

Post Covid 19 Restriction Arrangements at Street, Walton & Compton Dundon

As you will know, the government have announced that most Covid 19 related restrictions in England will end on 19th July. However, this is in the context of rapidly rising case numbers in Somerset with both our government and the Church of England urging continued caution.

With the ending of the legal restrictions, the bullets below can now only be guidelines, but my hope is that we, as church family, will be able to adhere to these, as we support each other on this next phase of the journey out of the pandemic.

From 19th July, in all of our services in each of our churches, the following will apply:

- Whilst advanced **booking** for services will no longer be required, those on welcome (stewards etc) will be taking names (and contact details for any visitors), retaining them for 21 days for track and trace purposes.
- The wearing of **face coverings** will continue to be actively encouraged* whilst inside the building.
- The use of **hand sanitiser**, **ventilation** of buildings and **enhanced cleaning** will continue.
- Whilst **social distancing** is no longer a requirement, we will give people permission to socially distance if they wish by spreading out in pews and chairs. In Walton and Compton Dundon, people can put an item on the pew beside them to signify they wish to socially distance, whilst in the Parish and Mission Churches, the chairs will still be arranged two metres apart, with those who wish to move closer, being free to do so.
- **Hugging, hand shaking, physical contact** etc will be the personal decision of both parties. For the moment, we will not re-introduce this as part of the 'peace' as this may put pressure on individuals who remain uncomfortable with physical contact.
- **Singing** will be permitted, but with the congregation wearing face coverings (please see above*).
- **Communion** will remain in one kind for the time being, using the current system including the priest preparing the bread and wine.
- We will not re-start serving **refreshments** as yet and will encourage any pre and post service mingling to take place outside where possible.
- Those wishing to give financially via the **collection plate** should place their gift in the plate available when leaving the building.
- **Users hiring our buildings** are responsible for their own decisions and risk assessments, but enhanced cleaning will continue.
- **Church groups** (Little Stars, house groups etc) will be asked to consider what restrictions, if any, they will now relax, based on risk assessing their event or activity. I do not propose to encourage the various coffee mornings / afternoon teas indoors that we have not held during covid to re-start until September at the earliest.
- **Church Meetings** can be held indoors but adhering to the above where possible.

I am so aware that this may not seem like much will change in the short term, although the return of singing and the end of 'booking in' I hope will bring some joy and relief to many, but my sense is that there is widespread caution still, and I want people to feel safe in public worship.

As the current covid surge unfolds, I am conscious we need to keep these guidelines under constant review but do not want to change things too frequently so as to cause confusion. I am therefore proposing that we keep these in place for July and August, reviewing them again towards the end of August in time for September services.

Ana Lawrence July 2021