

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

Version Control

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

THIS IS A PLANNING DOCUMENT ONLY. IT WILL BE UPDATED AND CONTENT MAY CHANGE ONCE GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE ON REOPENING PLACES OF WORSHIP HAS BEEN PUBLISHED. We are awaiting clarification from government on the extent and nature of what 'supervised individual prayer' means and what exactly will be required. We will update this document as further information becomes available.

On 7th June the government announced that places of worship may open for individual prayer in line with social distancing guidelines from 15th June. The government 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 small services such as weddings and funerals with limited numbers are allowed and then for different forms of public worship.

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

Church: St Michael the Archangel Dundry	Assessors name : Kathryn Woodward Churchwarden	Date completed: 30.6.2020	Review date: According to developments
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Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?..	Completed – date and name
Access to church buildings 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.	The South Door	Church Warden	30.6.2020 K Woodward
	A suitable lone working policy has been consulted if relevant.	Two people will supervise at each bi monthly session	Church Warden /PCC	..
	Buildings have been aired before use.	South and North porch doors are opened and closed at intervals to allow fresh air to flow through the church	Churchwarden and PCC members Volunteers	..
	Check for animal waste and general cleanliness.	Church swept .Bird droppings in the porch removed and washed down.	Churchwarden church volunteers	..
	Ensure water systems are flushed through before use.	Lavatory flushed several times , taps run thoroughly, electric boiling water dispenser in kitchen area flushed through.	Churchwarden PCC member	..
	Switch on and check electrical and heating systems if needed.	Electricity has been on during lockdown .Hot water switched on to check if working the off again .	Churchwarden	30.6.20

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?..	Completed – date and name
		Heating system turned off but boiler display shows good working order.	..	..
	Holy water stoups and the font are empty.	Yes .Font is empty.	N/A	..
Preparation of the Church for individual prayer	Confirm that all steps (above) for access by clergy have been carried out before anyone else accesses the building.	Church clean,safe and orderly for entry	Churchwarden	30.6.20 K.Woodward
	Review CofE guide on cleaning church buildings. Complete the ‘cleaning’ section of this risk assessment (below).	Rota cleaning fortnightly during and after church opening sessions	Two people from village and congregation	..
	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.	Entry to church will be through the South door and people will exit through the North Porch door. Notices with information on the flow through the church will be clearly displayed and indicated by arrows.	Two people at each session will monitor.	..
	Where possible, doors and windows should be opened to improve ventilation.	The building is airy and exchanges air with the outside naturally.		..
	Remove Bibles/literature/hymn books/leaflets.	Hymn books, bibles and booklets are covered.	Churchwarden PCC members	..
	Consider if pew cushions/kneelers need to be removed.	Kneelers removed and covered in storage area	..	

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		Toys and childrens books removed to storage area and covered.This area is taped off		
	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.	Chancel is taped off and arrows will indicate the safe flow visitors should take around the church. Cards in the pews will indicate the 2m distance in all directions .	Churchwarden PCC members Social group	K.Woodward 30.6.20
	Determine placement of hand sanitiser available for visitors to use.	Hand sanitiser is placed accessibly for visitors on entry to the church and on exit through the north porch door.	..	..
	Determine if temporary changes are needed to the building to facilitate social distancing	N/A	N/A	..
	Clearly mark out seating areas including exclusion zones to maintain distancing.	Few people anticipated . Distancing in seating areas will be clearly marked two meters apart.	..	..
	Clearly mark out flow of movement for people entering and leaving the building to maintain physical distancing requirements.	Arrows will indicate the flow of movement for those entering and leaving the building	..	..
	Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing etc.	Safety notices will be clearly displayed to remind visitors of safe social distancing practises and hand wasihing.

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	Ensure high-risk surfaces and touch points have been wiped with appropriate sanitiser spray or disposable wipes	The church has been cleaned before visitors enter and high risk touch points will be cleaned appropriately after each session. Written instructions on this process for each supervisory team. Will be provided.	Church members and volunteers on supervision rota.	K.Woodward 30.6.20 ..
	Check that handwashing facilities have adequate soap provision and paper towels, and a bin for the paper towels.	The toilet facility is very new and has an efficient hand dryer. Antibacterial hand soap is available.	Cleaning volunteers Church warden	K.Woodward 30.6.20
	Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available.	..	..	..
	Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk of those responsible for removing them.	All bins have disposable liners	Cleaning volunteers Churchwarden	..
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 cleaning.	The church will be closed for more than 72 hours between usage.	..	..
	If 72-hour closure is not possible then check all cleaners are not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating.	N/A	N/A	..
	Set up a cleaning rota to cover your opening arrangements.	Cleaning rota set up to include those supervising private prayer sessions	Church warden	..

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	All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable).	All cleaners provided with disposable gloves.	Church warden	..
	Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned.	Appropriate safe cleaning materials were used as laid down in the guidelines on cleaning church buildings particularly in the historic areas.	Church warden PCC Cleaning rota	..
	Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site.	N/A as Hand dryer used after wash basin use. Supervisor/cleaner will check bin in toilet after each church opening session.	Supervisor /cleaners Churchwarden	K.Woodward 30.6.20
	Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site – suggested daily removal.	As above	..	..
Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms	If possible close the church building for 72 hours with no access permitted.	N/A as church will always be closed for 72 hours after private prayer sessions.		..
	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.	n/a	..
	If the building has been quarantined for 72 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning.	In this situation we will follow the normal advice on cleaning	Churchwarden Cleaners	..