

Friday 20 March 2020 – The latest news and updates from the Chalcots Estate

COVID-19 (coronavirus) update

- We know you will be watching the news about COVID-19 (coronavirus) with concern and we want to reassure you that Camden is prepared and has plans in place to support you and keep your housing services running.
- We know we will have to move our teams around because our staff or their families may become ill but we are ready to work differently to support everyone who lives in our council homes as much as we can.
- You will see some changes to your services but please bear with us as we work hard to make sure that all essential work continues, and that the most vulnerable people in our communities get the help they need.
- Please look out for your neighbours, particularly if they are older, and if you are worried about them please call us on our dedicated number **020 7974 4444** (option 9). If you yourself live alone and need help to go shopping and can't ask family, friends or neighbours, call us on the same number.
- We are creating a register of volunteers to help local people with anything from delivering food to making phone calls to cheering up people in isolation. To sign up as a volunteer visit **help.timetospare.com/camden**
- Camden Age UK have a number of services available for people aged 55 and over who are unwell, self-isolating or struggling to get out including emergency food parcels, help with online shopping and a telephone befriending service – find out more about what they're offering to Camden residents at **ageukcamden.org.uk** or call **020 7239 0400**.
- Visit **camden.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19** for our latest COVID-19 updates. This is a quickly changing situation and we want to keep you informed. If you would like to sign up for emails about COVID-19 visit **camden.gov.uk/covid-19updates**

Advice on 'social distancing'

Public Health England recommend 'social distancing measures' which are steps you can take to reduce social interaction between people and help stop the spread of COVID-19. These are particularly important for pregnant women, anyone with an underlying health condition and people over 70. Public Health England recommends that you limit your face-to-face interaction with friends and family if possible and the following:

1. Avoid contact with someone who is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). These symptoms include high temperature and/or new and continuous cough.
2. Avoid non-essential use of public transport, varying your travel times to avoid rush hour, when possible.
3. Work from home if you can.
4. Avoid large gatherings, and gatherings in smaller public spaces such as pubs, cinemas, restaurants, theatres, bars, clubs.
5. Avoid gatherings with friends and family. Keep in touch using remote technology such as phone, internet, and social media.
6. Use telephone or online services to contact your GP or other essential services.

Hand washing and hygiene

Your caretakers will keep the Chalcots Estate safe and clean, but we need every resident and visitor to take personal responsibility and follow the Public Health England advice that everyone should wash their hands thoroughly when they get home to protect themselves and their families. You should:

- **wash your hands more often** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitiser when you get home, when you blow your nose, sneeze or cough, eat or handle food
- **avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth** with unwashed hands
- **avoid close contact** with people who have symptoms
- **cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue**, then throw the tissue in a bin and wash your hands

- **clean and disinfect** frequently touched objects and surfaces in your home.

Major works appointments

- We will no longer be holding face to face major works appointments with residents unless urgent and necessary. Your quality inspector will keep you up-to-date via phone or email.
- We encourage you to contact us if you have any questions or concerns about the major works. Call us on **020 7974 4444 (option 7)**, email **chalcotsestate@camden.gov.uk** or contact your block's quality inspector.
- We are unable to hold any meetings face to face until further notice and we are developing other ways to engage with you.

Your questions about the pause in the scaffolding works

- ***When will the scaffolding works start again?***
We are now in the very final stages of contract negotiations. Once an agreement has been made, it will take a further two weeks for the scaffolding works to restart and two to three months from then, works inside your homes will begin. However, our priority is keeping you safe and well, and we need to carefully review activities on the estate in light of the current situation and impact of COVID-19 – we will provide another update as soon as we can.
- ***Why weren't residents told about the pause before the scaffolding work stopped?***
The negotiation stages of any contract are commercially sensitive, so we weren't able to tell you about the pause until the works had stopped. When they did stop, the message shared with you had to be agreed by Camden and Wates – the CWG helped us to make sure the message was clear.

Keeping your homes and surroundings clean

- It is more important than ever to keep your blocks and the scaffolding clean. Please help your neighbours and caretakers to keep everyone safe and well by disposing of your rubbish properly, in tied up bags and in the right place, and **do not throw things from your windows**.
- We have had to arrange extra cleaning because of the rubbish left around the building and thrown from windows, costing the council £500 each time. This is not a good use of public funds and could have been used to support vulnerable tenants across the borough.
- It is very unpleasant to have to look at rubbish building up on the scaffolding in front of your window. Please be respectful – every resident deserves to live in a clean and safe environment.

Bogus caller in Taplow

- A bogus caller claiming to be a scaffolder recently visited a flat in Taplow intending to steal valuables from a resident's home – thankfully, our resident was not physically harmed. Nothing was taken as security was called and the police arrived shortly after, but this was of course very distressing for our resident. We have shared clear video evidence of the criminal with the police and the crime is being investigated.
- No staff from the major works team, including scaffolders, have any reason to visit your home to discuss the works or to access any part of the scaffolding via your home.
- **Ask to check ID** before letting anyone into your home. Genuine council or utility staff will not mind waiting while you check ID – and don't feel embarrassed about turning someone away.
- If you don't feel comfortable opening the door, call security on **07903 232 592**. If you feel in danger, always call **999**.

The Chalcots Works Group (CWG) invites resident elected TRA reps from each tower block, councillors and council officers. The CWG meet regularly to discuss works matters on the estate. This newsletter includes feedback from discussions held on **Wednesday 18 March**. The next meeting is expected to be held on **Wednesday 25 March** via conference call.

You can request a copy of this newsletter in large print, audio format or in another language by calling **020 7974 5717**. If you have questions about this newsletter please contact **chalcotsestate@camden.gov.uk**