

ALL SAINTS KEMBLE 9th July 2020

Risk Assessment for Opening Church Buildings to the Public -

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
12 th June 2020	3	The House of Bishops COVID-19 Recovery Group
1st July 2020	4	The House of Bishops COVID-19 Recovery Group

CHANGES FROM VERSION 3 IDENTIFIED IN YELLOW, ITEMS NOT ON Church of England list IN PALE BLUE, AND ITEMS FOR TREVOR IN GREEN

Churches and cathedrals have been legally permitted to open for purposes of individual private prayer from 13th June. House of Bishops guidance provided for churches to open for funerals from 15th June. Public worship, with measures in place for social distancing, are allowed from 4th July. Other activities, except for a few still prohibited by law, may also take place in churches, subject to the government guidance in place for the relevant sector.

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 any permitted purposes. As well as offering guidance on best-practice, it is also intended to help parishes make a decision on whether to open for any or all of these purposes or not, based on their local circumstances, resources and context. You should read the advice on re-opening buildings and the guidance on public worship before completing this assessment. Both are available on the [Church of England Coronavirus pages](#).

Future versions of this document will be produced when there is any substantive change to the guidance on the safe use of places of worship.

A separate risk assessment relating to contractors and construction workers is available on the [Church of England Coronavirus pages](#).

Carrying out a risk assessment

1. Agree what activities you are planning for:
 - Private prayer (clergy only)
 - Livestreaming services (clergy only)
 - Private prayer (general public)
 - Public worship
 - Rites of passage services
 - Opening for visitors and tourists

2. Consider the hazards:
 - Transmission of COVID-19
 - Hazards arising from the temporary closure of the church
 - Hazards arising from now using the church in a different way

Read the guidance and think about how it relates specifically to your church. What constraints are there? Consider how people will arrive at the church, including if they will need to wait or queue outside; how people will enter and leave the church; circulation inside: from the entrance to the worship space and out again; circulation within the worship space; also access to other areas including the toilet(s).

3. Consider who might be harmed and how? Read the guidance and think about how the activities you are planning will affect different groups of people. The risks are not different for larger churches so long as they are properly managed, but having more people coming through your building makes the possible impact – for example of someone with COVID-19 coming into contact with others – higher than in smaller venues with fewer people. Consider your particular circumstances and adapt the checklist below as appropriate.
4. Using the risk assessment checklist below as a template:
 - add in mitigations for any risks that are particular to your circumstances that may not be on the list;
 - record what you need to do for each activity to go ahead safely;
 - consider any equipment you need and any temporary changes you might need to make to the church;
 - check back against your list of activities to confirm which ones can go ahead and when.

Risk assessment template

Church:	Assessor's name:	Date completed:	Review date:
ALL SAINTS KEMBLE	STEPHEN LAMBERT-HUMBLE	08/07/2020	31/08/2020

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	VESTRY DOOR OPEN	SLH/MW	SLH 20:06:20
	A suitable lone working policy has been consulted if relevant.	EXAMPLE CONSULTED	SLH/MW	SLH 20:06:20
	Buildings have been aired before use.	FULLY CLEANED AND AIRED In accordance with guidance notes on cleaning churches during coronavirus	SLH/MW	SLH 20:06:20
	Check for animal waste and general cleanliness.	COMPLETED	SLH/MW	SLH 20:06:20
	Ensure water systems are flushed through before use.	WATER SYSTEMS HAVE BEEN REGULARLY FLUSHED THROUGH	MW	MW 20:06:20
	Switch on and check electrical and heating systems if needed.	MAINTAINED BY CR SWITCHED ON AND CHECKED BY SLH	SLH	SLH 20:06:20
	Holy water stoups and the font are empty.	EMPTY	NOT USED	SLH 20:06:20
	Ensure safe use of equipment needed for livestreaming: avoid exceeding safe load on sockets, cables/tripod causing trip hazard	CHECKED BY INSTALLATION COMPANY, THEN BY CR AND SLH (NEW EQUIPMENT WILL FOLLOW THE SAME PROCESS	CR/SLH	SLH 08:07:20

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
		AND THIS DOCUMENT THEN AMENDED)		
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.	NOT REQUIRED	-----	SLH 08:07:20
	Update your website, A Church Near You, and any relevant social media.	TO BE COMPLETED BY TREVOR		
	Consider if a booking system is needed, whether for general access or for specific events/services	CONSIDERED – NOT REQUIRED, HOWEVER REGULAR CONGREGATION MEMBERS WILL BE ASKED SO THAT SOME IDEA OF NUMBERS IS KNOWN	SLH/MW	SLH 08:07:20
	If opening to tourists consider applying for the Visit Britain ‘Good to Go’ standard mark	NOT REQUIRED		
Preparation of the Church for access by members of the public for any permitted purposes, including worship and tourism	Confirm that all steps (above) for access by clergy have been carried out before anyone else accesses the building.	YES	SLH	SLH 20:06:20
	Review CofE guide on cleaning church buildings. Complete the ‘cleaning’ section of this risk assessment (below).	REVIEWED COPY IN CHURCH COVID-19 PACK IN VESTRY	SLH	SLH 20:06:20
	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.	DEPENDENT ON NUMBERS BUT TWO DOORS OPEN. Signage in place for compulsory use of hand gel and social distancing. ENTRANCE AND SEATING WILL BE MANAGED – SEE BELOW	SLH/MW	SLH 08:07:20

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	Make any temporary arrangements for people to wait or queue outside the building (taking into account any consequential risks arising from people gathering outside).	2m MARKS PLACED IN ENTRANCE AND ALONG PATH FOR EACH SERVICE. ENTRANCE AND GUIDANCE TO SEATS MANAGED BY SIDES-PERSONS AND CHURCHWARDENS	SLH/MW	SLH 08:07:20
	Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation.	DOORS LEFT OPEN	SLH/MW	SLH 20:06:20
	Remove from use all books (inc. hymn books and Bibles) plus leaflets except single use material that will be removed by user.	REMOVED AND STORED	SLH	SLH 20:06:20
	Cordon off or remove from public access any devotional objects or items	REMOVED AND STORED	SLH	SLH 20:06:20
	Consider if pew cushions/kneelers need to be removed as per government guidance	REMOVED AND STORED	SLH	SLH 20:06:20
	Remove or isolate children’s resources and play areas	ISOLATED AND STORED	SLH	SLH 20:06:20
	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.	COMPLETED SEATING MEASURED AND AVAILABLE SEATING SPACES IDENTIFIED AND LABELLED Signage in place to remind and inform	SLH/MW	SLH 20:06:20
	Clearly mark out seating areas including exclusion zones to maintain distancing.	FRONT PEWS ONLY	SLH/MW	SLH 20:06:20

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.	GUIDANCE ARROWS	SLH	SLH 20:06:20
	Limit access to places where the public does not need go, maybe with a temporary cordon in needed.	AREAS CORDONED/BLOCKED OFF	SLH	SLH 20:06:20
	Determine placement of hand sanitisers available for visitors to use.	SANITISERS MEETING ANTI-COVID-19 REQUIREMENTS USED, PLACED AT ENTRANCE AND EXIT AND OTHER SITES INSIDE CHURCH AND NOTICES PLACED	SLH	SLH 20:06:20
	Determine if temporary changes are needed to the building to facilitate social distancing	NOT REQUIRED	SLH	SLH 20:06:20
	Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing etc.	NOTICES IN PLACE	SLH	SLH 20:06:20
	Ensure high-risk surfaces and touch points have been wiped with appropriate sanitiser spray or disposable wipes	DOOR HANDLES, LIGHT SWITCHES, LECTERN, A/V BOX AND AREA AROUND SANITISERS AND OTHER PROMINENT HIGH RISK AREAS SANITISED AND APPROPRIATE NOTICES PLACED	SLH	SLH 08:07:20
	Check that handwashing facilities have adequate soap provision and paper towels, and a bin for the paper towels.	ANTI COVID-19 SANITISER ONLY, FELLOWSHIP AREA NOT TO BE USED	SLH /CLEANER	SLH 20:06:20

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available.	SUPPLIES IN PLACE, NOTICES PLACED AND SANITISER AVAILABLE.	SLH/CLEANER	SLH 08:07:20
	Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.	ONLY WASTE RECEPTACLE IS IN VESTRY AND HAS DISPOSABLE LINER	SLH	SLH 20:06:20
	If possible, provide safe means for worshippers and visitors to record their name and contact details; retain each day's record for 21 days	SIDESMEN AND/OR CHURCHWARDENS WILL MAINTAIN LIST	SLH/MW	SLH 08:07:20
	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.	NOTICES PLACED ON NOTICEBOARDS, ON WEBSITE AND THROUGH PCC. ADVERT PLACED IN LOCAL PAPER	SLH/MW/TK	SLH 08:07:20
USE OF PPE	Facemasks and gloves	Government regulations for wearing of facemasks will be followed, but if no legal requirement, congregation may be advised to bring and wear their own facemask. Facemasks and Gloves will be worn when sanitising high risk areas.	SLH	SLH 08:07:20
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.	ENDEAVOURING TO ENSURE 72 HOURS BETWEEN ALL ACCESSES, BUT SANITISING PRODUCTS MEET ANTI CV-19 REQUIREMENTS USED	SLH	SLH 20:06:20

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here.		WHERE THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE		
	If 72-hour closure is not possible then check all cleaners are not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating.	CHECKED	SLH	SLH 20:06:20
	Set up a cleaning rota to cover your opening arrangements.	ARRANGED WITH CLEANER	SLH/BINNIE	SLH 20:06:20
	All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable).	AVAILABLE BUT CLEANER HAS OWN	SLH/CLEANER	SLH 23:06:20
	Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned.	CLEANER HAS OWN Cleaner understands COVID-19 requirements but will not be cleaning inside the 72 hour safety period	SLH/CLEANER	SLH 23:06:20
	Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site.	CLEANER REMOVES OWN, OTHERWISE CHURCHWARDENS	SLH/MW/CLEANER	SLH 23:06:20
	Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site – suggested daily removal.	EACH DAY OPEN Waste used will be placed in a bag in the bin and tied. This will be double bagged, and removed to bin by churchwardens using disposable gloves.	SLH/MW	SLH 23:06:20
Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms	If possible close the church building for 72 hours with no access permitted.	Church opening restricted to one day per week to facilitate this	SLH/MW/CR	SLH 23:06:20

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	If 72-hour closure is not possible then follow Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings.	Public Health England guidance will be followed, copy in COVID-19 Pack	SLH/MW/CLEANER	SLH 23:06:20
	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 (copy in COVID-19 Pack) WILL BE FOLLOWED IF REQUIRED		SLH 23:06:20
	SLH = Stephen Lambert-Humble – Churchwarden MW = Mark Wilton - Churchwarden CR = Colin Rank - Church Fabric Manager TK = Trevor Kemp – Parish Priest			