**THE REPRESENTATIVE BODY OF THE CHURCH IN WALES**

**CORONAVIRUS – COVID19**

# GUIDANCE ON CAERPHILLY COUNTY CORONAVIRUS LOCKDOWN

**9th September 2020**

***Introduction***

Following a sharp increase in coronavirus (COVID-19) cases in Caerphilly County, new restrictions have been introduced to reduce the spread of the virus and protect public health for people living in the area.

The restrictions come into force at 6pm on 8 September 2020 and will be kept under review.

Those living and working in the County should carefully review Welsh Government Guidance at:

<https://gov.wales/caerphilly-county-coronavirus-lockdown>

<https://gov.wales/caerphilly-county-coronavirus-lockdown-frequently-asked-questions>

This note is to guide churches within the area on actions they should take during these local restrictions.

***General Guidance***

Places of worship or church halls are not closed by these restrictions but they do impose new limitations on how activities are conducted. Government guidance lists the five main elements of the restrictions and the implications for churches and church halls are set out under each element below

1. **People who live in the Caerphilly County Borough area must stay in the area unless they have a good reason to leave it**
   1. People living within Caerphilly County cannot leave the county to worship unless:
      1. they are a minister leading a service, or,
      2. to attend a funeral/wedding to which they have been invited (but not any related reception).
   2. Reasons to leave the County can include to access or receive public services or access or receive childcare or education services. This does **not** include for purposes such as accessing voluntary services, attending exercise classes or socialising
2. **People from outside the Caerphilly County Borough area should not enter the area unless they have a good reason**
   1. People living outside Caerphilly County should not travel into the county to worship, unless:
      1. they are a minister r leading a service, or,
      2. to attend a funeral/wedding to which they have been invited (but not any related reception).
   2. Reasons to enter the County can include to access or receive public services or access or receive childcare or education services. This does **not** include for purposes such as accessing voluntary services, attending exercise classes or socialising.
3. **People living in the Caerphilly County Borough area should not meet indoors (including in a café, pub, bar or restaurant) with anyone who is not a member of their household unless they have a good reason – extended household arrangements are suspended for those living in the area**.
   1. Churches can remain open for private prayer, worship, marriages, funerals and baptisms in accordance with published guidance on the Church in Wales website
   2. Church halls/community centres can also can remain open (but for the limited uses already set out by regulations).
   3. Strict physical distancing between people and households is vital in the use of such premises
   4. Extended households and ‘bubbles’ are suspended. Gatherings with members of any other household can take place outdoors only.
   5. 30 people can still gather outdoors but with strict social distancing
4. **Face coverings must be worn in nearly all indoor public places by people over the age of 11.**
   1. Face coverings must be worn by all people attending church or church halls. This includes the minister of religion.
   2. Eucharistic services can continue in one kind only following guidance available on the Church in Wales website.  Face coverings should be worn with the communicant only removing their mask briefly to place the host in their mouth.
5. **People must work from home wherever possible**
   1. Local churches should consider carefully which work and services should be offered from home rather than from elsewhere.