position.

44% of manufacturers have indicated that there has been a reduction in staff numbers. The government support scheme that were identified by manufacturers as **most vital was the furlough/CJRS scheme.** Further **identified as useful were the Bounce Back Loans and the VAT payment holidays.**

Key steps businesses have taken were around reviewing cashflow forecast and spending reductions in capital spend plans. **78% of respondents indicated that no further clarifications around operating safely in a manufacturing environment would be needed.** Generally, **67% of business have said, that COVID-19 has not affected EU-Exit preparations.** Businesses have indicated that they would like the supply chain to look more toward the UK to source more often UK supplies and products.

As the [Midlands Engine's Economic Impact Report \(7th Edition, 17th July 2020\)](#) indicated, **UK GDP grew 1.8% in May but was still 24.5% below its level in February,** before the plunge in economic output when the pandemic struck. Manufacturing and housebuilding indicated some signs of recovery as some businesses saw staff return to work during May, but whilst retail sales rose, it was mostly confined to online shopping, due to restrictions on non-essential retail still being in place.

[MAKE UK's latest Manufacturing Monitor](#) (issued 20th July 2020), outlined that **approximately 77% of manufacturers have furloughed anywhere between 1% and 50% of staff, with the majority of firms within the 26-50% category** indicating that “[f]or the moment, the expectation that manufacturers will, slowly, bring workers back on a part-time or full-time basis remains and more so given the recent introduction of ‘flexible furlough.’” The latest survey also reported a **marked increase in the number of firms who are planning to make redundancies over the next 6 months.** Promisingly, a dominant share of manufacturers have not put apprenticeship training on hold. However, many firms will remain cautious to the probability of local lockdowns that may disrupt activity through the value-chain.

Regional Trends

Across the Midlands, many manufacturers are still experiencing some drop in revenue, sales or general business activity but the general feel is that things are starting to pick back up, albeit slowly. Midlands Engine's report indicated that overall

manufacturing companies seem to be benefiting the most from diversifying their offerings.

Midlands-wide **260,900 workers in AME were furloughed, which forms 17.7% of all furloughed workers across the Midlands Engine area. West Midlands had 146,600 workers furloughed in the sector.** The take-up rate for furlough across the West Midlands lies at 49%.

As the [Innovation Alliance West Midlands](#) summarised recently, a West Midlands Outlook on Manufacturing that was offered by Make UK on 15th July indicated that:

- Output fell to the lowest on record
- Both UK and Export orders declined to levels comparable to the financial crisis
- UK and Export margins have also declined significantly
- Manufacturing output forecast for 2020 at -10% and at 5.8% growth for 2021

With **304,000 jobs in manufacturing (10% of the region's total workforce) and the EU accounting for 44% of exports**, the uncertainties around Brexit were already having an impact before the pandemic. Both output and total orders in the region performed worse than the UK average for the final quarters of 2019, with the average performance of both domestic and export orders significantly worse than last year, and investment intentions significantly below the UK average. *Continued uncertainties will therefore further hinder the sector's recovery from the impacts of COVID-19.*

The [West Midlands Economic Recovery Plan](#) proposes investments into areas to support the Advanced Manufacturing sector – it is vital that these two interventions are funded through the 2020 Autumn Budget in order to support the recovery of the manufacturing sector.

- **This includes an initiative to support development and deployment of the latest advanced building techniques (£50m enabling fund)**
- **Create green manufacturing jobs - unlock 51,700 green jobs with investment of £614m**

Local Trends

As outlined in Coventry City Council's latest Business and Economy Briefing, although plants have been reopening, many are operating at partial capacity, which impacts on order levels and production capacity within supply chains. National data from [Make UK](#) indicates that just 15% of manufacturers are operating at full capacity, 42% of firms think they will take over a year to return to normal trading conditions and 53% plan to make redundancies in the next 6 months. **The motor vehicles sector is expected to lose 34% of its GVA in 2020**, whilst other transport (mainly aerospace) is expected to be 15% lower. Locally, JLR has announced it was cutting [1,000 agency posts](#) at Castle Bromwich, Solihull and Merseyside after a £501m Q1 2020 loss, Aston Martin announced [plans to cut 500 jobs across its sites](#) and Rolls Royce has announced job cuts across multiple West Midlands sites, [including 65 at Ansty](#). [Other major manufacturers](#) such as Airbus, Bombardier and

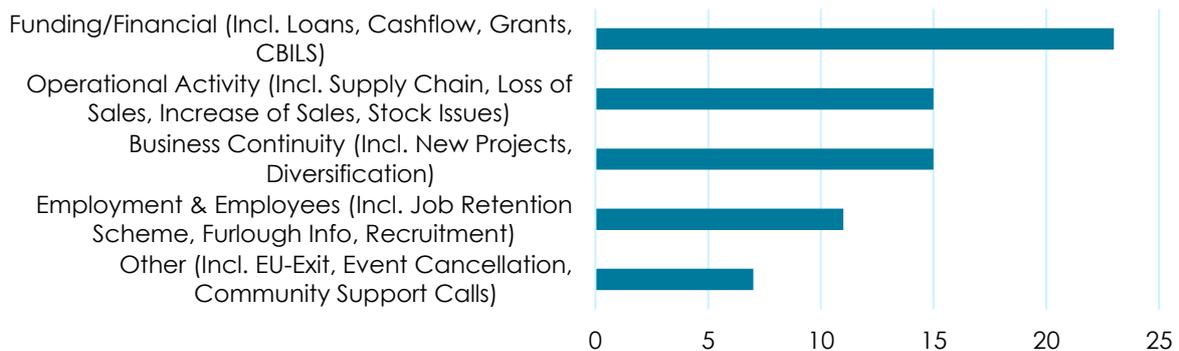
McLaren have announced job losses that will impact on local supply chains. It is therefore imperative that further support is made available to manufacturers with cashflow, innovation and diversification help them adapt to new trading conditions and diversify and safeguard jobs.

4.1 CWLEP Growth Hub Business Insights – Manufacturing

Since our previous Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering report we have continued to support Manufacturers – **our engagements with Manufacturers during the time since the previous report (issued 11th May 2020) grew from 17.5% to 32%.**

Whilst in the previous report the main business support needs were around **funding and financial and employment and employees** the focus of manufacturers has **shifted towards business continuity planning (including diversification) and operational activity (including loss of sales).**

What Support does the Business Need?

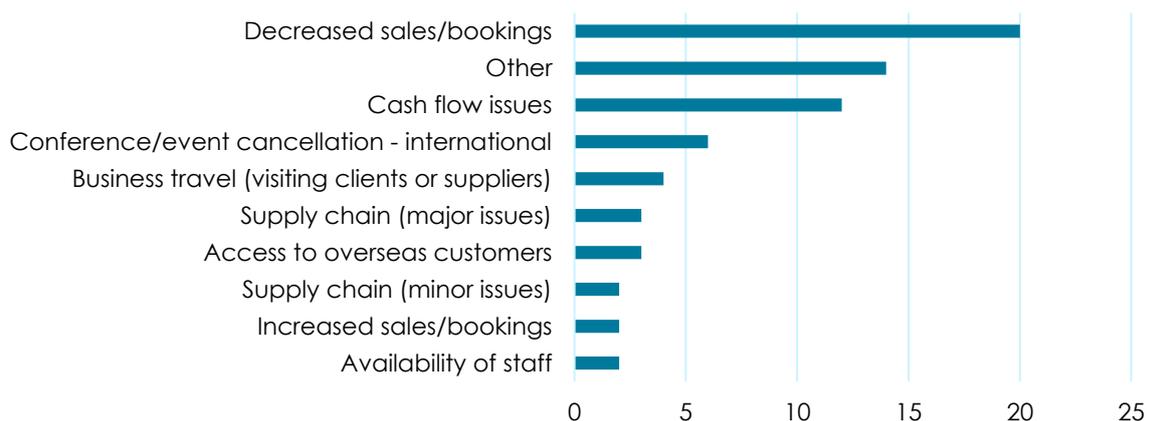


This change may indicate that whereas in early May businesses were looking for **support around the furlough scheme and understanding impact on their employees** – as businesses are now returning their staff to the work place they may now be considering next steps towards creating a resilient work place.

Cash flow issues have no longer been the main concern for businesses – this could indicate that manufacturers have been **making use of available grant and loan support schemes** which supported any cash flow issues that companies were facing towards the beginning of the COVID19 lockdown.

Business enquiries over the last 4-6 weeks have shifted almost towards “business as usual” type of enquiries – **as manufacturers are considering investments and innovation support.** Due to the large number of manufacturers **turning towards new services and products to offer to clients** – this could be an indirect effect of COVID19.

How is COVID19 Affecting Your Business?



5. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been derived off the back of careful analysis of macro-economic and business-level data that we have collated from Coventry & Warwickshire-based stakeholders.

5.1 Short & Medium Term

5.1.a

It is crucial that Government introduces further interventions prior to and during the 2020 Autumn Budget to support Manufacturing businesses to recover production capacity and help stimulate sales during the recovery/restart phase:

- **Introduce a sector based approach by to reconsider CBILS and the Furlough Scheme.** We would endorse Make UK's recommendation to extend the furlough scheme for manufacturing businesses by 6 months as firms recover production capacity. We also recommend that Government also introduces such an extension for other sectors reopening and recovering more slowly, such as arts & culture, hospitality and conferencing sectors.
- **Develop a National Skills Task Force for the sector, which has again been advocated by MakeUK** – this should focus on upskilling, retraining and redeployment opportunities for individuals working in the sector and potentially at risk of redundancy, and creating apprenticeship and tailored onsite training opportunities.
- **Provide significant finance and wraparound support to provide greater incentives for delivering innovation and R&D in key sectors such as automotive and aerospace.**
- The introduction of a **“Diversification Fund” to support manufacturers with capital or revenue expenditure** to help develop new products or expand production to supply more sectors.
- **Develop targeted programmes to support the continued growth and development of the low emission vehicles and battery technology supply chains**, building on opportunities presented by UKBIC and potentially a Gigafactory within the region.
- **Provide financing incentives to encourage the purchase and greater take-up of electric vehicles** to again help stimulate demand and production.
- **Invest in international trade support capacity, particularly to support the manufacturing sector** that has a high propensity to export to adapt to changes in trading conditions that will occur after the transition arrangements with the EU end in December 2020 and will also be compounded by COVID19. Such support needs to be introduced immediately and should continue until at least Spring 2021 to ensure that businesses can adapt to new trading arrangements in a sustainable manner.
- Allow **local authorities to retain any unspent COVID19 grant funds after the 28th August and introduce greater flexibilities to be able to support manufacturers**

with modernisation or diversification, particularly through purchasing and/or adopting new technologies.

- **Introduce clear and co-ordinated PR campaigns around safety messaging within sectors** – messages are conflicting- there needs to be a clear, concise, coordinated and consistent message in order to boost employee and consumer confidence.
- Invest in WMCA's Proposal involving development and deployment of Advanced Manufacturing in Construction (AMC) through a new **Regional AMC Accelerator Fund (£50m)**.

5.1.b

Manufacturing businesses would benefit from support through local stakeholders throughout the recovery/restart phase, particularly through **promoting FinditinCW in order to get more manufacturing opportunities and manufacturers on the platform**

5.2 Long Term

Businesses and the economy would benefit if both Central Government and local stakeholders consider and support these long-term recommendations

5.2.a

Drive and **support initiatives to accelerate digital connectivity projects** to support flexible working for employees in both rural and urban areas, and to provide manufacturers and businesses across a range of other sectors to fast and reliable broadband and 5G infrastructure to facilitate innovation and development of new products and services.

5.2.b

Reassess strategic approach to land and premises e.g. Brownfield land, residential and commercial property trends, power supply study outcome for Coventry & Warwickshire area → Work with stakeholders and monitor how demand changes.

- Consider trends around work and use of employment land
- Reshoring/Newshoring may be a trend → There'll be a lot more need to open up land around high value manufacturing

5.2.c

Continue to **push message around the role of new energy vehicles and transport** – support the role a **Gigafactory as a collaboration between public and private sector could play for the country. Promote Coventry & Warwickshire as the strategic location for this**, at the heart of the new energy transport industries.