



Welcome

by **John Doherty** (head of regulatory)
and **Ed Weightman** (regulatory review editor)

As we tentatively tippy-toe out of lockdown, we're delighted to deliver the latest regulatory review, spanning arguably the most challenging quarter in our history since World War II. Unsurprisingly, therefore, whilst we addressed the Covid-related issues of luxury-branded hand sanitisers and contact tracing apps, we also devoted attention to renewable heat and biomethane support and the Government's universal service obligation to bring broadband to all, even in the most remote areas.

Please do contact the team if you would like to discuss any of these issues, or other regulatory questions.

Essential luxury? How major brands are repurposing to tackle the pandemic

By **John Doherty** and **Emma Davies**

The luxury goods and cosmetics industries, which were deemed 'non-essential' businesses by the Government at the start of the UK lockdown, have been operating online and are only now beginning to reopen stores. Some of these high-end fashion brands and companies, as well as producers of alcoholic beverages, have been producing hand sanitiser and medical products to aid in combatting the coronavirus pandemic: while companies should be commended for their actions, they must ensure that when producing new products they meet the relevant regulatory requirements.

[Read the full article](#)

Contact tracing apps - saving society or surveillance society?

by **John Doherty**

Contact tracing apps are used to warn individuals who have been in contact with an infectious person, so that they can take appropriate steps to protect themselves and others. The Apple-Google initiative to develop a Bluetooth-based contact tracing framework to help public health bodies appears to be aligned with the principles of data protection and minimisation by design, but the NHS may choose to use a centralised app instead: if this is the case, then additional privacy, data security and practical concerns will have to be considered.

[Read the full article](#)

After RHI: what support comes next for low carbon heat?

by **Ed Weightman**

Lower carbon heating remains a key policy objective for the Government, which has a legally binding target of net zero emissions to meet by 2050. The current domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) scheme will close on 31 March 2022, and has had an important role in financially supporting low carbon heating alternatives and the production of biomethane. The Government has set out its proposals for the future RHI replacement, and is now seeking consultation responses on these proposals until 7 July 2020.

[Read the full article](#)

Fast broadband for all? The new Universal Service Obligation

by **Ed Weightman**

The Universal Service Obligation (USO) provides the right for every eligible home and business in the UK to request an affordable broadband connection from either BT or KCOM. However, since the Government first published the proposal in 2016, there has been concern that what the Government originally defined as a decent connection speed will be outdated by the time the USO actually comes into force. This concern is currently particularly relevant as in recent months the spread of Covid-19 has forced the closure of offices and increased the demand for home working and streaming connectivity.

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