# Risk Assessment for Opening of St John the Baptist Church, Great Bolas (Bolas Magna), Telford, TF6 6PQ

# to the public for Sunday Services

**Version Control**

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| Issue Date  | Version Number  | Issued by  |
| 10 July 2020 | 4 | Ray Hughes, Health and Safety Officer, St John’s PCC, after consultation with Jill Maddocks, Churchwarden and Rev. Dave Allport |
| 15 July 2020 | 5 | Ray Hughes, Health and Safety Officer, St John’s PCC, after consultation with Jill Maddocks, Churchwarden and Rev. Dave Allport. Updated following further advice from the House of Bishops Recovery Group |
| 26 August 2020 | 6 | Ray Hughes, Health and Safety Officer, St John’s PCC, after consultation with Jill Maddocks, Churchwarden and Rev. Dave Allport. Updated following further advice from the House of Bishops Recovery Group dated 7 August 2020 Version 3 regarding the mandatory use of face coverings.Updated to provide guidance on singing in the church |
| 6 January 2021 | 7 | Ray Hughes – amended to include more detailed advice following the UK Government’s decision to introduce another lockdown on 6 January 2021. Although this decision did not force churches to close, greater emphasis is now being placed on the basic procedures to be followed when entering our church. The identification of the new variant of Covid-19, together with the additional “South Africa” variant means that the transmission of the virus is much more easily transferred between individuals and the need to keep to these measures is being re-enforced by the publication of this version.In addition, the PCC of St John the Baptist church agreed to remain open for the time being despite the new concerns, which meant that we were the only church open in the benefice. This placed greater emphasis on managing the numbers attending our Sunday services. The PCC also agreed to provide a shorter, non-Eucharistic service each Sunday in order to reduce the transmission risk.This document, and the decision to continue worship, will be kept under review in the light of further guidance from the House of Bishops Covid Recovery Group. |

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| Issue Date  | Version Number  | Issued by  |
| 20 January 2021 | 8 | Ray Hughes – updated to report on progress following the publication of the last version. Since 6 January, we have held two non-Eucharistic services at St John the Baptist church. The numbers have been in line with our usual attendees, with no members from other churches. Strict observance of the rules, which were re-emphasised in the previous version, have been adhered to. We are happy to continue but will review on 3 February 2021. |
| 10 February 2021 | 9 | Ray Hughes and Dave Allport– updated for the following reasons:1. to report on the previous version (8), and
2. to re-introduce the sacrament of Holy Communion into our Sunday services (Morning Prayer services excluded) from 14 February 2021
3. we have received a request from Bishop Michael to include information on local infection rates or local variations of the virus. We will take this from the Telford and Wrekin website, <https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20692/coronavirus_covid-19>, and regular email updates from the same source
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| 20 February 2021  | 10 | Ray Hughes – updated to:* 1. reflect on the re-introduction of Holy Communion into our Sunday services from 14 February 2021, and
	2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council

The relevant update is contained on page 6. |
| 26 February 2021 | 11 | Ray Hughes and Dave Allport – updated to:1. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council, and
2. include the results of a small survey undertaken in the last few days
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| 5 March 2021 | 12 | Ray Hughes and Dave Allport – updated to:1. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council, and
2. update the results of a small survey undertaken in the last few days
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| 12 March 2021 | 13 | Ray Hughes, and Dave Allport – updated to:1. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council, and
2. introduce receiving the sacrament of Holy Communion using the Common Plate
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| Issue Date  | Version Number  | Issued by  |
| 19 March 2021 | 14 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. amend this document to fall in line with the new template issued by the House of Bishops Covid-19 Recovery Group, dated 13 January 2021 (“their” version 8)
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council, and
3. feed in some additional responses to our survey
4. a reminder that we have QR Codes for signing in as part of the Test and Trace system
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| 26 March 2021 | 15 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. report on the service that took place on 19 March
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council
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| 2 April 2020 | 16 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. report on the service that took place on 26 March
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council
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| 10 April 2021 | 17 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. report on the service that took place on 4 April – Easter Sunday
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council
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| 17 April 2021 | 18 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. report on the service that took place on 11 April
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council
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| 23 April 2021 | 19 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. report on the service that took place on 18 April
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council
3. Include a note concerning outdoor singing at the service on 25 April
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| 30 April 2021 | 20 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. report on the service that took place on 25 April
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council
3. Please note that there will be no update on 7 May as the author will be away on holiday
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| 14 May 2021 | 21 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. report on the services that took place on 2 and 9 May
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council for the periods ending 2 and 9 May
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| Issue Date  | Version Number  | Issued by  |

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| 21 May 2021 | 22 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. report on the services that took place on 16 May
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council for the period ending 16 May
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| 29 May 2021 | 23 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. report on the services that took place on 23 May
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council for the period ending 23 May
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| 4 June 2021 | 24 | Ray Hughes – updated to report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council for the period ending 3 June |
| 10 June 2021 | 25 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. report on the services that took place on 6 June
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council for the period ending 10 June
 |
| 18 June 2021 | 26 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. report on the services that took place on 13 June
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council for the period ending 17 June
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| 25 June 2021 | 27 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. report on the services that took place on 20 June
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council for the period ending 24 June
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| 10 July 2021 | 28 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. report on the services that took place on 27 June and 4 July
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council for the periods ending 30 June and 4 July
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| Issue Date  | Version Number  | Issued by  |

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| 23 July 2021 | 29 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. report on the services that took place on 11 and 18 July
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council for the periods ending 11 July and 18 July
3. include amendments to the template to accommodate the new version from the Church of England (their version 10)
4. Include a new Survey Questionnaire asking our community for their thoughts on coming to church for services and community events following the lifting of restrictions from 19 July 2021 as the final part, Step 4, of the “return to normal”.
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| 31 July 2021 | 30 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. report on the service that took place on 25 July
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council for the period ending 25 July
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| 8 August 2021 | 31 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. report on the service that took place on 1 August
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council for the period ending 1 August
3. the first results from our second survey
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| 13 September 2021 | 32 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. report on the services that took place on 8, 22, 29 August (there was no service on 15 Aug), 5 and 12 September
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council for the periods ending 8, 15, 22, 29 August and 5 September
3. report on the “Bolas-on-Sea” event that took place in the church and churchyard on 21 August
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| 20 September 2021 | 33 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. report on the service that took place on 19 September
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council for the period ending 12 September
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| 3 October 2021 | 34 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. report on the services that took place on 26 September and 3 October
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council for the periods ending 19 and 26 September
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| 7 November 2021 | 35 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. report on the service that took place on 10, 17, 24, 31 October and 7 November
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council for the periods ending 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31 October
3. include the introduction of a graph showing the number of Covid-19 cases that have been recorded since we were asked by Bishop Michael to report on the local infection rates (from 7 Feb 2021)
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| 29 November 2021 | 36 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. report on the services that took place 14, 21 and 28 November
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council for the periods ending 7, 14 and 21 November
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| 20 December 2021 | 37 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. report on the services that took place on 5,12, and 19 December
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council for the periods ending 28 November, 5 and 12 December
3. take account of the latest Risk Assessment template provided by the House of Bishops Recovery Group (their version 10.1 dated 10 December 2021).
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| 27 December 2021 | 38 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. report on the services that took place on 24 December
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council for the periods ending 19 December. No report will be published for the week ending 26 December.
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| 10 January 2022 | 39 | Ray Hughes – updated to report on the services that took place on 24 December 2021, 2 and 9 January 2022 |
| 29 January 2022 | 40 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. report on the services that took place on 16, and 23 January 2022
2. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council for the periods ending 2, 9, and 16 January 2022
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| 14 February 2022 | 41 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. point out the re-introduction of Holy Communion in BOTH kinds via simultaneous administration on 6 February
2. report on the services that took place on 30 January 2022 (no service at St Johns), 6 and 13 February
3. report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council for the periods ending 23, 30 January and 6 February 2022.
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| 7 March 2022 | 42 | Ray Hughes – updated to:1. offer the re-introduction of Holy Communion in BOTH kinds using the Common Cup **and** simultaneous administration on with effect from 6 March 2022
2. report on the services that took place on 20 and 27 February and 6 March

report on the latest local infection rates from Telford and Wrekin Council for the periods ending 23, 30 January and 13, 20, 27 and 3 March 2022.THIS IS THE LAST RISK ASSESSMENT IN CONNECTION WITH COVID-19 AS THE LAST OF THE RESTRICTIONS WERE LIFTED BY THE UK GOVERNMENT ON 24 FEBRUARY 2022. THE USE OF HOLY COMMUNION IN BOTH KINDS HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE HOUSE OF BISHOPS RECOVERY GROUP, INCLUDING THE USE OF THE COMMON CUP AND VIA SIMULTANEOUS ADMINISTRATION. |

Churches and cathedrals have been legally permitted to open for purposes of individual private prayer from 13th June 2020. House of Bishops guidance provided for churches to open for funerals from 15th June 2020. Public worship, with measures in place for social distancing, are allowed from 4th July 2020. Other activities, except for a few still prohibited by law, may also take place in churches, subject to the government guidance in place for the relevant sector.

The [government guidance for the safe use of places of worship during the pandemic](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-from-4-july) requires a COVID-19 risk assessment to be carried out for every building and site open to the public. This document provides a template risk assessment, with links to the relevant advice notes. It relates to opening up church and cathedral buildings to clergy and members of the public entering for any permitted purposes. As well as offering guidance on best-practice, it is also intended to help parishes make a decision on whether to open for any or all of these purposes or not, based on their local circumstances, resources and context. Specific guidance linking to advice on the lockdown period is available on the [Church of England Coronavirus pages](https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches).

The government acknowledges that places of worship play an important role in providing spiritual leadership for many individuals, and in bringing communities and generations together. However, their communal nature also makes them places that are particularly vulnerable to the spread of the virus. In drawing up a risk assessment for your church, or revising it in the light of the current situation, you will need to think carefully whether the public benefits you achieve by opening are justified by the risks involved, however much you can mitigate them. This judgement will vary depending on the location and nature of your church building and the makeup of your congregation and visitor profile. You will need to discuss the factors with your governing body, whether the PCC or chapter. Remember that this is your collective choice whether to open: while our churches are permitted by government to open, they are not obliged to do so. If you decide not to open, you can continue to have a valuable role serving the community in a number of ways. Guidance on this can be found on the [Church of England Coronavirus pages](https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches).

Future versions of this document will be produced when there is any substantive change to the guidance on the safe use of places of worship.

Separate risk assessments for outdoor worship and for access by contractors and construction workers are available on the [Church of England Coronavirus pages](https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches).

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**Carrying out a risk assessment**

1. Agree what activities you are planning for:
	* Private prayer
	* Public worship with or without congregational singing
	* Funerals, weddings, baptisms, ordinations
	* Livestreaming or recording services
	* A choir or music group singing indoors as part of a public, livestreamed or recorded service
	* Formal childcare or where part of a school
	* Essential voluntary and public services
	* Use as a vaccination or testing centre
	* Community and support groups
	* Provision of youth services
	* Opening shops/cafes
	* Opening for visitors/tourists/educational visits as a heritage attraction
	* Opening for concerts, plays etc
2. Consider the hazards:
	* Transmission of COVID-19
	* Hazards arising from using the church in a different way to usual
	* Shared or consequential risks of activities running simultaneously or back-to-back (eg crossover of people at entry/exit points)

Read the guidance and think about how it relates specifically to your church. What constraints are there? Consider how people will arrive at the church, including if they will need to wait or queue outside; how people will enter and leave the church; circulation inside: from the entrance to the worship space and out again; circulation within the worship space; also access to other areas including the toilet(s).

1. Consider who might be harmed and how. Read the guidance and think about how the activities you are planning will affect different groups of people. The risks are not different for larger churches as long as they are properly managed but having any significant numbers of people coming through your building makes the possible impact – in particular someone with COVID-19 coming into contact with others – higher than in smaller venues with fewer people. Consider your particular circumstances and adapt the checklist below as appropriate. Gathered congregations and major services may attract people from far afield, which is likely to add to the risk profile and go against the general guidance that people should stay local for any activities outside the home. Consider whether you need to consult your wider membership and users
2. Using the risk assessment checklist below as a template:
	* add in mitigations for any risks that are particular to your circumstances that may not be on the list;
	* record what you need to do for each activity to go ahead safely;
	* consider any equipment you need and any temporary changes you might need to make to the church;
	* check back against your list of activities to confirm which ones can go ahead and when.

**The Basic Rules:**

Wearing of face coverings by all those attending a place of worship, including ministers and worshippers, where there may be other people present is mandatory

Please sanitise your hands upon entering the church

You will be directed to a pew by a steward at the main entrance. We ask that you follow their guidance

Please keep at least 2metres from anyone else. There may be occasions where this is not possible, but the minimum distance is 1metre and then only whilst wearing a face mask

Please do not mingle at any point once you have entered the church. This includes the churchyard also. You may be asked to “move on” – please do not be offended if you are asked to, we simply want to ensure that we do the maximum to reduce the spread of this new variant.

**Update from Version 8**

1. Since the previous version, we have continued to offer non-Eucharistic services each Sunday, with attendees from the parish of St John the Baptist only, i.e., we have had no requests from other churches in the benefice to attend
2. Our congregation are keen to return to receiving the Sacrament of Holy Communion and have been given approval by our Rector with effect from 14 February 2021. There have been constant reviews of this document, together with the publication of other Risk Assessments for such aspects as Music in Live services, Tower safety (including procedures for bell-ringers), Lone Working, Fire, General Health and Safety, all of which are reviewed from time to time. In addition, we have designed seating plans to cater for larger events as Carol Singing, Harvest festivals, etc when we generally have larger attendances. With this in mind, we feel confident that we are able to offer the Holy Sacrament from 14 February. Therefore:
	* 1. In line with the advice given by our Rector, we will continue to distribute Holy Communion in one kind only (i.e., not simultaneous administration of consecrated bread and wine),
		2. We will operate in accordance with the House of Bishops Recovery Group guidance, ie in order to maintain distancing, the celebrant will distribute the consecrated bread to each communicant in their pew by hand as set out in the Church of England guidance (<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-01/COVID-19%20Advice%20on%20the%20Administration%20of%20Holy%20Communion%20v5.3.pdf>)
3. At each revision of this document, we will include the latest Covid-19 information at the end of this document from Telford and Wrekin Council
4. Starting on 17 February 2021, we will review this document on a weekly basis.

**Update from Version 9**

1. The Holy Communion service on 14 Februarywas attended by five members of the congregation, of which four received communion in one kind in their pews. No concerns were raised as far as I know.
2. On 11 February, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. They show a steady decline, but of particular interest is the statement from TWC at item c below.
3. On 12 February, TWC reported that infection rates have been high in the surrounding areas:

Donnington, High Ercall, Edgmond, Cherrington, Crudgington, Tibberton, and Waters Upton

Additionally, testing rates were relatively low with a high proportion testing positive. TWC recommended that individuals in these areas should arrange to have a Rapid Flow Test as soon as possible.

PCC Members and regular attendees were sent a copy of the notification from TWC.

**Update from Version 10**

* 1. The Holy Communion service on 21 Februarywas attended by eight members of the congregation, of which six received communion in one kind in their pews. No concerns were raised at the service.
	2. On 25 February, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. They show a decline of only 2% whilst other areas of the UK are falling more rapidly.
	3. We thought that it would be prudent to ask our congregation how they feel about coming to our church (or not) during this pandemic to gauge the reaction. A questionnaire was sent to members of our community and were asked to complete anonymously and return to the Health and Safety Officer (Ray Hughes) at his home address in an SAE. There are no real surprises in the findings so far, but a brief summary of the results so far is given below:
* One person is shielding, and one considers themselves to be at high risk
* 7 people have had the first dose of the vaccine
* 4 people do not think they are risk
* 7 people regularly attend and either lead or read at our services. All like to receive Holy Communion
* 3 people don’t feel safe coming to church at present
* 4 people don’t feel safe receiving Holy Communion at all
* 7 people do feel safe taking Holy Communion from the celebrant’s hands
* 7 people would feel safer taking Holy Communion from a plate in the Chancel
* 3 people would feel safer if the celebrant wore gloves and a mask, was regularly tested
* No-one attends Zoom services

A full copy of the results is available if anyone would like to inspect them.

We will continue to update this aspect in each version.

**Update from Version 11**

1. The Holy Communion service on 28 Februarywas attended by seven members of the congregation, of which five received communion in one kind in their pews. No concerns were raised at the service.
2. On 4 March, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. They show a decline of 32%, compared to a drop of only 1% in the previous week.
3. So far, we have had ten completed questionnaires, a brief summary of the results so far is given below:
* 7 x people feel safe coming to church
* No-one felt concerned if they knew that others were not either testing regularly, or vaccinated, or isolating
* 6 x people felt safe receiving Holy Communion, whilst 2 x people said they didn’t
* 3 x people would prefer to receive Holy Communion using the Common Plate than directly from the celebrant
* 4 x people would feel safer if they knew the celebrant was testing weekly
* No-one expressed a wish for the celebrant to wear gloves or a visor

**Update from Version 12**

1. The Holy Communion service on 7 Marchwas attended by nine members of the congregation, of which seven received communion in one kind (wafers only) in their pews. No concerns were raised at the service
2. On 11 March, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. They show a decline of 62%. compared to the previous week.
3. Primary schools fully opened for all pupils on 8 March. Secondary schools will have a phased return to class
4. On 8 March, England moved into Step 1(a) of the UK Government’s Roadmap for the easing of restrictions.
5. No further questionnaires have been received in the last week
6. Since the pandemic, guidance for delivering sacrament of Holy Communion has been given by the House of Bishops Recovery Group, chaired by Bishop Sarah Mullaly. The process for serving Holy Communion is documented on the Church of England’s website dated 12 January 2021, version 5.3). Our church has followed that advice, as some members of our congregation were uncomfortable receiving the communion wafer directly from the celebrant and then placing it in their mouth. Accordingly, Revd Dave Allport and a number of volunteers piloted an approach in November 2020 based on the use of a Common Plate. Dave wrote this up as follows:

On Wednesday I prepared a large plate (a collection plate which has a diameter of about 50cm), placing 10 wafers around the circumference and covering it with a cloth. I placed it on altar, and it stayed there until after the prayer of consecration on Sunday. I put on my mask and took the plate down and put it on a stand on the chancel step. I removed the cloth and retreated to the other end of the chancel (about 4 metres). Removed my mask and said the invitation.

Each person came forward in turn wearing a mask. As they did, I said their name and the congregation said, “The body of Christ keep you in eternal life”. They took one consecrated bread taking care not to touch others (they’re about 5 cm apart). They stepped back at least 2 metres from the plate, removed their mask, received, replaced their mask, said Amen and returned to their place. Then the next person came up.”

As a result, Revd Dave Allport wrote to Bishop Sarah on 17 February 2021 via email describing the pilot. Her response dated 22 February, stated “It seems fine to me from a public health point of view, but I have passed it on to the team advising on these matters for further consideration.” There has been no official response from the Recovery Group at the time of writing.

In addition, Revd Prebendary Helen Morby contacted Paul Thomas, the Archdeacon of Salop, via phone on 4 March 2021 who stated that if the PCC is happy with the use of the Common Plate, then he saw no reason to disagree. He did point out that he thought it was feasible in a small rural church like St John the Baptist, but maybe less so in a larger environment.

1. The procedure for delivering Holy Communion using the Common Plate is detailed below:

On the Wednesday before Sunday service (a full 72hrs before the service takes place), the celebrant prepares a large collection plate which has a diameter of about 50cm, placing 10 wafers around the circumference and covering it with a cloth.

It is then placed on the altar and remains there until the following Sunday morning after the prayer of consecration.

The celebrant puts on a mask and takes the plate and places it on a stand on the chancel step. The cloth is removed and the celebrant retreats to the altar (about 4 metres). The celebrant removes the mask and gives the invitation.

Each person comes forward in turn wearing a mask. As they do so, the celebrant says their name and the congregation join in saying “The body of Christ keep you in eternal life”. Each communicant takes one consecrated bread making sure not to touch others (they’re about 5cm apart). The communicant steps back at least 2 metres from the plate, removes their mask, receives, and replaces their mask, saying “Amen” and returns to their pew. The next communicant follows the same procedure until everyone has participated.

There is a slight risk of transmission from communicant to communicant if one accidentally touched a second wafer, this is mitigated by the distance between each wafer (approx 5cm). However, if there is contact by the communicant with any other wafer other than the one that they choose, the communicant must remove both wafers. If a further consecrated bread is required the celebrant will source it, say words of consecration and place it on the plate

If a communicant or celebrant coughs or sneezes over the Plate, the Plate and all wafers will be removed. The Celebrant will sanitise his/her hands, consecrate and deliver a fresh set of wafers using a different Plate which has already been sanitised for this purpose.

For those who wish to receive Holy Communion in their hand directly from the celebrant, this can be done separately. Communicants will be asked to stand and remain in their pew. The celebrant will deliver the wafer directly, placing it in their hands, and after stepping back to the Chancel area, will say to the congregation, “individual’s name, the body of Christ keep you in eternal life”. There is a risk of transmission from celebrant to communicants because at the time of administration the celebrant is less than I metre from the communicant (approximately 80cm), but this is mitigated if the celebrant receives a negative test in the 72 hours prior to the service.

1. For those who do not wish to receive Holy Communion, they will be asked to remain seated, and a blessing will be given by the celebrant.
2. Finally, as a further precautionary measure, Revd Helen and Revd Dave have agreed to have Covid-19 tests within 72hours of each service.

These options for the delivery of Holy Communion were agreed at a PCC meeting via Zoom on 10 March 2021.

The restrictions for the delivery of the Holy Communion wafer and wine were lifted by the UK Government on 19 July 2021, however, we will continue to deliver the wafer only using the Common Plate for the time being. In the meantime, we will consult with our community on how they feel about coming to church, not only for Church services but for community events also. See our Questionnaire towards the end of this document.

**Update from Version 13**

1. The Holy Communion service on 14 Marchwas attended by ten members of the congregation, of which nine received communion in one kind (wafers only) using the common plate. No concerns were raised at the service
2. On 18 March, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. They show a decline of 45% compared to the previous week.
3. A further six questionnaires have been received in the last week, bringing the total to 16. A brief summary of the results so far is given below:
* 3 x people did not feel safe coming to church
* 3 x people felt concerned if they knew that others were not testing regularly, or vaccinated, or isolating
* 6 x people did not feel safe receiving Holy Communion
* 9 x people felt safe receiving Holy Communion directly from the celebrant
* 11 x people felt safe receiving Holy Communion from the Common Plate
* 5 x people would feel safer if they knew the celebrant was testing weekly
* No-one felt the need for the celebrant to wear gloves
* Only one person expressed a wish for the celebrant to wear a visor or a mask
1. A number of posters with the unique QR code for our church are on display Everyone who attends is encouraged to download the NHS Covid-19 App to check in. This makes testing and tracing others who have contracted the virus more efficient. In addition, we still have our paper-based system if no-one is willing to download the App. BUT, under the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Collection of Contact Details etc and Related Requirements) Regulations 2020, churches and cathedrals only have a legal requirement to enable and require the collection of data when they are being used for specific non-worship purposes. Therefore, we cannot insist on people participating in the test and trace system when attending for public worship.

**Update from Version 14**

1. A non-Eucharistic Service (Morning Prayers) took place on 21 Marchwhichwas attended by nine members of the congregation. No concerns were raised at the service.
2. On 25 March, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. They show an increase of 12% compared to the previous week (last week 27, this week 32), which TWC have referred to as a “levelling out”.

No further questionnaires have been received in the last week.

**Update from Version 15**

1. A Holy Communion service took place on 28 Marchwhichwas attended by ten members of the congregation, of which nine received communion in one kind (wafers only) using the common plate. No concerns were raised at the service.
2. On 29 March, England moved into Step 1(b) of the UK Government’s Roadmap for the easing of restrictions.
3. On 1 April, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. They show a decrease of 18% compared to the previous week (last week 32, this week 27), which TWC continue to refer to as a “levelling out”. The borough's infection rate continues to remain lower than the regional and national average. No further questionnaires have been received in the last week

**Update from Version 16**

1. A Holy Communion service took place on 4 April, Easter Sunday, whichwas attended by 32 members of the congregation, of which 26 received communion in one kind (wafers only) using the common plate. This was possible due to the organisation of Revd Dave Allport who ensured that each attendee was appropriately socially- distanced from one another, for which we extend our grateful thanks. No concerns were raised at the service.
2. On 8 April, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. They show a decrease of 33% compared to the previous week (last week 27, this week 18). The borough's infection rate continues to remain lower than the regional and national average. On 9 April, Buckingham Palace announced the death of HRH Duke of Edinburgh, the Prince Phillip aged 99. Whilst this has no bearing on the pandemic, it is included here for historical reasons only.

No further questionnaires have been received in the last week.

**Update from Version 17**

1. A special (non-Eucharistic) service in memory of HRH Duke of Edinburgh, the Prince Philip, took place on 11 April, whichwas attended by 11 members of the congregation. No concerns were raised at the service.
2. On 15 April, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. TWC stated “The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin is fluctuating, the latest figures show. There were 40 new cases reported for Telford and Wrekin during the past seven days (5-11 April) - which means 8 more new cases recorded compared to the previous seven-day period. The borough's infection rate continues to remain lower than the regional and national average”. Further details are shown towards the end of this document.
3. On 12 April, England moved into Step 2 of the UK Government’s Roadmap for the easing of restrictions.
4. TWC are encouraging everyone to obtain Rapid Test Kits. They are now available for free to anyone over 18 with no Covid-19 symptoms. No appointments are needed to pick up home test kits.
5. On Sunday afternoon (18 April 2021), Freya Rooke-Moore will be running a short outdoor workshop in the churchyard. This will consist of a small group (less than 6) who will not enter the church. The music/creative workshop is a requirement as part of one of her university modules. It has been devised to focus on the community hence the reason for running it at the community hub of the village. There were no concerns from the Health and Safety Officer who gave his full support for this event to go ahead.

No further questionnaires have been received in the last week.

**Update from Version 18**

1. A Holy Communion service took place on 18 April, whichwas attended 8 members of the congregation, of which 7 received communion in one kind (wafers only) using the common plate. No concerns were raised at the service.
2. On 22 April, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. TWC stated “The number of new confirmed coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin continues to remain stable, the latest weekly figures show. There were 45 new cases reported for Telford and Wrekin during the past seven days (12-18 April), four more than the previous seven-day period. The borough's infection rate is similar to the regional and national average”. TWC continue to encourage everyone to obtain Rapid Test Kits, and take twice-weekly test. They are now available for free to anyone over 18 with no Covid-19 symptoms. No appointments are needed to pick up home test kits. Further details are on page 32.
3. On Sunday (25 April 2021), the congregation will meet outside in order to sing the last hymn of the service. Guidance published by the Govt and the Royal School of Church Music will be followed. Further details can be found here:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance#na>, and https://www.rscm.org.uk/covid-19-resources-for-churches/

We will mitigate the risk of mingling by leaving in an orderly way from back first and/or from front by Chancel door. Gathering in distinct groups of up to six or two households, with appropriate distancing observed.

No further questionnaires have been received in the last week.

**Update from Version 19**

1. A Holy Communion service took place on 25 April, whichwas attended 10 members of the congregation, all of which received communion in one kind (wafers only) using the common plate. No concerns were raised at the service. On 22 April, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. TWC stated “Infection rates in Telford and Wrekin begin to level out. The number of new confirmed coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin continues to remain stable, the latest weekly figures show. There were 41 new cases reported for Telford and Wrekin during the past seven days (19-25 April), four fewer than the previous seven-day period. The borough's infection rate is similar to the regional and national average.
2. TWC continue to encourage everyone to obtain Rapid Test Kits, and take twice-weekly test. They are now available for free to anyone over 18 with no Covid-19 symptoms. No appointments are needed to pick up home test kits.

No further questionnaires have been received in the last week.

**Update from Version 20**

1. A non-Eucharistic Service (Morning Prayers) took place on 2 Maywhichwas attended by 7 members of the congregation. No concerns were raised at the service.
2. A Holy Communion service took place on 9 May, whichwas attended by 6 members of the congregation, of which 5 received communion in one kind (wafers only) using the common plate. No concerns were raised at the service
3. On 6 May, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. TWC stated “The number of new confirmed coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin continues to remain stable, the latest weekly figures show. There were 39 new cases reported for Telford and Wrekin during the past seven days (26 April - 2 May), seven fewer than the previous seven-day period. The borough's infection rate is similar to the regional and national average.
4. On 13 May, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. TWC stated “The number of new Coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin has fallen slightly and we are now lower than the national average. Our cases are now the lowest we have seen since September last year. We are continuing to monitor the cluster of cases in Hadley and Leegomery involving the mutation of the UK-variant.

No further questionnaires have been received in the last week.

**Update from Version 21**

1. A Holy Communion service took place on 16 May, whichwas attended by 7 members of the congregation, all of which received communion in one kind (wafers only) using the common plate. No concerns were raised at the service
2. On 20 May, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. TWC stated “The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin is similar to the previous week, the latest figures show. The borough's infection rate is lower than the national average. Following an outbreak in Newport several weeks ago, analysis of the positive cases has identified one of the Indian variants. Health leaders are now warning that regular testing remains vital to control the virus”.
3. On 17 May, England moved into Step 3 of the UK Government’s Roadmap for the easing of restrictions.

No further questionnaires have been received in the last week.

**Update from Version 22**

1. A Holy Communion service took place on 23 May, whichwas attended by 5 members of the congregation, all of which received communion in one kind (wafers only) using the common plate. No concerns were raised at the service
2. On 27 May, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. TWC stated “The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin continues its decrease, the latest figures show. We had 19 new cases reported between 17 May – 23 May. Six fewer than the previous seven-day period”.

No further questionnaires have been received in the last week.

**Update from Version 23**

1. No service took place at St John the Baptist Church on 30 May. A benefice-wide Holy Communion service took place at St Peters Church, Edgmond
2. On 3 June, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. TWC stated “This week our latest figures show that Coronavirus cases have risen. Also, the Delta Variant (previously known as the Indian Variant) has become the dominant strain in Telford and Wrekin. 50 new cases have been reported between 24 May – 30 May. 32 more than the previous seven-day period. Zero residents have died within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test in the past week. No patients with Covid-19 were in the local hospital as of 30 May.

No further questionnaires have been received in the last week.

**Update from Version 24**

1. A non-Eucharistic Service (Morning Prayers) took place on 6 Junewhichwas attended by 7 members of the congregation. No concerns were raised at the service.
2. On 10 June, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. TWC stated “Coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin have risen for the second week running. 89 new cases have been reported between 31 May – 6 June. 40 more than the previous seven-day period. We are above the regional average but below the national average. No residents have died within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test in the past week. One patient with Covid-19 was in a local hospital as of 6 June. Local health leaders warn that Coronavirus has not gone away, and we must all play our part to keep cases low and everyone safe.

No further questionnaires have been received in the last week.

**Update from Version 25**

1. A Holy Communion service took place on 13 June, whichwas attended by 4 members of the congregation, all of which received communion in one kind (wafers only) using the common plate. No concerns were raised at the service.
2. On 17 June, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. TWC stated “Ninety-nine new cases have been reported between 7 June – 13 June. Eight more than the previous seven-day period. We are above the regional average but below the national average. No residents have died within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test in the past week. Two patients with Covid-19 were in a local hospital as of 13 June. Local health leaders warn that Coronavirus has not gone away, and we must all play our part to keep cases low and everyone safe. Local health leaders are asking people to get vaccinated and help prevent the spread of the virus so restrictions can lift.
3. On 21 June, England was due to move into Step 4 of the UK Government’s Roadmap for the easing of restrictions. This would have meant lifting all restrictions and life would return to normal. However, the Government announced on 14 June that this would not go ahead due to the rising number of Delta-variant Covid cases, and the easing would be pushed back to 19 July 2021. At the time of writing, this announcement has no effect on our approach to the provision of church worship, i.e., we carry on as we have previously. The only change that may have had a bearing is that the maximum number of attendees at weddings (30) has been removed in favour of an unlimited amount subject to each venue being able to accommodate people safely. No weddings were planned at our church during this period.

No further questionnaires have been received in the last week.

**Update from Version 26**

1. A Holy Communion service took place on 20 June, whichwas attended by 8 members of the congregation, all of which received communion in one kind (wafers only) using the common plate. No concerns were raised at the service.
2. On 24 June, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. TWC stated “167 new cases have been reported between 14 June – 20 June, 66 more than the previous seven-day period. We are above the regional average but below the national average. No residents have died within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test in the past week. Three patients with Covid-19 were in a local hospital as of 20 June. As walk-in vaccination clinics open in the borough, local health leaders are asking people to get vaccinated so some restrictions can lift.

No further questionnaires have been received in the last week.

**Update from Version 27**

1. A St John the Baptist Patronal service took place on 27 June, whichwas attended by 23 members of the congregation. The sacrament of Holy Communion was not administered. The service took us on a journey through the ages led by Reverend Dave Allport which included:
	* music provided by the Old Recs, positioned in the Chancel
	* a small choir of 4 singers positioned in the gallery
	* a potted history of our church building
	* a cast of four members of the congregation guided everyone through the service
2. A Holy Communion Service took place on 4 July which was attended by 5 members of the congregation

No concerns were raised at either service.

1. On 1 July, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. TWC stated 292 new cases were reported between 21 June – 27 June, an increase of 123 over the previous 7-day period., i.e., a 42% increase.
2. No formal email was released from TWC on 8 July, but their website shows 477 new cases were reported for the period 28 June to 4 July, an increase of 185 over the previous 7-day period, i.e., a 61% increase.

No further questionnaires have been received in the last week.

**Update from Version 28**

1. A non-Eucharistic Service (Morning Prayers) took place on 11 July which was attended by 6 members of the congregation. The sacrament of Holy Communion was not administered
2. A Holy Communion Service took place on 18 July which was attended by 3 members of the congregation

No concerns were raised at either service.

1. On 19 July, England moved into Step 4 of the UK Government’s Roadmap, which lifted all restrictions.
2. On 15 July, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. TWC stated There were 492 new Coronavirus cases reported for Telford and Wrekin during the past seven days (5 July – 11 July), an increase of 15 over the previous week, ie an increase of just under 4%. We are below the regional average and the national average. However, early indications are that cases are spiking for the week ending 18 July, so there is no levelling of cases in Telford and Wrekin. Sadly, one resident has died within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test in the past week. Eight patients with Covid-19 were in local hospitals as of 11 July.
3. On 22 July, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. TWC stated cases reach a new peak in Telford & Wrekin. Coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin have reached the highest number of weekly cases since the pandemic began. There were 984 new Coronavirus cases reported for Telford and Wrekin during the past seven days (12 July – 18 July), 483 more than the previous seven-day period, an increase of almost 100%. 14 patients with Covid-19 were in local hospitals as of 21 July. More than half of the people in hospital have not been vaccinated. With such a high number of cases recorded, health leaders are asking people to be cautious to protect themselves and their loved ones.
4. An updated questionnaire (version 2) has been issued to the congregation and community asking for their thoughts on returning to church life after the lifting of restrictions. A copy of the questionnaire is attached to the end of this document.

**Update from Version 29**

1. A Holy Communion Service took place on 25 July which was attended by 4 members of the congregation, all of which received communion in one kind (wafers only) using the common plate. No concerns were raised at the service.
2. On 29 July, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. TWC stated “Coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin have dropped in the last week, latest figures shown. There were 639 new cases reported during the past seven days (19-25 July), 372 less than the previous seven-day period. 24 patients with Covid-19 were in local hospitals as of 28 July.  Many of the people who have been seriously ill with coronavirus lately have not been vaccinated and are in younger age groups. We can expect numbers to fluctuate going forward so we are asking you to please continue to be cautious as the virus is still with us”.

**Update from Version 30**

1. No Holy Communion Service took place at St John the Baptist church on 1 August; however a service was held at St Michael’s Church, Waters Upton at the earlier time of 0915. This was attended by 10 members of the congregation, all of whom received communion in one kind (wafers only). This was the first time the author and his wife received the wafer in the hand direct from the celebrant since the first lockdown was introduced on 23 March 2020 (over 16 months ago). No concerns were raised at the service.
2. On 5 August, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. TWC stated “Coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin continue to fall for the second week in a row, latest figures show. There were 393 new Coronavirus cases reported during the past seven days (26 July – 1 August), 249 less than the previous seven-day period – a reduction of almost 61%.
19 patients with Covid-19 were in local hospitals as of 4 August.” We are below the regional and national average.
3. As the lifting of (almost) all restrictions came into force on 19 July 2021, we thought we would ask our community how they feel about coming back to our church. A questionnaire (a copy of which is attached towards the end of this document) was sent out which individuals were asked to complete anonymously and return to the Health and Safety Officer (Ray Hughes) via email or to his home address. An analysis of the results so far is shown on the following page:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Responses were received from* | 14 | people. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Of these* | 8 | were regular attendees |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 4 | were occasional attendees |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 2 | were community members |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *There was no clear concensus view on masks* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 4 | were OK to wear masks in church |  |  |  |  |
| *of which* | 4 | felt safer sitting with people wearing masks |  |  |  |
| *and* | 4 | felt safer wearing a mask themselves. |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *By comparison* | 9 | would prefer not to wear masks in church |  |  |  |
| *of which* | 7 | did not feel safer sitting with people wearing masks or were not bothered |
| *and* | 5 | did not feel safer wearing a mask themselves or were not bothered |  |
| *and*  | 5 | felt that wearing a mask lessened their sense of spirituality |  |  |
| *and*  | 10 | were uncomfortable singing with a mask on |  |  |  |
| *and*  | 5 | felt it lessened our sense of fellowship. |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *With respect to social distancing* | 8 | felt we should maintain social distancing |  |  |  |  |
| *while* | 5 | disagreed or were not bothered. |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *With respect to communion* | 4 | were OK receiving direct from the celebrant |  |  |  |
|  | 7 | felt safer receiving from the common plate. |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 6 | did not feel safe receiving from the shared cup |  |  |  |
| *while* | 9 | were OK with the idea of an individual communion glass. |  |  |

A full copy of the results is available if anyone would like to inspect them.

We will continue to update this aspect in each version.

**Update from Version 31**

1. A Holy Communion Service took place on 8 August which was attended by 9 members of the congregation, all of whom received Holy Communion using the Common Plate. Seven members did not wear masks, two did in addition to the Celebrant. Congregational singing did take place. No concerns were raised at the service.
2. There was no service on 15 August
3. A Holy Communion Service took place on 22 August which was attended by 10 members of the congregation, of which 9 received Holy Communion using the Common Plate. No concerns were raised at the service.
4. No service took place at our church on 29 August, but a gathered service took place at All Saints Church, Tibberton. The author was not present, so is unable to offer further comment
5. A non-Eucharistic Service (Morning Prayers) took place on 5 September which was attended by 7 members of the congregation. The sacrament of Holy Communion was not administered. No concerns were raised at the service.
6. A Holy Communion Service took place on 12 September which was attended by 6 members of the congregation, 5 of whom received Holy Communion directly from the Celebrant. No concerns were raised at the service.
7. On 12 August, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. TWC stated “The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin is again increasing, latest figures shown – after two weeks of decline. There were 457 new cases reported for Telford and Wrekin during 2-8 August, 64 more than the previous seven-day period. 20 patients with Covid-19 were in local hospitals as of 11 August.
8. On 19 August, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. TWC stated “ The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin is on the rise for the second week in a row, [latest figures show](https://emea01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flnks.gd%2Fl%2FeyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDEsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMTA4MTkuNDQ3NjI4NzEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL25ld3Nyb29tLnRlbGZvcmQuZ292LnVrL05ld3MvRGV0YWlscy8xNTg4NT91dG1fY29udGVudD0mdXRtX21lZGl1bT1lbWFpbCZ1dG1fbmFtZT0mdXRtX3NvdXJjZT1nb3ZkZWxpdmVyeSZ1dG1fdGVybT0ifQ.q7yeVSO56M8XGFuUgdS8E6-ftTg8fEDd_CfYLBtXAyI%2Fs%2F563260259%2Fbr%2F111140779362-l&data=04%7C01%7C%7C890fbeabcba149454f6b08d9631a053d%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637649785672098079%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=cNj2xS5BXLMStrDdBcaCqsKWJoafghXJoMlftsvdgug%3D&reserved=0). There were 601 new cases reported for Telford and Wrekin during 9-15 August, 143 more than the previous seven-day period. 19 patients with Covid-19 were in local hospitals as of 18 August. Sadly, there have been two further deaths reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test (bringing the total number of Covid-19 deaths in the borough since the start of the pandemic to 264).
9. On 21 August, the Friends of St John the Baptist church held their annual village BBQ, which, this year, had a “Bolas-on-Sea” theme. The weather was appalling with downpours of heavy rain from the outset at 1500, until approximately 1700 when the clouds cleared, and the sun came out! Despite the weather, we had an increased attendance over the last one in 2019, due to the following reasons:
	* There were plenty of activities for the children, such as a sand pit, paddling pool with “hook the duck”, coconut shy, colouring competition, “spot the difference” competition, “who grew the biggest sunflower competition”, activity games provided by our games mistress Lynne Pearce from Tibberton
	* There was a BBQ with burgers and sausage, and strawberries and cream for dessert – all for £5!
	* There was a bar with a soft drinks as well as alcoholic beverages
	* We had live music from the Old Recs who sang a range of nautically-themed songs such as Sloop John B, Yellow Submarine, We are Sailing, and many others that everyone sang along to outdoors
	* We had a “Seascape” board provided by our local artist Joan Darlington, ie a large sheet of painted plywood with body of a young lady in a bathing costume with holes in which to place your head!
	* Whilst this particular item would not normally be recorded in a Risk Assessment, the author felt it important to capture the mood of our community after an extended period of lockdown. Everyone breathed a huge sigh of relief at being able to do something that we haven’t done in a long time in a community environment. Some families expressed the view that it was a chance to get the children outdoors mixing at a time when the schools were closed for the summer break and was a welcome distraction for an afternoon, particularly as they weren’t sure if they were going to a have a holiday this year. All in all, it was a great success!
10. On 26 August, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. TWC stated “The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin is on the rise for the third week in a row, latest figures show. There were 656 new cases reported for Telford and Wrekin during 16-22 August, 51 more than the previous seven-day period. 27 patients with Covid-19 were in local hospitals as of 25 August. Sadly, there has been one further death reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test bringing the total borough deaths since the start of the pandemic at 265”.
11. On 2 September, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. TWC stated “The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin is rising for the fourth week in a row, latest figures show. There were 675 new cases reported for Telford and Wrekin during 23-29 August, 15 more than the previous seven-day period. 37 patients with Covid-19 were in local hospitals as of 1 September. Sadly, there have been three further deaths reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test, bringing the total borough deaths since the start of the pandemic at 268”.
12. On 9 September, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. TWC stated “Telford and Wrekin has the highest Covid-19 infection rate in West Midlands. The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin is increasing for the fifth week in a row, latest figures show. Currently, Telford and Wrekin has the highest Covid-19 infection rate in West Midlands and the 6th highest nationally. There were 828 new coronavirus cases during the past seven days (30 August – 5 September), 143 more than the previous seven-day period. Sadly, there have been two further deaths reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test (the total number of borough deaths since the start of the pandemic is 270)”.
13. No further questionnaires have been received.

**Update from Version 32**

1. A Holy Communion Service took place on 19 September which was attended by 4 members of the congregation, 3 of whom received Holy Communion directly from the celebrant. No concerns were raised at the service.
2. On 16 September, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. TWC stated “The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin remains high but has slightly decreased in the last week, latest figures show, following five weeks of being on an ascending trend. Telford and Wrekin still has the highest Covid-19 infection rates in West Midlands and is placed the 4th highest nationally. There were 747 new Coronavirus cases reported for Telford and Wrekin during the past seven days (6-12 September), 91 less than the previous seven-day period. Sadly, there have been three further deaths reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test (the total number of borough deaths since the start of the pandemic is 273)”.

**Update from Version 33**

1. On 26 September, a non-Eucharistic Service (Morning Prayers) took place which was attended by 4 members of the congregation. No concerns were raised at the service.
2. On 3 October, a Harvest Festival service took place, attended by 38 members of the community, including our favourite local band, the Old Recs, who provided live music, and seven members in our choir. The figure of 38 included 6 children. The service focused on the creation of our world, the blessing of the Harvest Bread (beautifully crafted by Alison Birkinshaw, our safeguarding officer), the offering of produce from the local community (which will be given to a local foodbank), thankfulness for what we have, intercessions to remember those in need, and a reminder from our local priest, the Reverend Dave Allport, that the last 18 months may have been difficult, with God’s help we will feel uplifted. In particular, todays service “raised us all up” (sung by the choir, even though it is not a hymn, but a hit single recorded by boy band, Westlife!). We ended by singing the Lord of the Dance. It was a fitting end to the celebration of the Harvest service. Refreshments were provided immediately afterwards.
3. On 23 September, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. TWC stated “The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin has slightly decreased in the last week but remains high, latest figures show. Telford and Wrekin has the second highest Covid-19 infection rates in West Midlands and is placed eighth highest nationally. There were 734 new Coronavirus cases reported for Telford and Wrekin during the past seven days (13-19 September), 17 less than the previous seven-day period. Sadly, there has been one further deaths reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test (The total number of borough deaths since the start of the pandemic is 274)”.
4. On 30 September, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates. TWC stated “ The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin has increased in the last week and continues to be well above the national and regional average, latest figures show. As of 24 September, Telford and Wrekin is ranked 11th highest nationally in Covid-19 infection rates. There were 929 new coronavirus cases reported for Telford and Wrekin during the past seven days (20-26 September), 185 more than the previous seven-day period. Sadly, there have been two further deaths reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test. The total number of borough deaths since the start of the pandemic is 276”.

**Update from Version 34**

1. On 10 October**, a** Holy Communion Service took place which was attended by 9 members of the congregation, 8 of whom received Holy Communion using the Common Plate. No concerns were raised at the service.
2. On 17 October**, a** Holy Communion Service took place which was attended by 9 members of the congregation, all of whom received Holy Communion from the Common Plate. No concerns were raised at the service.
3. On 24 October**, a** Holy Communion Service took place which was attended by 6 members of the congregation, all of whom received Holy Communion from the Common Plate. No concerns were raised at the service.
4. On 31 October**,** there was no service at our church. Instead a gathered service was held at the church of St Lawrence. The author did not attend.
5. On 7 November, a non-Eucharistic Service (Morning Prayers) took place which was attended by 4 members of the congregation. No concerns were raised at the service.
6. On 7 October, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates for the period ending 3 October. TWC stated “The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin has decreased in the last week but continues to be above the national and regional average, the latest figures show. As of 3 October, Telford and Wrekin is ranked 12th highest nationally in Covid-19 infection rates. There were 865 new Coronavirus cases reported for Telford and Wrekin during the past seven days (27 September - 3 October), 73 fewer than the previous seven-day period. Sadly, there have been two further deaths reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test. The total number of borough deaths since the start of the pandemic is 278”.
7. On 14 October, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates for the period ending 10 October. TWC stated “The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin has increased in the last week and continues to be above the national and regional average, the latest figures show. As of 10 October, Telford and Wrekin is ranked third highest in Covid-19 infection rates in West Midlands. There were 952 new coronavirus cases reported for Telford and Wrekin during the past seven days (4-10 October), 88 more than the previous seven-day period. There were 22 patients with Covid-19 in local hospitals as of 13 October. No further deaths have been reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test. The total number of borough deaths since the start of the pandemic is 278”.
8. On 21 October, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates for the period ending 10 October. TWC stated “The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin has increased in the last week and continues to be above the national and regional average, the latest figures show. As of 17 October, Telford and Wrekin is ranked second highest in Covid-19 infection rates in West Midlands. There were 1,053 new coronavirus cases reported for Telford and Wrekin during the past seven days (11-17 October), 101 more than the previous seven-day period. There were 32 patients with Covid-19 in local hospitals as of 20 October. No further deaths have been reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test. The total number of borough deaths since the start of the pandemic is 278”.
9. On 28 October, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates for the period ending 10 October. TWC stated “Covid-19 infection rates still high in Telford and Wrekin The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin has slightly increased again in the last week and is well above the national and regional average, the latest figures show. There were 1,099 new coronavirus cases reported for Telford and Wrekin during 18-24 October, 40 more than the previous seven-day period. 38 patients with Covid-19 were in local hospitals as of 27 October.”
10. On 4 November Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates for the period ending 31 October. TWC stated “The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin has decreased in the last week but continues to be above the national and regional average, latest figures show. There were 941 new coronavirus cases reported for Telford and Wrekin during 25-31 October, 160 less than the previous seven-day period. 57 patients with Covid-19 were in local hospitals as of 3 November. Sadly, there have been two further deaths reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test. The total number of borough deaths since the start of the pandemic is 280”.

**Update from Version 35**

1. On 14 November**,** a Remembrance Service took place which was attended by 20 members in total. No concerns were raised at the service.
2. On 21 November**,** a Holy Communion Service took place which was attended by 5 members of the congregation, all of whom received Holy Communion from the Common Plate. No concerns were raised at the service.
3. On 28 November**,** a Holy Communion Service took place which was attended by 5 members of the congregation, all of whom received Holy Communion from the Common Plate. No concerns were raised at the service.
4. On 11 November, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates for the period ending 7 November. TWC stated “ The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin has continued to decrease in the last week but is still above the national and regional average, the latest figures show. There were 815 new coronavirus cases reported for Telford and Wrekin during 1-7 November, 136 less than the previous seven-day period. 42 patients with Covid-19 were in local hospitals as of 10 November. Sadly, there have been four further deaths reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test. The total number of borough deaths since the start of the pandemic is 284”.
5. On 18 November, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates for the period ending 14 November. TWC stated “ The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin has increased in the last week and continues to be well above the national and regional average, the latest figures show. There were 960 new coronavirus cases reported for Telford and Wrekin during 8-14 November, 136 more than the previous seven-day period. 36 patients with Covid-19 were in local hospitals as of 17 November. Sadly, there have been six further deaths reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test. The total number of borough deaths since the start of the pandemic is 290”.
6. On 25 November, Telford and Wrekin (TWC) announced the latest infection rates for the period ending 21 November. TWC stated “ The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin has again increased in the last week and continues to be well above the national and regional average, the latest figures show. There were 1,077 new coronavirus cases reported for Telford and Wrekin during 15-21 November, 117 more than the previous seven-day period. 39 patients with Covid-19 were in local hospitals as of 24 November. Sadly, there have been three further deaths reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test. The total number of borough deaths since the start of the pandemic is 293”.
7. On Wednesday 24 November, the UK Government announced a new strain of the Covid-19 virus, later to be named as the Omicron variant, as a small number of cases were identified in the UK after coming to the world’s attention when the variant was first discovered in 6 x South African states. At the time of this documented version, a small number of Omicron cases were identified in the UK. Further measures to control the spread were announced by the UK Govt, (known as Plan B) which means that the wearing of masks will be compulsory from Tue 30 November in shops and on public transport in England. There was no official announcement from the House of Bishops recovery Group on the Govt’s proposals.

**Update from Version 36**

1. On 5 December**, a** non-Eucharistic Service (Morning Prayers) took place which was attended by 5 members of the congregation. No concerns were raised at the service.
2. On 10 December, the UK Govt announced new restrictions to help contain the virus their “Plan B”. Primarily, the areas that affect us are:
	* The mandatory wearing of masks for services in places of public worship, and
	* The advisory wearing of masks whilst singing

The Church of England’s [guidance](https://www.churchofengland.org/media/24767) is a helpful reference point.

1. On 12 December, **a** Holy Communion Service took place which was attended by 5 members of the congregation, all of whom received Holy Communion from the Common Plate. No concerns were raised at the service
2. On 14 December, we said goodbye to our friend and long-term member of our Parochial Church Council, Elaine Marian Gunn-Russell, who died on 13 November 2021 aged 92 years
3. On 15 December, a “Carols on the Doorstep” event took place in Great Bolas village around the bus-stop, listening and singing outdoors to the Christmas carols that were played by Radio Shropshire from 1800 till 1900, whilst drinking mulled wine, eating mince pies and sausage rolls! We did this last year and it was such a great success that we repeated it this year. It was well attended by many from the village and surrounding area – this now seems to be an annual Christmas event!
4. On 19 December, **a** Carol Service took place which was attended by 43 members of the congregation, including 6 children. No concerns were raised at the service
5. On 2 December, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates for the period ending 28 November. TWC stated “The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin has stabilised in the last week but is still well above the national and regional average - latest figures show. There were 1,090 new coronavirus cases reported during 22-28 November, 13 more than the previous seven-day period. For the week ending 28 November, Telford and Wrekin continues to have the highest infection rate in West Midlands. 50 patients with Covid-19 were in local hospitals as of 30 November. Sadly, one further death has been reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test. The total number of borough deaths since the start of the pandemic is 294”.
6. On 9 December, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates for the period ending 5 December. TWC stated “ The number of new coronavirus cases has stabilised in the last week but continues to be well above the national and regional average - latest figures show. There were 1,110 new coronavirus cases reported for Telford and Wrekin during 29 November – 5 December, almost the same as in the previous week. For the week ending 5 December, Telford and Wrekin continues to be the highest in West Midlands in Covid-19 infection rate. The number of patients in local hospitals with Covid-19 has more than halved over the last week - 23 patients as of 8 December, compared to 50 the previous week. Sadly, three further deaths have been reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test. The total number of borough deaths since the start of the pandemic is 297”.
7. On 16 December, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates for the period ending 12 December. TWC stated “ Telford and Wrekin continues to have the highest infection rate in the West Midlands. We expect cases to soon rise very fast due to the Omicron variant, as it is happening in other parts of the country. There were 968 new coronavirus cases reported for Telford and Wrekin during 6 – 12 December. 28 patients with Covid-19 were in local hospitals as of 15 December, compared to 23 the previous week. Sadly, two further deaths have been reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test. The total number of borough deaths since the start of the pandemic is 299.”

**Update from Version 37**

1. On 23 December, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates for the period ending 19 December. TWC stated “ Local cases go up in Telford and Wrekin, with 1 in 2 new cases in the last few days likely to be due to Omicron. There were 1,090 new coronavirus cases reported for Telford and Wrekin during 13-19 December. 16 patients with Covid-19 were in local hospitals as of 22 December. Sadly, three further deaths have been reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test. The total number of borough deaths since the start of the pandemic is 302. Please note: Unless there is a notable change, we won’t be sending any new Covid-19 updates on the number of cases in the borough until the new year”.

**Update from Version 38**

1. On 24 December at 23:30, a Holy Communion (Midnight Mass) service took place, which was attended by 11 members of the congregation, 10 of whom received Holy Communion. No concerns were raised at the service.
2. On 2 January, a non-Eucharistic Service (Morning Prayers) took place which was attended by 8 members of the congregation. No concerns were raised at the service.
3. On 9 January, a non-Eucharistic Service (Morning Prayers) took place which was attended by 6 members of the congregation. No concerns were raised at the service

**Update from Version 39**

1. On 16 January, a Holy Communion service took place, which was attended by 5 members of the congregation, all of whom received Holy Communion. No concerns were raised at the service.
2. On 23 January, a Holy Communion service took place which was attended by 7 members of the congregation, all of whom received Holy Communion. No concerns were raised at the service.
3. On 6 January 2022, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates for the period ending 2 January. TWC stated “ Local Covid-19 cases and hospitalisations spike significantly, with the Omicron variant now dominant in Telford and Wrekin. There were 3,015 new Covid-19 cases reported, 1,403 more compared to the previous week. 48 patients with Covid-19 were in local hospitals as of 5 January, up from 25 patients on 29 December. Sadly, there have been two further deaths reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test. The total number of borough deaths since the start of the pandemic is 304”.
4. On 13 January 2022, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates for the period ending 9 January. TWC stated “Local Covid-19 cases continue to be very high, with increasingly more Covid-19 patients in local hospitals – as Omicron continues to be dominant in Telford and Wrekin. There were 3,147 new Covid-19 cases reported,77 more compared to the previous week. 71 patients with Covid-19 were in local hospitals as of 12 January, up from 48 patients on 5 January. Sadly, there have been six further deaths reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test. The total number of borough deaths since the start of the pandemic is 310”.
5. On 20 January 2022, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates for the period ending 16 January. TWC stated “Local Covid-19 cases are on a decreasing trend but continue to be high, with Telford and Wrekin recording the highest infection rate in West Midlands. There were 2,504 new Covid-19 cases reported, 643 less compared to the previous week. 59 patients with Covid-19 were in local hospitals as of 19 January, down from 71 patients on 12 January. Sadly, there have been seven further deaths reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test. The total number of borough deaths since the start of the pandemic is 317”.

On Thursday 27 January 2022, the restrictions from Plan B were lifted meaning that face coverings were not required in public places, including places of worship. Our approach is to remind our congregation that they may wish to continue wearing masks in view of the continued (although diminishing) high numbers of Covid cases. The use of the Common Cup is allowed in accordance with the advice from the House of Bishops Recovery Group, but for the time being, we will not be providing wine as part of the Holy Communion service.

**Update from Version 40**

1. On 30 January, no service took place at St John’s – instead a gathered service took place at St Michael’s Church in Waters Upton. The author did not attend.
2. On 6 February, a Holy Communion service took place which was attended by 14 members of the congregation, 12 of whom received Holy Communion. Of those 12, 11 received Holy Communion in BOTH kinds via simultaneous administration, the remaining one chose to take the wafer only. No concerns were raised at the service.
3. On 13 February, a non-Eucharistic Service (Morning Prayers) took place which was attended by 10 members of the congregation. No concerns were raised at the service.
4. On 27 January 2022, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates for the period ending 23 January. TWC stated “Local Covid-19 cases increased in the last week, with our borough recording the second highest seven-day case rate of all English Councils, as at 21 January. There were 2,814 new Covid-19 cases reported, 292 more compared to the previous week. 66 patients with Covid-19 were in local hospitals on 26 January, up from 59 patients on 19 January. Sadly, there have been four further deaths reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test. The total number of borough deaths since the start of the pandemic is 321.
5. On 3 February, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates for the period ending 30 January. TWC stated “The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin has decreased in the last week but continues to be above the national and regional average, the latest figures show. As of 28 January, Telford and Wrekin has the tenth highest seven-day case rate nationally. There were 2,425 new Covid-19 cases reported, 773 less compared to the previous week. 58 patients with Covid-19 were in local hospitals on 2 February, down from 66 patients on 26 January. Sadly, five further deaths have been reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test. The total number of borough deaths since the start of the pandemic is 326.”
6. On 10 February, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates for the period ending 6 February. TWC stated “The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin has fallen in the last week but remains higher than both the regional and national average, the latest figures show. There were 1,608 Covid-19 cases reported, 816 less compared to the previous week. 55 patients with Covid-19 were in local hospitals on 9 February, down from 58 patients on 2 February. Sadly, six further deaths have been reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test. The total number of borough deaths since the start of the pandemic is 332”.

**Update from Version 41**

1. On 20 February, a Holy Communion service took place which was attended by 10 members of the congregation, 9 of whom received Holy Communion in BOTH kinds via simultaneous administration. No concerns were raised at the service.
2. On 24 February, Russia launched a large-scale invasion of Ukraine (not connected with this risk assessment but mentioned for historical reasons)
3. On 27 February, a Holy Communion service took place which was attended by 5 members of the congregation, 4 of whom received Holy Communion in both kinds via simultaneous administration. No concerns were raised at the service.
4. On 28 February, we said goodbye to our friend, Barbara Woolley, who died on 8 February 2022 aged 83 years
5. On 6 March, a Holy Communion service took place which was attended by 8 members of the congregation, 7 of whom received Holy Communion in both kinds via the Common Cup (for the first time since March 2020) or simultaneous administration. No concerns were raised at the service.
6. On 17 February2022, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates for the period ending 13 February. TWC stated “The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin has again fallen in the last week but remains higher than both the regional and national average, the latest figures show. There were 1,066 new Covid-19 cases reported, 544 less compared to the previous week. 43 patients with Covid-19 were in local hospitals on 16 February, down from 55 patients on 9 February. Sadly, six further deaths have been reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test. The total number of borough deaths since the start of the pandemic is 338.
7. On 24 February, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates for the period ending 20 February. TWC stated “The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin has fallen for the fifth week in a row. There were 693 Covid-19 cases reported, 380 less compared to the previous week. There were 43 patients with Covid-19 in local hospitals on 23 February, equal to the 43 patients on 16 February. Sadly, one further death has been reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test. The total number of borough deaths since the start of the pandemic is 339”.
8. On 3 March, Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) announced the latest infection rates for the period ending 27 February. TWC stated “The number of new coronavirus cases in Telford and Wrekin has again fallen for the sixth week in a row, the latest figures show. There were 505 Covid-19 cases reported, 188 less compared to the previous week. There were 49 patients with Covid-19 in local hospitals on 2 March, compared to 43 patients on 23 February. Sadly, four further deaths have been reported within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test. The total number of borough deaths since the start of the pandemic is 343”.

The latest graph charting the number of Covid-19 cases is on the next page.

**Risk assessment template**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Church:****St John the Baptist, Great Bolas, (Bolas Magna), Telford, TF6 6PQ** | **Assessor’s name:****Ray Hughes** | **Date completed:****7 March 2022** | **Review date: Non planned** |

| **Area of Focus**  | **Controls to consider (delete or detail as appropriate to your location and event)** | **Additional information** | **Action by whom?** | **Completed – date and name**  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Aerosol or droplet transmission of Covid-19** | Increase ventilation in your building: natural ventilation by opening doors, windows and vents or mechanical ventilation if appropriate/necessary. | Consult HSE [guidance on identifying poorly ventilated areas](https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/equipment-and-machinery/air-conditioning-and-ventilation/identifying-poorly-ventilated-areas.htm)Do not prop open fire doors. | Churchwardens on the day of service | On-going |
| Use outdoor spaces if appropriate and available. | Noted |  |  |
| Remind people that it is now mandatory to wear a face covering, unless exempt, when inside your building. You may also consider asking congregations to continue to wear face coverings for exempt activities that increase risk of aerosol spread such as singing. | Updated in our guidance to members of the congregation date 20 December 2021 | Dave Allport (as part of his invite to the Carol Service which took place on 19 December 2021) | 18 December 2021 |
| Put in place measures to reduce contact between people e.g. retaining social distancing | Updated in our guidance to members of the congregation published on 20 December 2021 | Ray Hughes | 20 December 2021 |

| **Area of Focus**  | **Controls to consider (delete or detail as appropriate to your location and event)** | **Additional information** | **Action by whom?** | **Completed – date and name**  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | If practical in your building, choose one point of entry into the church to manage flow of people and indicate this with notices, keeping emergency exits available at all times. Where possible use a different door for exit. | Noted, considered unnecessary | Ray Hughes | 23 July 2021 |
|  | For events where the building is likely to be especially busy, or the activity is particularly energetic, pay particular regard to the need for additional mitigations such as social distancing and face coverings. Where a non-worship activity with over 500 people is involved such as a concert or other event an NHS COVID Pass may be required for attendance. | Noted | Ray Hughes | 18 December 2021 |
| **Surface transmission of Covid-19** | Provide adequate hand cleansing stations. Provide hand sanitiser for the occasions when people can’t wash their hands. | Complete and regularly replenished | Jill Maddocks | 23 July 2021 and on-going |
| Identify where you can reduce the contact ofpeople with surfaces, e.g. by leaving open doors that are not fire doors, using electronic documents rather than paperwork. | Complete | Churchwardens | 23 July 2021 and on-going |

| **Area of Focus**  | **Controls to consider (delete or detail as appropriate to your location and event)** | **Additional information** | **Action by whom?** | **Completed – date and name**  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Good hygiene and cleaning of the building. | A regular routine of cleaning every week is already in place | Jill Maddocks | 23 July 2021 and on-going |
| Consider hygiene around shared items such as Bibles, prayer and hymn books that are used by multiple people.  | Only the boxed pews that are left open are used by members of the congregation with appropriate cleansed reading material  | Churchwardens | 23 July 2021 and on-going |
| If providing single-use service sheets or prayer cards, either place these on sheets or ask people to sanitise hands before picking one up, and request that people take these home with them. | As above, only the boxed pews that are left open are used by members of the congregation with appropriate cleansed reading material  | Churchwardens | 23 July 2021 and on-going |
| Cordon off or remove from public access any devotional objects or items (if they are liable to be touched or closely breathed on). | Done | Jill Maddocks | 23 July 2021 |
|  | Put in place a cleaning rota/system for children’s materials and toys, and consider providing cleaning materials for these if safe to do so (keeping all such materials out of the reach of children). | Done | Jill Maddocks | 23 July 2021 |
|  | Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available. | Not applicable | N/A | N/A |

| **Area of Focus**  | **Controls to consider (delete or detail as appropriate to your location and event)** | **Additional information** | **Action by whom?** | **Completed – date and name**  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them. | Done | Jill Maddocks | 23 July 2021 |
| **Visitors are unclear on requirements for attending church or visiting the building for other purposes, or anxious about attending.** | Display an NHS Test and Trace QR code, with an alternative option for those who cannot use that system. Encourage visitors to use one or other of these options. | Done | Ray Hughes | 23 July 2021 |
| Update your website, A Church Near You, and any relevant social media with information for visitors. Communicate details on requirements or requests such as bringing a face covering and options for those who may be anxious. | Done | Ray Hughes | 20 December 2021 |
| Consider specific advice for those who may struggle with continuing restrictions, such as those who are deaf or hard of hearing, or visually impaired. | Updated in our guidance to members of the congregation published on 23 July 2021 | Ray Hughes | 23 July 2021 |
| Consider if a booking system is needed, whether for general access or for specific events/services. | Not required given the small numbers who attend our services. A separate seating plan is in place when we hold larger events. | Reverend Dave Allport | 23 July 2021 |
| Communicate with nearby churches to ensure offered provisions are complementary. | Done, via the Parish Administrator from Ray Hughes | Ray Hughes | 23 July 2021 |
| Provide welcoming notices that outline safety measures. | Updated instructions provided on noticeboards and in communications to those attending our services via email. | Ray Hughes | 23 July 2021 |
| **Access to church buildings for purposes of recording and/or livestreaming (with no congregation present)****Risk:** contracting or spreading the virus by not social distancing or by touching contaminated services | Consider if anyone required for recording or broadcasting is clinically extremely vulnerable or has household members who are. Can someone else fulfil their role in the recording/livestreaming? Ensure that the people who need to attend the church building to enable the livestreaming or recording to take place are willing to do so and can do so safely. Make sure that only those essential for livestreaming or recording enter the church. | Advice on livestreaming and recording can be found [here](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-12/COVID%2019%20Livestreaming%20Worship%20v1.1.pdf). | None required as livestreaming is not in use in our church | N/A |
| Identify one point of entry to the church building, and a separate exit if possible. | Consider one entry point and a separate exit point if the numbers become large enough to warrant it. We will know if this is likely to be the case as we are asking individuals to book in advance | Responsible steward | As and when required |
| A suitable lone working policy has been consulted if relevant. | We have a documented policy contained within our General Risk Assessment. A copy can be requested from the author | Ray Hughes | 15 June 2020 |
| Consider staggered arrival times if multiple people from different households are coming into the building. | Managed by the responsible steward on the day | Ray Hughes | 19 March 2021 |
| Holy water stoups and the font are empty. |  | Jill Maddocks | 15 June 2020 and as required |
| Ensure safe use of equipment needed for livestreaming: avoid exceeding safe load on sockets, cables/tripod causing trip hazard |  | N/A | N/A |
| Provide adequate hand cleansing stations. Provide hand sanitiser for the occasions when people can’t wash their hands. |  | Jill Maddocks | 15 June 2020 and as required |
| Review CofE guide on cleaning church buildings. Complete the ‘cleaning’ section of this risk assessment (below). | Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found [here](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/Keeping%20church%20buildings%20clean%20v1.pdf)**.** |  |  |
| Identify where you can reduce the contact ofpeople with surfaces, e.g., by leaving open doors that are not fire doors, using electronic documents rather than paperwork. |  |  |  |
| Ensure you have an NHS Track and Trace QR code available, with an alternative option for those who cannot use that system. | Consult [advice on complying with Track and Trace](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/COVID%2019%20NHS%20Test%20and%20Trace%20v4_0.pdf). | Ray Hughes | 19 March 2021 |
| Consider how the national lockdown applies to the particular circumstances of the church and the worship or other activities envisaged. For gathered congregations or other activities drawing people from a wide area, consider the implications of where people travel from and the distance involved. | Our church is the only one open of the 6 churches in the benefice. Parishioners wishing to attend from outside our parish are requested to contact our Churchwarden, Jill Maddocks, before attending to ensure sufficient space is available. | Ray Hughes | 19 March 2021 |

| **Area of Focus**  | **Controls to consider (delete or detail as appropriate to your location and event)** | **Additional information** | **Action by whom?** | **Completed – date and name**  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Deciding whether to open to the public, public worship and other permitted activities** | Discuss with nearby venues and businesses to ensure that the timing and practical arrangements for using the church are compatible. |  | N/A | N/A |
| Check if any clergy, staff or volunteers required for opening to the public fall into clinically extremely vulnerable categories or have members of their household who do, and ensure there are enough people safely able and willing to facilitate opening and cleaning the building. | We expect individuals to notify other members of the PCC if they have fallen ill. | Ray Hughes | 19 March 2021 |
| Consider whether to discourage clinically extremely vulnerable members of the congregation or visitors from attending services altogether or setting aside a time for them to attend for individual devotions. |  |  |  |
| Consider if a booking system is needed, whether for general access or for specific events/services | As our church is the only one open in the benefice during the early months of 2021, we are asking worshippers from other churches to contact our Churchwarden to book in advance. | Jill Maddocks | As required |
| Communicate with nearby churches to ensure offered provisions are complementary. | Noted, but not something we are doing at this time. | Ray Hughes | 19 March 2021 |
| Confirm that all steps (above) for access for livestreaming/broadcast have been carried out before anyone else accesses the building. | No livestreaming or broadcast services are currently taking place in our church | Jill Maddocks/Ray Hughes | 10July 2020 |

| **Area of Focus**  | **Controls required**  | **Additional information** | **Action by whom?** | **Completed – date and name**  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Preparation of the Church for access by members of the public for any permitted purposes.****Risk:** Getting or spreading coronavirus in common use high traffic areas such as corridors, toilet facilities, entry/exit points and other communal areas. | Update your website, A Church Near You, and any relevant social media with information for visitors. Communicate details on requirements such as bringing a face covering. Clearly state the limits on attendance for weddings, funerals, commemorative events and any other permitted activities where upper limits apply (or provide a link to [this document](https://www.churchofengland.org/media/22028)). | Last updated on 19 March 2021 | Ray Hughes | 19 March 2021 |
| Update your website to remind people who are clinically extremely vulnerable to COVID-19 to stay at home as much as possible and observe social distancing guidance, and either strongly discourage them from attending church in person during this time or indicate a time for them to attend for individual devotions. | We do not have our own website | N/A | N/A |
| Review CofE guide on cleaning church buildings. Complete the ‘cleaning’ section of this risk assessment (below). | Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found  [here](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/Keeping%20church%20buildings%20clean%20v1.pdf)**.** | Jill Maddocks | 10 July 2020 |
| Read the CofE guide on face coverings and produce signage or other relevant materials to indicate compliance with the law requiring these for all except those exempt. | Appropriate signage is in place. Advice on face coverings can be found  [here](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-08/COVID%2019%20advice%20on%20face%20coverings%20v3.0.pdf). | Jill Maddocks | 10 July 2020 |

| **Area of Focus**  | **Controls to consider (delete or detail as appropriate to your location and event)** | **Additional information** | **Action by whom?** | **Completed – date and name**  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Choose one point of entry into the church to manage flow of people and indicate this with notices, keeping emergency exits available at all times. Where possible use a different exit. | Main entrance. Included in our Fire Risk Assessment and displayed on our Notice Boards. Will be considered as and when necessary. | Ray Hughes | 10 July2020 |
|  | Make any temporary arrangements for people to wait or queue outside the building (taking into account any consequential risks arising from people gathering outside). | Unlikely to be required for normal Sunday church services. Will be reviewed for all other occasions, such as weddings, funerals, etc when necessary. We will provide a steward at the entrance emphasising a greater need to adhere to the basic rules  | Responsible steward | As and when required |
| Make any temporary arrangements for managing the approaches to the entry points and any parking areas to ensure social distancing can be observed (taking into account any consequential risks arising from changes to circulation). | Our weekly attendance is less than ten, mainly by those from within the local area, who are familiar with our procedures. Additional measures are already in place for managing larger groups and will be enforced when appropriate. | Ray Hughes | 19 March 2021 |

| **Area of Focus**  | **Controls required**  | **Additional information** | **Action by whom?** | **Completed – date and name**  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation. | The two opening windows in the Nave are usually open. The main door will be kept open during services (to be reviewed if the church becomes too cold). We will consider opening the Chancel door to improve circulation if it is practicable | Jill Maddocks/Ray Hughes | 10 July 2020 |
|  | Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation. | Noted – see above |  |  |
|  | If heating is required check your system is safe to use and test it before people are allowed in. | Guidance on [church heating can be found here](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-10/COVID%2019%20Church%20Heating%20v1.0_1.pdf). |  |  |

| **Area of Focus**  | **Controls required**  | **Additional information** | **Action by whom?** | **Completed – date and name**  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Remove Bibles/literature/hymn books/leaflets unless they are absolutely essential, and participants cannot bring their own. Hardcopy literature should be quarantined for at least 48 hours between use. | It is not practical to fully adhere to the advice, but we are adopting the following procedure which will be advertised in a poster at the entrance and included in the notices at the beginning of each service:Pews with open doors will be provided with hymn books and service sheets which had been previously quarantined for 72hrs or more. When leaving the pew, members of the congregation will be asked to close the pew which indicates that it will require cleaning at the end of the service. | Jill Maddocks or other member of the PCC as required. | 10 July 2020 and as required |

| **Area of Focus**  | **Controls required**  | **Additional information** | **Action by whom?** | **Completed – date and name**  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Cordon off or remove from public access any devotional objects or items (if they are liable to be touched or closely breathed on) | The Chancel will be closed to all but the presiding minister. During the period from 3 January to 7 February 2021, we did not provide Holy Communion. However, from 14 February, we are able to offer this. Please see pages 10 and 11 for further details on the methods for delivering Holy Communion. | PCC | Ray Hughes and Dave Allport – 10 February 2021 |
| Consider if pew cushions/kneelers need to be removed as per government guidance on soft surfaces | Will be isolated for 72 hours after each service. | Jill Maddocks | 10 July 2020 and as required. |
| Remove or isolate children’s resources and play areas | Some have been removed to the Vestry, however it is not practical to remove all items. A prominent note has been displayed asking parents not to allow their children to touch these items. | Ray Hughes | 15 June 2020 |

| **Area of Focus**  | **Controls required**  | **Additional information** | **Action by whom?** | **Completed – date and name**  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Walk through the church to plan for physical distancing in seats, aisles, at the altar rail, including safe flow of visitors. Remember 2m in all directions from each person (or 1m with risk mitigation if absolutely necessary).  | A diagrammatical assessment is available and is reviewed when necessary. Movement during services (e.g., coming forward to the chancel step to read the lesson or receive the sacrament) will be restricted to one person in the aisle at any time.Readers will be asked to either read from their seat or if approaching the chancel, keep two metres away from the presiding minister. Readers will be asked NOT to use the lectern. | Dave Allport/ Jill Maddocks/Ray Hughes | 15 June 2020 |
| Clearly mark out seating areas including exclusion zones to maintain distancing. | Not considered necessary for normal Sunday services but see above for the procedure with respect to open and closed box pew doors. Will be reviewed for services with larger numbers when required. | Ray Hughes | 15 June 2020 |

| **Area of Focus**  | **Controls required**  | **Additional information** | **Action by whom?** | **Completed – date and name**  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Clearly mark out flow of movement for people entering and leaving the building to maintain physical distancing requirements. | Not considered necessary for normal Sunday services but see procedure above for movement during services. Will be reviewed for services with larger numbers when required. | Ray Hughes | 15 June 2020 |
| Limit access to places were the public does not need go, maybe with a temporary cordon in needed. | A table has been placed in front of the Chancel stating that no entry is permitted. | Ray Hughes | 15 June 2020 |
| Determine placement of hand sanitisers available for visitors to use. | Done. Register with [Parish Buying](https://www.parishbuying.org.uk/) for procurement options. | Jill Maddocks | 15 June 2020 |
| Determine if temporary changes are needed to the building to facilitate social distancing | Consult [advice on gaining temporary permissions](https://www.churchofengland.org/media/20647). Not required at present but will review for larger gatherings. | Ray Hughes | 15 June 2020 |
| Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g., no physical contact, practice hand washing etc. | Displayed on the main church gate, notice board, and main entrance door, and provided by the Steward managing the entry of the congregation. | Ray Hughes | 15 June 2020 |

| **Area of Focus**  | **Controls required**  | **Additional information** | **Action by whom?** | **Completed – date and name**  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Ensure high-risk surfaces and touch points have been wiped with appropriate sanitiser spray or disposable wipes | The church is thoroughly cleaned each Wednesday leaving 72 hours before admission for the next Sunday service. Advice oncleaning church buildings can be found [here](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/Keeping%20church%20buildings%20clean%20v1.pdf)**.** | Jill Maddocks | 15 June 2020, and weekly |
| Check that handwashing facilities have adequate soap provision and paper towels, and a bin for the paper towels. | Done. Register with [Parish Buying](https://www.parishbuying.org.uk/) for procurement options. | Jill Maddocks | 15 June 2020 |
| Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available. |  | N/A | N/A |
| Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g., polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them. |  | Jill Maddocks | 15 June 2020 |

| **Area of Focus**  | **Controls required**  | **Additional information** | **Action by whom?** | **Completed – date and name**  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Use of the church for baptisms, weddings, funerals and commemorative services** | Consider the specific guidance in place for those activities and assess the additional controls and limits on attendance in place. | Noted.Advice on baptisms can be found [here](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-01/COVID%2019%20advice%20for%20Clergy%20Conducting%20Baptisms%20v4.6.pdf).Advice on weddings can be found [here](https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches#na) (scroll down to Can weddings go ahead?).Advice on funerals can be found [here](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-01/COVID%2019%20Advice%20on%20Conducting%20Funerals%20v5.6.pdf).The government’s advice on commemorative events can be found [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-from-2-december). | Ray Hughes | 19 March 2021 |

| **Area of Focus**  | **Controls required**  | **Additional information** | **Action by whom?** | **Completed – date and name**  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Use of the church for permitted activities other than private prayer or worship** | Consider the specific guidance in place for those activities and assess the additional controls and limits on attendance in place. Check that any external group using the church has COVID-secure working practices in place, including their own risk assessment where necessary, and will comply with what is required by the church. | Noted, our coffee mornings and Creative Writing group have been suspended until further notice. The government’s guidance on the safe use of multi-purpose community facilities for permitted activities (including formal childcare and support groups) can be found [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-multi-purpose-community-facilities/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-multi-purpose-community-facilities). Advice on use of churches as vaccination centres can be found [here](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-12/COVID%2019%20Churches%20as%20vaccination%20centres%20v1.0.pdf).The government’s guidance on the use of hospitality spaces can be found [here](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/restaurants-offering-takeaway-or-delivery). | Ray Hughes | 19 March 2021 |

| **Cleaning the church before and after general use (no known exposure to anyone with Coronavirus symptoms)**Advice on [cleaning church buildings can be found here](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/Keeping%20church%20buildings%20clean%20v1.pdf).**Risk:** Getting or spreading coronavirus by not cleaning surfaces, equipment and shared facilities. | If the church building has been closed for 48 hours between periods of being open then there is no need for extra cleaning to remove the virus from surfaces. | Noted |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| If 48-hour closure is not possible then check all cleaners are not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating. | Noted |  |  |
| Identify surfaces that are frequently touched andby many people (often common areas), e.g.handrails, door handles, shared equipment, toilets, and specify the frequency and level of cleaning and by whom. | The church is thoroughly cleaned each Wednesday leaving 72 hours before admission for the next Sunday service. | Jill Maddocks | Every week |
| Keep surfaces clear to make it easier to cleanand reduce the likelihood of contaminating objects. | Noted |  |  |
| Bibles/literature/hymn books/leaflets deemed essential for services should be quarantined for 48 hours after use.  | Performed every week | Jill Maddocks | Weekly |
| All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable). | Register with [Parish Buying](https://www.parishbuying.org.uk/) for procurement options. |  |  |
| Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned. | Register with [Parish Buying](https://www.parishbuying.org.uk/) for procurement options. |  |  |
| Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g., hand towels) from the site. |  | Jill Maddocks | Weekly |
| Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g., hand towels) from the site – suggested daily removal. |  | Jill Maddocks | Weekly |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms** | If possible close the church building for 48 hours with no access permitted. | Noted, not yet happened. |  |  |
| If 48-hour closure is not possible then follow Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings. | [**Public Health England guidance** available here.](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings) |  |  |
| If the building has been quarantined for 48 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning. | Advice on[**cleaning church buildings can be found here**](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/Keeping%20church%20buildings%20clean%20v1.pdf)**.** |  |  |

**Questionnaire**

The Church of England has published its revised guidance in response to the Government’s lifting of Covid restrictions on 19th July. You can find the revised guidance by searching for “Church of England Covid guidance”. The guidance identifies that every church situation is different and that in response to the lifting of legal restrictions we should be primarily guided by our concern for each other’s physical, mental and spiritual well-being.

This questionnaire is designed to improve our understanding of how each of us feels about church and community life in the “new normal”. The questions on page 1 focus on your involvement with the church and community. The second page is intended to help us better understand how people are feeling about church services as restrictions are lifted.

Place a X in as many boxes as describe your situation.

How would you describe your normal involvement with St John’s ?

I attend services regularly 🞏

I attend services from time to time 🞏

I attend the coffee mornings / Community Café 🞏

I attend special services and events 🞏

I like to receive Holy Communion 🞏

I sometimes lead or read at services 🞏

How would you like to be involved in the future?

Same as before 🞏

I would like to be more involved in the church;

Leading and reading 🞏

Arranging flowers 🞏

Singing in the choir 🞏

Joining a local study group 🞏

I would be interested in participating in community events;

Community Café 🞏

Games and Quiz nights 🞏

Book club 🞏

Rambling (and/or cycling) club 🞏

Maintaining the church and churchyard 🞏

Other 🞏

I’d be willing to help organize or lead community events 🞏

Please say how you would like to get involved

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following, following the Government’s announcement of the easing of restrictions from 19 July2021? Insert an X in the appropriate box.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Not bothered | Agree | Strongly agree |
| I don’t feel safe attending church at the moment |  |  |  |  |  |
| I’d prefer not to wear a mask in church |  |  |  |  |  |
| We need to get back to normal as soon as possible |  |  |  |  |  |
| I’d feel safe if I knew that others were either testing regularly or vaccinated. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I think we should maintain social distancing in church? |  |  |  |  |  |
| I’d feel safer if everyone around me was wearing a mask |  |  |  |  |  |
| I’d feel safer if I was wearing a mask |  |  |  |  |  |
| Wearing a mask in Church lessens my sense of spirituality and closeness to God. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I think it’s important that we can return to congregational singing |  |  |  |  |  |
| I wouldn’t feel comfortable singing with a mask on. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Everyone wearing masks reduces our sense of fellowship. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I’d like us to return to receiving Communion as before (both bread and wine at the altar rail). |  |  |  |  |  |
| I don’t feel safe receiving Communion at all |  |  |  |  |  |
| I’m OK just receiving the consecrated bread and not the wine. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I’d feel safe receiving communion directly from the celebrant’s hand at the step or in my pew |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Not bothered | Agree | Strongly agree |
| I would feel safer receiving communion if the celebrant wore a mask. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I’d feel safe receiving communion from a plate at the chancel step |  |  |  |  |  |
| I’d feel safe receiving from a shared cup |  |  |  |  |  |
| I’d feel OK receiving from an individual communion glass |  |  |  |  |  |
| I would feel safer if I knew the celebrant was testing weekly |  |  |  |  |  |

Do you have any other comments that you would like to mention?

If you would like a reply or wish to be more involved, please write your name here: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to; Ray Hughes

ray-hughes@outlook.com

Grange Bungalow

21 Meeson

Telford

TF6 6PE

Thank You

The following note, prepared by Revd Dave Allport, accompanied the Questionnaire form, to provide background for its completion.

St John the Baptist, Great Bolas,

Dear friend,

The Church of England has published its revised guidance in response to the Government’s lifting of Covid restrictions on 19th July. You can find the revised guidance by searching for “Church of England Covid guidance”. The guidance identifies that every church situation is different and that in response to the lifting of legal restrictions we should be primarily guided by our concern for each other’s physical, mental and spiritual well-being.

The attached questionnaire is designed to improve our understanding of how each of us feels about church and community life in the “new normal”. The questions on page 1 focus on our involvement with the church and community. The second page is intended to help us better understand how people are feeling about church services as restrictions are lifted.

Please complete as much of the form which is relevant to you. If there are others in your household, please share the questionnaire with them and encourage them to give their views.

Paper copies of the questionnaire will be made available if you prefer this.

Return the completed form to:

Ray Hughes (ray-hughes@outlook.com)

21, Meeson

TF6 6PE

Thanks for your help.