

Dear members,

Last year brought with it a lot of change as we had to stop gathering at Kent House for services and find new ways for you, our members, to connect with Judaism and one another. It has been uplifting (though not a surprise) to see members step up and create new opportunities for one another, to help ensure no one is left alone, and to attend our Zoom Shabbat and Festival services over the year. It made us extremely proud to belong to our community and I would like to thank you all for standing together in a difficult situation.

Though the pandemic is clearly far from over, our Trustees know that many members have been hoping to come into the building. We are delighted that we feel it is now safe enough to reopen the building and start welcoming our members back to our beloved home. We are looking forward to welcoming everyone back (albeit in a different way to which we are used to) and can't wait to reopen fully in due course. We have accordingly been working on ways to enable us to come together in person for Shabbat Morning Services in accordance to the government guidelines and to ensure that we keep you and others in the building safe when we do so.

Over the next two weeks we will hold the service in Kent House, with a small group of service leaders with members joining by Zoom. However, we are delighted to announce that from **Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> March**, we will be opening the building to the wider community for Shabbat Morning Services for a limited number of people each week. We have created a system and some protocols which we hope achieves this in a way that is fair to all members. Please read our guidelines outlined below to find out more.

Our building won't look or feel quite the same - neither aesthetically nor how we must act - but we hope it will still hold our community spirit.

We also appreciate that many members might not feel safe or be able to travel and, as such, we will continue to stream these services on Zoom, with Mitzvot being offered both to those in Kent House and those participating from their own homes for the time being.

Please do read the below guidelines for booking and attending Shabbat Services:

### **Guidelines on booking for Shabbat Morning Services**

We wish we could welcome all members back into the building. However we can only safely allow about 40 members into the building each week (depending on bubbles). As such, you will need to book in through the Synagogue Website:

- Please visit the March/April Shabbat Registration Page;  
<https://www.westminstersynagogue.org/shabbat-apr21#>
- Complete the form; you may select multiple Shabbat Entries (**NB** registering does not guarantee you a space);
- Seats will be allocated each week on **Wednesday at 12:00pm;**

- If you or a household member can no longer attend, do let us know that same day so we can reallocate your seat(s).
- If you can not apply online, please call the Synagogue Office on 020 7584 3953

As it is likely that more members will wish to attend than we can accommodate, places will not be allocated on the basis of "first come first served" but will be determined in the fairest way possible. The intention would be to ensure that an applicant who has not previously attended has priority over a member who has.

### **Guidelines on attending Shabbat Services**

When inside the building we will have certain measures in place for your safety, as well as the safety of those around you. You can find the outline attached, which we will send again to those attending. Please note, in particular, that those inside the building will be required to wear masks at all times.

We are excited to be welcoming members back into Kent House but will continue to keep the position under review. We will also keep our procedure for booking under revision and will amend or adjust it as necessary. If you have any questions about the process going forward, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us or a member of the Synagogue Team who will be happy to help.

We hope you will be able to join us on Zoom this Shabbat, where again this Friday we will have chance to connect with other members in small groups and wish each other Shabbat Shalom.

With all best wishes,

Rabbi Benji Stanley

David Connick  
Trustee & Senior Warden

