

Risk Assessment for opening St Nicolas’ church to the public

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

Agreed by St Nicolas’ PCC 30th June 2020 and then amended by Incumbent & Churchwardens 1st July according to: COVID-19 Advice on the Conduct of Public Worship 30th June 2020 1.1 by the House of Bishops Recovery Group.

The Recovery Group has been set up to support the Church of England as government guidance changes through the COVID-19 pandemic. 1.1 has been prepared with information available by the issue date. It will be kept under review and updated as the situation develops, with each update issued as a new version and our St Nicolas’ Risk Assessment amended accordingly.

The two-metre ‘rule’ applies for public worship except in situations where closer contact cannot be avoided; extra Public Health precautions must then be taken. Frequently used areas will be marked by floor tape to help people to maintain social distancing.

- Those who are considered to be extremely clinically vulnerable to COVID-19 will have been advised to shield and are currently advised not to meet more than one person from outside of their own household, and therefore not currently advised to attend places of worship.
- Anyone showing symptoms of COVID-19 (a new continuous cough, a high temperature or a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell) should not attend the place of worship due to the risk that they pose to others; they should self-isolate at home immediately with other members of their household.
- Where individuals are self-isolating due to a possible or confirmed case of COVID-19 in the household, or because they have been requested to so by NHS Test & Trace, they should participate remotely.
- Guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19. Guidance is different for funerals, see risk assessment below..

Church: St Nicolas' Guildford	Latest review: 1/7/20	Agreed at PCC: 30/6/20
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Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
Access to church buildings when only for clergy for purposes of private prayer and/or livestreaming General advice on accessing church buildings can be found here.	One point of entry to the church building clearly identified.	Access only through main Community Centre doors (then locked to prevent anyone else entering).		
	A suitable lone working policy has been consulted if relevant.	PCC policy	Incumbent to follow PCC policy	
	Buildings have been aired before use.	Loseley Chapel only		
	Check for animal waste and general cleanliness.		Cw's	15/06/20 DR
	Ensure water systems are flushed through before use.	See Government Guidance for organisations on supplying safe water supplies	Darrol	15/06/20
	Switch on and check electrical and heating systems if needed.		Darrol	N/a
	Holy water stoups and the font are empty.	Confirmed		AHN
Use of the church when open for private prayer only	Confirm that all steps (above) for access by clergy have been carried out before anyone else accesses the building.	Confirmed	Inc & cw's	AHN
	Review CofE guide on cleaning church buildings. Complete the 'cleaning' section of this risk assessment (below).	Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here.	Cw's	12/06/20
Also when preparing the church to be open for public worship	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	In through the north porch (if possible) and out through the narthex	Cath produces signs	12/06/20 CA

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	use a different exit.			
	Where possible, doors and windows should be opened to improve ventilation.		Daily church supervisors	
	Remove leaflets.		Incumbent	14/06/20
	Cushions/kneelers need to be removed.		Incumbent	14/6/20
	Walk through the church to plan for physical distancing in seats, aisles, at the altar rail, including safe flow of visitors.	To be undertaken before the first Sunday service.	Cw's	
	Determine placement of hand sanitiser available for visitors and worshippers before holy communion to use.	Next to the door into church from the narthex and on the table just inside the north porch glass doors. At Mass by the altar rail.	Cath to produce signs. Cw's	12/06/20
	Determine if temporary changes are needed to the building to facilitate social distancing	Keep under review	Cw's	
	Clearly mark out areas to maintain distancing.	Signs placed on chairs not to be used. Frequently used floor areas marked. Incumbent to ensure all arrangements are explained beforehand to all church members.	Cath to make signs.	
	Clearly indicate movement for people entering and leaving the building to maintain physical distancing.	Clear signs to indicate entrance & exit		

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	Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing etc.		Cath to produce	12/06/20
	Ensure high-risk surfaces and touch points have been wiped with appropriate sanitiser spray or disposable wipes	Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here . Cath has sourced disposable antibacterial wipes, plus swing bin and liners for their disposal	Daily supervisors	
	Check that handwashing facilities have adequate soap provision and paper towels, and a bin for the paper towels.	Installed	CA	
	Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available.	Installed	CA	
	Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk of those responsible for removing them.	Installed	CA	
Sacristan to undertake duties in church	1. Complying with our health & safety policy 2. Also with our lone working policy 3. Ensuring that one person knows that she is working in church with expected times.			
Offers of voluntary help	We will not ask anyone in a vulnerable category to assist e.g. as a daily supervisor.	But if they self-present in church they will be expected simply to keep to the safety measures we are all observing.		
Use of the church for public worship	Track and trace: we will keep an accurate record of all attenders for 21 days.	Cw's to consider how to do this at baptisms, weddings and funerals.	Cw's	

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<p>Use of the church for the Eucharist with a congregation</p>	<p>We expect an individual’s decision to attend church to follow the latest government or local authority guidance for their personal category and condition.</p> <p>Physical distancing and prescribed hygiene precautions are to be observed at all times.</p> <p>National C of E guidance is that the wearing of face-coverings is voluntary but we ask all those who come into church for worship to wear a mask so that we are looking after each other.</p> <p>No collections are to be taken.</p> <p>Singing is not allowed as this may encourage droplet and aerosol spread.</p> <p>No books will be available to the congregation to use.</p>	<p>All controls to be clearly communicated in weekly leaflet and orders of service.</p> <p>Sidespeople will have masks available for those who do not have one.</p> <p>Plate and card reader available at the back of church</p> <p>Live or recorded music without singing should be encouraged as the next best option.</p> <p>Everything will be printed on leaflets – taken by each individual not given by sidespeople – afterwards taken home or disposed of safely by the sidespeople. Use of an electronic version of the weekly leaflet will be encouraged.</p>	<p>Cw’s/ Andrew</p>	

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	<p>The Peace is not to be shared at all.</p> <p>The priest (and anyone who prepares the bread and vessels) will sanitise their hands before touching them.</p> <p>Holy Communion will be administered in one kind only with no sharing of the common cup.</p> <p>In order to avoid touching it and to maintain physical distancing communicants will be directed not to kneel at the altar rail, but instead to form a line maintaining the prescribed distance to receive the bread from the priest.</p>	<p>Celebrant to explain verbally that we are temporarily not exchanging <u>any</u> sign of peace.</p> <p>For the first few weeks no servers.</p> <p>The priest alone consumes the wine; other communicants will receive the bread only, in the hand. The priest will sanitise his/her hands before administering the bread. Each communicant will be asked to sanitise their hands before receiving the bread.</p> <p>It will not be possible to maintain the normal distancing for the brief time that the priest administers the sacrament.</p> <p>The priest will wear a plastic shield at this point in the service.</p>		

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Funerals	<p>Physical distancing to be maintained between households at all times during the service and when entering and leaving the church.</p> <p>Ashes may be buried – observing the usual distancing and hygiene precautions.</p> <p>Mourners who are in an extremely clinically vulnerable group should be facilitated to attend, should they decide to do so.</p>	<p>There should not be a gathering after the funeral, but if there is one, clergy are advised not to attend.</p> <p>But they will be advised not to attend a funeral if there are others attending who are self-isolating due to another member of the household being unwell with symptoms of coronavirus. Mourners who are extremely clinically vulnerable should follow the general social distancing advice for the clinically vulnerable mourners and should maintain a distance of 2 metres away from others as a minimum. Actions to reduce their risk of infection should be considered.</p>		
Weddings	<p>Apart from the bride and groom physical distance should be observed as far as possible. The priest will not touch the rings to bless them, nor the couple's hands. Hand sanitiser will be on the table at the signing of the registers but those signing will be asked</p>	<p>Priest to explain clearly to the couple.</p>		

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Cleaning the church before and after general use (no known exposure to anyone with Coronavirus symptoms) Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here .	to bring their own pens with permanent black ink.			
	If the church building has been closed for 72 hours between periods of being open then there is no need for cleaning. If 72-hour closure is not possible then check all cleaners are not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating.	Frances re-commences on the 1 st July with daily cleaning of the Toilets and cleaning of the church.	Darrol and Linda to review with Frances	26/06/20
	Set up a cleaning / supervision rota to cover opening arrangements.	Rota of daily supervisors and cleaning to be reviewed	Darrol/ Cath	15/6/20
	Churchwardens to act as sidespeople at the 10 o'clock Mass for the first few weeks, then to liaise with Cath to form a rota.	Ensure surfaces etc are cleaned after the service before leaving church.	Cw's	
	All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable).	Gloves have been purchased	Daily supervisors	
	Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned.	Regular wiping of door handles, door plates and surrounding areas. Also any other areas touched by visitors.	Sidespeople on Sundays/ daily supervisors during week	
	Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. antibac wipes) from the site.	To be included on guidance for daily supervisors	ditto	
	Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site – suggested daily removal.	Waste to be removed daily and sealed bin liner put into general waste	ditto	

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Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms	If this occurs, the church building will be closed for 72 hours with no access permitted.		Andrew/ cw's	
	If 72-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 72 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning.	Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here.		
If anyone becomes unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 in a church	They should go home immediately and be advised to follow the stay at home guidance. If they need clinical advice, they should go online to NHS 111 (or call 111 if they don't have internet access). In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. They should not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital. Other people who may have been in contact with the person who has become unwell should wash their hands thoroughly after the interaction, but they do not need to take any other specific action unless they develop symptoms themselves or are advised to do so by NHS Test and Trace. If they do develop symptoms they should follow the stay at home guidance.	The church should be cleaned in line with Government guidance where a suspected case of COVID19 has been recorded.	Cw's	
If Upper Room want to resume use of the church for worship	They must conduct their own risk assessment to observe physical distancing and Public Health guidance. This must be approved by the churchwardens before they commence use.	The churchwardens will also consult with the PCC	Cw's	