



Dear

I am writing to update you about how Broadland is responding to the Coronavirus pandemic and particularly to the restrictions placed upon all of us by the Government. These are unprecedented times affecting how we all live and, for the Broadland team, how we work. Our priority is to minimise the health risks to our tenants and our employees as much as we can. This, of course, means considerable disruption to our services, although we are trying to maintain services, such as keeping the grass cut on some schemes and particularly servicing gas boilers.

The main differences you will have seen are that all our offices are closed, with the team working from their homes instead. Most engagement and support is taking place over the phone and there is a greatly reduced repairs service. We are prioritising gas servicing, not just because it remains a legal requirement, but also because it helps protect your safety at home, if you have a gas supply.

Currently we can only respond to emergency repairs. These are repairs needed because without them the tenant can't use the place they live in as their home. Examples include a lack of hot water, no working toilet or a major water leak. We are also trying to make empty properties ready for letting to people in need, when possible.

I want to be upfront with you – when the restrictions are eventually lifted, it will take a long time for our services to get back to normal. We estimate that if the restrictions carry on until the end of June, we will have a backlog of over 5,500 routine repairs!

It will not be possible for us to catch up quickly – and, again depending on the length of the lockdown, it might take us until spring 2021 before we will be able to resolve the backlog. We will discuss with the Homes Panel and the Tenant Action Group how to prioritise routine repairs, so that we can complete the most impactful in the first wave of our catch up. We will sadly need to delay some improvement programmes, so that we can focus on the backlog. Therefore, some new kitchens and heating systems will be delayed until 2021-22. We will let you know directly if that affects you.

Broadland Housing

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I am extremely sorry that I can't promise a fast return to business as usual, but we will work hard to get as much done as quickly as possible – keeping you informed through a dedicated page on our website, as well as updates on Tenants Online. Thank you for your patience.

Lockdown is stressful for everyone. Our normal freedoms are restricted, and we can't socialise as we want to. Many feel stuck at home and many have worries over things like money, food, loneliness and health.

If we can help, we will. This includes using our vans to collect prescriptions or other deliveries for you. If you need this support, please call Customer Services, who will arrange for someone to call you back. Please let us know early if your circumstances are changing. We can provide you with advice on claiming benefits. Again, if you need help, please call Customer Services.

On the bottom of this letter, which you can tear off and keep, we have provided contact details of organisations who can provide you with support, if you need it.

We are living through the most incredible disruption to daily life, caused by a new disease that will take time to control. We all must follow the advice from the Government on social distancing to help keep us, our neighbours and the people who we come near, as safe as we can. Broadland will do its best to make sure that we do not increase any risks to you and we ask the same from you, when you see my colleagues near or even inside your home. With your support and assistance, we will deliver our services to you and will be ambitious about how quickly we can return to normal when this disruption ends.

Thank you for all you are doing to help us and your neighbours.

Yours sincerely

Michael Newey
Chief Executive