

23 March 2020

To: All Sandbourne residents



Dear Resident

Coronavirus/COVID 19 – Update

This letter has been sent to all our tenants, leaseholders and shared owners.

Registered office:
Beech House
28-30 Wimborne Road
Poole
Dorset BH15 2BU

Tel: 01202 671222

Email: info@sandbourne.org.uk

Website: www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk

In our last letter we promised to keep you informed about the measures that we are taking in response to the threat of Coronavirus, and that is the purpose of this letter. You will appreciate that the situation is developing continually, as is the government's response, and we continue to be guided by that in terms of both the actions we are taking and those we are planning to take.

The specific actions that we have taken already, or will be implementing this week include:

- Scaling back on non-essential visits by staff and contractors and increasing the use of telephone and email communication.
- Changing the cleaning specification for all common areas to place greater emphasis on the cleaning and disinfecting of hard surfaces such as door handles and lift buttons. This will mean that some other tasks, such as vacuuming of carpets will happen less frequently than usual, but we consider this a necessary change in the circumstances.
- In light of the government's recent advice for those who are 70+ to self-isolate we will be closing all communal lounges, drop-in rooms and communal toilets until further notice.
- Laundries will remain open for the time being, but we would ask that people using them respect social distancing guidelines, and remain at least 2m from each other.
- Reviewing guest room bookings and restricting the use of these to those who are providing active support to residents who are unwell. We will be contacting anyone who currently has a guest room booking.
- We believe that we have identified most of those residents living in our 60+ accommodation who are both vulnerable and do not have family or friends in the area to support them. Either we or Careline will contact each of these people over the next week to confirm whether they wish to receive a periodic phone call to check their welfare.
- Our office at Beech House remains open for now and you can continue to call us between 9am and 4pm, but most of the team are working from home or other locations, so are unlikely to be available to respond immediately if you call them.

Calls may be recorded for information and training purposes

Information on how we use your personal data and your rights under the Data Protection Act 2018 are available on our website

If we have to close the office completely, following government advice, our telephone voicemail message will advise you of this and remind you of how to contact us.

- At the moment our contractors are continuing to undertake urgent repairs and essential health and safety works, so if you need such a repair, please contact us. With most of the team not now being based at the office, the best way to do this if you can is to email us at repairs@sandbourne.org.uk.
- As we said in our previous letter, please use info@sandbourne.org.uk for other housing and general enquiries. If you don't have access to email, please ask a family member or friend to email on your behalf.

Understandably our contractors are keen to protect their staff and therefore when telephoning you to make an appointment are likely to ask if you and your family are self-isolating or are showing symptoms of coronavirus. If you are, they will insist that when they visit you remain in a separate room from the operative whilst they complete the repair. Also, should you see any contractors on site, please keep a suitable distance from them.

Similarly, we are equally keen to keep our team safe so if you are choosing to self-isolate or display symptoms of the virus, then please let us know and we will keep a record of this, for the duration of the current situation.

We appreciate that these are very difficult times for everyone, and many people have seen their incomes affected as a result. If this applies to you and are struggling to pay the rent, then it is very important that you take action quickly. You should contact us immediately and let us know how your financial circumstances have changed. You may also be entitled to receive housing benefit and should contact the local authority urgently on 0345 0344569 or apply for help online at <https://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/CouncilTax/counciltaxsupport/claimonline.aspx>.

We also understand that some people who usually use their allpay card to make rent payments in local shops and post offices may be reluctant to do so for the time being. Allpay provide a range of alternative methods and these are detailed in the attached leaflet.

We are keeping our Action Plan under constant review and will be updating it regularly as the situation develops. We will do our best to keep you informed of further measures that we decide to take and how these will further impact on our normal service.

We appreciate the challenges that the current situation creates for everyone. Please follow the guidance of the government to help minimise the risks of infection and do what you can to stay safe and healthy in the coming weeks.

A copy of this letter, and any future notifications as to temporary changes that we make to the way we deliver services will also be available on our website, wherever possible at: <https://sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely



David Hall
Head of Housing