**Guidance for weddings in church as at September 28th 2020**

1. Numbers in church for weddings are limited to 15. That figure includes the couple, guests, and witnesses but not the officiant, verger, warden or organist employed by the church.
2. The risk assessments and procedures for public worship apply to weddings i.e. social distancing, sanitising.
3. Face masks must be worn by all except the celebrant and the couple whose faces need to be seen for identity purposes.
4. Exemptions do exist in relation to the wearing of face masks and include:

• young children under the age of 11

• 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

* to take medication
1. At the rehearsal:
* face masks must be worn by all including the couple;
* the couple will provide a list of the names and numbers of all who will attend the wedding for Track and Trace purposes. That list will be checked on the day as guests arrive and any additional names added. The list will be kept for 21 days and used only for the purposes of track and trace.
* a seating plan in church will be agreed ready for the day of the wedding
1. There can be no hymns or singing or playing of any wind instruments in church. The organist may play for the service
2. Apart from the bride and groom a physical distance of 2 metres should be observed between individuals as far as is possible. The minister will not touch the rings at the Giving of Rings, nor does he or she have to touch the couple’s hands as part of a prayer or blessing.
3. Where an infant is involved in proceedings a parent/guardian or member of the infant’s household should hold the infant.
4. If the bride is to be ‘walked down the aisle’ she should only be accompanied by a member of her household, while bridesmaids should be careful to observe physical distancing unless also from the same household.
5. The rings must not be touched by anyone other than the bride and groom. It is suggested that the rings be left in their box which is sanitised, then blessed by the minister in the box with the couple taking the rings from the box.
6. All those signing the register should sanitize their hands before signing, complete all the signatures necessary for them and then sanitize them again. Apart from the bride and groom, all those signing should maintain physical distancing if practicable.
7. From 15 August 2020 receptions and other celebrations for weddings can take place, but only in a COVID-19 Secure environment/venue. Such events should not take place in people’s private homes (or adjoining outdoor spaces like gardens), given that these will not have the same COVID-19 Secure measures in place. From 28 September 2020, capacity at a wedding reception or celebration (including the couple and guests) must be no more than 15, and safely accommodated with social distancing in a COVID-19 Secure venue. Anyone working, for example staff employed by the venue, any third-party suppliers, photographers, security personnel, or catering staff, are not included in this figure. (See https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-small-marriages-and-civil-partnerships/covid-19-guidance-for-wedding-and-civil-partnership-receptions-and-celebrations)