

Thornbury Magazine circulation: packing, distribution & delivery

1. Background & principles

The health and safety of our committee, our volunteers and readers are paramount. Neither the elimination of Covid-19 nor widespread deployment of a vaccine are likely within the next year. It is therefore essential that we take action to ensure that the hazard posed by Covid-19 is as low as reasonably practicable.

Many of us are over 70 and are therefore classed as clinically vulnerable with a higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. Younger folk with chronic conditions are similarly classed. Thornbury is currently 'Tier Three – Very High Alert' and should follow current government guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tier-3-very-high-alert#protecting-people-more-at-risk-from-coronavirus>):

- We can go outside as much as we like but should still try to keep our overall social interactions low.
- We should continue to wash our hands carefully and more frequently than usual and maintain thorough cleaning of frequently touched areas in our home and/or workspace.

Our over-riding principles are that:

1. No volunteer experiencing symptoms similar to those of Covid-19 shall participate in the packing of rounds, distribution to deliverers or letterbox delivery until they have tested negative.
2. As few people as possible shall handle copies between box opening and delivery to a letterbox.
3. Volunteers shall take appropriate action to safeguard their own exposure to infection within the government guidelines operating at the time of delivery.
4. Hand sanitizers, gloves and masks shall be provided to distributors and deliverers.
5. There shall be no deliveries to:
 - a. Retirement lodges, sheltered housing or care homes. It is essential that exposure of the occupants is avoided until Covid-19 guidance allows.
 - b. Shops, offices, commercial premises or community buildings.
 - c. Blocks of flats with letterboxes that require access to an indoor area.
6. The process shall be reviewed in the light of changed guidance prior to each circulation.

2. Receipt of printed magazines

- i. Circulation will commence on the last Wednesday of each month unless the level of alert requires delay or abandonment.
- ii. Motion will deliver the magazines to St Mary's Church Hall (SMCH) in boxes of 160 containing bundles of 10 or 20 secured by a rubber band. They are packed by the printer and Motion personnel only touch the outside of boxes when loading or unloading the delivery vehicle.
- iii. The printers follow appropriate guidance to minimise the potential for contamination by Covid-19. WHO describes the risk of infection via newsprint as minimal because the production process is highly automated.
- iv. St Mary's Church has advised that the hall should be available and appropriate guidance on its use will be provided and shall be complied with.

3. Packing rounds

Our precautions implement government guidance on Covid-Secure workplaces

(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/offices-and-contact-centres>).

- i. Doors into the hall and a fire exit door shall be left open in order to maximise circulation of air through the hall to reduce the concentration of airborne virus.
- ii. The number of rounds has been minimised to reduce the number of people required for packing. Ideally each round would contain 160 copies so that a deliverer would simply collect unopened boxes. This is not practicable so some repacking is inevitable.
- iii. Packers making up rounds shall wear facemasks and use gloves or regularly sanitise their hands in order to minimise the chance of contaminating copies of the magazine. Minimum distancing of 1 metre and preferably 2 metres means that bagging up shall be done by one person or a couple. No more than 6 volunteers shall be in the hall at any one time and their names shall be recorded and reported to SMCH if requested.
- iv. All rounds that require packing or repacking shall be sprayed with sanitizer before despatch.
- v. Tables and other items used for packing shall be cleaned prior to leaving the hall.

4. Collection by and distribution to deliverers

- i. Deliverers shall not collect from SMCH in order to respect the limit on numbers inside the hall.
- ii. Distributors shall minimise their handling of boxes and bags and sanitise their hands regularly.

5. Letterbox delivery

- i. Deliverers shall regularly sanitise their hands after touching letterboxes, gates etc. Although the use of gloves and facemasks is not required in outdoor areas, volunteers are expected to comply with guidance prevailing at the time and to take whatever precautions they need to be comfortable with their delivery.
- ii. There shall be no deliveries to blocks of flats with letterboxes that require access to an indoor area until restrictions allow.