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Latest update - 22<sup>st</sup> March 2020

## **COVID-19 - CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK 2020**

Dear all .....

As you know, we are all in the most challenging of times due to the spread of Coronavirus (Covid-19).

The health, well-being and safety of our residents and everyone at Ravenswing Manor is and will remain our absolute top priority. I want to reassure you all that we are and will continue to do everything within our powers to keep all of our residents within our care, safe, healthy and until further notice, isolated from the threat of the Coronavirus.

Many of you are aware, that until last weekend, we had been taking proportionate measures to allow relatives to continue to visit their loved ones. We had hoped that we might have been able to continue with increasingly restricted and controlled visits.

Due to the rapidly changing situation and in light of the reduced social contact between our residents, staff and yourselves, we have been looking at ways of keeping in touch with you and above all keeping you updated. I am pleased to announce that our website – [www.ravenswinghomes.com](http://www.ravenswinghomes.com) which had been undergoing a facelift over the last few weeks, is now up and running. This vital link to the outside world will provide an additional line of communication. A dedicated Coronavirus page has been created on the site where our updates will also be posted. (I apologise in advance if anyone spots any glitches, mistakes or otherwise, with the website, but as explained above, we have rushed to complete the site as quickly as possible in order to provide an information update platform. The website will continue to be developed over the coming weeks and months).

Just over a week ago we had envisaged being able to allow restricted visiting beyond this weekend, particularly mindful that it is Mother's Day today. I was pleased to catch up with many of you last weekend and update you in person. However, the situation has moved so quickly, that we had to take the decision to lock down and close our home from residents' regular family visits. This total restriction became effective from Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and will remain in place until further notice. The only exception to the visiting ban would be "special" visits, under "exceptional" circumstances..... which may include for example but is not limited to a sudden deterioration in health. All special visits would have to be pre-arranged with the home manager, Beverly Ramsey. And I am sure everyone will understand that these visits may have to be closely controlled. You may be required to wear personal protective equipment, which we would provide. Visits would have to take place in a resident's bedroom and there would be a limit on the number of visitors attending at any one time. Additional visitation restrictions may also apply and Beverly would explain those at the time. Please note that prior to entry being permitted to the home, it is now a mandatory requirement that everybody is temperature checked (non-invasively), and follows our hand hygiene policy. Obviously it is an individual's choice as to whether they allow us to take their temperature, however if anyone does not wish to allow us to take their temperature, we regret that they will not be permitted entry to the home.



Furthermore, once within the home, visitors will not be permitted to wander freely around communal areas such as lounges and which we have designated as residents' "safe areas".

I appreciate that some might find these measures to be drastic or excessive, but I trust everyone will understand that we are doing this solely to protect residents within the home.

We will never prohibit family members from visiting their loved ones at the home, however we will treat every necessary "special" visit individually, respectfully and act with everyone's best interests.

I was and remain very mindful of the distress, that implementing restrictions and bans on home visits, may cause, so this was not a decision that I took lightly.

I cannot repeat it enough, but our focus is wholly on keeping our residents safe and our staff protected. Our ultimate mission is to prevent the virus from entering the home. We do not currently have the virus in our home and we want to keep it that way.

In the absence of family visits, we will encourage residents to engage in more activities within the home and in addition to this we will ensure, the staff are able to spend even more one on one time with everybody.

Visits by medical professionals including GP's, District Nurses and Paramedics as and whenever necessary will continue as normal in order to keep the residents safe and well. Medical professionals are also temperature checked and required to follow our hygiene policy on washing hands etc when they enter the home.

I am pleased to report that over the last week, we have successfully greatly reduced the number of people visiting the home and on average this has been as low as one or two medical /professional visits per day.

To further reassure you, we are working closely with all our suppliers other service providers and stakeholders to ensure continuity of our service and that we remain operational.

### **Medical and Disposable Supplies**

We normally carry approximately 3-4 months of general medical disposable supplies, such as gloves, aprons sanitizers, cleaning and laundry products. Just over a fortnight ago, whilst replenishing our stocks we were informed of a national shortage of some specific supplies, including hand sanitisers and face masks etc.

Whilst we currently have more than sufficient supplies to keep us going for the next few months, I am confident that there we will not go short of any products required to ensure operational continuity.

To that end, we are starting to see support from both national and local level.

### **Food**

The home purchases food produce from a wide range of national and local suppliers, with dairy produce coming from local farms etc, and some bulk ingredients coming from national supermarkets and wholesalers etc.

The home is currently well stocked up with food and in light of recent news reports showing mass panic shopping by the public, I have met with various supermarket managers over the last week, who have assured me that the home will be looked after and that our regular deliveries will continue as normal and our orders fulfilled.

## Staff

At this point, I feel I should say I owe the staff a debt of gratitude for their unwavering loyalty and dedication. At times like this and whilst they have their own personal situations and families to consider, it is truly heartening how the team are sticking together, and never let us down, as they more than anyone understand the necessity to protect and care for the elderly and vulnerable.

At the time of writing, our team of staff are all fit and well and working well under the current pressures and restrictions.

We have made a few adjustments and simplified our staff rotas by merging some of the short day shifts. This has been done with the agreement of the staff, and by doing so, we have reduced the daily turnover of staff entering and leaving the building. As with all visitors to the home, every member of staff is temperature checked on arrival for their shift and they are also required to follow the home's hand hygiene policy.

We will continue to support all our staff in any and every way we can and by listening to, sharing and adhering to all the official recommendations and advice, provided by the Government.

At this stage I cannot say how long the current restrictions will be in place. I will of course keep everyone informed over the coming days and weeks.

I do not intend to continually bombard you with daily emails but will endeavour to keep you informed of any significant changes and or developments.

This pandemic crisis has created some new challenges for the home and has also added a considerable amount of additional pressure in various different forms, whether it be additional cleaning duties, administrative work, or simply care work, with carers having to work around new daily logistical issues etc. Therefore, whilst the situation remains fluid and often changing faster than we can keep up, could I please ask that if anyone feels the need for an interim update at any time, please pick up the phone and call us. We do not want you to feel cut off from the home and likewise I am sure the residents and staff do not want to feel cut off from yourselves.

I may have mentioned to some families about setting up a Skype link as another possible communication link between the residents and yourselves. . If anyone would like to take this idea up, please let us know and provide your Skype contact details so we can make the necessary arrangements to facilitate this.

As always, we welcome any suggestions you might have, especially at this time, whether it be in relation to possible communication links, or new ideas for activities etc.

This is probably a good point to sign off this initial Covid-19 era newsletter

We will continue to monitor and respond to the advice provided by Government as well as other national organisations including Public Health England, etc.

Current information suggests that this isolation period that we have now entered into may last for several weeks but we will do everything within our powers to protect the residents from the virus.

To everyone, we thank you for your understanding and cooperation during these very challenging times. We know that with your continued support, we can get through this together.

And on behalf of Beverly, the team and myself, we would like to thank everyone who has sent cards and messages of thanks and support. It really is appreciated by all.

Over the coming weeks we will update you further and tell you more about what we are doing within the home. Please share these email updates with your family and friends who have been regular visitors to the home.

In the meantime, we hope everyone keeps safe and well.

If anyone requires further information, please do not hesitate to contact either myself or Beverly.

With warmest wishes.

*George Daniels*

George Daniels

Director

Ravenswing Homes Limited