



BOB BLACKMAN

A Strong Voice for Harrow East



Father Edward Lewis
The Vicarage
3 St. Leonards Avenue
Harrow
HA3 8EJ

4 November 2020
Our reference: BB38061/G5

Dear *Edward,*

Places of Worship

Thank you for your correspondence about the closure of places of worship under the new coronavirus restrictions in effect from 5 November.

I certainly understand your disappointment about the closure of places of worship as part of these new measures. While the Government has made a compelling case that national action needs to be taken to prevent the further spread of the virus following a significant rise in cases in recent weeks, I share your view that places of worship should be allowed to open in a COVID secure manner.

I am therefore lobbying the Government to allow venues to remain open for services. Faith is a central aspect to so many people's lives and I believe that it would be possible to continue services under safe conditions in the current circumstances. I agree that we must recognise the benefits services bring to people's lives and how important attending regular prayer and services is for many people, even if they must be separated from those they do not live with within the venue.

I sincerely hope these efforts are successful in changing the Government's position. Whatever the outcome of our campaign, however, I also hope that the new measures more broadly allow us to ease restrictions around places of worship in the near future further, as I am very aware that people have endured many difficult months of restrictions surrounding their faith already.

All data held by my office is processed in accordance with GDPR guidelines and my Data Privacy Policy can be found on my website. Please note the reference number assigned to this enquiry for future correspondence on this particular subject. All casework correspondence sent by post should be directed toward my Harrow office, address below.

Yours sincerely,

Bob Blackman MP
Harrow East