



iduals to continue to take precautions to protect the vulnerable from

She was speaking as guidance was issued by the Church of England to help churches prepare for stage 4 of the Government's roadmap for the lifting of restrictions.

Bishop Sarah, who chairs the Church of England's Recovery Group, said: "The relaxation of restrictions on Monday is only possible because of the vaccination programme which has reduced the percentage of those with Covid who become seriously ill or die.

"We are indebted to all who have developed and administered the vaccines and we encourage anyone who has not yet done so to take advantage of the protection they offer.

"Many will welcome the possibilities now before us, not least increased numbers at life events and a long awaited return of congregational and amateur choir singing.

"However, this is a difficult point in the course of the pandemic. Despite vaccination rates, cases are up, hospital admissions are up and long covid remains an ongoing concern. Therefore our approach needs to be cautious and careful.

"Taking personal responsibility means responsibility for our neighbour, not just for ourselves, and taking precautions to protect those more vulnerable than we consider ourselves to be. Local church leaders know their communities and their own circumstances, and we will support them making local decisions to keep themselves and their community safe. We would ask everyone to support those making local decisions and respect risk assessments, which are in place to protect everyone as we enter the next phase."

More information

- [Read our Covid-19 guidance](#)

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