

Risk Assessment for Opening Church Buildings to the Public

Issued by The House of Bishops COVID-19 Recovery Group - June 2020

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. As well as offering guidance on best-practice, it is also intended to help parishes make a decision on whether to open or not, based on their local circumstances, resources and context.

Risk assessment

Church: St Mark's, South Farnborough, Hampshire	Assessor's name: Deglan Rowe	Date completed: 25/06/2020	Review date: 28/06/2020
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Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
Access to church buildings for clergy General advice on accessing church buildings can be found here.	One point of entry to the church building clearly identified and separate from public entry if possible	Only the main entrance is in use, save the first person entering the building does so via the vestry.	Deglan Rowe	Deglan Rowe 25/06/2020
	A suitable lone working policy has been consulted if relevant.	An example can be found here.	N/A	
	Buildings have been aired before use.	To be effected on opening.	Deglan Rowe	Deglan Rowe 28/06/2020
	Check for animal waste and general cleanliness.	To be effected on opening. None detected.	Deglan Rowe	Deglan Rowe 28/06/2020

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	Ensure water systems are flushed through before use.	Will do so on each visit.	Deglan Rowe	Deglan Rowe 28/06/2020
	Switch on and check electrical and heating systems if needed.	Heating not required. Electrics working satisfactorily.	Deglan Rowe	28/06/2020
	Holy water stoups and the font are empty.	✓		
Preparation of the Church for members of the public	Confirm that all steps (above) for access by clergy have been carried out before anyone else accesses the building.	Confirmed by Father Ian	Father Ian/Deglan Rowe	
	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.	Colin Lagor	28/06/2020
	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.	Front door. We cannot have separate access/exit, but we have created a route once in the building.	Colin Lagor	28/06/2020
	Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation.	Can open doors.	Deglan Rowe	28/06/2020
	Remove from use all books (inc. hymn books and Bibles) plus leaflets except single use material that will be removed by user.	Will advise entrants not to use books. Have screened off library and removed Bibles.	All	28/06/2020
	Cordon off or remove from public access any devotional objects or items	No Holy Water will be provided.	Deglan Rowe	Deglan Rowe 28/06/2020
	Consider if pew cushions/kneelers need to be removed as per government guidance	Removed.	James Podger	28/06/2020
	Remove or isolate children’s resources and play areas	Taped off.	Colin Lagor	28/06/2020

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	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.	Initial numbers will be limited and we will direct worshippers where to sit.	Deglan Rowe/Colin Lagor	Deglan Rowe/Colin Lagor 25/06/2020
	Clearly mark out seating areas including exclusion zones to maintain distancing.	Being effected Sunday am (28/06/2020).	Colin Lagor	Deglan Rowe 28/06/2020
	Clearly mark out flow of movement for people entering and leaving the building to maintain physical distancing requirements.	Front door only, presents issue. There is a flow system in operation. Front door to be monitored.	Deglan Rowe	28/06/2020
	Limit access to places were the public does not need go, maybe with a temporary cordon in needed.	The kitchen will be closed. Toilet will be for limited use.	Deglan Rowe/James Podger	28/06/2020
	Determine placement of hand sanitisers available for visitors to use.	In place.	Deglan Rowe/Colin Lagor	Deglan Rowe/Colin Lagor 25/06/2020
	Determine if temporary changes are needed to the building to facilitate social distancing	N/A	Deglan Rowe	Deglan Rowe 25/06/2020
	Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing etc.	In place already.	Colin Lagor	Colin Lagor/Deglan Rowe 28/06/2020
	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.	There will be more than 72 hours between church visits.	Deglan Rowe	
	Check that handwashing facilities have adequate soap provision and paper towels, and a bin for the paper towels.	Bin emptied and hand towels provided.	Colin Lagor/Deglan Rowe	Colin Lagor/Deglan Rowe 28/06/2020

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	Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available.	Toilet is closed except for emergency, but there are available requisites.		
	Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.	Will ensure wet wipes are placed in plastic bags.	Deglan Rowe	Deglan Rowe 28/06/2020
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.	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.	Noted	Deglan Rowe	
	If 72-hour closure is not possible then check all cleaners are not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating.	Noted	Deglan Rowe	
	Set up a cleaning rota to cover your opening arrangements.	To be arranged on Sunday 28/06/2020.	Deglan Rowe	Deglan Rowe 28/06/2020
	All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable).	Have disposable gloves.	Colin Lagor/Daryl Bates	Colin Lagor/Daryl Bates 25/06/2020
	Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned.	We have these.	Colin Lagor/Daryl Bates	Colin Lagor/Daryl Bates 25/06/2020
	Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site.	Person on door duty each session.	Person on duty	28/06/2020
	Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site – suggested daily removal.	Beginning of following session in church.	Deglan Rowe	

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Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms	If possible close the church building for 72 hours with no access permitted.	Likely that we will not enter the church building within 72 hours of closing. If a person needs to enter within this time, appropriate precautions will be taken.	Deglan Rowe	
	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. Noted.	Deglan Rowe	
	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. Noted.	Deglan Rowe	