



**Head Office**  
Suite 1  
3 Silver Business Park  
Airfield Way  
Christchurch  
Dorset BH23 3TA  
T: 01202 485597  
F: 01202 488523  
E: [info@applehouse.co.uk](mailto:info@applehouse.co.uk)  
W : [www.applehouse.co.uk](http://www.applehouse.co.uk)

17<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Family Members and Friends,

Re: COVID-19

As the impact of COVID-19 gathers momentum I wanted to get in touch with you during this crisis to keep you updated on how we are trying to keep people safe, both residents and staff.

Since the extent of the virus hit the headlines we have taken a highly proactive approach and ensured we have closely monitored Government guidance which has been, and continues to be, sent to us via CQC, Public Health England (PHE), NHS and our various care associations and professional bodies of which we are active members, such as Care England and National Care Association.

Here are the bullet points of actions we have taken so far:

- On 27<sup>th</sup> February our company sent out our own 'COVID-19 Contingency Plan' to all local authority and NHS partners, work having started on this well before the date it was sent out.
- NHS hand washing posters shared to all homes and put on display. Hand washing is thorough, regular and in accordance with NHS guidance.
- Risk assessments produced for and with all homes covering crucial risks such as staff shortages, food and medical provisions shortages, infection within the homes.
- In February the company ordered additional stock of hand sanitiser, gloves and essentials.
- Every home has been asked to increase their own stocks of personal protective equipment (PPE) and essentials and basics, including food, above their usual stocks.
- Each home has a COVID-19 Link: This person, usually the registered manager, is working alongside directors in co-ordinating our health and safety drive.

**Directors:**

Jane Montrose(Managing),Romaine Lawson(Operational),Guy Montrose(Co.Sec)  
Company Registration. no: 5249887  
Registered Office: 31/33 Commercial Road,Poole,BH14 0HU



**Head Office**  
Suite 1  
3 Silver Business Park  
Airfield Way  
Christchurch  
Dorset BH23 3TA  
T: 01202 485597  
F: 01202 488523  
E: [info@applehouse.co.uk](mailto:info@applehouse.co.uk)  
W : [www.applehouse.co.uk](http://www.applehouse.co.uk)

- Each home has been asked to prepare a list of staff prepared to be 'locked down' or socially distanced with residents in the case of: infection within the home and/or isolating the most vulnerable residents.
- Additional temporary beds have been purchased and sited at each home for staff required to lock down and stay at the home should this be necessary.
- All annual leave has been cancelled from Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March so that we are as ready as we can be for staff absences from self-isolation, illness or household isolation.
- Daily temperatures are being recorded for all residents as well as it now being mandatory for all who enter our homes to be temperature-checked and denied entry if temperature exceeds 37.8C
- Mandatory, supervised hand washing for all who enter the homes.
- Banning of non-essential contractors from our premises.
- Postponement of any non-essential face-to-face meetings or alternative means used such as Skype or phone conference call.
- Updating of website with NHS link and general information.
- 24/7 availability of senior management and director with ongoing monitoring and internal communication amongst HQ and all team members.
- Constant sharing of updated information from the Government and its health regulators: Read and sign sheets in situ in the homes.
- House meetings encouraged as well as regular information sharing between teams and individuals they support. Social stories encouraged.
- Teams planning creative home-based activities for isolation periods as well as identifying zones (where available and practicable) which can be used solely by infected individuals, and another for non-infected individuals, for the purpose of fitness, recreation and/or de-escalation of anxieties.

Our cleaning regimes are stringent, heightened and with increased regularity. Observations of continued wellness, or the early signs of illness, are paramount and at the forefront of our team's work.

We couldn't be more proud of our team's commitment and selfless dedication to keeping your loved ones safe, in spite of their own fears for their vulnerable family members. At times like this I'm sure we are all speechless at the compassion and 'pulling together' of society and communities.

With regard to visiting we ask that you please plan visits carefully, ensuring that there has been no sign of illness within your household: no new or persistent cough, no



**Head Office**  
Suite 1  
3 Silver Business Park  
Airfield Way  
Christchurch  
Dorset BH23 3TA  
T: 01202 485597  
F: 01202 488523  
E: [info@applehouse.co.uk](mailto:info@applehouse.co.uk)  
W : [www.applehouse.co.uk](http://www.applehouse.co.uk)

temperature above 37.8C. Visiting family are of course hugely important for many people and for their mental health and peace of mind. Although we are not banning visitors per say, in accordance with Government guidance, we ask that you limit visits to the home to essential visits only at this time please. If you do come to our homes, you will be asked if we may take your temperature and record it. If you decline this, you will be denied access for which I apologise. If your temperature reads above 37.8C you will be offered a retest in 15 minutes time but not permitted entry until or unless a lower reading is achieved next time. We will also guide you to the nearest basin and observe handwashing; again, we apologise if this seems extreme but the wellbeing of your family member, friend or our staff are paramount.

As you can imagine, our teams face challenges. Your loved one also faces challenges: life will not quite be the same for some weeks or even months. External activities will likely no longer be offered or accessed as social distancing measures are increased by the Government. Such change can have a profound impact for individuals for whom routine and the expected is an essential part of feeling calm, confident and happy. This is beyond our control and we promise to try hard to fill such gaps with meaningful fun.

As with all other care homes in the nation, we cannot guarantee our usual compliment of staff but promise you we are doing and will continue to do our very best to keep your loved one safe, comfortable, nourished and well where it is within our human endeavours to do so. Please be assured we have a network of support: Public Health England, local NHS task forces, GPs, our sector, and our community. We don't know to what degree we will need to rely upon any or all of these as momentum continues to gather with the virus. In any case, we anticipate shortages; the need to replace regular staff with agency will be closely monitored and we are already requesting COVID-19 plans from agency colleagues and will require the highest standard of hygiene from them as we do our own team. We will require any temporary staff to familiarise themselves with your family member's care plans prior to contact and they will be supervised where possible by our own team. All temporary staff we use have undertaken mandatory training and DBS safety checks. The only exception to this would be community volunteers, should we have need of community support further down the line. We will comply with the Care Act in what form it takes-current or amended.

If you would like to take your family member home to be with you please can you make this wish known to our COVID-19 Link who will be the manager of the home your loved one resides in. This can be considered but we will need to work with LA or NHS colleagues to ensure the individual and yourselves are safe and that it is the right decision to make.

Directors:  
Jane Montrose(Managing),Romaine Lawson(Operational),Guy Montrose(Co.Sec)  
Company Registration no: 5249887  
Registered Office: 31/33 Commercial Road, Poole, BH14 0HU



**Head Office**  
Suite 1  
3 Silver Business Park  
Airfield Way  
Christchurch  
Dorset BH23 3TA  
T: 01202 485597  
F: 01202 488523  
E: [info@applehouse.co.uk](mailto:info@applehouse.co.uk)  
W : [www.applehouse.co.uk](http://www.applehouse.co.uk)

I ask you to be patient with us as we do our very best. I also ask you to please only make essential phone calls and emails to the homes, (perhaps a daily update email if anxious), to allow our staff to devote their time and perhaps reducing resources to the people who reside in Apple House care homes.

Please stay well and take care.

Yours sincerely,

Jane Montröse  
Managing Director

Romaine Lawson  
Director of Operations

Directors:  
Jane Montröse(Managing), Romaine Lawson(Operational), Guy Montröse(Co.Sec)  
Company Registration no: 5249887  
Registered Office: 31/33 Commercial Road, Poole, BH14 0HU