



The United Benefice of Sutton  
Bosley, Wincle and Wildboarclough



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND

DIOCESE OF CHESTER

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Dear All

The last eighteen months have been difficult for all of us. On 19<sup>th</sup> July the government are lifting all restrictions, which means the wearing of facemasks will no longer be compulsory and neither will be the need to maintain social distancing. However, infections are continuing to rise and many of us will take some time to adjust to the removal of these restrictions. Though many of us have received double vaccinations, it is still possible to catch and pass on the virus, so we do need to act responsibly and protect each other.

For this reason we will be phasing the lifting of restrictions at our church services, so that everyone may feel safe and secure as we return to a normal pattern of worship. From 19<sup>th</sup> July it will no longer be necessary to book a place at church on the following Sunday. We will be lifting social distancing restrictions so that people may sit next to each other, but for the end of July and throughout August we will keep alternate pews cordoned off. If this will cause anyone anxiety, they can contact David Potts on 01260 253164 and he will allocate them a seat which is socially distanced from others.

I can also announce that from 19<sup>th</sup> July the church will be open daily from 10am till 4pm for all to visit and pray. Although facemasks are not compulsory we would urge everyone to continue wearing them during services, particularly if there are more than 30 people in attendance. We will keep doors open to maintain good air circulation and we would encourage everyone to continue using the hand sanitizer on entering and leaving the building.

Congregational singing is now permitted but it is stressed that this must be done safely. My recommendation is that for the time being we continue to wear masks whilst singing to reduce the spread of aerosol droplets. I appreciate this may be uncomfortable for some but we need to move forward at a pace which is suitable for everyone. The choir may now sing together unmasked provided they are at least 2 metres from the rest of the congregation.

Although restrictions have been lifted regarding the sharing of the communion cup, I would prefer to continue administering bread only until the PCC and congregation has been consulted and infection levels begin to fall.

I understand these restrictions may be frustrating for some but it is more important that our church continues to be a safe space, a sanctuary where everyone is cherished and protected.

May the Lord protect you and keep you. May the Lord be gracious to you and grant you peace now and always. In his love

*John*

Revd John Harries (vicar of Sutton, Bosley, Wincle and Wilboarclough)