

Diocese of Brechin: News Bulletin

24th June 2021



Updated guidance on coronavirus

Update following First Minister's announcement on Tuesday 22 June.

The SEC Advisory Group issued an update this week. This article is an expanded version of that note. Firstly, there is **no immediate change** to the levels in the Government's strategic framework within which local authorities are currently placed. The Government's assumption is that the current levels will remain in force until 19 July with no increase or decrease of level. The government guidance is available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-scotlands-strategic-framework-update-june-2021/>.

Most of the First Minister's announcement related to plans for the coming weeks, all of which remain provisional at this stage and contingent upon meeting vaccination milestones in the Government's revised strategic framework. Until now the Government's stated strategic intention has been to "suppress the virus to the lowest possible level and keep it there". Going forward, the aim is now to "suppress the virus to a level consistent with alleviating its harms while we recover and rebuild for a better future".

The 19 July target is based on progress with vaccinations and would be the date that 'level 0' is moved into by all of Scotland.

Weddings & Funerals

With effect from 28 June, some minor changes are being made to the rules on weddings and funerals. The suppliers of wedding services, and other people employed by the couple being married, are no longer to count towards the cap on numbers at a wedding. Also, those accompanying the wedding couple down the aisle will no longer need to wear face coverings. In relation to funerals, people from more than one household will be allowed to help carry the coffin or take a cord when lowering it.

The key aspects of relevance to churches in the Government's forward plan are as follows:

The intention is for all of Scotland to move to Level 0 on 19 July. The position will be confirmed one week in advance.

That will mean, for example, that the limits for indoor household gatherings will increase and up to 200 people will be able to attend weddings and funerals (given physical distancing).

The general indoor physical distancing requirement will be reduced from 2 metres to 1 metre in level 0, i.e. from 19 July. That will entail recalculation by churches of their capacity, including the maximum Physical Distancing Based Capacity figure required to be displayed. Churches will be able to accommodate significantly more worshippers. The Scottish Government review paper on physical distancing is available at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-review-physical-distancing-scotland-june-2021/>

It is hoped to remove the requirement for any physical distancing outdoors from 19 July and, at the same time, that limits on informal outdoor social gatherings, in private gardens for example, will also be removed. That means that the current Level 0 rule, that informal gatherings are limited to 15 people from 15 households, will cease. Current rules in relation to "organised" outdoor events will however remain unaltered at least for a period because such events can attract larger crowds.

'Post-level 0' Planning

The hope is that the remaining major legal restrictions will be lifted on 9 August, again based on the progress of vaccination in the Scottish population. This could include lifting the legal requirement for physical distancing or face coverings indoors. If so, that would have a major impact for churches. Further advice and guidance will be provided in the next few weeks on how churches might approach this potentially rapid removal of government guidance on restrictions in worship. A return to 'normal' in church worship feels a long way off and clergy and congregations will need to plan for change at a pace that will work for all within the worshipping community.

For more information contact the Diocesan Office.

Installation of the Very Rev Elizabeth Thomson as Provost of St Paul's Cathedral, Dundee

The Very Rev Elizabeth Thomson was instituted as Rector and installed as Provost of St Paul's Cathedral, Dundee on Saturday 19th June at 3pm.

The service was attended by physically distanced congregation members, local VIPs and a delegation from Derby Cathedral, where Elizabeth has served for the past seven years. The livestream on the Cathedral Facebook page allowed all to participate in the celebration, given the ongoing restrictions of the Covid pandemic.

In the service, the Precentor of Derby Cathedral, Canon Richard Andrews, presented greetings from Derby. The Lord Provost of Dundee, Ian Borthwick, gave greetings from the city and the Rev Nick Baker, Superintendent of the Methodist Church in Angus, Dundee and Perthshire, brought ecumenical greetings.

A video of the service of installation is accessible on the cathedral Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/stpaulsdundee>

Licensing of Martin Allwood as Priest in Charge of Carnoustie and Monifieth

Rev Martin Allwood will be licensed as priest in charge of Holy Rood, Carnoustie and Holy Trinity, Monifieth on Saturday 10th July. There will be the following 'in-person' services at both churches that day:

10.30am Holy Rood Carnoustie

2.30pm Holy Trinity Monifieth

The intention is to livestream these services to let a wider congregation than the number-limited services take part in the celebrations. 'In-person' attendance



Provost Elizabeth after the service of installation

will only be possible for those already invited by the vestries.

Please keep Martin, his wife Colleen, and all those in the congregations and communities of these Angus towns in your prayers.

Note: Martin and Colleen have now moved to Angus. If anyone requires cardboard boxes for e.g. a house move, please contact them (via the Diocesan Office) and an arrangement can be made!

Memorial Service for Carole Spink

A memorial Service for Carole Spink, much missed friend, Lay Reader and Treasurer at the Cathedral, will take place in St. Paul's Cathedral on Thursday 8th July at 2pm. It will be followed by the interment of Carole's ashes in the Cathedral's Garden of Remembrance. More people will be able to attend than were able to come to her funeral which took place last August. However, numbers will still be limited to 50 due to Covid restrictions, so please do book a place through the Cathedral Office by calling 01382 224486 or emailing admin@saintpaulscathedral.net .

The Service will be live-streamed on the Cathedral's Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/stpaulsdundee/>



Online Worship in the Pandemic

The Scottish Episcopal Church continues to offer 'national' worship online. A Sunday service, each from one of the Dioceses, will continue in the form of a service broadcast at 11am each Sunday.

This service has an option to hear the worship by telephone for those without internet access. There are more details and downloads of previous weeks' services at:

<https://www.scotland.anglican.org/broadcast-sunday-worship/>

News to share? Please send...

If you have any events, ideas with worship or anything else to report, please send copy to Elliott at office@brechin.anglican.org.