

**UPDATE ABOUT CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)**

**LOCKDOWN BRITAIN WEEK 6:**

**935 CASES OF CONFIRMED INFECTIONS IN NEWHAM ON THE DAY THE PM COMES BACK  
URGING PATIENCE WITH RESTRICTIONS TO PREVENT A SECOND WAVE**

**27<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2020**

Dear Newham Resident,

At the start of week 6 of 'Lockdown Britain', the Prime Minister has returned to work amidst much speculation about when lockdown can be relaxed. On the same day, new figures reveal that 324 people have lost their lives to the virus in UK hospitals in the last 24 hours, bringing the UK death toll to 21,092.

Recent history suggests that this is likely to be a significant under-estimate, as weekend reporting has always been consistently behind the true numbers. But hopefully, this is a sign that the lockdown measures are working - and we are slowly but surely turning the tide. The number of infections registered in Newham has also risen, bringing the borough total 935 though this may be the result of more residents and workers accessing testing.

In his first speech since his illness, outside Downing Street this morning, Mr Johnson stated that the UK is 'turning the tide' on tackling coronavirus. But he's warned that we're still facing 'maximum risk' if we end the lockdown prematurely; with the prospect of a second Covid-19 which could lead to another wave of deaths, more infections and an even greater economic disaster than the one we currently face.

It will also mean further lockdown, that all of us want to see eased at the appropriate point, and which the Prime Minister said will only happen when the government's five tests have been met: rates of death and infections falling, increasing testing and the supplies of personal protective equipment, avoiding a second 'peak' and the NHS not being overwhelmed. That is why all of us have to continue following the restrictions in place.

The government today has also announced plans to provide 'maximum possible transparency' from now on, including allowing members of the public to sit on its Scientific Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE); and a new life assurance scheme to compensate the families of NHS and care workers who have died after contracting the virus in the course of their duties.

To support the families of the 82 NHS workers and 16 social care workers who have died so far, £60,000 will be paid, as will other families of those working in our NHS and care homes. The loss of a loved one cannot be quantified in monetary terms, and this

needn't have been required if the planning, testing and PPE equipment were already in place.

This grim reality only highlights how deadly Covid-19 is, and thankfully I know that the majority of us here in Newham are following the lockdown requirements in place. Regrettably a small number in our borough aren't. Over the weekend, myself and councillors have received a number of complaints about the activities in our parks, such as football, sunbathing and picnics – as well a failure to follow the rules around social distancing and gathering on our popular high streets.

While the council does not have the power to enforce the restrictions (because under the Coronavirus Act only the police can), we do monitor the situation in our parks and high streets and liaise with the local police force.

If you have any concerns, you can contact Newham Police direct on 101 (for those on twitter, you can follow them on @MPSNewham), and also report to your local ward councillors who will pass on to the Council's Covid-19 control unit which works closely with the police – you can find details of your councillors here: <https://mgov.newham.gov.uk/mgFindMember.aspx>.

Tomorrow is [International Workers' Memorial Day](#) and at 11am there will be a minute's silence for the victims being observed across the country. At the Council, I'll be encouraging all staff and councillors, wherever they are, to stop what they are doing and take part in a collective silence in memory of our heroic workers who have died from Covid-19 serving their communities during this desperate time.

This includes two local heroes, Betty and Ken Hill from Plaistow, who died within 24 hours of each other having contracted the virus. The couple had been together for 40 years, and were well known to us at the council, because Ken was the secretary of the East Ham branch of the Royal British Legion and we worked with him to organise the annual Remembrance Day event in East Ham's Central Park.

Our deepest sympathy go out to their family, friends and fellow Legionnaires; alongside the families of all those who have died because of coronavirus.

As we enter week six of lockdown, please do not give up your resolve, continue to practise social distancing and hygiene measures, let's not risk slipping back and allowing the virus another chance. So please stay safe, and protect the fragile recovery we have worked so hard to achieve.

**Best wishes,**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rokhsana Fiaz', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Rokhsana Fiaz**  
**Mayor of Newham**

**People at the Heart  
of Everything We Do**