

Providence Baptist Chapel, Cheltenham **Revised 18 July 2020**

Covid-19 – Guidance for Users on the Resumption of Meetings

Objectives

To enable Providence Baptist Chapel to resume meetings in a safe and staged way which:

- Minimises the risks of spreading the Covid-19 virus.
- Promotes the safety of those attending the Chapel.
- Complies with current Government guidelines for places of worship. This Guidance may be found in full at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-from-4-july/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-from-4-july>

Limitations

This User Guidance:

- Refers only to matters relating to Covid-19 and not to any other Health and Safety issues.
- Applies only to those meetings currently being held on the Chapel premises. At present these are the Sunday (Lord's Day) worship services (11:00am & 6:30pm) (not including the Communion Service), and Wednesday midweek services (7:30pm).
- Applies equally to both the indoor and outdoor parts of the Providence Baptist Chapel premises.
- Will be updated from time to time as the need arises.

Should You Attend the Meetings?

We quite understand that not everyone may feel that now is the best time for them to resume attending the meetings. Services will continue to be broadcast online using all the channels available during the lockdown and we trust this will continue to help most of those who must stay at home.

You should not attend any meeting if:

- You are shielding (clinically extremely vulnerable), at least until 1st August 2020.
- You are self-isolating.
- You have symptoms of Covid-19 (recent onset of a new continuous cough; high temperature; a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell).

If you are in the more general 'clinically vulnerable' group (i.e. you are aged 70 or over, or an adult instructed to get a yearly flu jab on medical grounds) you may prefer to stay away or to attend wearing a face covering. This is a matter for your discretion.

You should not travel with someone from outside your household/support bubble unless you can practise social distancing or apply suitable mitigation on the journey.

What You Should Do

- Bring your own Bible and take it away with you after each service. (See under 'The New Arrangements' below regarding hymn books.)
- If you will need drinking water, please bring your own and take the container away with you.
- Keep all your possessions with you at all times.
- Be diligent in washing or sanitising your hands when you arrive and leave and at other times as appropriate.
- Avoid giving donations by cash or cheque if at all possible.
- Keep with your household/support bubble group and avoid physical contact with others.
- Ensure that your children are supervised at all times.
- Keep socialising to an absolute minimum.

- As far as possible keep at least 2m distance from other households when moving about. Go straight to your seat.
- Avoid unnecessary touching of surfaces and objects.
- Follow the direction signs and comply with the instructions of the stewards.
- Leave the premises immediately if you develop symptoms of Covid-19.
- If you develop symptoms either at or after a meeting, follow the appropriate test and self-isolation procedures and advise one of the Providence Chapel Church Officers so that contact details may be made available if required to NHS Track and Trace.
- Do not access the Chapel premises at any times other than for services unless this has been expressly agreed beforehand by one of the Church Officers. This is to minimise the risk of contamination.

What We Shall Do

- Install signage and direction markings to guide people in their use of spaces within and immediately outside the building.
- Provide cleaning/sanitising materials, gloves, etc.
- Appoint stewards and cleaners as necessary to carry out the measures specified here..
- Clean all obvious contamination points such as toilets, door handles, chair frames and surfaces after every service.
- Maintain good ventilation levels throughout the parts of the building remaining in use.
- Maintain a record of those attending each meeting. To be retained for 21 days in case of need for NHS Track and Trace purposes.
- Ensure that reusable hymn booklets are quarantined for at least 48 hours between each use.
- Keep users informed of changes to arrangements.

The New Arrangements

- **Entry and Exit**
 - Entrance to the Chapel will only be through the main entrance doors to the porch of the Chapel extension (the ramped access).
 - Exit from the Chapel will only be through the 'Old Porch' door at the pulpit end of the building which is clearly signed Exit. (Please note that there is a step down at each doorway in this porch.)
 - The external doorway to the car park will not be available for either entry or exit (except in case of emergency).
- **Entry Procedures**
 - Please ensure that your household group waits at the inner door of the entry porch to be checked in by the door steward before entering the Chapel. If queuing is necessary, social distancing of 2 metres between households must be observed (as marked on the ramp and into the entry porch).
 - The steward will ask the lead person in the household group to confirm that none of your group currently has symptoms of Covid-19 and you will all be required to cleanse your hands with sanitiser. If any of your group is symptomatic, unfortunately nobody in the group be allowed to enter.
 - The steward will register the name of each person entering the Chapel and contact details for the household group (if these are not already known).
 - Hymn booklets may be collected from the box on the door steward's table.
- **Internal circulation**
 - Movement in the main aisle will be in one direction only, towards the pulpit.

- Movement to and from the toilet corridor will be two-directional, using the rear door from the main chapel. Flow will be controlled by a steward (see below under '*Use of Toilets*').
- No access will be permitted to the kitchen or the upstairs room.

- **Seating**

Some 66 chairs are available. However the maximum number of people who can be accommodated at each meeting when social distancing requirements are met will vary according to the particular mix of households present. The practical maximum is likely to be around 40.

To make the best use of the space while still retaining acceptable social distancing you will be asked to:

- Sit together with your other household members.
- Keep at least two seats (approx. 1m) free between your household and another in the same row.
- Sit as directed by the stewards.

- **Use of toilets**

- Access to toilets will be limited. You are strongly advised to use your home facilities immediately before leaving for Chapel.
- Only the Gents toilets and the Disabled toilet will be available (the latter for ladies and disabled people only). The Ladies toilet will be closed.
- The available toilets will operate simultaneously on a one-out/one-in basis..
- Before and after services the flow of people in the toilet corridor will be controlled by a steward stationed at the door from the main chapel. The aim will be to have no more than two people (adults) in the corridor at any one time.
- Children under 11 must always be accompanied to the toilet by an adult.
- Once a toilet has been used the user should wipe clean the surfaces touched (including door handles) using the cleaning materials provided.

- **Singing**

The Government's strong advice is that "*People should avoid singing... because of the potential for increased risk of [Covid-19] transmission from aerosol and droplets.*" At the same time, congregational sung worship is a key element of our meetings.

As services resume at Providence Baptist Chapel it is intended to explore on a trial basis different ways by which some form of sung worship may be included without incurring the risks which the Government properly advises against. Hymn booklets may be picked up from the box at the entry door and should be returned to the box at the exit door at the end of the service. Do not let anyone who is not in your household group handle your hymn booklet.

- **Donations**

Donations by cash or cheque are discouraged because of the risk of contamination through handling. However, if such donations are received they will be removed from the boxes using protective gloves and placed in a plastic bag. This will then be deposited in the safe, where it will remain for at least 72 hours before being handled for counting.

- **Exit procedures**

- The occupants of each row will be asked to leave the building row by row from the front under the direction of the stewards.
- Your whole household/support bubble should leave together.
- Please deposit your hymn booklet in the box near the exit door.
- Leaving greetings should be of the briefest and without physical contact.
- No sweets will be distributed to children.

- Hands should be cleansed with the provided sanitiser on leaving.
- Please disperse from the area outside the building as quickly as possible to avoid bunching of households.

Thank you for your continuing cooperation in difficult circumstances.

The Church Officers - 18th July 2020