

# Island News

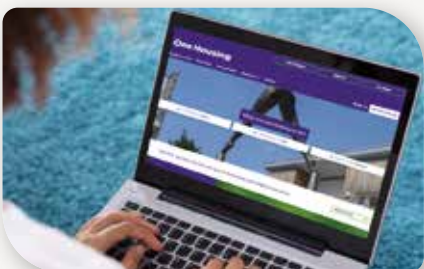
The newsletter for One Housing residents on the Isle of Dogs

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## Island life goes on – lockdown style

**It's not quite the Spring we had in mind. School's out too soon, playgrounds are padlocked, cafes are closed, events are cancelled and big celebrations like Easter and Ramadan have been confined to the home.**

Social distancing is inconvenient, unfriendly, a spoilsport, but it remains vital to stop coronavirus infection rates spiralling out of control.

The Isle of Dogs looks and sounds very different under lockdown – and that's because of the considerable efforts most people have made to stick to the government guidelines, first to stay at home and now to take tiny steps towards normality.

The virus is affecting what we do, too, and how we do it. Our offices, community centres and youth clubs on the island remain shut and all routine repairs have been postponed. But we are still carrying out emergency repairs and putting extra resources into keeping communal spaces clean and hygienic.

We're also learning how to do things differently, like using the internet to meet up with resident panels, entertain young people or keep consultations moving over regeneration options.

We've been checking in on our more vulnerable residents and are funding local charity deliveries of hot meals and groceries to those who need them. Most importantly, the community spirit on the island is strong; neighbours look out for one another here and volunteers ensure that nobody has to face this crisis alone.

You can keep up with all our latest coronavirus news at [onehousing.co.uk coronavirus](https://onehousing.co.uk/coronavirus)



# Vital outdoor areas get some extra TLC



During lockdown, your estate becomes your world. It might just be a view out the window or from the balcony, a place to do your daily exercise or the route to the supermarket. Whichever it is, we want you to enjoy clean, safe and pleasant surroundings.

We're adapting what we do in communal spaces to meet the twin challenges of social distancing and self-isolation. Our workers keep apart from each other, travel together in smaller numbers and are being as flexible as possible to provide extra help where there are staff shortages or urgent need.

Our concierge can't have face-to-face contact with residents for now, so they're helping us with more regular patrols and more frequent cleaning of shared facilities, like stairwells, lifts and roof terraces.

We're doing more litter picking and, when council waste recycling centres were closed, we put more of our own vehicles on the road to collect fly-tipped rubbish.

The sunshine and showers have roused

the grass. We're keeping it trim with cuts at least every fortnight. And we've boosted our regular gardening team with seasonal staff and can now look at replanting some areas.

Playgrounds remain closed to avoid close contact which could spread the virus. Some are padlocked, others display posters alerting people to the current restrictions. The vast majority of residents are respecting the rules for the right reasons, but do alert our on-site staff or the Metropolitan Police if you see people using the equipment.

To help us keep your estate in order, would you please:

- dispose of rubbish properly in bin stores or rubbish chutes
- wash your hands before entering communal areas and when you return home
- don't leave rubbish or belongings in communal areas
- let us know if you see people dump rubbish, fly-tip or throw things out of windows.

## Repairs focus is on fast response to emergencies

Routine repairs are on hold until at least the start of June, for your safety and ours, but we aim to fix any emergency repairs within 24 hours.

These include major floods and leaks, loss of heating, hot water or electricity supply and failure of lifts, alarms or flushing of only accessible toilet, as well as any breaches to external doors or windows.

We'll still carry out safety checks of your gas and electrics, as well as safety inspections and fire alarm testing in communal areas.

If we are due to visit your home, please let us know if you or anyone in the household has Coronavirus symptoms or is self-isolating so that our operatives can wear the appropriate protective gear.

To report your emergency repair, call us on 0300 123 9966, email [ask@onehousing.co.uk](mailto:ask@onehousing.co.uk) or visit [onehousing.co.uk/resident-services/repairs-and-maintenance](http://onehousing.co.uk/resident-services/repairs-and-maintenance)

# Kelson Gardens revamp starts, as we act on more of your ideas

A drab, unloved, 60-metre stretch of land on the Samuda estate is being reimagined as more colourful, tranquil and inviting gardens. Contractors are working on the site behind Kelson House – observing social distancing rules – to complete the revamp, which will include repairing, repaving and replanting the space.

It's one of the largest projects to come out the Your Island Your Ideas scheme, where we put aside a pot of money and asked you how we could use it to make your area a better place to live. We then worked with resident groups every step of the way to find the right solutions.

More than 50 of your suggestions to spruce up, lighten up and cheer up your neighbourhoods were given the go-ahead. Forty one of these were completed before lockdown, ranging from new LED lighting in dark spots to more speed bumps in danger areas.

Four more improvements are in progress, while nine have been postponed due to coronavirus. We can't repaint lines with new brighter and more resilient paint, for instance, while so many cars are stuck at home. And our seasonal planting plan across all estates, which should add year-round volume and vibrancy, will have to wait until we can safely discuss our needs with our gardening contractors.

Should you have any questions or concerns about any of these, please contact [rjones@onehousing.co.uk](mailto:rjones@onehousing.co.uk)



## First virtual exhibition keeps regeneration work moving

Zoom catch-ups, YouTube PE lessons and HouseParty quizzes – technology has stepped up in lockdown to enable remote work and play. It has also let us keep consulting with residents on the regeneration proposals for the island.

We launched our first virtual exhibition in May, allowing Kedge House, Winch House and Starboard Way residents to watch video presentations of the regeneration options that are being considered. Our third exhibition for this project, the designs are now more detailed and, as always, there's an opportunity for people to make comments and suggestions via an online form or a one-to-one telephone conversation.

Visit the virtual exhibition via the Kedge House, Starboard Way and Winch House section of our website at [bit.ly/35YkfWi](http://bit.ly/35YkfWi). The options will be



revised further, with a resident ballot expected to take place this autumn.

Alice Shepherd House and Oak House residents are likely to get their first sight of the possible regeneration plans for their area at the end of June – later than scheduled, due to the outbreak. We've been working with the steering group to agree a new timetable, with a resident ballot on final options pencilled in for early next year.

A planning application has been submitted for the regeneration of the Bellamy Close and Byng Street area. This follows a ballot in which residents

voted overwhelmingly in favour of the redevelopment of their area. If approved, the demolition of 25 properties and construction of 149 new homes (including homes for all existing residents) is likely to begin in early 2021.

Meanwhile, the steering group for the Kingsbridge Estate project is looking to appoint an architect to work with residents and One Housing to develop regeneration options for this estate. Known as an 'option appraisal' process, this is expected to begin in the summer, leading up to a resident ballot around a year later.

## Our commitment to you if you're worried about your rent

Alongside health worries, coronavirus is causing many concerns over money. Household incomes are being hit by redundancy, business closures and self-isolation.

Should you face difficulties paying your rent, do get in touch. We promise to listen and do our best to help you find a way through.

Our website ([onehousing.co.uk/coronavirus](http://onehousing.co.uk/coronavirus)) provides loads of useful information about government support

schemes and managing your payments during the outbreak. Alternatively, give us a call on **0300 123 9966** or email [ask@onehousing.co.uk](mailto:ask@onehousing.co.uk)

We're committed to:

### 1. Keeping people secure at home

No one will be evicted from one of our homes as a result of financial hardship caused by coronavirus.

### 2. Helping people to get the support they need

We are helping residents to access

benefits and other support to alleviate financial hardship.

### 3. Acting compassionately and quickly where people are struggling

We are working with residents to understand how we can help them.

This can include flexibility on collecting rent where that would make a difference.





# Volunteers get our backing

**While we have to keep our friends at arm's length, local groups are reaching out a hand to residents in the crisis.**

**Close to their communities, these frontline volunteers are playing a vital role to ensure older, isolated and vulnerable people across the island are not forgotten.**

The Island Network – a partnership between the Island Bengali Welfare Organisation, other local community groups and St John's Tenants and Residents Association – has already delivered more than 1,300 hot meals and food parcels to those who need them.

"We live on the island, know our neighbours and have a good idea of who might benefit," explains Island Network chair Maium Miah Talukdar. "Some of them haven't been able to ask for any other support because they don't use the internet, email or even phones."

But with mosques and churches closed, and no congregations to make donations, the Island Network is reliant on our funding. "We're extremely grateful to One Housing," says Maium. "It shows its concern for the wellbeing of all the community."

We've also donated to the East End Community Foundation Emergency Fund, which distributes resources to small charities across London's East End. It has already helped more than 1,500 vulnerable people since lockdown, with deliveries



Maium Miah Talukdar drops off groceries to appreciative resident Sammy Samuels

of hot food, shopping, prescriptions, mental health support and wellbeing services.

- If you are over 70 or self-isolating or living alone with an underlying health condition or disability and need some help, do call Island Network's Maium on 0798 3798 791, Sabur on 0795 646 1469, Malik on 0790 862 8114 or email [islandnetwork1@gmail.com](mailto:islandnetwork1@gmail.com).

## New customer website goes live

**If you've visited our website in the last few weeks, you'll have seen that it's had a bit of a makeover. The first thing you'll notice is that the design has been refreshed. But it's not only the colours and logo that have changed.**

Thanks to the input of customers who

tested the site and gave us lots of really useful feedback, the new site provides a much-improved user experience, with simpler navigation to make it much easier to find the information you're looking for.

We've created a dedicated coronavirus area on the site ([www.onehousing.co.uk/coronavirus](http://www.onehousing.co.uk/coronavirus)) where you can find lots of useful information.

Whether you want to know what impact there is on services, see what we're

doing to keep communal areas clean and safe, find out where to get advice on Universal Credit or other benefits, or find answers to your frequently asked questions, this is the best place to check as the information is regularly updated.

You will also find links to many authenticated sources of information. If you can't find what you're looking for, please email us at [ask@onehousing.co.uk](mailto:ask@onehousing.co.uk). And do let us know what you think of the new site.

## Contact Us



**Telephone:** 0300 123 9966

**email:** on [ask@onehousing.co.uk](mailto:ask@onehousing.co.uk)

**Website:** [onehousing.co.uk](http://onehousing.co.uk)

### Our local offices:

12 The Quarterdeck  
London E14 8SJ

17 Castalia Square  
London E14 3PQ

## Translation

This document is also available in other languages, larger print and audio format on request. For more information please call our Customer Contact Centre on 0300 123 9966

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