

UPDATE ABOUT CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19):
VOLUNTEER WITH THE #HELPNEWHAM LOCAL HUB
TO SUPPORT OUR VULNERABLE
FROM MAYOR ROKHSANA FIAZ
25th March 2020

Dear Newham resident,

As the coronavirus crisis continues to disrupt all our lives, with 77 confirmed cases in Newham as of today, I read about the death of the UK's youngest victim. Her name was Chloe Middleton. She was not from Newham, she was from High Wycombe, but she was just 21-years-old and not known to have had any pre-existing health conditions. Let's not make the mistake of thinking this disease is just coming for the elderly or vulnerable – it is coming for us all.

As I expressed heartfelt condolences to her family, her death was another stark reminder of the unimaginable impact that will affect many of our residents if we don't take seriously the new restrictions announced by the Government on Monday night. They require us to #StayAtHome, stop all non-essential travelling, ban group gatherings and all religious services - except for burials which are restricted to a small number of immediate family members.

I know these adjustments are really hard for all of us, but in this unprecedented time we need to act urgently to delay the spread of coronavirus to minimise the number of people who become infected or die.

That's why I've been speaking via video and tele-conferencing to voluntary groups and faith leaders about the help we need to spread these vital public health messages; and to work with us to support our most vulnerable.

These calls are the first in a series that are being organised over the coming weeks for residents across our eight community neighbourhoods so that I can update residents directly about the Council's response to the virus.

I've also been heartened by Newham residents who are volunteering and offering to support us to help our most vulnerable. It's a humbling demonstration of social activism and our collective humanity.

Today we launched the Council's **#HelpNewham Local Hub** – a network of schools and council buildings across each of our community neighbourhoods, which will act as distribution centres delivering healthy food parcels and prescriptions; and offering a 'chat service' for residents via telephone who we know need support.

Coordinated by the Council, we'll be working with the voluntary sector, places of worship and resident groups and targeting the most vulnerable. Our **#HelpNewham**

Local Hub network will support those aged over 70 who live alone, as well as people who receive support through adult social care and those with health conditions who have been identified by the NHS.

The **#HelpNewham Local Hub** will also support young people who we care for through social services, those who receive free school meal; and families with children with special educational needs and disabilities. We'll also be using the **#HelpNewham Local Hub** to support members of our street homeless community and families living in temporary accommodation.

We need as many volunteers as possible, and that's why I am asking you to help me, as we need to build an as big as possible volunteer army in Newham!

So please ask anyone who is interested in becoming a volunteer to email us for more information and to register. This can be done via volunteers@activenewham.org.uk or call 020 3770 4444.

In the meantime, please remember to do your bit to delay the spread of coronavirus by following the NHS advice here: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

NHS 111 also has an online coronavirus service too which can be accessed via: <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19>

Now more than ever we need to look after each other, so take care, be safe and always practise social distancing.

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