

## **COVID-19 GUIDANCE**

Dear Member

As you will be aware the situation relating to COVID – 19 is a very fluid and fast changing one. There continues to be a lot of information circulating about coronavirus, both officially and through media coverage. We will try to keep you informed as much as we can via updates on our website, [www.penrithbs.co.uk](http://www.penrithbs.co.uk), through social media and via email if you have provided your email address to us. We appreciate that it may be a difficult time for both you and your family, and to carry on your interactions with Penrith Building Society and our staff base, which may affect our health, finances and daily lives.

We continue to review matters on a daily basis to ensure we can continue to support our members through this difficult period which may last several months based on the latest information we have.

For all the situations noted below and any others you may have, please either phone the Society on 01768 863 675 or email us on [enquiries@penrithbs.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@penrithbs.co.uk) and a member of the savings or mortgage team will be able to provide the necessary support and advice.

### **Branch closure**

The Society has taken the decision to adjust branch opening times. We are also limiting the number of members who can access the branch office at any one time, to adhere to the government's 'social distancing' policy. For counter service our opening hours will be 9am – 12pm Monday to Friday until further notice.

Saturday opening is suspended for the time being.

We may yet be required to close the branch. If this is going to happen, we will advise via our website, notices in branch and through our social media channels. We will avoid this as far as possible.

### **Contact times**

Our phone lines will be open as usual, 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday, and we have staff working both remotely and in the office to answer your calls, but, please bear with us if these are not answered immediately due to call volumes, we will get to you.

Email will be monitored each day from 9am to 5pm weekdays if this is your preferred channel.

### **Mortgage transactions**

Mortgage borrowers may not be able to meet their usual monthly repayments due to personal circumstances around employment or other sources of income being suspended or reduced as the virus develops. You may have heard the financial services sector initiative in terms of 'Mortgage Payment Holidays'. To find out a little more about what a mortgage payment holiday is, please review our [guidance sheet](#). We will discuss all individual circumstances with borrowers. If you make contact with the Society, we can assist you by setting up arrangements during this period that are suited to your circumstances.

We are currently not conducting face to face mortgage interviews and would ask that if anyone needs any general advice about their mortgage or any of our products, that the preferred routes for contact are phone or email.

### **Savings transactions**

For our savings members, we are encouraging you not to attend the branch in person where possible, to protect yourself and our members of staff. If you need to withdraw cash or a cheque we can arrange for this to be done via a bank transfer to a nominated current account, in your name, following a few simple steps, which our savings team can advise you of.

Please note the amount of any bank transfer will be limited to £1,000 per weekly transaction unless you arrange with us for a larger withdrawal to be made for a specific purpose. We believe this amount would allow individuals to manage general living costs week to week during the period of the pandemic.

If you have your pension or salary paid into a savings account with the Society and would like access to these funds, again a bank transfer can be set up to immediately pay this income in to your nominated current account on the date of receipt and contact us for more information on how this can be done.

If you wish to open an account, please use the downloadable applications available on the website.

If you need to deposit funds to the Society, we would ask that these are sent via a standing order or faster payment where at all possible and these can be credited to your individual account, provided you include your account number with the transaction.

If you need to deposit a cheque to the Society, we would ask that this is posted to us where possible and we can credit it once received.

If you would prefer a cheque withdrawal to a bank transfer, please contact us and we can send these out in the post.

Cash deposits and withdrawals should be avoided where possible to limit cash handling for both us and yourselves, as cash handling is a key area through which the virus could be spread.

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Above all, we hope that all our members remain safe throughout this period and that you keep informed on the general situation via the government website, which has daily live public information:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

or for additional NHS advice on the condition, through:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

We will continue to post updates on our website, [www.penrithbs.co.uk](http://www.penrithbs.co.uk) and via social media as well.

Yours,

The Board and Staff at Penrith Building Society