

Update on Plans to Re-open St Aidan's

(with all the usual hygiene precautions)

With vaccinations now covering one quarter of the adult population, hopefully we shall see the virus being contained in the months to come.

Fr Emmanuel and I now wish to share with you the **THREE CONDITIONS** which must apply before we reopen St Aidan's.

With the new virus variants in circulation, we still also need to keep an eye on the number of cases and hospitalisations; so here are the **three conditions for reopening the church, ALL of which must apply: -**

1. All key personnel (minimum team of clergy, servers, choir) have had their **vaccinations in full** ... (2 doses separated by 12 weeks).
2. Nationally (tested) COVID-19 case numbers (7 day rolling average) **less than 1,000** ... (currently this figure stands at 17,715)
3. Nationally recorded COVID-19 hospitalisation numbers (7 day rolling average) **less than 500** ... (currently this figure stands at 2,428)

These figures are published daily on the Government web site here: -

[Daily summary | Coronavirus in the UK \(data.gov.uk\)](https://data.gov.uk)

This information will be published to the parish on a weekly basis so you can see how near we are getting to reaching our targets.

Background Notes and Explanations to the Three Conditions:

Re. 1: By Wednesday 10th February, Fr Emmanuel, Peter Bateman, Benedict Broomhead and Fr Gregory will all have had their first vaccinations.

You must make your own mind up about vaccination and nobody will be refused entry to church if you don't get vaccinated, BUT it would be extremely foolish for you not to be vaccinated, unless medically prevented from doing so.

Fr Gregory's second vaccination date will be in 12 weeks from 10th February,

(maybe a little earlier), that is on 5th May, followed by the standard 3 week waiting time for maximum immunity, that is 26th May.

We will not be opening church before then, the earliest and first Sunday of reopening therefore being 30th May. If the national situation worsens, then we shall have to review that target date.

What matters going forward are the national and regional performances in terms of vaccine effectiveness, cases and hospitalisations, all of which are unknown as yet!

Developments in Manchester

The second Kent variant, (similar to the South African), has now been discovered in south Manchester. This is a variant against which the vaccines may still be effective, but probably less effective in mild to moderate cases; meaning that transmission would still occur after vaccination. However, existing vaccines will almost certainly still work to reduce hospitalisations and deaths in severe cases, which is why you should still get vaccinated! Of course, the vaccines still work perfectly well against the dominant strains in the population as a whole, which is another reason why you should not delay in getting vaccinated when called.

Re. 2 & 3: The figures stated above: (1000 cases, 500 hospitalisations 7 day rolling average), are based on that time period last year (*mid-June to end of August – cases; mid-June to end of September – hospitalisations*) when we were the closest to “normal” living. The hospitalisation figures started to rise again towards the second lockdown about one month later than the increase in cases, on account of the usual 3 to 4 weeks’ time lag between the two figures.

Where regional variations occur, the national target numbers will be scaled down to the population size of Great Manchester (2.813 million) as a proportion of the UK population (67.9 million).

If you need more information or explanations on these points, please do not hesitate to ask. God bless you.

Love in Christ,

Reverend Fr. Gregory Hallam

[St. Aidan's Orthodox Church, Manchester](#)