

WOOLGATE - COVID-19 FAQ'S



How many people are you letting into the shops?

This is different for all of the shops here, based on how much space they have inside and how their layout of furniture/racking meets the needs for social distancing. Most of our shops have a notice at the door advising how many can enter, please check these before coming in. If the shop has reached capacity a staff member may ask you to wait on a queue marker outside, or the door may be locked with a notice asking you to wait on a queue marker or please return later.



Where should I queue?

Running down the side of the mall, there are footprints with a line in front of them – these are our queue markers. The queue markers for each shop run along the width of the shop front in most cases. Sometimes this will mean there is a queue marker on each side of the door rather than one behind the other. Customers should enter the shop in the order they arrive. Please don't queue in the door or across the doors of neighbouring shops.

There are times when all queue markers for a certain shop will be occupied. When this happens, please come back and visit later rather than wait in a space not designated for queuing. The exception to this system is Waitrose, where the space given over for queuing has not been marked out with queuing markers, but with barriers instead. Please follow the instructions of Waitrose staff and security for when to enter the shop and when to wait in the queue.



When is the best time to visit to avoid the queues?

Our busiest time of day is between 11am and 1:30pm. If you visit either before or after these times, you will find there is much less chance you will have to queue. Our busiest days of the week are Thursday, Friday and Saturday, so if you're really keen not to have to queue then visiting between Sunday and Wednesday is advised (and try to avoid the 11am til 1:30pm period also).



Why can't I stand in the middle of the mall?

To best support our retailers, we've elected not to impose a one way system, or a limited capacity for those wanting to visit the Woolgate Shopping Centre, but this does mean ensuring there is still sufficient space for shoppers to observe social distancing whilst they visit. The way this has been accounted for is by marking out a central channel as a "no stopping zone". Shoppers should not stop in this area so that people can continue to move through the mall and give each other space.

Keeping to the left when walking through the no stopping zone is also advised to help everyone have their own space. Standing in the no stopping zone, even for a short period can quickly force people to have to walk closer to others as they walk around you and will make social distancing very difficult.

If you want to stop, please move over to the side or make your way through to the wider areas of the shopping centre that are not marked out with a no stopping zone.



Where should I wait for my friend whilst they're in a shop/getting their coffee?

If you're waiting for someone, please don't take up space in the queue system for any of the shops, or stand waiting in the no stopping zone. Agree to meet your friend either at the clock tower near Waitrose and the car park, or near the benches under the tree at the high street end. Both these areas are large enough for people to wait comfortably without creating congestion for those walking through.



Why can't I walk my dog through the Woolgate?

Please note that we still want to welcome those with support dogs, such as guide dogs, to continue to use the shopping centre as normal. The decision to ask those walking dogs to avoid the Woolgate is to help us with social distancing. Where dogs and their owners can't enter the shops, there isn't the space available to have them wait for others. Keeping shoppers moving through the no stopping area is vital to avoid a breakdown in social distancing.

Another factor is the width of the mall taken up by a person walking with their dog on a lead by their side and during the weeks across April and May we saw many failings in social distancing that arose from this. People in Witney love dogs, but even a well-meaning short stop to greet a particularly nice dog can quickly cause congestion within the no stopping zone.

Dog mess has also been an issue either through having to shut down a section of mall to allow for cleaning, or from people giving the dog mess a wide berth this has brought about the potential for a failure in social distancing.

Thank you to the dog walkers to have adapted their walking routes to detour around Woolgate to help us out during this difficult time.



I'm picking up a click and collect order – do I need to queue?

Please check any instructions you've received from the retailer as there are many different systems in use. In the majority of cases, you may still have to queue if the in-store capacity has been reached, but there are retailers (Waitrose for instance) who will allow click and collect customers to enter without need to join the main queue. Waitrose are working on a solution that will allow for click and collect customers to receive items from a designated zone in the car park – please look out for updates from Waitrose regarding this service.



Your signs are very small, can you get something that's easier to read?

Thank you for the feedback - we have ordered larger signs that will be much easier to read.



How can I find out the opening times for shops at the Woolgate?

During this time, there are many retailers operating with shorter opening hours, or differing opening days to their normal pattern. Please check their websites directly for the most up to date information and note that in some cases this will change week to week due to staffing pressures.