

Post-Covid-19: Where next for the construction sector?

A strategic communications perspective



JBP (and James Hinchcliffe) – a short introduction

We (both) have extensive experience in strategic communications in the property and construction sector

JBP - 35+ years experience



Media Relations



Stakeholder Engagement



Public affairs

nationalgrid

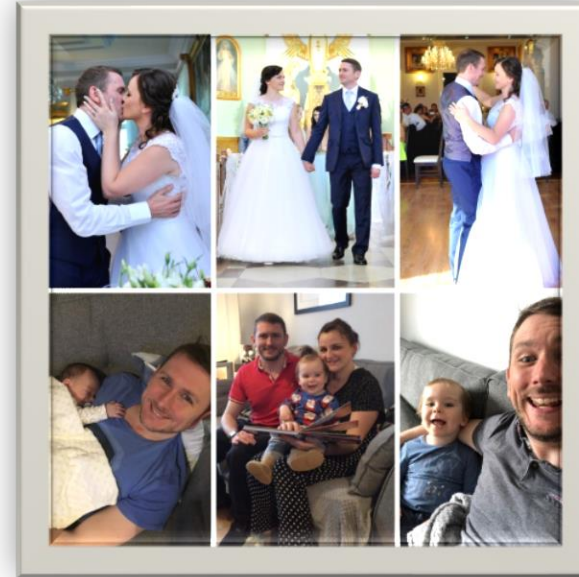
RIDGE

Taylor Wimpey

Sainsbury's



JH - 20+ years experience



Bath & North East Somerset Council



Aims of the presentation

A slither of insight from the world of strategic communications

- Covid-19 state-of-play: optimistic observations drawn from the world of politics and PR
- Seize the moment – reboot your strategic communications approach
- Moving from PR promotion to genuine two-way engagement: a suggested model

SNAP POLL

- On a scale of 1-5 how optimistic are you about the prospects for the construction industry over the next 12 months?

(1 = very low optimism; 5 = very high optimism)

Gain a sense of optimism!

Although it was a difficult start to the quarter...



Government provides impetus for Local plans and planning committee meetings to continue

Construction industry in a hole



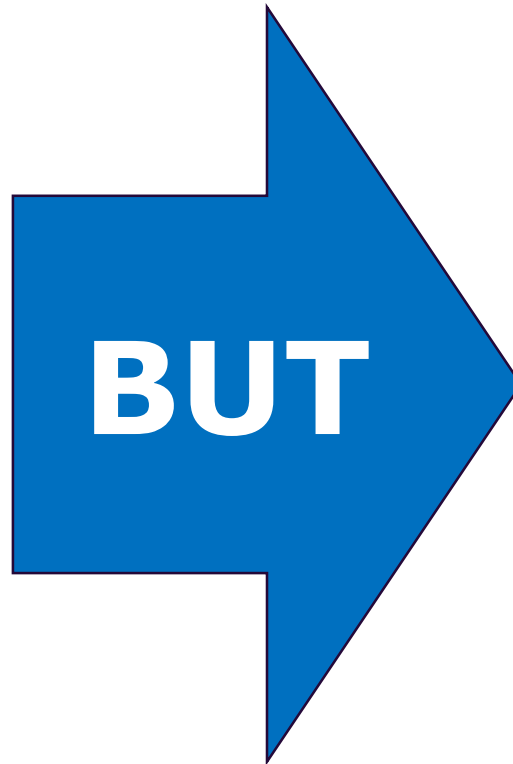
Nearly nine out of ten construction businesses said activity fell last month
NICK ANSELL/PA

Share    

Save 

The construction sector collapsed in Britain last month as businesses put projects on pause.

IHS Markit's [purchasing managers' index](#) plummeted to 8.2 in April, down from 39.3 in March and by far the weakest reading since records began in 1997. A figure below 50 signals contraction.



"Nor should we worry that this crisis will mean that the government's infrastructure programme will have to be scrapped. The rules specifically allow investment spending of up to 3% of GDP; as long as the government can borrow, this should not be threatened."

*David Smith,
The Sunday Times, 17 May*



Industry	Workforce Confidence Index
UK Overall	13
Construction	24
Healthcare	21
Manufacturing	19
Software & IT Services	19
Finance	17
Education	15
Corporate Services	2
Recreation & Travel	-1
Media & Communications	-2



LinkedIn Workforce Confidence Index:
April 2020

Build on the optimism!

Seize the moment: an opportunity to re-set your communications strategy

**Information
Technology**



Commercial



Procurement



Human Resources



**Accounting and
Finance**



**Research and
Development**



Operations



Purchasing



**Strategic
communications**



What business purpose should your strategy reflect?

Re-setting your communications capability for an 'evolved normal'

Stage 1: Restart

- ✓ Be proactive – communicate the current state of the business to your stakeholders. Reassure.
- ✓ Employee engagement and interaction – tuning in to how your colleagues are feeling, reintegrating furloughed/ non-furloughed staff.
- ✓ Partner/ supply chain communications. Catch-up/ update.

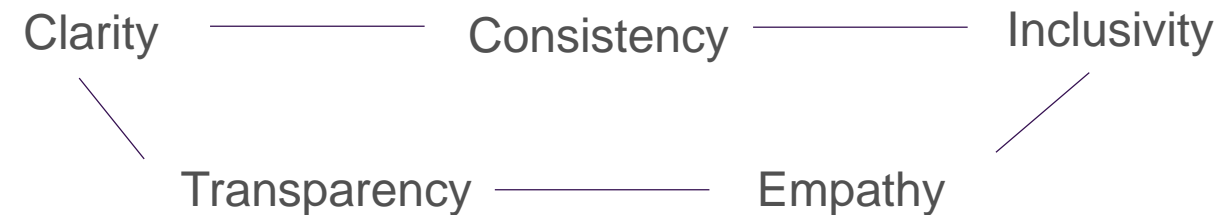
Stage 3: Reboot

- ✓ Communicating your reimagined business to your stakeholders and how this change will benefit them.
- ✓ Framework in place for communicating achievements/ challenges against the new look business plan. Evaluate the positive reputational impacts – learn from them to inform continuous improvement for your communications.

Stage 2: Reimagine

- ✓ Stakeholder analysis – customers; industry influencers; suppliers; partners; media. Who has the power/ interest in your industry who you should be communicating with?
- ✓ Transformation and change inevitable. How can you involve staff in two-way discussions about the future and in your company story?
- ✓ Digital communication. Digital communication. Digital communication.

Language of rejuvenation



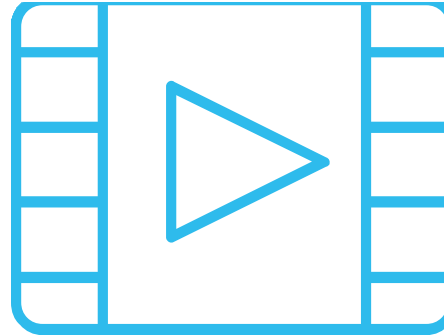
Leading a digital technology revolution!

Viva la your communications team!!



Website

- Winning the ‘visibility battle’
- Keywords the battlefield weapons to hit the search engine result pages (SERPs)
- Mobilise some professional help to yield data-driven insights to maximise your search and content performance



Video platforms

- More to conferencing than Zoom
- Branded video conferencing – host your own TV news bulletin
- Introduce external media, ticker content, visual sentiment and much more as humans discover what’s lost



Virtual events

- Social distancing has reduced the normality of public exhibition conditions
- Virtual event software – trust us, it was always out there! Now becomes a product of its time.
- What about your internal conferences/ events? Real ROI opportunities.

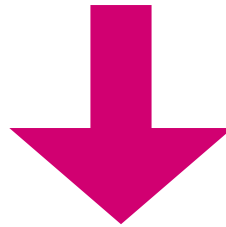
End of Part One: Interlude discussion

Thoughts and questions from the floor

Using strategic communications to launch conversation

A new approach to connecting with your audiences?

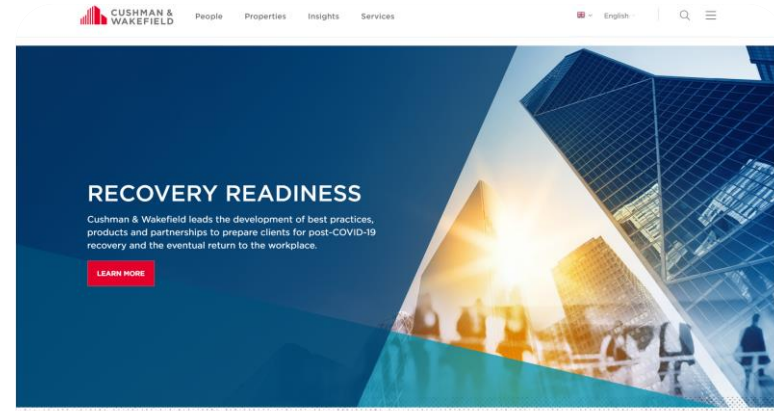
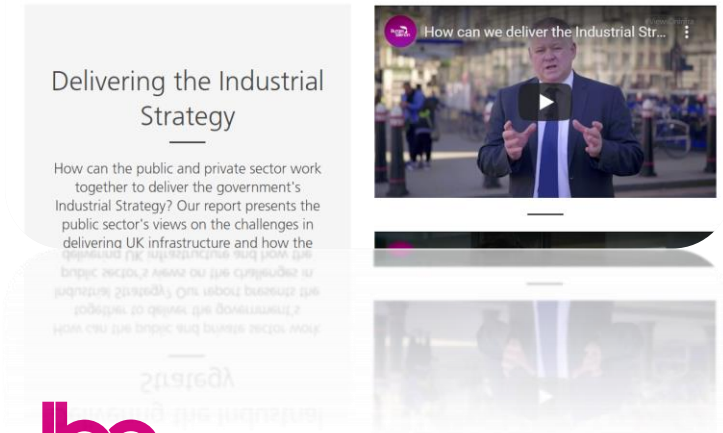
*'What if instead of trying to be amazing you focused on being helpful?
What if you decided to inform rather than just promote?'*



*Generate greater understanding, awareness and two-way conversation
about challenges/ solutions facing the construction sector.*

YoUtility in action

Examples from the professional services landscape



Key idea

Provide thought leadership based upon your insight and understanding of the challenges facing the construction sector. Approach includes:

- **Using your data, observations and insight;**
- **Encouraging influencers/customers to take part in that discussion – you become the facilitator of debate.**

In line with the principle of 'being helpful', the concept becomes a precursor to a wider commercial conversation.

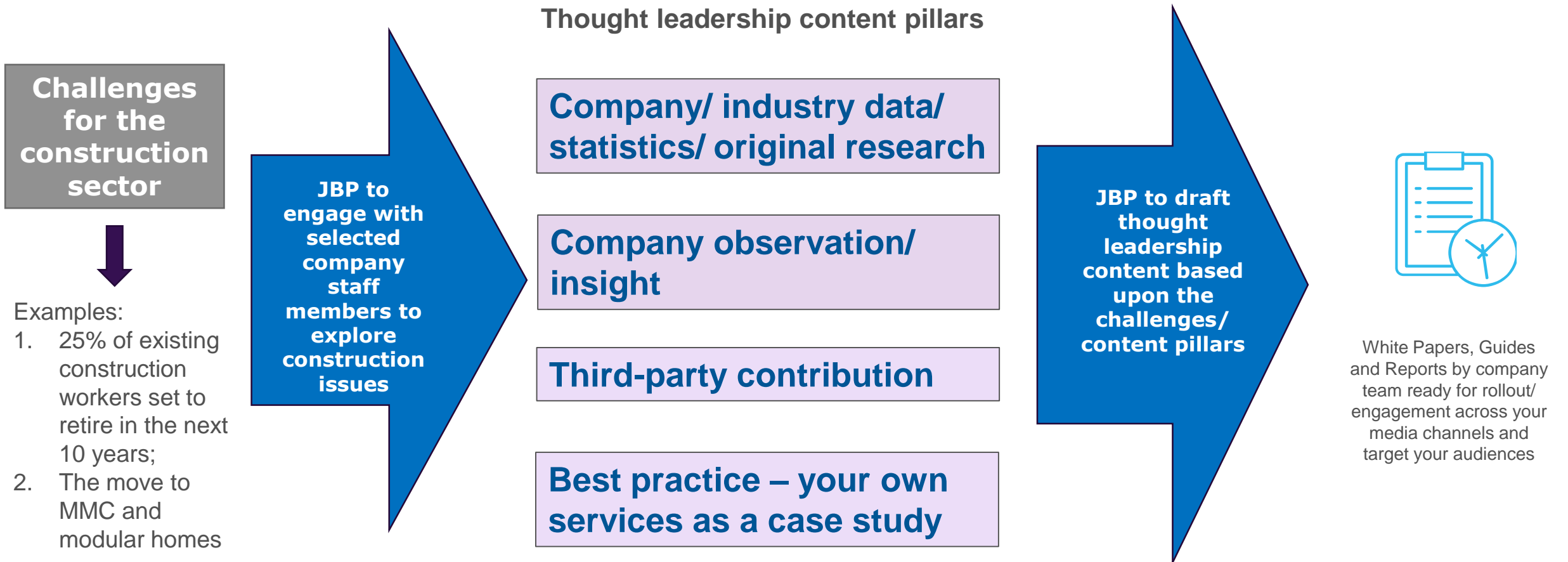
SNAP POLL

- Have you written a thought leadership white paper, report or guide on a topic of interest for your company?

Yes or no?

Generating a conversation starter

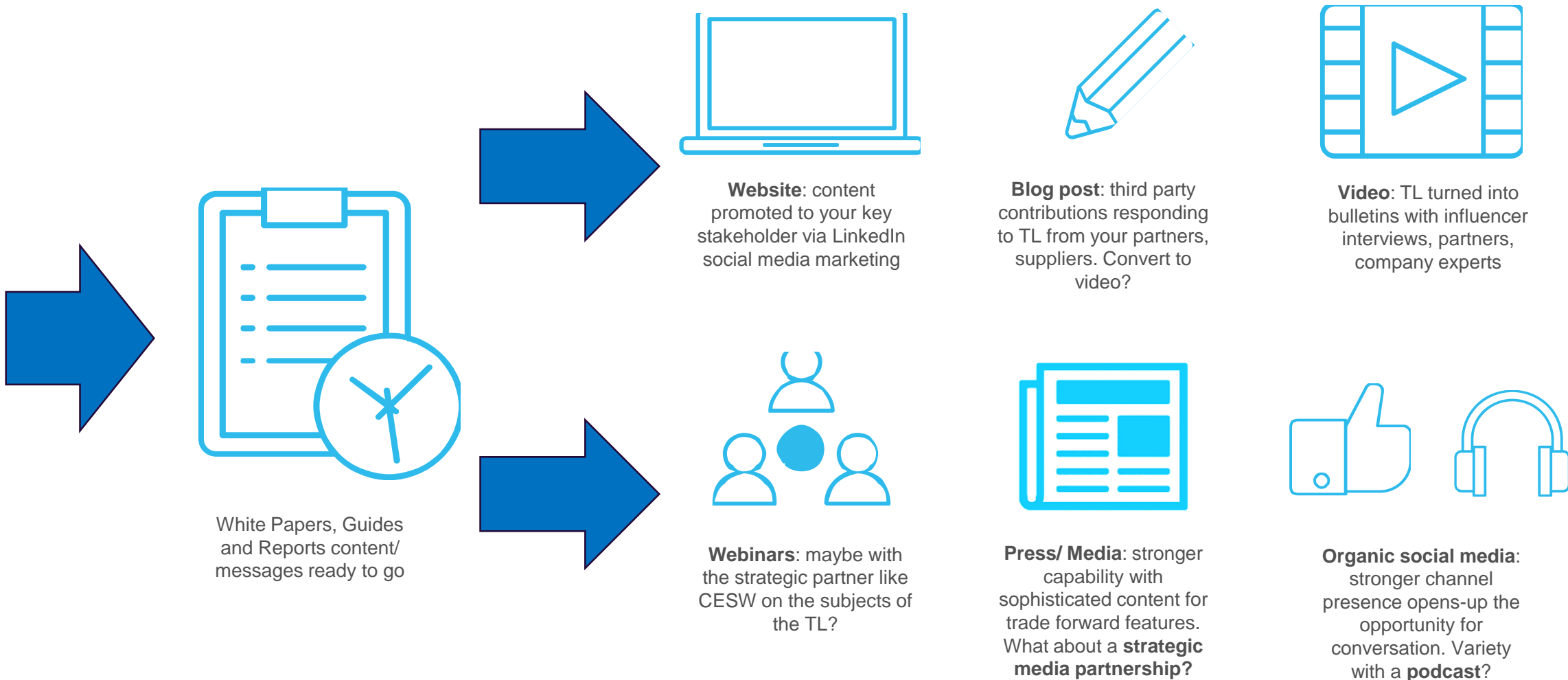
Using thought leadership to kickstart your organizational reboot



Reboot in action: two-way conversation process starts

Maximising your content advantage on Paid, Earned, Shared and Owned media

Reimagination of your target stakeholder list to inform the most effective methods of reaching those audiences



Concluding thoughts

- Covid-19 – a watershed moment for your **strategic communications approach**
- Harness the emerging optimism of the construction sector by putting **strategic communications** front and centre of your 'evolved normal' approach
- And the dividends will be great!

Interested to know more?

JBP Reboot programme

www.jbp.co.uk/reboot

Sign-up to our boot camps today



**Talk to James a bit more
about PR & political comms**

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