



# Reopening Guidance

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### Introduction

Places of worship such as our mosque, play a crucial role in providing spiritual leadership for many individuals and in bringing communities and generations together. However, their communal nature can make them places that are particularly vulnerable to the spread of COVID-19. It is for this reason, Cambridge Central Mosque (CCM), decided to close its doors after just one year of opening, to protect the public from the risk of coronavirus infection.

The government continues to review and amend its guidance, as necessary, regarding the opening of places of worship. These amendments are made in line with the changing situation. On 4<sup>th</sup> January, the Prime Minister announced a national lockdown for all of England. These restrictions require people to stay at home, except for specific purposes, prevent people gathering with those they do not live with, except for specific purposes and close certain businesses and venues.

Under the national lockdown, places of worship remain open for communal worship. This is now one of the very few legal exemptions that allow larger numbers of groups to gather. For this reason, it is crucial that worshippers adhere to both the law and the COVID-19 protocols that CCM have put in place.

Under these restrictions, places of worship in England must only open for the following purposes:

- Individual worship
- Communal worship
- Funerals (Janazas)

This guidance sets out these activities as well as outlines CCM's guidelines for reopening. Our priority is the health and safety of all visitors, staff and volunteers. This guidance will come in to effect from January 2021. Furthermore, this guidance will remain under review and may be updated in line with the changing situation.

### Overview of Activities/ Services and Their Gathering Limits

Activity	Description/ Gathering Limit
<b>Individual Worship</b>	A person, or single household, entering the venue to pray on their own.  Social Distancing must be adhered to at all times
<b>Communal Worship, including prayers led by Imams</b>	The limits for congregational prayers are decided on the basis of the capacity of the mosque.  Social distancing must be adhered to at all times
<b>Janazas</b>	Janazas will only be held onsite for cases unrelated to COVID-19 and are limited to 30 people in attendance.  Please see the <a href="#">services</a> section of our website for further information.  Social distancing must be adhered to at all times.
<b>Shahadas</b>	Available online only please see the <a href="#">services</a> section of our website for further information.
<b>Nikahs</b>	Available online only please see the <a href="#">services</a> section of our website for further information.

### Key Principles for Safely Opening CCM

Each place of worship is strongly advised to apply government guidance regarding its specific circumstances, including its size and type of activities, how it is organised, operated, managed and regulated. Places of worship have discretion over when they consider it safe to open, and when, should it be deemed necessary, to close. To help decide what actions to take, a COVID-19 specific risk assessment has been completed. CCM has taken action to minimise the potential for spreading of COVID-19 among worshippers, and those working/volunteering within the mosque and surrounding grounds. We ask worshippers to kindly adhere to the guidelines that have been put in place to ensure we can maintain a safe environment for all.

### Adapting Practices to Reduce the Spread of Infection

Congregational prayers and mosque services will be adapted to ensure the safety of those present and minimise the spread of infection. All ceremonies and services should be concluded in the shortest reasonable time. Once completed, worshippers will be encouraged to move on promptly, to minimise the risk of contact and spread of infection. CCM will continue its live stream programs and will look to include Jum'a Khutba's to reach individuals who are self-isolating or particularly vulnerable to COVID-19, also for those unable to attend due to limited availability.

### General Guidelines:

1. Anyone showing symptoms of COVID-19 should stay at home and pray. You are also advised to stay at home and [arrange a test](#) to see if you have COVID-19.
2. Unfortunately, there will be no access to ablution and toilet facilities. So please make sure you have made your ablution either at home or at your place of work before coming to the mosque.
3. Please follow the one-way system and instructions given by staff and volunteers as you enter and exit the mosque.
4. Children under the age of 12 will not be permitted to enter inside the mosque
5. We encourage those aged 70 and over or clinically vulnerable, with underlying health conditions not to attend congregational prayers, but to pray at home.
6. Please bring your own prayer mat and a shoe bag. If you forget either one of these items you will be able to purchase a "prayer pack" for a small fee. (All proceeds go to the mosque)
7. Face coverings must always be worn whilst inside the Mosque, unless you are exempt from wearing one as per government guidelines on [face coverings](#).
8. Social distancing must be maintained at all times, including during prayers
9. You must sanitise your hands before entering the mosque and should do so when leaving.
10. No food or drink consumption is permitted within the mosque.
11. You must bring your own copy of the Quran, hard or electronic as there will be no access to the mosque Qurans.
12. We encourage you to pray your Sunnah and Nafil prayers at home
13. Avoid physical contact with others, such as handshakes and hugging.

### Daily Prayer Procedure

The Mosque will be open between 12:30 - 20:00, for any prayers that fall outside of these times, the Mosque will open 15 minutes before the Jama'at and will close 15 Minutes after. On Fridays, following Jum'a prayers the Mosque will close and will reopen at 16:00 for Asr so that the building can be sanitised thoroughly.

- Please make sure you have made your ablution before coming to the mosque.
- Remember you will need to have your own prayer mat and shoe bag in order to enter the mosque. You may purchase a "prayer pack" for a small fee if needed.
- When entering the Mosque premises, follow signage towards the Prayer Hall
- Before entering the Mosque please use the hand sanitising stations provided.
- Please use the correct entrances/exits as indicated following the one-way system that has been created.
- On arrival, a staff member or volunteer will check your temperature. In case of a high temperature, unfortunately you will be asked to go home.
- For every prayer, please sign in using the form provided, we will ask for your name and contact number, this is to help with the [NHS Test and Trace](#) service to manage the risk of the virus re-emerging.
- Follow the direction of staff and volunteers who will guide you to a designated prayer space
- Place **both** your mat and shoe bag on the prayer space provided, please kindly do not place any items on the carpet.
- After the prayer has finished, please leave promptly and do not gather, as the Mosque must be cleaned thoroughly following each prayer.

### Jum'a Prayer Procedure

Due to certain restrictions, unfortunately, there will be limited availability to attend the prayer. To cater for a large number of worshippers, we will hold more than one Jum'a prayer. Please visit the [website](#) for exact timings as these may change.

- You must book your place for Jum'a prayer online using Eventbrite, this can be found via our Mosque [website](#). You will have to show this booking before being allowed to enter the premises.
- There must be a separate booking for every individual. Group or family bookings will not be accepted.
- Remember you will need to have your own prayer mat and shoe bag in order to enter the Mosque. You may purchase a "prayer pack" for a small fee if needed.
- Before entering the Mosque please use the hand sanitising stations provided.
- When entering the Mosque premises, be sure to follow signage and the instruction of staff and volunteers.
- **You should allow for at least 1 hour to attend Jum'a prayers.** This includes the queuing time, the Khutba, the prayer as well as the exiting procedure.
- On arrival, a staff member or volunteer will check your temperature. In case of a high temperature, unfortunately you will be asked to go home.
- Use the correct entrances/exits as indicated by following the one-way system that has been carefully created.
- There are separate entrances for males and females.
- Upon entering the Prayer Hall, a volunteer will direct each individual to a designated prayer space. You must not demand to pray in a particular line as this cannot be accommodated.

- Between the two Adhans you may pray any Sunnah prayer, but not afterwards. Instead you may wish to read Quran until you are able to leave.
- Please bring your own copy of the Quran, either hard or electronic as there will be no access to the mosque Qurans.
- To exit the mosque safely and to maintain social distancing, you will be told to remain seated until it becomes your turn to leave and exit the mosque.
- Worshippers will exit one row at a time, under the direction of trained staff and volunteers

### Life Cycle Events: Shahadas, Nikahs & Janazas

Currently the only life cycle event that can take place at the Mosque is Janazas, with a maximum of 30 people in attendance. Only Janazas for those who have passed away to cases unrelated to COVID-19 can take place onsite. However, only essential aspects of the Janaza will take place at this time. Face-coverings must be worn at all times within the mosque building, unless you are exempt. Social distancing must be adhered to at all times and no food or drink consumption is permitted on site.

Shahadas and Nikkahs are available online only.

### Visitors, Tours & Public Spaces

At present, the mosque is only open for prayer. This means that tours and general visits are not permitted within the mosque. This includes the Islamic Garden; these guidelines are under regular review.

### The Use of Shared Items

Individuals should avoid touching property belonging to others. Reusable and communal resources such as prayer mats, Qurans, prayer hats & scarfs will not be available. Worshippers must bring their resources and must take these items home with them. In circumstances where worshippers cannot bring their own resources, CCM will provide these items.

### Cash Donations

We encourage worshippers to continue to use online or contactless methods of donating. Where this is not possible donation buckets or our donation box can be used.

### Young People and Children Attending Places of Worship

No children under the age of 12 will be permitted into the Mosque. Anyone under the age of 18 must be supervised by their parent or guardian at all times.

### General Actions to Reduce the Spread of Infection

All worshippers should act safely and responsibly to reduce the spread of infection in our communities.

### Test & Trace

The government has launched an [NHS Test and Trace](#) service to manage the risk of the virus re-emerging,

The service:

- Provides testing for anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19 to find out if they have the virus
- Gets in touch with anyone who has had a positive test result to help them share information about any close recent contacts they have had; and
- Alerts those contacts, where necessary, and notifies them they need to self-isolate to help stop the spread of the virus

In line with government guidance CCM will be assisting this service by keeping an accurate temporary record of visitors for 21 days. This information will be kept in a secure location and will not be made available to third parties other than those required for the Test & Trace service. For Jum'a prayers an online booking system will be used and for daily prayers, worshippers will be asked to sign in on arrival.

### Face Coverings

In England, face coverings are required by law to be worn in places of worship. There are valid exemptions for some individuals and groups to not wear a face covering in these settings. In particular, those who are leading permitted services or events in a place of worship, and those who assist them.

### Social Distancing

- Social distancing must be adhered to at all times.
- Non-essential social spaces will be closed.
- Queueing protocols have been carefully created so that the flow of groups in and out of the Mosque can be managed in a socially distanced way. This is to reduce the risk of congestion or contact.
- A one-way flow in and out of the premises with appropriate signage and restrictions on accessing non-essential areas will be in place.
- Worshippers must leave one row at a time, to prevent crowding at entry or exit points.
- Congregational prayers will be carried out in adherence to social distancing, prayer areas will be marked out through the use of lino mats.
- Time spent in contact should be kept to an absolute minimum.

- An online booking system will be in place for Jum'a prayers to assist in managing numbers.
- Any changes to entrances, exits and queues will take into account reasonable adjustments to accommodate those who need them, such as worshippers with physical disabilities.
- Doors will be fixed open where appropriate and safe.
- Visitors must not mingle with anyone outside of their household or support bubble when attending a place of worship

Please bear in mind that social distancing measures also apply when travelling to and from the Mosque. The mosque car park will be available but please note that parking is limited and is offered on a first-come-first-served basis.

### **Symptomatic individuals**

Anyone showing symptoms of COVID-19 (a new, continuous cough, a high temperature or a loss of, or change to their normal sense of taste and smell) should not attend the Mosque due to the risk that they pose to others; they should self-isolate at home immediately with other members of their household. Worshippers who are self-isolating or unable to attend the Mosque can visit our website and social media platforms to view our live stream programs.

### **Individuals Self-Isolating due to a Possible or Confirmed Case of COVID-19 in the Household**

Where individuals are self-isolating due to a possible or confirmed case of COVID-19 in the household, or because they have been requested to do so by NHS Test and Trace, should not attend the mosque. See [stay at home guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19](#).

For a funeral, even if you are a close family member of the deceased, you should attend remotely, to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread to other mourners.

### **Hygiene**

On entering and leaving the Mosque all worshippers, staff and volunteers should sanitise their hands thoroughly. Please avoid touching your face and cough or sneeze into a tissue which is disposed of immediately, or into the crook of your sleeved arm if a tissue is not available. Sanitising stations can be found at entrance and exit points of the Mosque.

### **Cleaning**

CCM has ensured that a robust cleaning system has been put in place, all surfaces, especially those most frequently touched such as door handles and rails will be regularly cleaned using appropriate cleaning materials. A deep clean of the Mosque has taken place before reopening. Sufficient time needs to be allowed for regular cleaning to take place, therefore the Mosque must be vacated promptly after congregational prayers and any Mosque services.

### **Protecting the Vulnerable**

Members of our community who are clinically vulnerable and therefore more likely to develop severe illness are advised to pray at home. Individuals who are [shielding](#) should continue to follow the government's advice.

If anyone becomes unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 whilst at the Mosque they should inform a volunteer or member of staff immediately. They will then be taken to an isolated room, where they will be provided with a facemask and safely directed out of the premises. You are advised to follow the stay at home guidance which covers NHS Track and Trace. If you require clinical advice you should go online to NHS 111 (or call 111 if you do not have access to the internet). You are advised not to visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

If you have been in contact with someone who has become unwell at the Mosque, you should sanitise your hands thoroughly after the interaction, you do not need to take any other specific action unless you develop symptoms or are advised to do so by NHS Test and Trace. If you do develop symptoms you should follow the stay at home guidance.

### **Individuals aged 70 years and over**

Certain groups, including people who are aged 70 or older, regardless of medical conditions may be at increased risk of severe disease from COVID-19. Individuals who fall within this group are advised to stay at home as much as possible. If you do wish to go out, please take particular care to minimise contact with others outside of your household.

### **Individuals who are extremely clinically vulnerable/shielding**

Worshippers who are shielding are currently advised not to meet more than one person from out of their household and therefore are not advised to attend places of worship.