

Business Continuity Plan - Coronavirus Position Statement

Jigsaw[®]

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1 Background

1. This document has been produced in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic now affecting the UK and elsewhere. Whilst the Group's business continuity arrangements envisaged risks such as cyber disruption, fire, flood, loss of staff, etc. our plans, like those of many businesses, did not anticipate the unprecedented impact of this pandemic.
2. This position statement therefore describes what actions the Group is taking to respond to COVID-19 and will be updated as necessary, recognising that the current environment is a fast changing one. In producing this position statement, we are taking account of advice from central Government, the NHS and Public Health England as to how best we can protect our workforce and our residents. We are monitoring this advice constantly.
3. This document may be shared with stakeholders.

2 Aim

4. We recognise that our services are being impacted severely by COVID-19. Our ultimate priorities are to provide services to the most vulnerable of our residents and other service users whilst maintaining business critical functions and protecting the health and well-being of our workforce.

3 Status Update as at 15 May 2020

5. On 23 March 2020, the Government announced a lockdown with travel to and from work **only if absolutely necessary** because of the coronavirus. Our offices closed on 24 March 2020.
6. On 16 April 2020 the Government extended the lockdown by three weeks.
7. On 10 May 2020 the Prime Minister announced a partial relaxation of the lockdown.
8. All employees have been asked to stay at home unless they:
 - are site-based and work in supported or extra care schemes;
 - undertake fire safety, electrical checks or gas servicing in general needs properties;
 - undertake void works or carry out emergency repairs.

3.1. Support for Residents

9. The impact of the coronavirus on our residents and the communities we work on has been significant and we are working with our partner local authorities and other

agencies in all our major areas of operation to support residents where we can, redeploying staff resources as necessary.

10. We have partnered with a number of public, private and voluntary agencies, including local foodbanks, and other registered providers, to get food to the most vulnerable members of society. Food parcels have been in high demand throughout all of our neighbourhoods and we have supported families with both immediate provision and longer term solutions through volunteer networks and Local Authorities. In addition to this we have assisted a number of local organisations, through funding and by re-deploying staff to the role of delivery drivers, helping to help enable food parcels to be created and delivered.
11. All independent living tenants are getting twice weekly calls. Calls are being made to identify any tenants who are self isolating and in need of food and medication, suffering with symptoms of Covid-19 and/or experiencing difficulties with mental health. Next of kin are being contacted where welfare or social distancing concerns are identified. The Independent Living Tenancy Inclusion Officer is providing a list of local agencies offering support to vulnerable people as a resource for staff supporting tenants.
12. Our research of local community groups has identified a number of support networks for residents to which we have been referring individuals. Altogether, we have identified over 6,000 residents over the age of 69 in our general needs accommodation and, through employees and neighbours, other residents under 70 who might be vulnerable as a result of physical or mental health needs. All these tenants have now received a welfare phone call from Jigsaw Homes to assist them with any support they need. Those showing signs of real loneliness are being referred to external agencies for regular calls and befriending services.
13. We have researched and completed a directory of community help groups, including public, private and voluntary sources. This directory includes support for food provision, medical supplies, money advice, loneliness support, mental health support, home care, utilities and voluntary community groups.

3.2. Business Critical Functions

14. Critical tasks that need to carry on and which we will endeavour to provide via employees working from home or in essential front line services are:
 - Maintaining staffing and services to our supported housing schemes
 - Lettings to vulnerable groups
 - Services to older residents in our independent living schemes, or living alone in the community
 - Money advice to tenants struggling to pay rent and other bills
 - IT
 - Payroll

- People team to ensure employees are deployed to the necessary areas
- Payment of suppliers
- Emergency repairs
- BACS payments
- FM (for access for IT team, etc. if offices closed)
- Contractual obligations
- Delivery of our development programme
- Rent collection - without which we cannot pay for any of the above

3.3. Gas Servicing

15. Gas Safe is our regulator for gas safety and they have advised that we must continue to follow our procedures and try to access properties. We are conscious of the need to balance this against the health and wellbeing of our customers and gas technicians. Many tenants we contact are continuing to refuse to allow entry at present; however no access has improved from 80% in April to around 50% in mid-May. We are currently working towards resuming our gas service programme in full during May and will continue in our attempts to gain access to properties where certificates have now expired. Where Covid-19 has been identified as the reason for refused access we do not believe it is reasonable or fruitful to pursue legal action. Following Gas Safe advice in these instances we are documenting all steps taken that have led to failed access, this is either due to a direct refusal from the tenant over the phone or following two No Access cards being delivered to the property.

3.4. Grounds Maintenance

16. We commenced grounds maintenance from week commencing 20 April, with our gardeners maintaining social distancing whilst performing their duties.

3.5. Repairs

17. We made contingency arrangements for a scenario in which, as a result of mass self isolation by tenants, widespread infection, employee absence due to sickness or self isolation or lockdown, we are unable to deliver our normal day to day repairs service. We moved to an 'emergencies plus' repairs service with effect from 24 March 2020.
18. From 18 May 2020 and as an extension to the 'emergency plus' service, we will also be undertaking all urgent repairs. Where these are required in properties with people who have symptoms and are self-isolating, we are providing additional safety precautions to protect our employees who attend. Where it is safe to do so, we will also be undertaking external repairs that do not require our technicians to enter the property.

19. Our call centre staff are equipped to work from home and receive calls from residents making inbound calls.
20. Our emergency repairs criteria are:
 - Complete failure of gas central heating and hot water
 - Electrical failure to property (none appliance related)
 - Plumbing leaks that cannot be controlled or isolated
 - Blocked toilets where sewage is overflowing into the property
 - Insecure entrance doors
 - Responding to flooded properties
 - Responding to property fires
 - Suspected gas leaks
 - CO alarm activations
 - Faulty smoke alarms
 - Dangerous electrics as a result of water ingress
 - Broken and insecure windows
 - Dangerous structures
 - Failure of warden call system
 - Loss of communal/emergency lighting
 - Statutory testing around emergency lighting, fire alarms and water hygiene
 - Partial loss of heat or hot water
 - Partial loss communal lighting
 - Blocked drains (no sewage present)

3.6. Letting Properties

21. We are letting newly built properties handed over by developers. We have been working with local authority homelessness services to let properties which required very little works and are recommencing void property refurbishments whilst requiring our technicians to observe the social distancing guidelines. We have developed a digital letting process that maintains social distancing between employees and incoming tenants. This has led to us successfully rehousing people from vulnerable groups.

3.7. Rent Collection

22. Tenants who get into rent arrears for reasons connected with Covid-19 are being treated sensitively and assisted. We continue to offer free and confidential advice through our money advice teams. To increase our ability to assist tenant in claiming the benefits and financial assistance they are entitled to, we have reallocated staff to money advice work and are making outbound calls to those not in receipt of housing benefit to see if their circumstances have changed due to the pandemic, offering support where necessary. This includes setting up new payment methods for cash payers who are self-isolating, accepting lower payments when a tenant is unsure of their future income, issuing foodbank vouchers, signposting to debt advice, completing grant applications and making further referrals for food provision to local private and volunteer agencies.

3.8. Impact on Workforce

23. We initially planned for up to 80% of the workforce becoming infected by Covid-19 with up to 50% being off at any one time. Whilst for many the symptoms will be mild and the workforce will not all be infected at the same time, we carried out a risk assessment of all our employees and identified approximately 300 people with a pre-existing condition or whose family or caring network includes such persons, of which 220 are self isolating.
24. We have enabled the vast majority of normally office-based employees to work from home, prioritising business critical roles. Not all staff require full system access and we have taken account of this in our assumptions.
25. We have updated and published to employees our homeworking policy to take account of the coronavirus. We are using Microsoft Teams to support remote team working.
26. More recent statements by the Chief Medical Officer that the social distancing guidelines brought in by central Government may need to be maintained until the end of 2020 will require a fuller assessment of the impact on our current working arrangements.

3.9. Supported Housing Schemes

27. Many of our supported housing schemes have on-site staff providing a 24 hour service. We are continuing to run these services, albeit on some occasions with reduced staffing levels. We will utilise teams from across all services to maintain as many supported housing services as possible, both 24 hour and visiting support.
28. Business Continuity plans for our staffed schemes and maintenance services are being reviewed and brought into effect as needed.

3.10. Independent Living and Supported Housing Schemes

29. We carried out a business-wide review of all our ILS and supported schemes to increase cleaning regimes in line with government guidance. We have provided advice to

residents on how to protect themselves through proper hygiene. We have liaised with the care teams who work in our buildings and commissioned by local authorities to ensure continued care provision to our residents.

30. In light of the lockdown we have closed communal lounges, taped off communal areas that cannot be secured and closed lavatories that are normally accessible to all residents and visitors.
31. We have also asked residents to observe social distancing guidelines and not to invite external visitors into their schemes, although this is not something we can enforce as we have no legal powers to do so and our schemes are not staffed 24/7.

3.11. Communications

32. Communications with tenants are being channelled through all media, including writing out to all our tenants. Updates are provided on our website, with regular emails sent to notify residents of important information.
33. 13 sets of FAQs for employees have been distributed via email and fresh FAQs are developed and issued in response to the changing situation and any further issues raised by staff. A special edition of *Newspiece* - our in house staff newsletter - was published pulling together all this information.
34. We are using our Facebook page, Team - Jigsaw, to communicate with employees and are also mass texting employees and using personal email and text contacts for those staff at home unable to access emails from the company.
35. Tailored messages are also being issued to managers.

3.12. Warning Flags

36. We have set up warning flags on our IT systems to highlight where tenants or their household members are shielding or self isolating because underlying conditions, and for confirmed cases resulting in the death of a tenant. We have put in place protocols to ensure that this information is shared with employees and contractors as necessary.

3.13. Offices

37. We have agreed with local authority commissioners to move some services to a telephone only service and so minimise face-to-face contact.

3.14. Training to Staff

38. All staff were enrolled in an online infection training module in March and homeworkers asked to complete a homeworking data protection survey in April. Coping with Covid -19 Anxiety and temporary homeworker e- learning online modules were issued in May.

3.15. Assurance

- 39. We reported to our Risk and Audit Committee on 16 March 2020 and gave verbal updates to our landlord and Jigsaw Support boards during the same reporting cycle.
- 40. Risk & Audit Committee are being updated weekly on the position.
- 41. Our Group Board is meeting monthly in order to oversee the Group's response to Covid-19 and support the Executive as necessary to respond to the changing situation. The Group's financial position is being monitored monthly by the Group Board and reviewed by the Executive in line with the Group's stress test recovery plan.

3.16. Business Continuity

- 42. The Group's response to Covid-19 is being managed by the Business Continuity Group, which comprises directors from a range of disciplines and includes the Group Chief Executive and all members of EMT. This group is meeting twice weekly by video conference.

3.17. Stakeholders

- 43. We will share this position statement with stakeholders via our website and provide updates as necessary.



Creating homes. Building lives.

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