



Sir Kenneth Olisa OBE CStJ

HM Lord-Lieutenant of Greater London

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Dear Deputy Lieutenant

The Prime Minister underlined the gravity of the Covid-19 threat when he introduced measures which he described as “unprecedented in peacetime and unprecedented in the last century”.

So much which we have long taken for granted has been turned on its head. Millions have lost their jobs, been placed on furlough or found themselves at risk. Streets have emptied, and the employed are coming to terms with home working. Reduced options for respite following the closure of leisure venues and schools, compounded by minimal contact with friends and family add to the strain of it all. Meanwhile, those charged with keeping us safe – from the NHS to the military, find themselves under even greater pressure as they prepare for the worst but hope for the best.

It would be easy to panic in such circumstances, but to our collective pride, antisocial conduct has been limited and the draconian measures have been implemented voluntarily without the need for the authorities’ intervention. Happily, uplifting coverage of neighbours helping neighbours, businesses assisting the needy and communities prioritising the welfare of the disadvantaged, have crowded out the less positive stories which tend to occupy the media’s attention in normal times.

The quintessentially British values which have guided the country’s response are those that have been espoused by The Queen since her coronation in 1953 when she spoke of “respect for the rights of minorities, and the inspiration of a broad tolerance in thought and expression”. This week, as she prepared to leave London for Windsor, Her Majesty issued a simple but powerful reminder of those values and especially, the duty to protect the most vulnerable within our communities.

This duty defines the activities of the Greater London Lieutenancy and, as you know, forms the bedrock of my strategic framework for social inclusion – *Building Bridges for a fairer London*.

Our ability to amplify Her Majesty’s message – by ensuring that our links with civic society, the military, charities and business are used for the greater common good – has a crucial role to play in these unprecedented times. I would ask that you do all you can, in the name of the Lieutenancy, to support any and all efforts in your areas of influence within the capital. If you require assistance, please contact the appropriate Representative Deputy Lieutenant, the Clerk or me directly.

London’s resilience over centuries gives us every reason to believe that we will beat Covid-19. Together, we can make a major contribution to reinforcing Her Majesty’s confidence that:

“At times such as these, I am reminded that our nation’s history has been forged by people and communities coming together to work as one, concentrating our combined efforts with a focus on the common goal.”

Best wishes, stay well and thanks
for all that you do for London.

Ken