

Dear Father Liam Gallagher

Thank you for taking the time to get in touch with me to share your personal and very understandable concerns. I sincerely hope that you and yours are well during this difficult time.

As you will know, the number of Covid cases is rising rapidly across the whole of the UK. The Government has announced a national lockdown from Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November to control the spread of the virus. The single most important action we can all take, in fighting coronavirus, is to stay at home, to protect the NHS and save lives.

As you mention in your email, Places of Worship will be closed, unless they are being used for the following reasons:

- Funerals
- To broadcast acts of worship
- Individual prayer
- Formal childcare or where part of a school
- Essential voluntary and public services, such as blood donation or food banks
- Other exempted activities such as some support groups

Places of Worship will not be the only area to close as we move into lockdown and I entirely understand the collective sacrifice of each and everybody to revert to stricter measures. I appreciate that this may not be the answer you were hoping for and I appreciate the particular personal sacrifice involved in being unable to gather for communal services. I therefore wish to reassure you that the Government will continue to keep all of its guidance about these new restrictions under regular review.

SAGE publishes all of the data presented to Ministers before Government makes their decision, this can be found online here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/scientific-evidence-supporting-the-government-response-to-coronavirus-covid-19>.

Please let me know if there is anything further that I can do to help in the meantime and thank you again for taking the time to write to me about this issue.

Very best wishes

Helen Grant M.P.