

## Comment from Bishop David regards July 19 Step 4 of the Roadmap out of Covid-19 restrictions

Dear Co-Workers in Christ,

This Monday, we reach the 4<sup>th</sup> step on the UK Roadmap through the Covid pandemic, with an acute awareness that the country continues to find itself in a very precarious situation.

Getting to this point has required a huge amount of co-operation and flexibility and once again I acknowledge the strength and agility of your response. I am grateful that so many pastoral and practical challenges have been faced and resolved, by yourselves, leadership teams, congregations and communities.

Decisions will continue to be made locally by Incumbents, Churchwardens and PCCs as appropriate and in the spirit of full collaboration, with support available from the Archdeacon and Area Dean. Attention must be paid to recommendations that face coverings be worn in crowded places and risk assessment criteria applied as usual to all local actions. Those who are in consideration regards the administration of Holy Communion might wish to consult with the Bishop in the first instance.

I will pay attention personally to the national exhortation to 'go slowly', exercising wisdom at home and in public. While the UK programme for full vaccination greatly lowers the risk of hospitalisation and transmission of Covid, we will continue with due care for the health and well-being of others and ourselves.

As we reset our patterns of ministry, let us appreciate one another's socially responsible choices by making them possible and welcoming all with acceptance and joy.

During the summer holidays, I hope you find time for rest and refreshment in the love of Lord Jesus, who welcomes us exactly as we are.

I pray that the Holy Spirit gives the gift of discernment for our immediate plans and an equitable future.

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid." John 14:27

*Yours in Christ,*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+David Birmingham". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Rt Revd David Urquhart  
Bishop of Birmingham

