



the Fellowship of Independent  
Evangelical Churches

# Leadership in Lockdown





the Fellowship of Independent  
Evangelical Churches

## 2 Corinthians 3v7-18:

- Be bold because the ministry of the gospel/Spirit is more glorious than the law
- Be thankful that the veil has been removed in Christ
- The glory of the Lord is lasting rather than fading
- The glory of the Lord can be contemplated
- We are being transformed into his glorious image

**Leadership**  
**in Lockdown**





the Fellowship of Independent  
Evangelical Churches

# Leadership in Lockdown





the Fellowship of Independent  
Evangelical Churches

## The New Rules on Face Coverings

- 8 August: Face coverings required in places of worship
- Also required in cinemas, theatres and museums
- This will be a matter of law not guidance
- Those who break the law will face fines
- Police have been encouraged to enforce
- Regulations not yet published
- Scotland and Wales

# Leadership in Lockdown





the Fellowship of Independent  
Evangelical Churches

## Why has this been introduced?

- The ONS evidence of a rise in rate of infection
- Desire to prevent a second spike/wave/lockdown
- New evidence on risk asymptomatic transmission
- Absence vaccine and effective treatment
- Indoor spaces where people meet strangers
- Aim to protect others not the wearer
- Why are pubs and restaurants treated differently?

# Leadership in Lockdown





the Fellowship of Independent  
Evangelical Churches

# The Global Picture

- WHO advice
- Europe and United States
- Australia - Victoria
- Mask wearing statistics: Singapore 90%, Japan 86%; France 78%; US 73%; UK 36%

Leadership  
in Lockdown





the Fellowship of Independent  
Evangelical Churches

# The Current Regulations

- “face covering” means a covering of any type which covers a person’s nose and mouth’
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>

**Leadership**  
**in Lockdown**





the Fellowship of Independent  
Evangelical Churches

# Current Church Guidance

- Church of England already advises congregations and clergy to wear face coverings
- Metropolitan Tabernacle: "The wearing of face coverings is required in the sanctuary and elsewhere on the premises, including portico and sidewalks, at all times, out of consideration for all attenders."

Leadership  
in Lockdown





the Fellowship of Independent  
Evangelical Churches

## Current Exemptions Likely To Continue to Apply to Congregation Members

- young children under the age of 11 (Public Health England do not recommend face coverings for children under the age of 3 for health and safety reasons)
- not being able to put on, wear or remove a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability
- if putting on, wearing or removing a face covering will cause you severe distress
- if you are travelling with or providing assistance to someone who relies on lip reading to communicate

# Leadership in Lockdown





the Fellowship of Independent  
Evangelical Churches

## Current Exemptions Likely To Continue to Apply to Congregation Members

- To avoid harm or injury, or the risk of harm or injury, to yourself or others
- to avoid injury, or to escape a risk of harm, and you do not have a face covering with you
- to eat or drink if reasonably necessary
- in order to take medication
- if a police officer or other official requests you remove your face covering

# Leadership in Lockdown





the Fellowship of Independent  
Evangelical Churches

## Exemption Cards & Church Enforcement

- Those who have an age, health or disability reason for not wearing a face covering should not be routinely asked to give any written evidence of this, this includes exemption cards.
- No person needs to seek advice or request a letter from a medical professional about their reason for not wearing a face covering.
- Some people may feel more comfortable showing something that says they do not have to wear a face covering. This could be in the form of an exemption card, badge or even a home-made sign.
- This is a personal choice and is not necessary in law.

# Leadership in Lockdown





the Fellowship of Independent  
Evangelical Churches

## Current Exemptions that could apply to churches

- Face coverings can be removed to take the Lord's Supper
- 'a person responsible for a relevant place or an employee of that person acting in the course of their employment'
- 'any other person providing services in the relevant place under arrangements made with the person responsible for a relevant place'
- 'A person who is responsible for a relevant place includes the owner, proprietor, tenant or manager of the relevant place'

# Leadership in Lockdown





the Fellowship of Independent  
Evangelical Churches

## Current Exemptions that could apply to churches

- Implications for Churches: Employed staff and authorised lay volunteers would not need to wear masks
- Baptist Union advice to churches: "The requirement to wear a face covering does not apply to church staff but is a matter for the trustees to determine through a work place health and safety assessment"
- <https://www.baptist.org.uk/Publisher/File.aspx?ID=258760>

# Leadership in Lockdown





the Fellowship of Independent  
Evangelical Churches

# The likely shape of new regulations

- Probably published on Friday
- Evangelical Alliance & FIEC engagement with DHVLG
- Consultation on draft guidance for churches

**Leadership**  
**in Lockdown**





the Fellowship of Independent  
Evangelical Churches

## Probable Exemptions for churches

- Specific exemption for 'those who are leading services or events in a place of worship, and those who assist them (for instance by reading, preaching, or leading prayer'
- Other social distancing to be maintained (eg plexiglass screen)
- Face coverings to be worn when distributing food (eg Lord's Supper)
- Specific exemption for 'bride and groom at a wedding and those [officiating/leading] the wedding' – but not for those observing the wedding
- Music group & solo singer not required to wear face covering (but other mitigations apply)

# Leadership in Lockdown





the Fellowship of Independent  
Evangelical Churches

## Unanswered Questions & Issues

- Will the obligation apply to those leading children's groups?
- Will the obligation apply to churches meeting in schools, community centres, leisure centres or hotels?
- Will the obligation apply to third party groups using church premises?
- Will the obligation apply to small meetings in the church building – eg Homegroups/Prayer meetings?

# Leadership in Lockdown





the Fellowship of Independent  
Evangelical Churches

## Unanswered Questions & Issues

- Will the obligation apply to the car park, garden and courtyard of the place of worship?
- Will other social distancing requirements be relaxed because face coverings are worn (eg 2m distance and restriction on conversations)
- Will singing be allowed because of face coverings?

Leadership  
in Lockdown





the Fellowship of Independent  
Evangelical Churches

# Implications for churches

- Check for updates when the regulations/guidance are published
- Congregation must wear face coverings
- Inform congregation what is required and details of exemptions
- Right to refuse admission if not wearing

Leadership  
in Lockdown





the Fellowship of Independent  
Evangelical Churches

# Implications for churches

- Know who amongst your members is entitled to an exemption
- Provide disposable face coverings at the door
- Undertake risk assessment if preachers/leaders not wearing face coverings

Leadership  
in Lockdown





the Fellowship of Independent  
Evangelical Churches

## Is it worth meeting?

- Restrictions are more onerous than when churches first re-opened
- Some congregation members are likely to prefer to remain on-line
- Face coverings may become an accepted norm for everyday life
- Face coverings are likely to be required for an indefinite period (at least until a proven vaccine)
- Government advice has always been 'keep as much on-line as possible'
- Be prepared for local lockdowns/closure in the Autumn

# Leadership in Lockdown





the Fellowship of Independent  
Evangelical Churches

## Resources for Churches

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july>
- <https://www.baptist.org.uk/Publisher/File.aspx?ID=258760>
- <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches>
- <http://www.john-stevens.com/2020/07/coronavirus-face-coverings-will-be.html>
- <http://www.john-stevens.com/2020/07/church-state-christian-obedience-and.html>

# Leadership in Lockdown