



## How Religious Communities Locally Responded to the Coronavirus Pandemic

Name of Religious Tradition: Pagan

Name of local group - Coventry EarthSpirit (but there are other groups in Coventry and the local area.)

Location – Coventry.

Place of Worship: Pagans tend to meet regularly in informal groups often in pubs for socialising, discussions and learning. Our individual traditions often have other, more formal meetings in their own places. Pagan rituals following the Wheel of the Year tend to take place outdoors in special places. So around Coventry, Pagans may meet in local parks and green spaces. Other activities tend to take place in people's homes and gardens.

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

Pagans usually like to gather in groups outdoors but – in the pandemic - we have stayed at home and gone online. So local Moots (Pagan meetings) are now meeting online on their usual days but some have introduced extras like regular coffee mornings, etc and there is a moot in Coventry offering an online course!

We have conducted Rituals online – I'm proud to say that Coventry EarthSpirit was one of the first local Moots to do this. National organisations like OBOD (Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids) are doing national online rituals - I can send you a link to OBOD's recent Imbolc ritual if that is helpful.

We are enjoying the outdoors but looking forward to being able to meet again.

Lots of us are pining for hugs!

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

Regarding looking out for each other - this is also largely online - moot leaders are generally keeping an eye on who posts. So – for instance - recently there was a bit of a panic when members of Coventry EarthSpirit and South Birmingham Moot messaged around because we were concerned about one of our elderly and vulnerable members who had disappeared from social media and was not answering his phone. The good news is that we sent someone round to knock on his door and they found him cooking his dinner! He had broken his phone and a few days later - when his new phone arrived - he was back online but with a renewed faith in his community and asking for help with a personal issue. Otherwise Pagan-folk tend to keep a low profile but seem to be contributing to local charities in the way they do normally.