



UPDATE ABOUT CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19):

294 NEWHAM RESIDENTS HAVE DIED FROM COVID-19 SO FAR

AND DESPITE THE EASING OF RESTRICTIONS PLEASE KEEP UP WITH SOCIAL DISTANCE

From Mayor Fiaz

4th June 2020

Dear Newham Resident

This evening, Newham Council buildings went purple for a third night in solidarity for George Floyd, the black African-American who died in Minnesota last week after being apprehended by four police officers.

One of those police officers has been charged with second degree murder, after a video showed him pinning George Floyd to the floor with his knee for eight minutes and 47 seconds, as he begged for his life struggling to breathe. The three other police officers have been charged with aiding and abetting murder. These are small steps towards justice.

Tonight, a memorial service was held by his family, with moving and powerful testimonies about George Floyd's inspiration, whose death has sparked a global mass movement for racial justice because #BlackLivesMatter.

In London yesterday, thousands of people from all backgrounds gathered in Hyde Park in protest about his murder, and chief constables from across the country issued a joint statement saying that they stand alongside all those across the globe who are appalled and horrified by the way George Floyd lost his life.

Racial disparities across all areas of life in the UK have been well documented for decades, so when the eagerly anticipated Public Health England (PHE) report on the 'Disparities in the risks and outcomes of Covid-19' was published on Tuesday, it was a disappointment. You can read the full report here:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-review-of-disparities-in-risks-and-outcomes?utm_source=2e046dd4-5550-4042-b5a7-372873716a2a&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

While it confirms that the risk of dying among those diagnosed with Covid-19 is higher in black and minority ethnic groups than in white ethnic groups, the report revealed little that wasn't known or suspected already, and was published without any clear and actionable recommendations.

After accounting for the effect of sex, age, deprivation and region, it found that people of Bangladeshi ethnicity were at most risk, with around twice the risk of death than people of white British ethnicity. People of Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, other

Asian, Caribbean and other black ethnicity had between 10% and 50% higher risk of death when compared to those who are white British.

The PHE reports also shows that while in previous years, 'all-cause' mortality rates were lower in Asian and black ethnic groups than in white ethnic groups, since the start of the pandemic the mortality risk for Covid-19 amongst BAME communities is worse and higher - a reversal of what's been monitored in the past which is really significant and very, very concerning.

But the report goes nowhere in answering how the Government, in their own words, will 'level up' inequalities in health and address deprivation that is leading many ethnic minority people dying from Covid-19. All we heard from the Health Secretary on Tuesday, is yet another inquiry into the disparity of Covid-19 outcomes, led by a junior minister.

That's why I'll continue calling for an independent public inquiry of the disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on ethnic minorities. That will be a positive legacy to emerge from the darkness of this Covid-19 crisis, especially for those groups who are suffering the worst effects of inequality which have been drawn into sharp focus by this pandemic. But we also need action to address decades of racial inequality in this country.

Today, Public Health England (PHE) published its daily figures, showing that a total of 39,904 people have died, including the 176 people who have tragically passed away in the past 24 hours. So far 281,661 people have been tested positive with Covid-19 in the UK, and 27,063 are from London. Of these, 1,004 are from Newham (which is strange, because on Monday this figure was listed by PHE as being 1005). On Tuesday, we also found out from the weekly Office for National Statistics (ONS) that in Newham, 294 residents have now tragically died from Covid-19, up three from last week. My condolences to all the families devastated.

This week we've also begun to see more of the lockdown restrictions loosened. While it's nice to be able to meet up to six friends or relatives in parks, gardens or outdoor spaces, please remember that the two-metre social distance requirements still apply.

Today, the Government also announced that from the 15 June, face coverings will also become compulsory on all forms of public transport in England to help stop the transmission of Covid-19. If you have to go to work, please avoid using public transport by walking or cycling instead as there will be reduced passenger capacity. That's why we are urging you to continue work from home if you can, stay at home as much as possible, limit contact with other people, keep up with the social distancing requirements and wash your hands frequently.

Also this week, the Government said our primary schools were now able to welcome back more pupils in nurseries, reception and years 1 and 6. Over recent weeks, I have made it clear that schools in Newham shouldn't open as it could lead to increased transmission and a second wave in the borough. That's why I'm pleased that all our maintained schools took a cautious approach and didn't open. Newham schools will only open when their governing bodies and head teachers have weighed up the risks based on sound clinical expertise and guidance from the

Council which will be monitored closely, and have the right social distancing measures in place to keep pupils, staff, families and the wider community safe.

If you are a parent or carer, don't feel under pressure to send your child back to school, as the Council won't take any action in this current period. The safety of your child, household, school staff and the wider community is too important. We also want to hear your views if you are a parent or carer, through a survey which was published today. It only takes five minutes to complete and you can find the survey at <https://wh1.snapsurveys.com/s.asp?k=159128816963>

Let's work together to help stop the spread of the virus in Newham, and prevent a second wave of Covid-19 in the borough.

Stay safe.

Best wishes,

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

Rokhsana Fiaz
Mayor of Newham
People at the Heart
of Everything We Do