



Masjid Al Tawhid



Al-Nogashi Mosque & Centre



ELM



MAYFAIR ISLAMIC CENTRE

Coordination Committee for Mosques and Islamic Centres, London

Reopening of Mosques

After months of closure, mosques are looking to reopen. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused immense hardship and suffering for many. Paramount importance is being given to the wellbeing and safety of returning worshippers and their families.

The government has announced that as of the 4th of July, places of worship may reopen for worship and other activities if deemed COVID-19 safe by their management. This is a welcome news, Alhamdulillah. May Allah make it easy to see off this Pandemic for good with minimum suffering and loss of lives.

But, as much as we welcome the opportunity to re-open our mosques, we take seriously our religious, legal and moral responsibilities for the safety of our worshippers, staff, volunteers, and neighbourhoods.

Data from the Office for National Statistics shows that the age-standardised mortality rate is highest amongst Muslims compared to other religious groups^[1], and that the mortality rate is highest amongst black and minority ethnic (BAME) groups than other ethnic groups^[2].

For us, it is a delicate balance between asking our worshippers to bear with us a little more being away from their beloved mosques and rushing to reopen and subject our community to the risk, albeit small and limited, of COVID-19 infection and potential increase in Islamophobic sentiments.

As people rush to take advantage of the lockdown easing measures going in effect on 4th July, we hope and pray that the COVID-19 transmission rate declines. For now, our mosques will remain closed, but hopefully not one day longer than necessary. We are constantly reviewing our position in light of Government updates and advice from relevant bodies

If the COVID-19 transmission rate remains stable post 4 July, we envisage Mosques may start reopening hopefully very soon.

The Coordination Council of Mosques (and many other Mosques) will reconvene on the evening of Tuesday 7th July 2020 to reassess the date of reopening in light of the recent resurgence of the virus.

As a community we have collectively endured this period of closure, including through Ramadhan and Eid al-Fitr, and it is appropriate that we try to reopen the Mosques as soon as it is safe to do so and in unity.

We recommend phasing the introduction of services so that mosques can adapt to new social distancing procedures and operating plans in a structured manner. Mosques could initially open for two prayers each day (e.g. Asr and Maghrib). Thereafter, following a review of lessons learnt, there could be scope for gradually increasing services and reopening for an additional prayer.

A phased approach will allow mosques to safely increase services while maintaining the safety and wellbeing of volunteers, staff and members of the community.

May Allah keep us all safe

Coordination Committee for Mosques and Islamic Centres, London

- The Islamic Cultural Centre & The London Central Mosque Trust
- UKIM West London Islamic Centre
- East London Mosque & London Muslim Centre
- Finsbury Park Mosque
- Al Manaar – Muslim Cultural Heritage Centre
- Al Muntada Al Islami & WLICC
- Muslim Welfare House
- Mayfair Islamic Centre
- Masjid Al Tawhid
- Al-Nagashi Mosque & Centre

3 July 2020 / 12 Dhu'l Qa'da' 1441 AH



References

[1] *Coronavirus (COVID-19) related deaths by religious group, England and Wales: 2 March to 15 May*, Office for National Statistics (2020). Available:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/articles/coronaviruscovid19relateddeathsbyreligiousgroupenglandandwales/2marchto15may2020>

[2] *Beyond the data: Understanding the impact of COVID-19 on BAME groups*, Public Health England (2020). Available:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/892376/COVID_stakeholder_engagement_synthesis_beyond_the_data.pdf

[3] *Staying safe outside your home*, UK government (2020). Available:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-safe-outside-your-home/staying-safe-outside-your-home>

[4] *Staying alert and safe (social distancing) after 4 July*, UK government (2020). Available:

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