

## **Guidelines for Church and Positive Steps Activities** **During the National Lockdown**

On 5th January 2021 England was placed in a national lockdown meaning that people should stay at home and only leave for the few permitted reasons. This document is a summary of the current rules during the national lockdown and should be read alongside the detailed risk assessment documents for each activity.

### **Summary**

The country is now in national lockdown. This means that, except for permitted reasons people should stay at home and this is enforceable by law. Currently worship (including funerals) and the Beestro are allowed to continue under the national lockdown (including Cracking Good Food cooking and distributing food). Youth Activities where they are supporting vulnerable young people and where these activities need to happen face to face. Official support groups may continue where these need to happen face to face. People may also enter the building to undertake essential cleaning tasks or to undertake essential maintenance tasks (where they are urgent and cannot wait). No other activities are permitted within the building. All other activities must be suspended or held online.

### **Worship**

- Face coverings must be worn by all participants except when leading prayers, preaching, reading from the Bible, leading worship or delivering any other announcement from the front of church.
- A minimum of 2 metres distance from people outside of a household or bubble should be observed at all times.
- Hands should be washed or sanitised:
  - on entering and leaving the building
  - before and after touching something that will be touch by someone else
  - before and after removing or replacing a face covering
  - before and after eating or drinking
  - after using the toilet facilities
  - Clergy should also observe the additional hand sanitising guidelines associated with Holy Communion and Baptism.
- Socialising with others inside or outside the building is strictly prohibited.
- Worship in a public space which is not the building or the church yard is prohibited.
- Singing is not permitted by congregations indoors. If singing outdoors, the congregation must be 2 metres apart from one another and not facing each other.

- Singing is permitted indoors by a choir or a worship group but:
  - Should be kept to a minimum
  - Should involve as few people as possible
  - All performers should be socially distanced and facing the same direction
  - All performers must be at least 2 metres away from the congregation.
- Time spent in the building should be as minimal as possible
- Wherever possible windows or doors should be kept open to improve ventilation when people are in the building.
- Prayer groups and study groups are not permitted and can only be held online.
- After use, the worship room and any items used must be cleaned or quarantined for a minimum of 48 hours.
- Those entering the building can use the QR code or consent form for the purposes of Test and Trace however, this is not compulsory for those attending acts of worship.
- Where a craft activities or prayer or worship resources are being used, these should be provided to each individual, household or bubble and should not be shared. These must either be disposable, cleaned after use or quarantine for 48 hours.
- Sunday school is not permitted to be held in the building and must now be online only (ensuring that all safeguarding procedures for online meeting are observed)
- Those involved in stewarding should now wear a visor in addition to a face mask (this is also advised in the church risk assessment for those distributing communion).
- Congregations are encouraged to attend services online and should only attend the building for worship if this is essential to their wellbeing.

### **Brunswick Beestro**

- Face coverings must be worn at all times unless exempt or to facilitate lip reading.
- A minimum of 2 metres distance from people outside of a household or bubble should be observed at all times.
- Hands should be washed or sanitised:
  - on entering and leaving the building
  - before and after touching something that will be touch by someone else
  - before and after removing or replacing a face covering
  - before and after eating or drinking
  - after using the toilet facilities
  - between each customer

## National Lockdown Guidelines - 10th January 2021

- No one should be allowed in the building except for those serving food, cooking and preparing food.
- All staff, volunteers and visitors must provide their details for NHS Test and Trace or use the QR code provided.
- After each session, the space and any items used must be cleaned or quarantined for a minimum of 48 hours.

### **Other Activities**

- Meetings are online only and must not be conducted in person.
- Youth Activities are only where they are supporting vulnerable young people and cannot be conducted remotely. There should be a maximum of 15 participants
- No other group is permitted to hire the building except for the purpose of worship or official support groups.
- If a group is hiring the building for worship, they must adhere to the worship guidelines. Prayer meetings and study groups are not permitted under National Lockdown.
- Weddings are not permitted except in exceptional circumstances and must consist of no more than 6 people not including those who are working.
- Funerals are permitted but with no more than 30 people in attendance plus those who are working. Any other commemoration of someone who has died is limited to 6 people plus those who are working.
- Clergy are permitted to attend to minister to the sick or dying.

### **Documents Used to Create this Guidance**

- HM Government - COVID-19: guidance for the safe use of places of worship from 2 December (Updated 22nd December 2020)
- HM Government - National lockdown: Stay at Home (updated 6th January 2021)
- COVID-19 Permitted Activities under national lockdown rules (Version 3.1)
- National Youth Association - Providing Youth Sector Activities During COVID-19 Lockdowns: Red Readiness