



Message from the Chief Executive Althea Loderick

I want to extend my ongoing thanks to you all! The current situation is incredibly difficult for people in terms of their physical and emotional wellbeing and I know all staff are working above and beyond the call of duty to support residents, particularly the most vulnerable, often while trying to care for friends and family.

This update has been created specifically for staff who don't have access to council IT systems so that we can keep you up-to-date on general news about Coronavirus and any issues specific to your service. Please check the new staff pages on the website: www.Newham.gov.uk/staffinfo regularly for updates.

Thank you!

Coronavirus (Covid-19)

Keeping you in touch

- This is a slide-based briefing which should be cascaded to all staff through line management chains and shared / discussed with all those who are not on email at weekly or daily briefings. It is issued to Managers at least 2x per week on Tuesday and Thursday, or more frequently as required. **Please note – there will be no briefing note on May 26. The next briefing will be provided on May 28.**
- It can be also be accessed on the new staff information page: www.Newham.gov.uk/staffinfo
- More detailed information and guidance is on the **new Covid19 pages** on the Intranet and managers should ensure all staff (who have email) are able to access it.
- **This briefing covers:**
 - Latest national / regional / local figures re cases
 - Latest guidance and advice
 - Key messages for staff in Newham

National and local status

The number of infections continues to grow, as of **6.18pm on 19 May 2020**:

- **248,818 cases** of coronavirus have been confirmed.
- There have been **35,341 deaths** in the UK.
- Newham has **995 confirmed cases**.
- We have had to reduce many council services to support social distancing or due to lack of staff.



Key updates for staff 21/05/2020

- Staff are reminded that they need to **complete an online learning** for workstation assessments and safety. This is important for staff who may be working from home. The e-learning is available on the intranet. If you are unable to access it, please contact your line manager.
- This week is **Mental Health Awareness week**. Staff are reminded that if you need advice or support, please **ask for help at any time**. You can access our Employee Assistance Programme www.employeeassistance.org.uk (access code: Newham), with freephone access **24 hours-a-day, 365 days-a-year to counsellors and advisors** on 0800 328 1437 (minicom: 01482 661 814). You can also contact hr@newham.gov.uk and ask for a chat with a Mental Health First Aider.
- **Staff are also asked to share your thoughts** on how you are, and what more we can do to support you better. Please complete our **Wellbeing 'pulse' survey** and we will the results to shape future support we provide. The survey is available:
https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=4Wk2NRiX-Eab7ZWvyHdsig6jde8u98ZDonPu8SAc_PVUMDhQVINPRDBaQkU5RUgxQjJFTTdUMzNBMy4u



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Key updates for staff 21/05/2020

- **Can you help?** 1 in 3 residents in Newham says they have no-one to rely on during a crisis. Our new **“Befriending” service, part of #HelpNewham** has been put in place to provide calls to vulnerable residents. We are **looking for staff who can support this for 2-3 hours a week**. All training and calls can be done from home. If you're interested, email Rebecca.Taylor@Newham.gov.uk
- The Highways Team has started to **widen pavements on high streets** to give residents extra space to queue outside shops and be able to walk or cycle past at a safe distance. **Pavement stencilling, encouraging people to keep 2m apart**, has also been put in place.
- Find out more about **social distancing** in Newham:
<https://www.newham.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/c19-information-advice/3>



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How to Celebrate EID Lockdown

In England*, slightly relaxed lockdown measures were announced on 11 May. Sadly we cannot celebrate Eid Al-Fitr in the usual way this year, but to stay safe, for **ENGLAND**:

DO...

 Wash, wear your best clothes and wear perfume	 Pay Zakat Al Fitr in advance	 Eat something sweet for breakfast	 Call out Eid Takbiraat at home
 Perform Salah at home, either Eid prayer or Nafil Salah**	 If not shielding, go outdoors with household members only and connect virtually with others	 Exchange gifts within households or by ordering online/post	 Enjoy a home-cooked dinner or a take-away meal eaten at home

DO NOT...

 Go to the mosque. Sadly community gatherings are not permitted	 Visit family and friends in their homes	 Gather in a group of two or more who are not from your household.
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* See separate guidance for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
 ** Pray Eid prayer in accordance with your school of thought / local mosque guidance

www.mcb.org.uk | covid@mcb.org.uk

 @MuslimCouncil.UK  @MuslimCouncil.UK  @MuslimCouncil

M C B
The Muslim Council of Britain

Eid celebrations



- We've been working with Newham Muslim Forum, Newham Council of Mosques and the Alliance of Muslim Associations to support a **safe Newham celebration of Eid**.
- The **continuing COVID-19 restrictions and current Government advice** means that people should not gather to celebrate Eid and **should maintain social distancing**.
- To celebrate Eid, Newham Muslim Forum, Newham Council of Mosques and the Alliance of Muslim Associations will be **having Eid "Takbiraat" (celebratory announcements)**.
- All Newham mosques have an allocated time between 9-10am on Eid morning to make Takbeer for 2 to 3 minutes each. This will be a chance for **people to come together and pray at home**.
- We know how **disappointing it is to not celebrate communally** but there needs to be alternative ways of celebrating, virtually, at home and by ensuring everyone is kept safe.

People at the Heart of Everything We Do

Testing reminder

- **Testing is available to key workers** and their household members who may be self-isolating due to symptoms. The full list of essential workers can be found: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested#essential-workers>
- The **test must be taken within the first 5 days of symptoms**, therefore is unsuitable for people who have self-isolated longer than 5 days.
- The turnaround between test and result is **48-72 hours**.
- **Access a test at home:** book an online test: <https://self-referral.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/> (select home test)
- **Access a fixed site:**
- There are currently 2 sites near East London
 - O2 Arena, Edmund Halley Way, Greenwich, SE10 0PH
 - Lee Valley Athletics Centre, N9 0AR
- The sites are open between 10am and 5pm.
- **You can book** through the self-service portal : <https://self-referral.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/> selecting the test site which works best for you.
- **Newham Council and care workers can also book a priority test** through the CCG by sending an email with the person's name and mobile number to thccg.cv19@nhs.net before 12pm.
- People who attend the **testing sites without an appointment will not be tested**.



**People at the Heart
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A poem from a Newham staff member

- A **staff member from the Adult Social Care team** has written a poem reflecting on the Covid-19 crisis and kindness, entitled ‘When this is all over’. Enjoy...

When This Is All Over

From a distance, we watched aloof
Then begged and bowed to a virus
Unseen, in silence

For weeks on end, we screamed and trembled
Prayed and hoped
With mouths ajar
We wept and wished
This ill to keep afar

But lo the illness distant
Had befallen us in an instant
Young old black white
All the dreams of yesterday
And the hopes of tomorrow
All locked down awhile

We hid in fear
And hoped the spikes and peaks would ease

In all, your love
Like the wind propels me
When this is all over
Would you give a kiss and hug
For each day missed
And smile for each muffled laughter
Would you hold my hand
As of old in teeming streets
And love me all over
When this is all over

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16/5/2020