



## How Religious Communities Locally Responded to the Coronavirus Pandemic

Name of Religious Tradition: Buddhist. Theravada, Thai Forest tradition  
With Burmese connections.

Location: near Warwick

Place of Worship: The Forest Hermitage

During the Pandemic, the main changes to our ways of worshipping were:

This caught us at a difficult time. Most Buddhist temples, like us, are also residential and nearly all our Buddhist monastic communities have been strictly locked down to protect members, especially those who are elderly.

So, since March last year all our regular events have been cancelled and we have had no festival celebrations. This has hit us hard because these are normally sources of support.

Unfortunately, we are situated where mobile phone connections are feeble and where we are also near the end of an ancient line of copper wire so that internet connections are very slow. With BT we manage around 4 mbps or less and download usually less than 1 mbps. Lately we have tried 3 or 4G and can double that but these very poor speeds have meant that we have struggled to provide meditation meetings via Zoom to replace the regular meetings here. But we do try on Monday and Friday evenings.

In September we did manage a carefully organised funeral in the garden for Maureen Leahy, one-time Head of King's in Warwick.

During the Pandemic, the ways in which our religious community reached out to the local community were:

I have continued to run the Buddhist Prison Chaplaincy but since the end of March last year I have not made any of my usual regular visits. I make a weekly broadcast on National Prison Radio and write a weekly letter for Buddhists in prison that is nationally distributed.

Coventry SACRE & Warwickshire SACRE  
February 2021

Written by Ven. Luang Por Khemadhammo (Phra Bhavanaviteht) OBE on behalf of the  
Forest Hermitage Buddhist Monastery, Lower Fulbrook