

UPDATE ABOUT CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19):

**A WELCOME RELIEF FOR THE SELF-EMPLOYED & STOP AT 8PM:
TO CLAP FOR THE NHS
#ClapForCarers**

**FROM MAYOR ROKHSANA FIAZ
26th March 2020**

Dear Newham Resident,

The effect of the coronavirus pandemic on our daily lives is exceptional. We know that the health impact has the potential to be deadly, with 578 deaths already attributed to the virus in the UK as of today.

We also know that the financial impact will be devastating for millions of people across the country and for many of our residents in Newham, where poverty already affects 48 per cent of our community.

The scale of the impending unemployment surge as a result of coronavirus is clear in official figures. These show that in the last nine days alone, 477,000 people have applied for universal benefit. That's more applications than the entire year of 2019.

It's why earlier this week I joined 22 other council leaders in urging the government to support workers who are self-employed and have little to fall back on. So the Chancellor's announcement earlier today, of a new self-employed income support scheme is a welcomed step, which will allow those eligible to benefit from up to £2,500 in support a month from June.

Supporting workers and businesses in Newham is an important part of our response to coronavirus, as is continuing our Community Wealth Building ambitions during this crisis. We are already helping them access the business rates relief scheme announced last week and have stopped charging rent for our market stall traders for three months initially. And also in line with our Community Wealth Building agenda we will be announcing measures to pause rents for small businesses that lease commercial properties from the Council. Tomorrow I'll be emailing more than 4,000 companies in Newham with our first information bulletin so that everyone has guidance about all aspects of the Government's current support package for businesses and workers. If you are a business and want to know more about what is on offer please email newhambusinessdesk@newham.gov.uk or call 020 3373 7373.

Tonight at 8pm we have the opportunity to join the rest of the nation in paying tribute to their amazing bravery and dedication by joining in with **#ClapForCarers**: a simple but heartfelt gesture that is already popular in cities around the world who want to show appreciation for their medical workers.

So stop whatever you are doing at 8pm, and go to your doorways, windows, balconies or gardens to give a massive round of applause to those key workers who are keeping our country going through this crisis.

For all the latest and best advice please visit our website www.newham.gov.uk, and please follow the NHS guidance.

Wash your hands for 20 seconds frequently; minimise social contact with others; work from home where possible; stop social gatherings with other people including in parks, recreational areas and places of worship. And only travel if it is essential travel. Keep up with the social distance measures which are vital.

Stay well and stay safe.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rokhsana Fiaz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Rokhsana Fiaz
Mayor of Newham

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