

The House of Bishops has welcomed and commended the decision of the Government to open places of worship for public worship from 4th July at a virtual meeting held on June 24th.



Following the Prime Minister's statement to the Commons the previous day, the Bishops encouraged all concerned to work within the Government's guidance whilst ensuring proper care is given to those most vulnerable to the virus.

The House of Bishops endorsed a [statement](#) made by the Bishop of London on behalf of its Recovery Group, stressing this would not be an immediate return to normality, and that Government guidance is permissive not prescriptive. Churches that are not fully ready by July 4th should not feel any obligation to rush to restart public worship.

For clergy who have been shielding, the House agreed that personal safety should continue to be prioritised and that duties could still be performed remotely. Where churches may not be able to open for a long period, for this or other reasons, bishops stand ready to agree with the minister and parochial church council a dispensation from the legal requirement to hold services.

The House welcomed clarification from the Government that a limit of 30 people in total applied to weddings, and that numbers for worship would differ depending on the context.

More information

- [The Church of England's advice relating to COVID-19](#)

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