



**Office of the Leader**

**Cllr Jas Athwal**

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Dear Faith Leaders,

The government recently announced, from 13 June 2020 places of worship will be permitted to open for the additional purpose of individual prayer. I recognise that places of worship play an invaluable role in providing spiritual leadership for our communities in Redbridge. I know how difficult the last few months have been, especially during major religious observations such as Passover, Easter and Ramadan. I recognise and thank our faith leaders for maintaining spiritual and pastoral care throughout this time, especially through the use of online technology.

On Thursday 11 June, I joined faith leaders representing our diverse faith communities to discuss the recent changes announced by the government. It is vital we all work together and that we continue to protect both members of our congregations and everyone who lives and works in Redbridge by preparing for reopening very carefully.

As places of worship prepare to reopen, we must ensure our buildings are safe to open with the necessary measures in place, such as the observation of social distancing, regular thorough cleaning, detailed risk assessments and the ability to protect those who are most vulnerable.


The council has prepared a Redbridge Places of Worship guide taking into consideration all the government guidance, attached. Our underlying message is – places of worship are not required to open and should not do so until they have all the necessary measures in place and have carried out a risk assessment. We have included risk assessment templates from national faith bodies in our guidance.

The council is preparing with the support of our Public Health team a generic risk assessment, this will of course require you to tailor this guidance as appropriate for your venue. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any support with the risk assessment.

I have heard your requests for regular, current COVID-19 information regarding the spread in local areas and potential spikes, this is something we are working towards and we will provide an update in due course.

Thank you all for your incredible support and I look forward to us meeting again.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Athwal', written in a cursive style.

Cllr Jas Athwal  
Leader, London Borough of Redbridge