

Risk Assessment Template for Opening Church Buildings to the Public

Risk assessment template

Church: Ss. Peter & Paul, Bromley	Assessor's name: James Harratt	Date completed: 1/3/20	Review date: 1/7/20
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Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
Access to church buildings for purposes of recording and/or livestreaming services (with no congregation present) Risk: contracting or spreading the virus by not social distancing or by touching contaminated services	Make sure that only those essential for livestreaming or recording enter the church.	Livestreaming continues to be operated by one person with all other contributions given virtually.	JMH	22/6/20
	Identify one point of entry to the church building, and a separate exit if possible.	Office Door is main point of access. Lock changed and log kept to allow only designated individuals entrance		
	A suitable lone working policy has been consulted if relevant.	A policy is yet to be adopted by the PCC		
	Holy water stoups and the font are empty.			
	Ensure safe use of equipment needed for livestreaming: avoid exceeding safe load on sockets, cables/tripod causing trip hazard	One socket is required for livestreaming. Cables are tidied with a trip safe cover		

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	Provide adequate hand cleansing stations. Provide hand sanitiser for the occasions when people can't wash their hands.		JMH	22/6/20
	Read the CofE guide on face coverings and produce or download signage or other relevant materials to indicate compliance with the law and requiring these for all except those exempt.	Sign informing people of the need for face coverings at public entrance to building. Verbal reminders to be given in services.	JMH	1/3/20
	Ensure you have an NHS Track and Trace QR code available, with an alternative option for those who cannot use that system.	QR code at public entrance. Separate code created for rooms. Manual register taken during services for those who cannot use QR codes.	JMH	1/3/20
Deciding whether to open to the public for private prayer, public worship and other permitted activities	Consider how the national lockdown applies to the particular circumstances of the church and the worship or other activities envisaged. For gathered congregations or other activities drawing people from a wide area, consider the implications of where people travel from and the distance involved.	Almost all the congregation who gather on a Sunday live within a 5 mile radius of the church and so can be considered to be undertaking local journeys.		
	Discuss with nearby venues and businesses to ensure that the timing and practical arrangements for using the church are compatible.	The busy nature of the town centre means no issues are envisaged.		1/3/20
	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.		JMH	1/3/20

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	Consider whether to discourage clinically extremely vulnerable members of the congregation or visitors from attending services altogether or setting aside a time for them to attend for individual devotions.	In notices, it will be highlighted that the services remain streamed for those who do not feel safe to attend in person.	JMH	1/3/20
	Consider if a booking system is needed, whether for general access or for specific events/services	A ticket system via church suite remains in place for attending services	JMH	1/3/20
Preparation of the Church for access by members of the public for any permitted purposes Risk: Getting or spreading coronavirus in common use high traffic areas such as corridors, toilet facilities, entry/exit points and other communal areas.	Confirm that all steps (above) for access for livestreaming/broadcast have been carried out before anyone else accesses the building.		JMH	1/3/20
	Update your website, A Church Near You, and any relevant social media with information for visitors. Communicate details on requirements such as bringing a face covering. 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).	Remains to be done once the PCC confirm the reopening of the church on the 21 st .	JMH	
	Update your website to 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.	To be done via notices and email.	JMH	
	Read the CofE guide on face coverings and produce signage or other relevant materials to indicate	Signs encouraging face coverings at main entrances to the building.		

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	compliance with the law requiring these for all except those exempt.			
	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.	Entrance via ambulatory and back door. Exit via main doors	JMH	1/3/20
	Make any temporary arrangements for people to wait or queue outside the building (taking into account any consequential risks arising from people gathering outside).	Safe distancing markers in ambulatory for queuing.	JMH	1/3/20
	Make any temporary arrangements for managing the approaches to the entry points and any parking areas to ensure social distancing can be observed (taking into account any consequential risks arising from changes to circulation).	Car parking limited to ensure safe pedestrian space outside the church.	JMH	1/3/20
	Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation.		JMH	
	If heating is required check your system is safe to use and test it before people are allowed in.	Boilers regularly serviced. Repair carried out on one March 2021/		
	Remove Bibles/literature/hymn books/leaflets unless they are absolutely essential and participants cannot bring their own. Hardcopy literature should be quarantined for at least 48 hours between use.			1/3/20
	Cordon off or remove from public access any devotional objects or items (if they are liable to be touched or closely breathed on)			1/3/20

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	Consider if pew cushions/kneelers need to be removed as per government guidance on soft surfaces.		JMH	1/3/20
	Remove or isolate children’s resources and play areas.		JMH	1/3/20
	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 (or 1m with risk mitigation if absolutely necessary).	Safe distancing in pews maintained and marked out with tape	JMH	1/3/20
	Clearly mark out seating areas including exclusion zones to maintain distancing.		JMH	1/3/20
	Clearly mark out flow of movement for people entering and leaving the building to maintain physical distancing requirements.	Signage and markers in place	JMH	1/3/20
	Limit access to places where the public does not need go, maybe with a temporary cordon is needed.		JMH	1/3/20
	Determine placement of hand sanitisers available for visitors to use.	Sanitiser at all entrance and exit points	JMH	1/3/20
	Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing etc.	Notices printed	JMH	1/3/20
	Check that handwashing facilities have adequate soap provision and paper towels, and a bin for the paper towels.	Stock levels checked before opening	JMH	1/3/20
	Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available.	.		

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	Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.		jMH	1/3/20
Use of the church for baptisms, weddings, funerals and commemorative services	Consider the specific guidance in place for those activities and assess the additional controls and limits on attendance in place.	<p>Advice on baptisms can be found here.</p> <p>Advice on weddings can be found here (scroll down to Can weddings go ahead?).</p> <p>Advice on funerals can be found here.</p> <p>The government’s advice on commemorative events can be found here.</p>	JMh	
Use of the church for permitted activities other than private prayer or worship	Consider the specific guidance in place for those activities and assess the additional controls and limits on attendance in place. Check that any external group using the church has COVID-secure working practices in place, including their own risk assessment where necessary, and will comply with what is required by the church.	Hirers are given an extra set of criteria to manage rooms safely, plus are asked to have their own covid policies in place.	Rooms Manager	
Cleaning the church before and after general use (no known exposure to anyone)	If the church building has been closed for 48 hours between periods of being open then there is no need for extra cleaning to remove the virus from surfaces.	Wednesday opening for prayer leaves 48 hour gap, and no need for extra cleaning.		

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with Coronavirus symptoms) Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here . Risk: Getting or spreading coronavirus by not cleaning surfaces, equipment and shared facilities.	Bibles/literature/hymn books/leaflets deemed essential for services should be quarantined for 48 hours after use.			
	All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable).	Gloves purchased and available		
	Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned.	Disinfectant spray provided		
	Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site.	JMH to put in bins on Sunday	JMH	
	Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site – suggested daily removal.	Paper towels to be used only.		
Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms	If possible close the church building for 48 hours with no access permitted.			
	If 48-hour closure is not possible then follow Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings.	Public Health England guidance available here .		
	If the building has been quarantined for 48 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning.	Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here .		