

The 4Parishes and the Government Roadmap (stage 4) out of Lockdown.

Dear all,

I hope and trust that you are keeping well and are able to enjoy the much-needed sunshine that's been beating down on us in these recent days.

You will all be aware that on the 19th July, the British Government made previously legally enforceable lockdown restrictions now a matter for personal responsibility. It is down to us to use our own common sense as to the measures we take in keeping ourselves and others safe from the Corona Virus. Considering the increasing infection rates the government have advised people to wear face-coverings on public transport, in health care settings and in other busy indoor spaces.

With each step of new government regulations, the Church of England's Recovery Group has met and offered advice to us as to how we can best respond to the changing guidance and restrictions. The relaxing of the rules on the 19th July was no exception and the Bishop's Recovery group have met and are asking that we respond carefully to the relaxing of the restrictions we have lived with for over 18 months. The Bishop's Recovery group chaired by the Bishop of London writes:

Within the Church we believe that everyone is known and loved individually by God and that as many members within one body we are called to be responsible to and for one another, respecting the more vulnerable whose suffering is our suffering (1 Cor 12:12-27). The move to step 4 means we are being asked to take even more personal responsibility around coronavirus than when we were compelled to adhere to Government restrictions.

Because of the differences in our church buildings and congregations the advice in each of the 4Parishes will vary. After consultation in PCC's and many pastoral conversations, I hope the following will help us to respond well to stage 4 of unlocking.

I'm sure you will all agree that this is not the time to throw caution to the wind and do away with the care we have been expressing for one another in adhering to lockdown restrictions. In the 4Parishes, out of care for one another we encourage the following:

- 1) the continued wearing of face coverings for public worship while fully respecting the choice of those who do not wear them
- 2) the continued use of track and trace/QR codes where people are willing to participate in this
- 3) congregational singing through face coverings to mitigate against aerosol droplets and keeping the doors of the churches open to enable better ventilation. (Bury PCC have agreed not to have congregational singing until September, but we respect the right of those who choose to sing to do so freely)
- 4) Holy Communion in 'one kind' only as is still advised by the Bishop's Recovery group with the priest being the only person who will have the bread and the wine, communion in both kinds
- 5) the continued use of hand sanitiser where people are willing
- 6) continuing to encourage people to sit in their family groups/bubbles whilst being mindful of helpful gaps between ourselves and others. (because of life events in Wistow and Warboys during this last week we have needed to remove floor markings/tape from pews and most of the chairs in Warboys are back in place)
- 7) we look forward to being able to serve refreshments again as we gather for worship and fellowship, but we will wait until at least September before we put the kettle on

I hope as we move forward together that our priority will continue to be our care for one another and to be especially mindful of those who are more vulnerable than ourselves.