

## Arrangements for Public Worship during the COVID-19 Outbreak

Version	Date	Revisions
0.1	07/07/2020	Draft issue for comment.
1.1	13/07/2020	Final version for publication.
1.2	07/08/2020	Amended to reflect additional legal requirements.

### Introduction

This document outlines our response to The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2020 and the government publication 'COVID-19: guidance for the safe use of places of worship during the pandemic from 4 July'. It shall be posted on our website, displayed on the chapel notice board, and issued to those who normally worship with us.

The majority of the measures described in this document relate to the safety of the chapel premises and will have no material impact on the conduct of worship. Nevertheless, all changes to our normal practices will be reviewed by the elders on a regular basis and revoked at an appropriate time. This document will also be updated as required to reflect changes to official guidance and legislation.

### Use of the chapel premises

The chapel premises are only used for services of worship and functions preparatory to the same. In accordance with current legislation, and until further notice, gatherings of more than thirty people will only be permitted at the following regular service times:

The Lord's Day (Sunday)	10.30am	Prayer Meeting
	11.00am	Morning Worship
	6.00pm	Evening Worship
Wednesday	7.30pm	Bible Study and Prayer Meeting

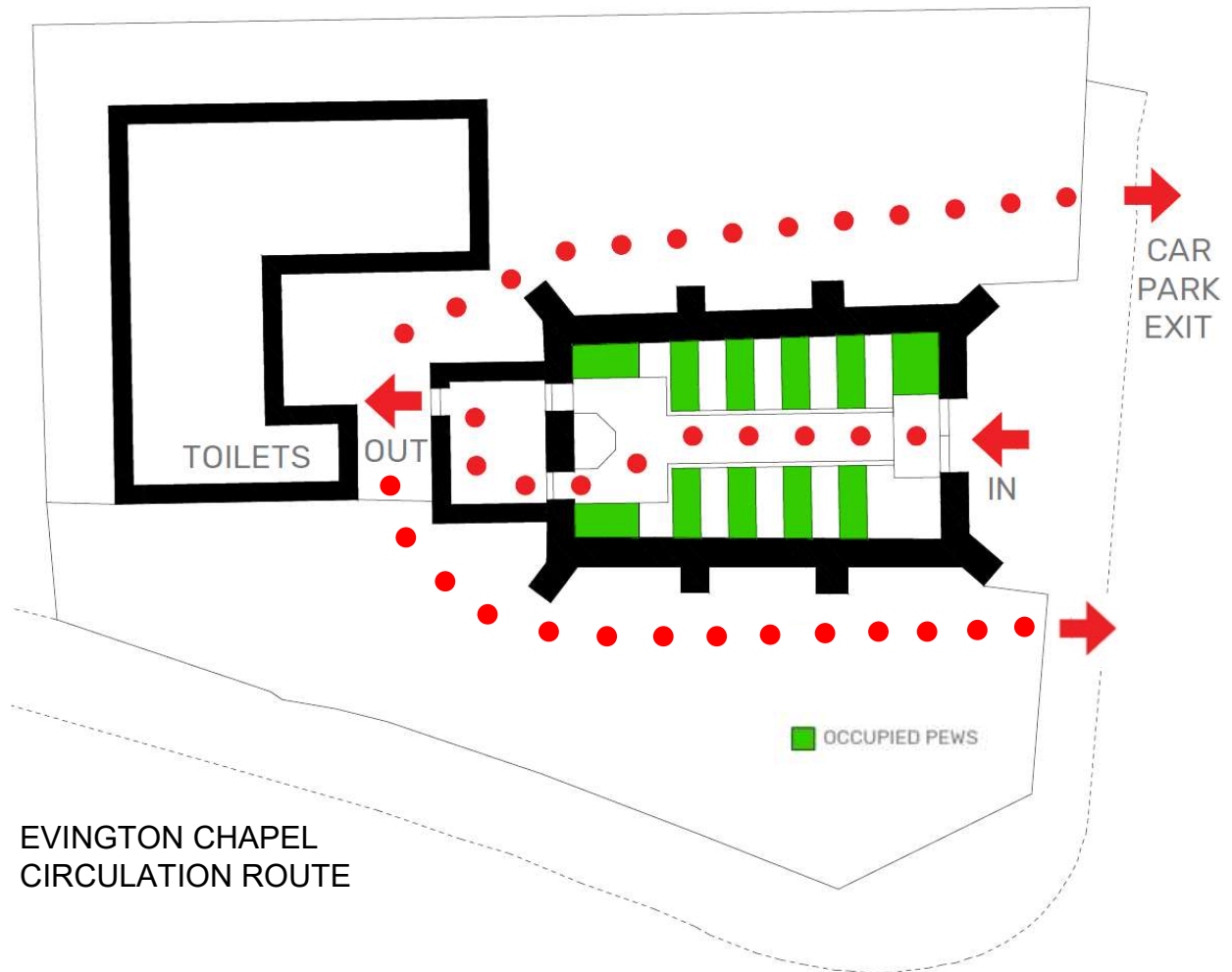
Until further notice, all meetings will take place in the chapel with the exception of the Sunday morning prayer meeting which will be held in the upstairs lecture room.

### Seating capacity

Members of the congregation will be asked to occupy alternate rows of pews and to sit apart from others to maintain an appropriate distance between different households. Those who attend regularly should occupy allocated seats, and visitors will be directed to a pew by the door steward. With these measures in place, we estimate that there is sufficient space in the chapel building to seat around 35 people. However, this will vary according to the particular mix of households present. Appropriate levels of natural ventilation will be maintained and the congregation will be asked to remain seated throughout each service as this may reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission through aerosol and droplets.

### Social distancing

Circulation through the chapel premises will generally be in a single direction. The congregation should enter the chapel through the main entrance door on Evington High Street and will be asked to leave at the close of worship via the minister's vestry and rear courtyard. The entrance door will be managed by a steward and if queuing is necessary, individual households will be asked to keep at least two metres apart from each other. These arrangements are illustrated in the diagram below.



### Hygiene Practices

Hand sanitizer dispensers will be located in the entrance porch and minister's vestry for use by all members of the congregation when entering and leaving the building. Additional supplies of hand sanitizer will be distributed around the chapel premises for use at other appropriate times. Soap dispensers and paper towels will be provided in the toilet facilities.

### Shared items

Bibles and hymn books will be quarantined for at least 72 hours after use. They will also be stored in two separate containers to ensure that no cross-contamination occurs when more than one meeting is held on the same day.

This document will be updated when detailed plans have been developed for administering the ordinance of the Lord's Supper.

### Attendance records

Contact details for those who regularly attend Evington Chapel are already held on file and visitors may choose to supply a telephone number for contact tracing purposes. All records will be held in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations and will not be disclosed to a third party – including the NHS – without the consent of the person concerned.

### Cleaning

The chapel premises will be cleaned between services. Obvious contamination points such as toilets, door handles and pews will also be cleaned on additional occasions as required.

### Food and drink

No food or drink will be served on the chapel premises until further notice. A small supply of bottled water will be kept in the main meeting rooms to meet any urgent need for refreshment.

## **Cash donations**

The offertory box will be emptied into a secure container at the end of each meeting by a steward wearing protective gloves. Its contents will be removed from the chapel premises but will not be counted or circulated for at least 48 hours.

# **Questions**

## **Who should attend services at Evington Chapel?**

We are not imposing any restrictions on who can attend our meetings. However, you must stay away if:

- You are exhibiting any symptom of COVID-19 – a high temperature, a new continuous cough, or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste.
- You have been instructed to self-isolate through the NHS Test and Trace programme.

Those who are shielding clinically extremely vulnerable people are also advised to stay at home.

Additionally, we would advise those with underlying health conditions such as chronic respiratory problems, chronic heart disease and diabetes to consider carefully whether it would be appropriate for them to attend services at the present time.

## **Will church services be available to watch online?**

Yes, we intend to live stream all our services through the Evington Chapel website for the benefit of those who are unable to attend in person.

## **What should I do if I begin to feel ill during a church service?**

Anyone who begins to exhibit any symptom of COVID-19 should leave the chapel premises immediately, return home – avoiding public transport if possible – notify one of the elders and visit an NHS testing centre at the earliest possible opportunity.

## **What should I do if I develop COVID-19 symptoms after attending a service at Evington Chapel?**

We would ask anyone who develops symptoms within two days of attending a service at the chapel to notify one of the elders so that we can coordinate an appropriate response.

## **May I choose where to sit?**

We have devised a seating plan for the chapel to ensure that adequate spacing between households is maintained. Regular members of the congregation have already been allocated a seat. Visitors and newcomers will be directed to a seat on arrival.

## **Do I need to bring anything with me?**

Please bring your own Bible and hymn book if you have one, bottled water if you are likely to need a drink during the service, and a face covering if you are required to wear one. Please also ensure that all personal belongings are removed from the chapel premises at the end of each service, including empty containers.

## **Will there be any opportunities for conversation after services?**

Yes, but these may be more limited than usual. We will be asking the congregation to vacate the building promptly after each service and to avoid gathering in large groups outside, especially in confined spaces such as the rear courtyard and the pavement outside the front door.

**Will I be required to wear a face covering?**

The government has made face coverings mandatory in a variety of settings including church buildings. However, a variety of exemptions apply, and this may mean that you do not need to wear one. Please be assured that we fully understand this and that there is no need for anyone to feel embarrassed.

**Will I be able to use the toilet facilities?**

Yes. If all the toilets are occupied, please queue in the external courtyard area rather than inside the building to ensure that social distancing measures are maintained. We also recommend that users wash their hands thoroughly for at least twenty seconds using both soap and water.

**Will the passenger lift be available for use?**

It should only be necessary to use the lift to access the Sunday morning prayer meeting in the lecture room. A steward will be available at this time to sanitise the control panel, door handle and grab rails between each use.

**Will services at Evington Chapel include hymns?**

Yes, because congregational praise is an essential aspect of public worship. We will take necessary precautions, and in the first instance, praises may be spoken rather than sung.

**Can I bring a friend or family member?**

Yes, providing that there is sufficient seating capacity. Please note that we would appreciate knowing beforehand if visitors are expected as we may need to adjust seating arrangements. Please also note that you will not be able to sit with anyone who is not a member of your household or support bubble.

**Would the current restrictions prevent baptisms from taking place?**

At Evington Chapel, baptism is administered by total immersion, and we only baptise those who have repented of their sin and profess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. If a person desires to be baptised, and we are satisfied that they meet these requirements, we will make special arrangements.

**Are children permitted to attend services?**

Children are welcome at Evington Chapel, but those under the age of sixteen must remain with a parent or guardian at all times. We regret that we are unable to provide creche facilities at the present time.

**Who should I speak to if I have any questions or concerns?**

Please speak to one of the elders. Their contact details are listed below.

Andrew Pollington  
Phone: 07751 834535

Jonathan Davey  
Phone: 07743 349274

E-mail: [evington.chapel@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:evington.chapel@yahoo.co.uk)