

Risk Assessment for Opening Church Buildings to the Public

Risk assessment template

Church: St. Michael and All Angels, Howe Bridge	Assessor's name: Revd. Reg Sinclair	Date completed: 5/7/20	PCC Review date: 9/7/20
--	---	----------------------------------	-----------------------------------

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
Deciding whether to open to the public	Discuss with nearby venues and businesses to ensure that the timing and practical arrangements for using the church are compatible.	N/A as no other venues in locality.		
	Update your website, A Church Near You, and any relevant social media.	To be advertised on Web Page and Social Media. Short video to be posted outlining arrangements		
	Consider if a booking system is needed, whether for general access or for specific events/services	With only 1 church open initially, booking system will be required.		
	If opening to tourists consider applying for the Visit Britain 'Good to Go' standard mark	N/A		
Preparation of the Church for access by members of the public for any permitted	Confirm that all steps for access by clergy after lockdown have been carried out before anyone else accesses the building. (Version 2 dated June 2020)			

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
<p>purposes, including worship and tourism (General requirements identified here, specific requirements for specific services identified below)</p>	<p>Review CofE guide on cleaning church buildings. Complete the ‘cleaning’ section of the Preparation for the Opening of Church risk assessment (Version 2 dated June 2020).</p>	<p>See CoE advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here.</p>		
	<p>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>	<p>Main entrance to be used for entrance and exit. Sidesperson to manage entry and exit to maintain 2m distancing.</p>		
	<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).</p>	<p>Minister or sidesperson to continually monitor external space and advise people to maintain distance. Social distancing sign to be prominent external to the building.</p>		
	<p>Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation.</p>	<p>Doors to be opened at least ½ hour before start of service. Door to remain open for good ventilation.</p>		
	<p>Who can volunteer?</p>	<p>Volunteers in the Clinically Vulnerable category can if they wish volunteer, having been first advised of the risk of severe outcome if they catch virus. They are under no obligation to carry out a role. Training will be provided by Clergy / Wardens based on</p>		

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
		the risk assessment and current guidelines prior to starting.		
	Who cannot Volunteer/work?	Anyone in the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable Group. Anyone who is showing symptoms of Covid-19, lives with someone with symptoms, is awaiting a test, has had a test and is waiting for a result. Anyone who has tested positive Return to duties is-as per the government guidance.		
	Who should attend?	Those who are clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable to be advised of risk of severe outcome if they catch virus but final decision on attending is theirs.		
	Children’s attendance	Parents must be made aware that their children are their responsibility and must ensure they maintain socially distanced with non-household members. Parents to be encouraged to bring		

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
		quiet activities with them for their children.		
	Social distancing messaging maintained.	Mark transit areas at 2m distancing using floor tape or paint to help people		
	Remove Bibles/literature/hymn books/leaflets	All such books/literature to be removed or isolated. Any Orders of Services to be taken away by people attending.		
	Cordon off or remove from public access any devotional objects or items (if they are liable to be touched or closely breathed on)	Children’s area to be roped off. No other devotional items readily accessible.		
	Readings and prayers led from stand microphone away from lectern.	Bible readings printed on single sheets -no Lectionary		
	Consider if pew cushions/kneelers need to be removed as per government guidance	All kneelers from pews not isolated and all pew cushions to be removed.		
	Remove or isolate children’s resources and play areas	Children’s area to be isolated.		
	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).	Full assessment of service and ensuring 2m distancing to be undertaken – results implemented to ensure it happens.		
	Clearly mark out seating areas including exclusion zones to maintain distancing.	Pews roped off where required. Signs in place for where people sit on the pew.		

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	Clearly mark out flow of movement for people entering and leaving the building to maintain physical distancing requirements.	Main entrance used for entry and exit. Sidesperson to instruct people to ensure 2m distancing maintained.		
	Limit access to places where the public does not need go, maybe with a temporary cordon if needed.	Access to vestry to be limited to minister, wardens and sidespeople. Access to toilets if needed.		
	Determine placement of hand sanitisers available for visitors to use.	Hand sanitisers to be placed at vestry entrance, main entrance, outside toilets. Wipes inside toilet cubicles.		
	Determine if temporary changes are needed to the building to facilitate social distancing	No temporary changes required.		
	Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing etc.	Following signage to be included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social distancing of 2m • Hand washing technique in toilets • Hand washing technique by hand sanitiser • Covid 19 symptoms – do not enter • Touch only what you need to • Only same household to sit together 		

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toilets not available (except in emergency) • Sit where signs indicate 		
	Ensure high-risk surfaces and touch points have been wiped with appropriate sanitiser spray or disposable wipes	V2 anti-viral disinfectant to be used.		
	Check that handwashing facilities have adequate soap provision and paper towels, and a bin for the paper towels.	Hand sanitiser to be used therefore not applicable.		
	Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available.	Provided in case of emergency. Wipes for cleaning inside cubicles and sanitiser outside.		
	Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.	Supply of bin liners purchased and provided (bio-degradable).		
	If possible, provide safe means for worshippers and visitors to record their name and contact details; retain each day's record for 21 days	Sheet provided and to be recorded by sidesperson. For weddings and funerals list of names to be provided by family prior to event.		
	Reduce risk with plate collections.	Plate to be evident at entry/exit point so people can place envelopes or cash on plate. Contents put in bag and kept isolated for at least 72 hours before counting.		

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	Give due notice of the resumption of use of the building to neighbours, congregation and wider community, ensuring that visitors and worshippers will know what to expect when they come.	General worshippers to be advised by letter and leaflet including how to arrange booking.		
	Singing and chanting not to take place as this could encourage droplet and aerosol spread.	No singing permitted. Organist may play and CD's may be played.		
	Reminders of Covid 19 safe requirements.	Minister to reinforce Covid-safe requirements prior to, or at, the beginning of the service, in addition to signs.		
Cleaning the church before and after general use (no known exposure to anyone with Coronavirus symptoms)	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.			
	If 72-hour closure is not possible then check all cleaners are not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating.			
	Set up a cleaning rota to cover your opening arrangements.			
	All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable).	Disposable gloves provided, together with V2 anti-viral disinfectant where needed, and disposable paper cloths.		
	Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned.	See above.		
	Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site.			

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site – suggested daily removal.			
Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms	If possible close the church building for 72 hours with no access permitted.	Where possible this will be achieved, where not anti-viral cleaning will be undertaken.		
	If 72-hour closure is not possible then follow Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings.	<u>Public Health England guidance will be followed.</u>		
	If the building has been quarantined for 72 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning.			
Specific requirements for a service of marriage. Note: all above requirements to be in place in addition to these specific requirements.	Numbers restricted to 30 (this includes the couple, witnesses, officiant, photographer and guests, but excludes verger and churchwarden.	Minister to advise couple of numbers and obtain list of attendees prior to wedding. Consideration to be given to audio or video link for those not able to attend.		
	Ensuring good understanding of the requirements.	Minister to advise early that the service may not go ahead if government or church restrictions dictate. All requirements to be clearly advised to couple.		
	Rings to be handled by as few people as possible.	Rings to be given to minister at least 3 days prior to wedding and locked in safe. Only couple to handle them.		

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	Maintain social distancing through the ceremony	Bride to be walked down the aisle by someone from own household. Best man to maintain 2m distance.		
	Minister to remain at 2m distance	Minister to use microphone to minimise droplet and aerosol spread. Minister not to wrap stole around couple's hands at the Proclamation.		
	Maintain distancing and sanitising at signing of the registers.	Minister to sanitise before filling in registers. All who sign to sanitise before and after signing the registers. Pen to be sanitised between each person signing. Separate sheet of paper to be used to rest hand on for each person.		
	Maintain social distancing during procession out of church.	People from own household only to walk together. Party to be 2m apart.		
Specific requirements for a Eucharist service. Note: all the relevant requirements above to be in place in addition to these specific requirements.	No physical contact is allowed and social distancing maintained.	People should remain in their places for the duration of the service except to receive communion or receive a blessing. People turn to share the peace verbally (no shouting) or visually.		

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	Cleanliness in preparation	Minister should prepare the elements and vessels to minimise people who touch them. Hands washed or sanitised prior to this.		
	Protection of the elements	Minister to sanitise hands before Eucharistic Prayer and before distribution. Congregational wafers kept in covered ciborium until distribution by the minister. Priest's wafer to be consumed by the minister only. The minister only will receive the consecrated wine.		
	Communicant's sanitise hands	Communicants to hand sanitise prior to receiving bread.		
	Reducing risk to congregational bread	Minister says words of distribution to whole congregation and all respond together prior to distribution. Bread dropped gently into hands not into mouth.		
	Maintaining a safe distance	Minister (wearing mask or visor) takes bread to communicants who remain in their places.		

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	Cleaning vessels	If minister only one to have touched them they can be cleaned in usual way.		
	Reserving sacrament	Bread reserved but cannot be consumed for 72 hours after consecration.		
	Restrictions on Orders of Service	If Orders of Service are used each person puts them in a separate box as they leave and these remain in isolation for at least 72 hours.		
Specific requirements for a standalone service of Baptism. Note: all the relevant requirements above to be in place in addition to these specific requirements.	Numbers restricted to 30 maximum (this includes the individual to be baptised, family, officiant, and guests, but excludes verger and churchwarden.	Minister to advise family of numbers and obtain list of attendees prior to baptism. Consideration to be given to audio or video link for those not able to attend.		
	Ensuring good understanding of the requirements.	Minister to advise early that the service may not go ahead if government or church restrictions dictate. All requirements to be clearly advised to family by phone or videoconference.		
	Church cleaning	Church will be thoroughly cleaned before the service if a service has taken place in the morning or previous 72 hours.		

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	Maintaining social distancing	Due to backlog of cancelled baptisms, 2 families will be accepted but then only 15 attendees from each family.		
	Maintaining good hygiene	Baptismal water only used for one candidate. If 2 Baptisms, water to be disposed of and bowl cleaned with V2 before refilling.		
	Restricting consecutive services	Baptism services will be at 2:00pm only (no 3:00pm service to take place) unless adequate people available to thoroughly clean the church.		
	Restrictions on Orders of Service	Orders of Service placed by congregation into a separate box as they leave and these remain in isolation for at least 72 hours.		
	Maintaining social distancing of 2m	Parents and minister only to be at the font. Infant not to be held by the minister.		
	Minimising contact	Minister to sanitise hands before and after signing the cross. The sign of the cross to be made with the oil of Baptism using an artist's		

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
		paintbrush. Water to be poured on head using a shell.		
	Wiping child’s head after Baptism	Parents to be advised to bring cloth to wipe child’s head and to take away with them.		
	Giving of a candle	One Godparent collects candle and lights it from the Paschal Candle, sanitising hands first.		