

Risk Assessment for Opening Church Buildings to the Public: individual prayer and funerals (Including 8am Holy Communion Public Worship section by HTP)

Version Control

Issue Date	Version Number	Issued by/update
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
9 th July 2020	4	Holy Trinity Prestwood, covering 8am worship
20/7/2020	5	Revision following review
26/7/2020	6	Facemasks guidance
4/8/2020	7	Facecoverings are mandatory

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

Church: Holy Trinity Prestwood	Assessor's name: Deiniol Heywood	Date completed: 30/6/2020 7/7/2020 9/7/2020	Review date: 31/7/2020
--	--	---	----------------------------------

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 and separate from public entry if possible	Not possible		01.06.20
	A suitable lone working policy has been consulted if relevant.	Complete	Clergy	01.06.20
	Buildings have been aired before use.	Complete	Deiniol Heywood	01.06.20
	Check for animal waste and general cleanliness.	Complete	Deiniol Heywood	01.06.20
	Ensure water systems are flushed through before use.	See Government Guidance for organisations on supplying safe water supplies Complete	Deiniol Heywood	01.06.20
	Switch on and check electrical and heating systems if needed.	Not needed yet. Need to check before end of September.	David Wickham	
	Holy water stoups and the font are empty.	Complete	Deiniol Heywood	01.06.20
Preparation of the Church for	Confirm that all steps (above) for access by clergy have been carried out before anyone else accesses the building.	Complete	Deiniol Heywood	

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
individual prayer and funerals	Review CofE guide on cleaning church buildings. Complete the ‘cleaning’ section of this risk assessment (below).	Determine cleaning process from opener and closer. Complete – see below	Deiniol Heywood & Doreen Clarke	30/6/2020
	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.	1. Car park notice board – general welcome, worship. 2. A-Frame at path junction with posters at access process. 3. At entrance: a) alcohol-based hand sanitiser, stand alone unit. b) alcohol-based cleaning wipes for furniture. c) Bin for wipes. 4. Large notice board and blue floor level board “Everyone welcome” notice board:	Deiniol Heywood in overall control. Various tasks to be completed by Dick Rivett & Caretaker.	30/6/2020

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
		a) How to come in b) How to sit down c) How to pray c) How to worship e) For children... f) How to donate g) How to leave 5. Pews set at required distance apart for social distancing. Sanctuary closed off. 14 benches, max. capacity 42 6. Arrows on floor indicating flow. 7.Exit via Vestry door. 8. Hand washing available: a. Instructions b. Soap c. Paper towels in holder.		

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
		d. Bin		
	Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation.	Outer doors open, glass doors push open. Vestry door to open on latch.	Person who opens the church each day.	Ongoing.
	Remove from use all books (inc. hymn books and Bibles) plus leaflets except single use material that will be removed by user.	Book stand turned to wall and hidden by display board.	Dick Rivett	30/6/2020
	Cordon off or remove from public access any devotional objects or items	Vestry, Toilet and Kitchen area will be locked. Sanctuary will be roped off. Remaining pews and chairs will be roped off.	Dick Rivett	30/6/2020
	Consider if pew cushions/kneelers need to be removed as per government guidance	Kneelers to be put in Vestry	Dick Rivett	30/6/2020
	Remove or isolate children's resources and play areas	Not applicable	N/A	N/A
	Walk through the church to plan for physical distancing in seats, aisles, at the altar rail, including safe flow of visitors. Remember current guidelines in all directions from each person.	Benches will be used. Current social distancing regulations will be followed	Dick Rivett	30/6/2020
	Clearly mark out flow of movement for people entering and leaving the building to maintain physical distancing requirements.	Notices outside church.	Dick Rivett	30/6/2020

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
		Removable arrows on church floor.		
	Determine placement of hand sanitisers available for visitors to use.	Entrance	Deiniol Heywood	21/6/20
	Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing etc.	Notices and display boards to be prepared. Need to be updated as instructions change.	Deiniol Heywood & Liz Lewis	30/6/2020
	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.	Person who opens church will use disposable gloves and ensure that all handles, sanitisers, open benches etc are cleaned.	Person opening the church.	Ongoing role, no completion date.
	Check that handwashing facilities have adequate soap provision and paper towels, and a bin for the paper towels.	Daily by opener.	Person opening the church.	Ongoing, daily
	Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available.	Not opening toilets	N/A	N/A
	Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.	All disposable liners to be removed as required by gloved opener and placed in wheelie	Person opening the church	Ongoing role, no completion date.

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
		bin outside vestry door. New ones inserted into bins.		
Additional controls for Worship	Sanitiser and notices checked		Sidesperson	Ongoing
	Church seating laid out for worship, barriers removed		Sidesperson	Ongoing
	Sidesperson for each service appointed	All Sidespeople must work through the Personal Risk Factors document before agreeing to volunteer	Colin McBride	Ongoing
	Worship procedures to be followed.	See below	Sidesperson/ Minister	Ongoing
	Face coverings are mandatory for all	Sidesperson, clergy to wear face coverings and all attendees to do same	Sidesperson/ Minister	Ongoing
	Microphones to be used but not to be shared.		Sidesperson/ minister	Ongoing

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	Orders of service: once weekly, low risk, but attendees invited to download to tablets, but sidesperson to put out Orders of service and collect afterwards whilst wearing gloves.		Sidesperson	Ongoing
	Vestry to be clear for minister to vest.		Minister	Ongoing
	Hand Hygiene Protocol for communion: a) President only to prepare altar, lay up, ablute and tidy. b) Hands washed before preparing altar, c) At start of service, d) At offertory, e) Before distribution		President	Ongoing
	Aerosol Hygiene for communion a) Face mask to be worn by President throughout b) Small communion wafers to be used by all. c) Small communion wafers and monstrance wafer placed on paten with pall covering. d) Priest's wafer on top. e) Only president consumes priest's wafer, assisting clergy consume small wafers. f) Presiding priest to consume monstrance wafer after Online Worship		President	Ongoing
	Assisting clergy to maintain social distancing in chancel.		Assisting clergy	Ongoing
	Sidesperson to direct communicants to chancel step a) Maintaining social distance b) Not to kneel		President/Sidesperson	Ongoing
	Voices to be kept low and other guidance followed	Govt guidance and C of E specific guidance	Minister/Sidesperson	Ongoing

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	Register to be kept of attendees as per guidance	Eventbrite online ticketing system preferred but capacity to safely record names of casual attendees.	Sidesperson	Ongoing
	Church to be cleaned after worship ensure benches, high-risk surfaces and touch points have been wiped with appropriate sanitiser spray or disposable wipes	Sidesperson will use disposable gloves and ensure that all handles, sanitisers, open benches etc are cleaned.	Sidesperson	Ongoing
	Areas to be roped off so that church is safely open for private prayer		Sidesperson	Ongoing
Cleaning the church before and after general use (no known exposure to anyone with Coronavirus symptoms) Advice on cleaning church	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.	N/A	N/A	N/A
	If 72-hour closure is not possible then check all cleaners are not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating.	Cleaners will be the people opening the church and closing the church.		
	Set up a cleaning rota to cover your opening arrangements.	By end of July need to consider if more cleaning is needed. If	Standing Committee	9/7/20 sidesperson required due to 8am worship

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
buildings can be found here.		needed liaise with Caretaker.		
	All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable).	Ensure adequate supply for church openers, closers and caretaker.	Supply Purchase: Liz Lewis	Ongoing role.
	Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned.		Supply Purchase: Liz Lewis	Ongoing role.
	Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site.	Church openers and closers. Wheely bin by vestry door.	Deiniol Hewwood	21.6.20
	Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site – suggested daily removal.	As required on opening of church.	Deiniol Heywood	21.6.20
Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms	If possible close the church building for 72 hours with no access permitted.	Ensure church is closed. Notices amended to say closed. Identify who is going to carry out deep clean. And check PHE advice.	Dick Rivett & Doreen Clarke	
	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.	Dick Rivett & Doreen Clarke	
	If the building has been quarantined for 72 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning.	Advice on cleaning church		

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
		buildings can be found here.		

Procedures

Daily Opening procedure:

1. Enter through vestry door.
2. Put on gloves (drawer by sink near cleaning cupboard).
3. Turn on lights – church on and the kitchen light.
4. Latch open vestry door.
5. Collect spray & blue paper towel roll from cupboard above sink.
6. Unlock main church glass doors. Fix outer wooden doors open, glass doors to be left closed to, so as not to create a through draft with open vestry door.
7. Use spray and blue paper towel roll to spray door furniture (vestry and inner and outer main doors), sanitising station near main entrance, GoodBox, cleaning wipes, open benches and the handwashing station.
8. Check levels of:
 - a) sanitiser
 - b) cleaning wipes
 - c) soap
 - d) paper towels
 - e) *cleaning spray, blue paper and gloves for staff*and replace / refill where necessary. See separate instructions for how to replenish stock.
9. Empty both bins when full / nearly full, place bin bags in Wheelie Bin and reline bins as required. On Sunday evening wheelie bin to be put out onto road near cottage for bin men collection on Monday morning. Bin be put back in position once they have been.
10. Put out A-frame onto path, just before the path splits.
11. Dispose of gloves

Closing procedure:

1. Put on gloves (drawer by sink near cleaning cupboard).
2. Take in A-frame.
3. Close outer wooden doors and lock glass doors.
4. Turn off kitchen light and church light to exit.
5. Lock vestry door.

8am Worship Procedures:

1. **Before Service** open church following **Opening Procedure**
2. Clean benches, doors, other surfaces following **use in last 72 hours** cleaning procedure, that is:
Use spray and blue paper towels to spray door furniture (vestry and inner and outer main doors), open benches, handwashing station, sanitising station (entrance), GoodBox.
3. Unrope restricted spaces
4. Put out Orders of Service
5. Switch lights to “Nave Service”
6. Unlock vestry
7. Name Sheet and pens out to record casual attendees
8. Wear facemask and maintain Social Distance whilst welcoming congregation and throughout worship

9. **After service** clean benches, doors, other surfaces following **use in last 72 hours** cleaning procedure, that is:
Use spray and blue paper towels to spray door furniture (vestry and inner and outer main doors), all seating benches, handwashing station, sanitising station (entrance), GoodBox.
Check levels of:
 - a) sanitiser
 - b) cleaning wipes
 - c) soap
 - d) paper towels
 - e) *cleaning spray, blue paper and gloves for staff*Empty both bins and place bin bags in Wheelie Bin and reline bins as required.
10. Rope off restricted spaces
11. Put away Orders of Service
12. Switch lights to “Church On”
13. Place name sheet in vestry
14. Lock vestry
15. Dispose of gloves.

Items for Reviews

Review:

Items for first July review –

- ~~1. Seating capacity to be reviewed and increased where possible.~~
- ~~2. Ticketing arrangements and attendance management to be reviewed.~~

Items for early September review:

1. 9.30 Online Worship Risk Assessment
2. Hiring of church and potential conflicts with other activities.
3. Provision for families with children.