

# ST PETER'S, WESTHAMPNETT



## Guidance on Covid Safety after Plan B

As you will be aware, the Government is introducing new Covid-safety provisions ('Plan B') in response to the risks posed by the Omicron variant.

On 9 December the Church of England also issued updated Guidance to Clergy which you can access here: [https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-12/COVID%2019%20Guidance%20v2.3\\_\\_1.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-12/COVID%2019%20Guidance%20v2.3__1.pdf)

Some of the key points in this Guidance are as follows:

- Mask wearing for the congregation is now **mandatory**. There are exemptions from this rule, *inter alia*:
  - For those leading the service
  - For those giving a reading
  - For those with medical reasons not to wear a mask
  - For singing, where the Guidance says there is a "reasonable excuse exemption which allows people to remove a face covering whilst singing if they wish to do so."
  - For children under the age of 11
- Singing and live performance remains permitted.
- There are no statutory limits on numbers at services – the onus lies on the vicar to ensure that the church is safe for worship and to make appropriate decisions on what numbers can be safely accommodated.
- There are no requirements for an NHS Covid pass.
- There is no statutory requirement to track and trace, although people are encouraged to use the QR code. You will find this on the Church notice board and on the table inside.

St Peter's is already operating under Covid-safe protocols. We have updated our Risk Assessment in the light of current guidance.

- There is plenty of space in the Church for the congregation to spread out and any worshippers who feel vulnerable are invited to take a folding chair and sit in the north or south aisles.
- Hand sanitiser is offered at the entrance to the Church.
- The peace is offered without physical contact.
- Communion in both kinds is delivered by intinction by the Celebrant, who wears disposable gloves at this point. The procedure is as follows:
  - At the Eucharist, a covered ciborium (cup) containing communion wafers (which the celebrant does NOT touch) and a covered chalice of wine (from which the celebrant does NOT drink) and is consecrated.
  - At the distribution, the chalice is uncovered and held by an adult server (wearing a mask) and the celebrant, wearing gloves, briefly dips each wafer in the wine before communicating each congregation member.

I hope very much that you will come and join us for worship at St Peter's.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

With every blessing,

THE REVD RACHEL HAWES  
Associate Rector

10 December 2021