

## **Update on Covid precautions in our churches**

*Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2022*

We've always tended to take a cautious approach regarding Covid restrictions, bearing in mind that each of us will bring different concerns to the situation – with some needing to be more cautious than others for a host of reasons. We're also aware that public confidence is generally growing in relation to the relaxation of restrictions and as a Benefice, we will now seek to reflect aspects of that confidence in our practices in church. In consultation with the PCCs at both ends, we've decided the following:

From Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> March,

### **Across the Benefice**

- Face coverings will still be 'encouraged' but we acknowledge that we have no grounds to enforce this. Please respect those who do still choose to wear one. Clergy will still wear a mask to administer the sacrament.
- Communion **will remain in one kind only** for the time being, but we will keep this under review. We repeat the reassurance that the doctrine of the Church decrees that receiving in one kind only is sufficient, but also acknowledge that symbolically the absence of the common cup is a sadness.
- Hand sanitiser will be retained for people to use. Test and Trace QR codes will be removed in line with Government policy.

### **At All Saints'**

- The central pews in the nave will be 'unrestricted'.
- Distancing will be retained in the side aisles for those who may still wish to keep distanced.
- The Sunday 'one way system' will be removed, as will the tape markings on the floor. Entry *and* exit will be via the usual north porch door.

### **At St Thomas'**

- We will move the rows of chairs in the centre of the church closer together again.
- Side aisle chairs will be kept at 2m distancing for those who wish to do so.
- We will also reintroduce *some* hassocks (though they need a clean first, so may not be immediately in place for 13<sup>th</sup> March).

We hope that this will seem a reasonable compromise as part of the move towards 'living with Covid'. If you have any questions do please be in touch.

With continued prayers and best wishes in this holy season,

*Fr Chris*