



Bessels Green, Sevenoaks, Kent. TN13 2PS

Tel: 01732 454921

www.bgbc.co.uk

Charity Registration No. 1132394

19th March 2021

Roadmap for reopening Bessels Green Baptist Church for public worship

Dear Friends,

It was one year ago this week (17th March 2020) that we took the very difficult decision to close all meetings at Bessels Green Baptist Church. Of course, we had no idea at the time what the year would hold and that one year on so many of our activities would remain suspended.

The last twelve months have been a time of unprecedented challenge for humanity. We grieve the loss of life and livelihoods and continue to pray for you regularly. However, with the vaccination programme, there is now tangible hope of a return to something more normal. We are very keen to see the church return to gathered worship as soon as possible.

Throughout the year the trustees have met monthly and reviewed the published guidance from the Baptist Union and UK Government. On 22 February, the UK Government published a new document, "Covid-19 Response Spring 2021". This is a 'roadmap' for how restrictions may be lifted in England from 8 March 2021 onwards, in four steps. Below is our understanding of those guidelines and how the trustees think we should implement them at BGBC.

Whilst Baptists have an emphasis on the gathered community, we must balance that with the safety of our members and our witness to the wider community. Each church has unique opportunities and constraints to balance. We believe that it is important for us to 'stand alongside' our local community, sharing the same restrictions to limit the spread of coronavirus, rather than playing a special churches exemption card. This could be understood as an outworking of 'incarnational ministry', living and worshipping within and alongside the local community.

From this starting point and with the government guidelines in mind, we are proposing the following roadmap as we look to reopen Bessels Green Baptist Church.

March 8th

No change to Church activities, worship services and small groups will continue online.
The afterschool club resumes at BGBC to provide wraparound childcare.

March 29th

Youthwork and sport can resume outdoors.
Josh has plans to gather the youth clubs outdoors.

April 12th (earliest)

Youthwork can resume in the building.



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May 17th (earliest)

Groups of six can gather inside the building.

Worship services will be open to a ticketed, socially distanced, congregation.

Small groups that are too large to meet in an individual home can book the hall and gather in groups of six (up to 18 people).

June 21st (earliest)

The tantalising possibility of a return to something more normal.

However, we are still waiting for clarification on, social distancing, masks and congregational singing.

Please remember the Hardship Fund, so if you find yourself in financial need or you are aware of a financial need within the church, please do speak to Andy Potter, Neil Hudson or Alison Riches who are administering the Fund on behalf of the Trustees. If you find that you are struggling in other ways, do ring Charlie or Andy via the church office on 454921.

Thank you so much for your faithful support, prayers and encouragement and for journeying with us this far. Please continue to pray for us as we finalise the details and move cautiously towards a return to gathered worship.

Charlie Ingram & Andy Potter
On behalf of the Trustees