

SANCTON PARISH COUNCIL

Management of Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Social Distancing Requirements Whilst at Sancton Methodist Chapel

PURPOSE

With the ongoing global pandemic of Coronavirus (COVID-19), it is important to understand the precautionary measures that need to be taken to reduce the risk of cross infection between councillors, employees, and members of the public.

It is known that the virus is spread from human-to-human; between people who are in close contact with one another (within 2 metres) the virus can spread through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person exhales, coughs, or sneezes. An infected person may be asymptomatic, and the measures being taken are to reduce the risk of exposure from such cases.

It has also been shown that the virus can live on some surfaces for up to 72hrs – persons touching a surface contaminated with the virus and then touching their face increase the risk of transmission through oral ingestion or absorption through the mucus membrane.

The standard recommendations to prevent infection spreading include social distancing, regular hand washing, covering mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing and wearing of a face covering. Also, the avoidance of close contact with anyone showing symptoms of COVID-19 and actively practicing self-isolation and testing where either you or someone in your household is symptomatic.

Symptoms of COVID-19 can range from mild to serious and in some cases have proved fatal. It is therefore extremely important to treat all cases no matter how mild with urgent and deliberate action.

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that:

- The risks have been mitigated by minimising the risk of transmission at a meeting.
- To ensure safe and continued parish council face-to-face meetings by applying rules around social distancing, hygiene monitoring and recognised good practice measurements and management.

DEFINITIONS

COVID-19 - Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus.

Social Distancing – The practice of maintaining at least a 2m separation between yourself and the next person to limit the transmission between people.

Face Masks – A face covering often used in a clinical setting providing a barrier across the mouth and nose to limit transmission of infection.

Face covering e.g., cloth face covering regularly washed/disinfected to provide a similar barrier.

Self-isolation – The practice of remaining at home for a predetermined time if experiencing symptoms of Coronavirus or if family members are experiencing symptoms.

MAINTAINING SOCIAL DISTANCING

- All persons must observe the 2m rule wherever possible.
- A face covering is required when moving around the space and not seated.

PERSONAL HYGIENE

All persons are encouraged to wash their hands regularly to limit the onward transmission of the virus – good practice is to use soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Hand sanitisation gels and wipes are available at the chapel and persons are encouraged to use these often to limit the transmission of the virus.

Individuals coughing or sneezing must do so into a tissue or at the very least cover their mouth and nose when doing so. It is important to wash hands following coughing or sneezing or use a hand sanitiser where washing is impractical.

CLEANING

The cleaning/sanitizing of the tables in the meeting area before and after is encouraged.

All cleaning materials must be disposed of in bins and not discarded where others may handle them.

MEETING ETIQUETTE

Face coverings must be worn when entering or leaving the meeting room but can be removed when seated if 2m social distance can be maintained.

FACE COVERINGS

There is increasing evidence of the effectiveness of face coverings in preventing the spread of the infection and recent government guidance on the use of face covering where effective social distancing cannot take place must be followed.

The use of face coverings is not however a replacement for other ways of mitigating the risks of COVID transmission outlined in this document.

When required to wear a face covering it is important to use them properly and ensuring good hygiene during use.

NHS APP

The NHS app is a mobile application that can be downloaded to your phone. The app detects other phones in the area using Bluetooth and helps to identify people who may have been in close contact with those that have tested positive for Coronavirus. It is a person's choice whether or not to download the app but the chapel is registered with a QR code for those that choose to do so.

RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the attendee's responsibility, if he/she has suspected signs and symptoms of COVID-19 exposure, to report it to the parish council before arriving at the meeting and follow all instructions given to prevent spread of infection to others.

Maintain good personal hygiene through handwashing and sanitisation.

Practice social distancing. Maintain at least a 2-metre distance between yourself and anyone else. This will limit the potential transmission of the virus from one person to another.

Use a face covering in required areas.

Stay informed and follow advice given by the UK government.

METHODIST CHAPEL COMMITTEE

Apply notices to communal areas such as the meeting room, bathroom and kitchen to indicate the maximum occupancy of the area.

Ensure a stock of hygiene resources are available – wipes / sanitiser / face coverings.

GENERAL FACE COVERING RULES

- Distance must be used as the first line of defence – keep 2m apart.
- If you cannot keep 2m apart then a face covering must be worn.
- Always carry a face covering with you.
- If you stand up to leave, put a face covering on and leave it on until re-seated.
- Take the face covering off when seated in a meeting room and if 2m social distance can be maintained.
- You may remove the face covering outside provided you can maintain 2m social distance.

FACE COVERINGS AND MEETINGS

- Meeting rooms have been assessed and their maximum occupancy numbers set so that it is possible to maintain a 2m social distance from others.
- Wear a face covering when entering a meeting room.
- Meetings should involve taking a seat 2m away from others to control movement.
- Keep wearing the face covering until all attendees have entered the room and are seated.
- If standing up to leave the room – put on your face covering.
- Good practice elements would be to try to reduce the number of meetings or the duration of the meeting.

This policy was approved on the 21st June 2021.

Review date: 21st December 2021 or upon government advice if sooner.