

St Michael and All Angels

Poole Keynes

24<sup>th</sup> June 2020

## Risk Assessment for Opening Church Buildings to the Public: individual prayer and funerals

**Version Control**

Issue Date	Version Number	Issued by
22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2020	1	The House of Bishops COVID-19 Recovery Group
8 <sup>th</sup> June 2020	2	The House of Bishops COVID-19 Recovery Group
12 <sup>th</sup> June 2020	3	The House of Bishops COVID-19 Recovery Group

Churches and cathedrals are legally permitted to open for purposes of individual private prayer from 13th June. House of Bishops guidance provides for churches to open for funerals from 15th June.

The [government guidance for the safe use of places of worship during the pandemic](#) requires a COVID-19 risk assessment to be carried out for every building and site open to the public. This document provides a template risk assessment, with links to the relevant advice notes. It relates to opening up church and cathedral buildings to clergy and members of the public entering for individual private prayer. As well as offering guidance on best-practice, it is also intended to help parishes make a decision on whether to open for individual private prayer or not, based on their local circumstances, resources and context.

Future versions of this document will be produced when different forms of public worship and access are allowed.

A risk assessment relating to contractors and construction workers forms part of an updated document giving advice on access for these groups. This can be found on the [Church of England Coronavirus pages](#).

**Risk assessment template**

<b>Church:</b> St Michael and All Angels, Poole Keynes ( StM&AA)	<b>Assessor's name:</b> Tom Grand	<b>Date completed:</b> 21/ 06/2020	<b>Review date:</b> 28/07/2020
--	--------------------------------------	---------------------------------------	-----------------------------------

#	Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
1	<b>Access to church buildings for clergy for purposes of private prayer</b>  <a href="#">General advice on accessing church buildings can be found here.</a>	One point of entry to the church building clearly identified and separate from public entry if possible  <i>Not relevant StM&amp;AA only has one entrance.</i>	The church will only be open for private prayer.	N/A	N/A
2		A suitable lone working policy has been consulted if relevant.	An example can be <a href="#">found here.</a>	Read by Tom Grand. No additional measures required	21/06/20
3		Buildings have been aired before use.	The church will be prepared for opening by; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Airing</li> <li>• Cleaning ( in line with relevant <a href="#">guidance</a> )</li> <li>• removal to storage of</li> </ul>	Preparation of Church for opening Tom Grand, with support of George Collins (Church Warden), to provide keys, hand sanitiser (60% alcohol	Completed 27/06/20  All non-essential items including soft furnishing stored in tower

#	Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
			unessential items; individuals will be required to bring personal prayer books and bibles.	as recommended) and dispenser.	which is always locked  Target opening date 01/07/20
4		Check for animal waste and general cleanliness.	Before each opening session	Tom Grand & George Collins	Cleaned 27/06/20 further cleaning before each opening
5		Ensure water systems are flushed through before use.	<i>Not relevant StM&amp;AA does not have a water supply.</i>	N/A	N/A
6		Switch on and check electrical and heating systems if needed.	The church electrical heating system will be checked but it is not expected that it will be switched on during the Summer. Lights and sockets are working	Tom Grand	Done 27/06/20
7		Holy water stoups and the font are empty.	They will be empty	Tom Grand	Done 27/06/20

#	Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
8	<b>Preparation of the Church for individual prayer and funerals</b>	Confirm that all steps (above) for access by clergy have been carried out before anyone else accesses the building.	To be undertaken as part of opening routine. See Appendix 1.	Tom Grand	Done 27/06/20
9		Review CofE guide on cleaning church buildings. Complete the 'cleaning' section of this risk assessment (below).	Guidelines read and will check regularly for updates	Tom Grand & George Collins	21/06/20
10		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.	There is only 1 entrance. 72 hour locked door between sessions. Signs in position	Tom Grand	Done 27/06/20
11		Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation.	To be undertaken as part of opening routine.	Tom Grand	Done 27/06/20 repeated before each opening
12		Remove from use all books (inc. hymn books and Bibles) plus leaflets except single use material that will be removed by user.	Stored in cupboard. Lock organ	Tom Grand/George Collins	Done 27/06/20
13		Cordon off or remove from public access any devotional objects or items	To be undertaken as part of preparation for opening.	Tom Grand	Done 27/06/20
14		Consider if pew cushions/kneelers need to be removed as per government guidance	Removed and stored in tower.	Tom Grand/George Collins	Removed 27/06/20
15		Remove or isolate children's resources and play areas	Removed from building	Tom Grand/George Collins	Removed 27/06/20

#	Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
16		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.	Access to pews on each side of the aisle will be alternated on open days. Access to rows of pews will be obstructed with ribbon to maintain the 2m safe distance by marking as closed pews that are within 2m of open pews.	Tom Grand	Done 27/06/20
17		Clearly mark out seating areas including exclusion zones to maintain distancing.	Access to pews on each side of the aisle will be alternated on open days. Access to rows of pews will be obstructed with ribbon to maintain the 2m safe distance by marking as closed pews that are within 2m of open pews.	Tom Grand	Done 27/06/20
18		Clearly mark out flow of movement for people entering and leaving the building to maintain physical distancing requirements.	Access to pews on each side of the aisle will be alternated on open days. Access to rows of pews will be obstructed with ribbon to maintain the 2m safe distance by marking as closed pews	Tom Grand	Done 27/06/20

#	Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
			that are within 2m of open pews.		
<b>19</b>		Limit access to places where the public does not need go, maybe with a temporary cordon in needed.	Access to pews on each side of the aisle will be alternated on open days. Access to rows of pews will be obstructed with ribbon to maintain the 2m safe distance by marking as closed pews that are within 2m of open pews.  Allow access to altar rail but not chancel.	Tom Grand	Done 27/06/20
<b>20</b>		Determine placement of hand sanitisers available for visitors to use.	Hand sanitisers to be made available in the porch beside notices on guidance for church access. There will be reminders to socially distance and the need to use sanitiser	Tom Grand	Done 27/06/20
<b>21</b>		Determine if temporary changes are needed to the building to facilitate social distancing	It is assessed the fabric of StM&AA will not be needed to be altered to enable the observance	Tom Grand	21/06/20

#	Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
			of 2m social distancing. This is because; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the anticipated footfall is very low</li> <li>exclusion areas and visitor flow can be marked with temporary signage</li> <li>arrangements will be in place to alternate the pews accessed</li> </ul>		
<b>22</b>		Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing etc.	Completed as part of preparation procedure for opening.	Tom Grand	Done 29/06/20
<b>23</b>		If the church has been used in the last 72 hours ensure high-risk surfaces and touch points have been wiped with appropriate sanitiser spray or disposable wipes.	To be undertaken as part of opening routine.  Visitors will be requested to mark their attendance and voluntarily provide contact information for Track and Trace.	Tom Grand	Done 27/06/20  Kept under review

#	Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
			Hand wipes, pens and post it notes available		
24		Check that handwashing facilities have adequate soap provision and paper towels, and a bin for the paper towels.	To be undertaken as part of opening routine.  St M+AA has no running water. Encourage use of Alcohol (60%) based hand sanitiser provided.	Tom Grand	Ongoing
25		Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available.	There are no toilet facilities.	N/A	N/A
26		Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.	To be undertaken as part of opening routine. Use of waste bin with pedal operated lid	Tom Grand	Done 27/06/20  Kept under review
27	<b>Cleaning the church before and after general use (no known exposure to anyone with Coronavirus symptoms)</b>  Advice on <a href="#">cleaning church buildings can be found here.</a>	If the church building has been closed for 72 hours between periods of being open then there is no need for extra cleaning to remove the virus from surfaces.	To be undertaken as part of opening routine.  It is assessed that StM&AA can open daily because;	Tom Grand	Ongoing



#	Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the anticipated footfall is very low. Estimated &lt;5 per day.</li> <li>• The <a href="#">infection rate</a> in the South West and Gloucestershire is among the lowest in England</li> <li>• Daily cleaning will be undertaken and pew access alternated</li> <li>• Visitors will have sanitiser available</li> <li>• A mechanism to register the number of visitors will be in place</li> </ul> <p>The PCC will be kept informed of visitor</p>		

#	Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
			numbers and this policy reviewed as required.		
28		If 72-hour closure is not possible then check all cleaners are not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating.	Confirmed, Tom Grand is not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating.	Tom Grand	21/06/20
29		Set up a cleaning rota to cover your opening arrangements.	cleaning to be undertaken as part of opening routine.	Tom Grand	21/06/20
30		All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable).	To be undertaken as part of opening routine.	Tom Grand	Ongoing
31		Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned.	To be undertaken as part of opening routine.	Tom Grand	Ongoing
32		Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site.	To be undertaken as part of opening routine.	Tom Grand	Ongoing
33		Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site – suggested daily removal.	To be undertaken as part of opening routine.	Tom Grand	Ongoing
34	<b>Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms</b>	If possible close the church building for 72 hours with no access permitted.	To be undertaken as part of response to track and trace process, part of opening routine.	Tom Grand	Ongoing

#	Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
35		If 72-hour closure is not possible then follow Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings.	<a href="#">Public Health England guidance available here.</a>	N/A	N/A
36		If the building has been quarantined for 72 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning.	Advice on <a href="#">cleaning church buildings can be found here.</a>  To be undertaken as part of response to track and trace process, part of opening routine.	Tom Grand	Ongoing

Update George Collins 30/06/20

## Introduction

This Church opening procedure and routine has been designed to enable the safe opening of St Michael and All Saints Church, Poole Keynes now that full lockdown is being ended and responsibility is being placed on individuals to ‘Stay alert – control the virus – save lives’.

The importance of opening the church cannot be underestimated for the;

- welfare of the individuals who will seek spiritual fulfilment through individual prayer.
- the benefit of the fabric of an historic building which needs to be used to ensure ongoing operation.
- the Church as institution, which must not sit on its hands in a time of national emergency.

## Opening procedure

#	Item	Remarks	Notes
1.	Risk Assessment	DRAFT 21/06, to be reviewed and agreed by PCC	
2.	Agree opening schedule	Plan v3 Wednesday opening 0830 - 1900	Tom Grand to unlock and lock following defined procedure.
3.	Put up notice of church opening times and procedures in Village notice board.	Prepare notice of timings and information on Individual prayer	Tom Grand, target date tbc
4.	Opening preparation	Tom Grand and George Collins to meet for preparation of building.	date 27/ 06/ 20 George Collins to provide Key to Tom Grand.

5.	Put up information in porch including visitor registration sheet.	Instructions for 'safe use of the church' for individual prayer	
6.	Set up sanitiser	George Collins to bring relevant equipment for installation.	
7.	Prepare Church	Items 1- 22 in Risk Assessment	
8.	Update PCC	Provide confirmation to PCC of completed procedure.	On completion Secretary to issue confirmation of church opening timings and safe use information.

## Daily Opening Routine

#	Timing	Items	Notes
1.	0815 approx.	Church opens – Tom Grand checks building and measures for safe access	Items 20 -36 in Risk Assessment.
2.	1900 approx.	Church closes – Tom Grand completes risk assessment items	Items 20 -36 in Risk Assessment

## Daily Opening Policy

Daily opening for individual prayer can only operate if it is able to be consistent with Government and Church guidance; the approach and frequency of opening will be subject to review of the PCC as required.

Key controls will be the request to those attending the church for individual prayer to;

- register their visit, and if they are happy to, provide contact details to support Track and Trace should it be required.
- act responsibly, observe the request not to enter the church if they have any symptoms of Covid -19
- inform a representative of the PCC (contact details to be advertised) if they develop any symptoms of Covid-19 after their visit to the church.

- use sanitiser provided
- observe social distancing and the exclusions set up in the church

Given the expected number of visitors, <5 per day, it is assessed that, if the above controls are observed, the risk to those attending the church for individual prayer will be very low and that the Government and Church guidelines will be being observed for making the church available for individual prayer.

## Covid-19 Incident Policy

If an individual who has entered the church reports Covid- 19 symptoms, the opening of the church will be suspended for a minimum 72hours and cleaning undertaken in line with relevant guidance.

Where possible to register of attendance will be shared with the Government Track and Trace Service.

The re-opening of the church will be subject to PCC review of this risk assessment, policy and procedures.