

Risk Assessment for Opening Church Buildings to the Public and Public worship

Risk assessment template

Church: Immanuel and St Andrew	Assessor's name: Sarah, Suzie, Joyce	Date completed: 1/03/21	Review date: Ongoing
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Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
Access to church buildings for clergy for purposes of private prayer and/or livestreaming General advice on accessing church buildings can be found here.	A suitable lone working policy has been consulted if relevant.	An example can be found here .	Sarah to investigate	
	Buildings have been aired before use.	Prior to building use the upper windows opened and doors kept open for a time before the service starts	Warden on duty	
	Check for animal waste and general cleanliness.	Check entrance for slippery/wet leaves and clear if problematic	Warden on duty	
	Ensure water systems are flushed through before use. (applies if building is closed for a long period)	See Government Guidance for organisations on supplying safe water supplies	Vicar/wardens	
	Switch on and check electrical and heating systems if needed. Commission system checks as necessary.		Vicar/wardens	

	Ensure safe use of equipment needed for livestreaming: avoid exceeding safe load on sockets, cables/tripod causing trip hazard		Chris	
	Monthly checking of all fire detectors in church	To occur on the first of each month and be logged in a logbook	Joyce/Sarah	
	Check if any clergy, staff or volunteers required for opening to the public fall into clinically extremely vulnerable categories or have members of their household who do, and ensure there are enough people safely able and willing to facilitate opening and cleaning the building	Including volunteers and cleaners	Sarah	
Preparation of the Church for access by members of the public for any permitted purposes, including worship and tourism	Update your website, A Church Near You, and any relevant social media with key information about COVID	<p>Note on website/e mail communication to encourage congregation to use the NHS test and trace app on arrival to church to (not mandatory but strongly advised)</p> <p>Note on website about face coverings being mandatory unless in the exemption group</p> <p>Remind people to be vigilant about COVID symptoms and if showing any symptoms, they must not attend the church building or if any of their</p>	Sarah, Mark Kirsty	

		<p>household members are showing COVID symptoms</p> <p>Remind people who are clinically extremely vulnerable to COVID-19 to stay at home as much as possible and observe social distancing guidance, and either strongly discourage them from attending church in person during this time or indicate a time for them to attend for individual devotions.</p> <p>Clearly state the limits on attendance for weddings, funerals, commemorative events and any other permitted activities where upper limits apply (or provide a link to this document).</p> <p>COVID risk assessment to be uploaded onto website</p>		
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	Consider if a booking system is needed, whether for general access or for specific events/services	Not needed for regular Sunday services but may need to consider for larger services (e.g. Easter services)	Sarah	
	Choose one point of entry into the church to manage flow of people and indicate this with notices, keeping emergency exits available at all times. Where possible use a different exit.	<p>People will enter at the front entrance to the church and leave via the hall entrance</p> <p>Put a no entry sign on the common room door near the church entrance, to encourage people to enter the common room/disabled toilet using the one-way system</p>	<p>Sarah to develop no entry sign</p> <p>Wardens to help direct flow of congregation members</p>	
	Make any temporary arrangements for people to wait or queue outside the building (taking into account any consequential risks arising from people gathering outside).	Hasn't been an issue as people arrive. At the end of services people will be asked to leave promptly	Vicar to announce and wardens to help usher	
	Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation.	Upper windows will be opened for services and the front doors (unless cold is a major issue). Internal door to church to be kept open until the start of the service.	Wardens/Steward	
	If heating is required check your system is safe to use and test it before people are allowed in		Wardens/ Steward	

	<p>Check what type of heating church has. Types of heating that present a Covid-19 risk are those that take air from one occupied space in a building and move it into another occupied space, i.e. from one room to another. If your heating or ventilation system has this feature it must be turned off so that air is not moved from one space to another</p>	<p>Heating system uses radiators does not use move air from one room to another</p>		
	<p>Remove Bibles/literature/hymn books/leaflets</p>	<p>All Bibles and hymn books to be kept on shelf and not used Encourage congregation members to bring their own books.</p> <p>Service booklets to be put out on chairs and then collected and left for a week before use.</p> <p>At each service congregation members should be informed that they must not collect service booklets at the end of the service, they must leave them on the chairs</p>	<p>Wardens/Steward Vicar to make announcements about leaving service sheets on chairs at each service</p>	
	<p>Cordon off or remove from public access any devotional objects or items (if they are liable to be touched or closely breathed on)</p>	<p>None present</p>		
	<p>Consider if pew cushions/kneelers need to be removed as per government guidance</p>	<p>None present</p>		
	<p>Remove or isolate children's resources and play areas</p>	<p>The children's groups are suspended and the creche room is to be open but no</p>	<p>Parents to bring their own toys if required.</p>	

		toys put out. Children are to remain with their parents/carers.		
	Walk through the church to plan for physical distancing in seats, aisles, at the altar rail, including safe flow of visitors. Remember 2m in all directions from each person	Chairs have been placed in small groups for households/support bubbles to sit. 2 meters distance between each group of chairs in all directions A maximum of 60 people are allowed at any service.	Vicar/wardens/stewards to ensure there are sufficient chairs and the placement is suitably spaced.	
	Clearly mark out seating areas including exclusion zones to maintain distancing.	No exclusion zones identified.		
	Clearly mark out flow of movement for people entering and leaving the building to maintain physical distancing requirements.	One-way system signs in place		
	Limit access to places where the public does not need go, maybe with a temporary cordon in needed.	Sign to be put on the vestry room limiting access. Sign to be put on the church office limiting access.	Sarah	
	Determine placement of hand sanitisers available for visitors to use.	Register with Parish Buying for procurement options. Sanitiser to be available at the entrance and the exit.	Sarah/Kirsty Wardens/Steward	
	Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. face coverings, social distancing, increasing the frequency of hand washing, avoiding touching your face, and	Signs in place for the following: Face coverings Increased hand hygiene		

	coughing or sneezing into a tissue which is binned safely	Respiratory hygiene measures -One-way system -toilets direction -hand washing -Putting toilet seat down		
	Check that handwashing facilities have adequate soap provision and paper towels, and a bin for the paper towels.	Register with Parish Buying for procurement options.	Cleaners/Kirsty Wardens to check	
	Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available.	Register with Parish Buying for procurement options.	Cleaners/Kirsty Wardens to check	
	Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.		Cleaners/Kirsty Vicar to check	
	Ensure the NHS Track and Trace QR code available at the front entrance for worshippers and hall hirers to check in with.	Encourage all who enter to use it Ensure the poster is on a flat surface so that QR codes can scan properly	Welcome/wardens	
	For people who are unable to use the NHS Track and Trace app, provide safe means for worshippers and visitors to record their name and contact details; retain each day's record for 21 days	Warden/welcomer will ask for details and record as people arrive. Paperwork to be kept in the safe and disposed of after 21 days.	Warden/welcomer	
Cleaning the church before and after general use (no known exposure to anyone with Coronavirus symptoms)	If the church building has been closed for a minimum of 48 hours between periods of being open, then there is no need for extra cleaning to remove the virus from surfaces.	Check all cleaners or volunteers helping with	Sarah	

	<p>If 48-hour closure is not possible then check all cleaners and volunteers are not considered vulnerable with an underlying health condition</p> <p>If the church has been used within 48hr period, ensure the toilets are cleaned and high-risk surfaces and touch points have been wiped with appropriate sanitiser spray or disposable wipes at a minimum of twice a day</p>	<p>cleaning are not considered vulnerable and with an underlying health condition</p> <p>Wardens/vicar to clean high risk surfaces and touch points following the Sunday morning service, ready for the next church service</p> <p>Look into changing cleaners schedule from Friday night to a Saturday evening to ensure the church is ready for the Sunday Service.</p> <p>Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here.</p>	<p>Wardens and Vicar</p> <p>Sarah and Kirsty</p>	
	<p>Set up a cleaning rota to cover your opening arrangements taking into consideration if 48-hour closure is not possible prior to cleaning check that all cleaners and volunteers are not considered vulnerable with an underlying health condition</p> <p>Numbers going in to clean should be kept to a minimum, and social distancing always complied with</p>	<p>Cleaners clean the building twice a week – Friday and Sunday evening. This is to be reviewed.</p>		

	All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable).	Register with Parish Buying for procurement options.	Kirsty to arrange (a reusable pair for each cleaner – named in pen)	
	Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned.	Register with Parish Buying for procurement options. COVID 19 Keeping Church Buildings Clean v3.0.pdf (churchofengland.org)	Kirsty to order	
	Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site.	Cleansers to remove.	Kirsty to check	
	Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site – suggested daily removal.	Sarah to discuss what is possible with Kirsty.	Sarah/Kirsty	
Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms	If possible close the church building for a minimum of 48 hours with no access permitted. If the building has been quarantined for 48hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning. Any objects handled by the person where cleaning is not possible should be quarantined for at least 72 hours.	It is possible to close the main church hall, but the common room/ back part of church and toilets will either need cleaning or closing for 48hrs		
	If 48-hour closure is not possible then cleaning and disinfecting the areas are required. Follow Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings	COVID-19: cleaning in non-healthcare settings outside the home - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)	Sarah to liaise with Kirsty who will brief the cleaners	

	<p>Use combined detergent disinfectant solution at a dilution of 1,000 parts per million available chlorine</p> <p>Use disposable cloths or paper roll and disposable mop heads, to clean all hard surfaces, floors, chairs, door handles and sanitary fittings – think one site, one wipe, in one direction. PPE required: gloves & apron)</p>	<p>COVID 19 Keeping Church Buildings Clean v3.0.pdf (churchofengland.org)</p> <p>Check we have the following equipment in case there is a positive case: Paper roll or disposable mop heads Detergent disinfectant solution with chlorine Gloves and aprons</p>	Kirsty check we have the supplies in stock	
Special instructions for services.	When opening for public worship, weddings and funerals care should be taken to ensure that worshippers and visitors maintain social distancing.	Ideally there should be one person on the door and one in the worship area to keep an eye and guide.	Vicar/Wardens and Steward	
	When preparing for communion service care must be taken to ensure hand hygiene and the setting up of the elements.	The minister taking the service will be responsible for setting up communion. Everything will be set up on the communion table before the service starts.	Sarah	
	When communicants receive communion, they must maintain social distancing as much as possible.	Congregation members do not que up to get wafer, they remain seated and the vicar will come to each person individually.	Vicar announces plan to administer wafer whilst congregation members remain seated	
	When officiating and distribution communion great care must be taken to avoid transmission of COVID-19.	Minister must:	Vicar/visiting priest/wardens	

	<p>The presiding minister should set up for communion where possible. If it is a visiting minister then it can be set up by a warden and care must be taken to hand sanitise before handling anything.</p>	<p>Wash hands with soap and water before the service starts. Leave the elements covered while saying the eucharistic prayer. Consume the entire wafer which is broken. Use hand sanitizer before distributing the bread and if their hands come into contact with any person receiving communion. Wear a facemask during the distribution of communion. Remain silent while distributing communion.</p>		
	<p>Where singing or chanting is essential to an act of worship, this should be limited to one person wherever possible. Exceptionally, where it is essential to the service, up to three individuals should be permitted to do so. Strict social distancing should be observed, and the use of Plexi-glass screens should be considered to protect worshippers, and each other.</p>	<p>Limit to 1 person wherever possible. Care must be taken around social distancing. Singers should be 3 meters apart from the congregation and 2 meters apart from one another. Instruments and microphones should be appropriately cleaned afterwards.</p>	Musicians	

	<p>Sharing of microphone during service for readings, intercession prayers and giving notices</p>	<p>Encourage people who use the microphone to sanitise their hands before using microphone.</p> <p>Clean microphone at the end of the Sunday service</p>	<p>Individual readers</p> <p>Vicar or wardens</p>	
	<p>When a baptism is taking place, ensure social distancing where possible and minimise risk of transmission through contact. NO FULL IMMERSION BAPTISMS.</p>	<p>The baby/child should be held by a parent throughout. Only the family and minister to stand by the font, Godparents to stand at the front socially distanced. Minister should sanitise hands before and after baptism and a mask should be worn by all whilst by the font. If oil is used when signing the cross a Qtip/brush should be used to apply it. Water should be poured over the candidate using a shell or other receptacle. If a candle is handed over the giver's hands should be sanitised before handling the candle.</p>	<p>Vicar</p>	

<p>Hall Hire</p>	<p>Ensure hall hirers have read: COVID-19: Guidance for the safe use of multi-purpose community facilities - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>Ensure hall hirers carry out their own individual risk assessments for the type of business/service they will be delivering from the church hall</p> <p>Ask hall hirers to send their risk assessment to church office, so, church is comfortable with their plans to adhere the COVID guidance to maintain safety of the public</p> <p>Hall hirers to carry out their own cleaning before and after use. They must ensure the toilets are cleaned and high-risk surfaces and touch points have been wiped with appropriate sanitiser spray or disposable wipes (detergent and cleaning products provided by church). Hall hirers should know where to access the cleaning products</p>	<p>Review e mail template to be sent to all hall hirers with the requirements outlined in measurers column</p> <p>Hall hirers should reply to e mail saying they agree to all of the requirements and send their risk assessments</p>	<p>Kirsty/David</p>	
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