



28/07/2020

To  
Matt Hancock,  
Secretary of State,  
Department of Health and Social Care,  
39 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0EU

Dear Mr. Hancock,

I hope and pray that you and your family are keeping well during this testing time for all of us.

I appreciate the challenging job you have being the Health Secretary at this difficult time for all of us and would like to thank you for the tireless work you have put in so far to deal with the pandemic.

I am writing to request you to consider the lifting of the lockdown in Leicester and Oadby & Wigston when you carry out your review and to inform you of a successful community to community messaging that we have delivered in collaboration with the local NHS. This request is in light of the reduction in the spread of the virus and after faith groups and places of worship have been working very hard to promote messaging to their members, worshippers, and wider communities they serve. We believe that we are in a different place than where we were 3 weeks ago and the places of worship and other faith and ethnic groups have established a strong messaging network with their communities.

Any local concentrations of the virus can be managed, we believe, locally via our collaboration with the NHS and local authorities. As faith communities and groups, we have worked with the authorities since March and recently, 3 weeks ago, we collaborated in a unique community to community messaging, whereby agreed scripts from the NHS are read out (in their preferred languages) in audio or video messages by priests, Imams, leaders and representative directly appealing to their members, worshippers, wider communities via their own social media channels such as whatsapp, facebook and twitter. This resulted in over 30 faith groups sending messages in 15 different languages to over 26,000 people directly in the high prevalence zones and many thousands more indirectly via sharing.

We believe that this, along with other action, has helped to contain the spread of the virus.

As so many people remain impacted by the lockdown, even after so many sacrifices being made, we feel that we now have the resilience to cope with localised concentrations of the virus in Leicester and surrounding areas.

By easing the lockdown, we will also allow places of worship and faith groups to pick up the pieces in supporting the mental and spiritual well being from the effects of this virus and lockdown. Many elderly people as well as many young people rely on social interaction that places of worship offer and we feel that by easing the lockdown, the communities of Leicester can start to return to some form of normality.

Of course, we will support the easing of the lockdown when it is safe to do so, but we feel that at this present time we are in a different place and have sufficient mechanisms to manage messaging on safety, vigilance and recovery.

I look forward to hearing from you soonest.

Yours Sincerely



Fayyaz Suleman – Chairman

Cc

Faith Places of Worship

Members of Parliament

Details of Faith Groups Participating in the Lockdown Messaging Initiative

The Jain Centre  
Shreejidham Haveli Temple  
Shree Sanatan Mandir Temple  
BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir  
Shree Hindu Temple & Community Centre  
Jalaram Temple Charitable Trust  
Shree Ram Mandir  
Geeta Bhavan Temple  
Brahma Samaj Community Centre  
Guru Tegh Bahadur Gurdwara  
Ramgharia Sikh Gurdwara  
Masjid Huda  
Masjid Taybah  
Usmani Mosque  
Markaz Quba Mosque  
Masjid Umar  
Darussalam Mosque  
Neve Shalom Synagogue  
City of Favour Church  
Church of the Resurrection  
Dharga Community Leicester  
Muslim Khatri Association  
Memon Association  
Al Khidmah Foundation  
MBCOL  
Polish Community Centre

Pilgrim House, 10 Bishop Street, Town Hall Square, Leicester LE1 6AF

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[www.lcof.org.uk](http://www.lcof.org.uk)

Ismaili Jamatkhana Community Leicester  
Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais  
Redeemed Christian Church of God  
Daman Community Leicester  
Tamil Community Leicester  
Leicester Catholic Zimbabwean Society  
Leicester Hebrew Congregation