

Charles Trent Ltd

Nicola Friend, Head of HR



SERVICE
Employment Services



COMPANY SIZE
50-249 employees



INDUSTRY
Wholesale & Retail



WEBSITE
trents.co.uk



CHARLES TRENT
LEADERS IN VEHICLE RECYCLING

The ultimate, original green company was hit by the coronavirus lockdown just like everybody else. Here's how they handled it with Croner's support...

Background

Charles Trent Ltd are UK-based vehicle recyclers with over 90 years' experience in the industry. Nicola Friend, Head of HR tells us about the company and how it has been affected by coronavirus lockdown:

"Vehicle recycling is very different to what you'd imagine a typical scrapyards to be," begins Nicola, "we're a lot more high-tech. We like to think of ourselves as the ultimate, original green company. We take every single bit of damaged scrap and extract as much as we possibly can from them to reuse. We have two main sites; one in Poole, the other in Rugby, and a storage site in Nottingham.

"We have around 185 employees now. Roughly 70% of those are back on-site, while the remaining 30% are still on furlough. Anyone who has an office-based job currently has the option of working from home. But all of those with hands-on roles are coming back. As you can imagine, it's quite difficult to scrap a car from your living room."

"I thought, being in HR as long as I have, that nothing particularly new would come along. But then coronavirus threw a whole slew of brand-new HR issues at us."

Challenge

"Charles Trent originally sourced their HR advice locally. They started shopping around for an HR system to manage documentation and records and found Croner. The online management system was impressive, and it came with a good HR advice package, so we signed up.

"We only originally shut down the business for the first three weeks of lockdown. We have contracts with specific companies—essential organisations—that we supplied with vehicle parts to keep them on the

road. And so, we had to open to continue to service them. Initially, we had a skeleton staff but continued to bring people back when the workload required it. On average, we collected around 1,000 cars a week prior to lockdown. Now, we are collecting around 600, so we're still not back to full capacity.

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How We've Helped

"It was during this period of lockdown that I found the Croner service to be invaluable. The advice line and the team of advisers were fantastic. It was so impressive because guidance on what you could and couldn't do would be released so quickly. It was like we were always trying to hit a moving target. And yet, the Croner advisers were always able to offer me sensible advice and support our business. When the guidance changed, the team would always be happy to clarify the changes.

"More specifically, we asked for advice on the furlough agreements in the initial stages of lockdown. Then, as time went on, we needed support in other areas. In particular, we asked for advice on getting people back into the workplace. Some employees were more reluctant to return than others, even when there was work available for them. Luckily, the vast majority of our workforce have been absolutely brilliant during the process. However, where we did encounter issues, Croner helped us navigate them.

"I would recommend the Croner service to anyone working in our industry without question, I think the team are superstars. They're not afraid to give straight, pragmatic answers, even if they're not the ones I want to hear. I think that's exactly what employers need during this time."

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 **Nicola Friend**, Head of HR

Speak to an Expert

For expert advice or to discuss how Croner can help your business, call **0800 015 4937**