

In The News | 26th August 2022 | Latest Facilities Management News

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Welcome to InTheNews – covering all the FM news you may have missed over the last week:

Local councils will have a new strengthened framework to improve air quality, under new plans announced by Defra.

Using powers in the Environment Act, National Highways is to become the first designated “Relevant Public Authority” placing a legal requirement on it to work together with local councils when necessary to take effective action to deliver air quality standards and objectives. While National Highways already work with local authorities to improve air quality, this statutory requirement – consulted on earlier this year – will see a more consistent approach to meeting local air quality objectives on road networks.

In addition to this, Defra has updated [Local Air Quality Management \(LAQM\) Policy Guidance](#) to reflect legislative changes introduced through the Environment Act 2021 and clarify roles and responsibilities within local government.

[The Building Engineering Services Association \(BESA\)](#) has issued an urgent warning about a potential fire safety weakness in a large number of building ventilation systems.

It has issued an interim technical bulletin (VH001) ahead of a full update of its industry guidance for the ‘Installation of Fire Dampers and Smoke Dampers’ (DW145) which is due for launch at the Association’s

[National Conference in October.](#)

BESA said it was taking the unusual step of producing an interim announcement because of the urgent nature of the problem after annual inspections carried out by maintenance contractors found that “a huge number of dampers” had been incorrectly installed.

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Research now and a study from [Perkbox](#), the global benefits and rewards platform, has found that hiring is going truly borderless, with almost two-thirds of businesses (62%) planning to increase the number of remote staff they hire outside of their main country of operations, over the next 12 months.

[Perkbox](#)’s survey of over 500 business leaders across the UK highlighted the top three as building a more diverse workforce to access a wider talent pool (35%), encouraging innovation (32%), and building a global workforce (29%) to service a wider customer base.

This drive is fuelled by technological advances over the past two years facilitating greater hybrid and remote working. Businesses can now leverage those advances to boost their borderless working strategy.

New research from leading workspace cleaning and hygiene firm, OSCFM (Office Space Cleaning Facilities Management), has revealed some of the biggest office hygiene gripes amongst UK workers.

More than a third of respondents identified desks and workstations as the untidiest areas of the office (34%) – with kitchens and washrooms tying for second place (27%). This may come as a surprise to some, but with research finding desks 400 times dirtier than the average toilet seat – with 10 million bacteria on average living on them – this hygienic negligence is a genuine cause for concern.

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