



### **Good Practice Note Coronavirus (Covid-19)**

There is understandably an increasing concern surrounding Coronavirus (Covid-19), we are sure that all our members are taking this issue extremely seriously and have generated appropriate procedures to mitigate the spread of the virus. We are all aware that the sector in which we operate potentially has a higher degree of risk.

We can't tell members what to do, as such, as any action will be driven by specific business need but we hope the guidance will be useful. In any event it is worth members considering what contingencies will be required ahead of any worsening situation, this should include reference to residents, staff, contractors and any other visitors together with business continuity cash flow from the collection of service charges.

We were contacted in early February by the Daily Telegraph and issued the following statement:

'Our members have issued appropriate guidance to all staff and, in particular, those who are in direct contact with leaseholders to ensure they are aware of what to look out for and would alert family and next of kin to any concerns.'

The general advice below is in line with Government, NHS and World Health Organisation guidance.

- **All** visitors to developments must adhere to Gov.uk advice and take reasonable measures to prevent any staff at risk from Covid-19 : <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public#information-about-the-virus> . This includes anyone who is returning from specified (high risk) locations, or those who are required to self-isolate.
- It would be sensible to ensure all visits made by contractors have been arranged directly with the site based staff and appropriate signing in and signing out procedures are adhered to. This is to help with tracing anyone who may be infectious.
- It may be sensible to advise residents that should the situation worsen it may not be possible to complete non essential works within normal timescales.
- All visitors must strictly adhere to the hand and general hygiene guidance and if you are able to provide hand sanitizing gel and/or hand washing facilities these should be clearly identified and sign posted.
- **All** visitors must report immediately by phone (to the relevant member organisation) the details of anyone known to have visited the scheme who is confirmed positive for Covid-19.

- Many of our members will be currently working on service charge budgets and we are aware of the advice in the Code of Practice around meetings to present the budgets to residents ahead of issuing the final service charge budget for the next financial year. Whilst you may make a business decision to postpone any regular scheme meetings depending on the individual circumstances that may be affecting your schemes, please ensure that you have robust communication plans in place to ensure that residents are aware of any changes and that you provide updates as necessary.
- The same good practice also applies to general scheme meetings where your staff may be planning to carry out their routine regular visits. Ensure on site staff and residents are made aware and appropriately supported remotely if it is not possible for line managers to visit on a one to one basis.
- Please also consider alternative arrangements in the event that site based and visiting staff are not able to carry out their duties if they are off sick and what measures can be put into place to ensure to ensure continuity in the delivery of the service.
- We all hope that with the implementation of sensible and proportionate measures the situation will not worsen drastically. We would be happy to hear from members who are willing to share some of their own organisations' good practice in how they are dealing with the situation to share with others.

05.03.20