

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

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

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: Parish Church of St Mary Barton upon Humber North Lincolnshire.	Assessor's name: Robert Smith & Father David Rowett	Date completed: 17 June 2020	Review date: 31 July 2020 or when new guidance is issued.
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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	One point of entry to the church building clearly identified and separate from public entry if possible	MAIN ENTRANCE ONLY	DR / RS	DR/RS 11 June 2020
	A suitable lone working policy has been consulted if relevant.	An example can be found here .		
	Buildings have been aired before use.	COMPLETED & ONGOING	DR / RS	DR/RS 11 June 2020
	Check for animal waste and general cleanliness.	DAILY	D	DR/RS 11 June 2020

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	A c t i o n b y w h o m ?	Completed – date and name
			R / R S	
	Ensure water systems are flushed through before use.	WEEKLY	D R / R S	DR/RS 11 June 2020
	Switch on and check electrical and heating systems if needed.		D R / R S	DR/RS 11 June 2020
	Holy water stoups and the font are empty.	EMPTIED	D R / R S	DR/RS 11 June 2020
Preparation of the Church for individual prayer and funerals	Confirm that all steps (above) for access by clergy have been carried out before anyone else accesses the building.		D R / R	DR/RS 11 June 2020

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
			S	
	Review CofE guide on cleaning church buildings. Complete the 'cleaning' section of this risk assessment (below).	SPECIALIST MEDICAL GRADE CLEANING SOLUTION PURCHASED	DR / RS	DR/RS 11 June 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.	MAIN ENTRANCE ONLY SIGNAGE IN PLACE (ADDITIONAL EXIT VIA THE CHURCH HALL TO BE OPENED FOR FUNERALS ONLY)	DR / CLERGY & THOSE	DR/RS 11 June 2020

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
			hoassistatfunerals	
	Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation.	DOORS AND WINDOWS TO BE LEFT OPENED DURING OPENING HOURS	DR/RS/B/C	DR/RS 11 June 2020
	Remove from use all books (inc. hymn books and Bibles) plus leaflets except single use material that	ALL REMOVED & ACCESS RESTRICTED	DR	DR/RS 11 June 2020

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	will be removed by user.		/RS	
	Cordon off or remove from public access any devotional objects or items	AREAS CORDONED OFF	DR/RS	DR/RS 11 June 2020
	Consider if pew cushions/kneelers need to be removed as per government guidance	NOT REMOVED, CONSIDERED LOW RISK(WILL BE DISINFECTED DAILY)	DR/RS	DR/RS 11 June 2020
	Remove or isolate children’s resources and play areas	ALL CHILDRENS RESOURCES AND PLAY AREA REMOVED	DR/RS	DR/RS 17 June 2020
	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.		DR/RS	DR/RS 11 June 2020

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	Clearly mark out seating areas including exclusion zones to maintain distancing.	EXCLUSION ZONES CLEARLY MARKED. SIGNAGE IN PLACE	DR/RS	11 June 2020
	Clearly mark out flow of movement for people entering and leaving the building to maintain physical distancing requirements.	SIGNAGE ADVISING VISITORS TO MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING AT ALL TIMES	DR/RS	11 June 2020
	Limit access to places where the public does not need go, maybe with a temporary cordon in needed.	EXCLUSION ZONES CLEARLY MARKED	DR/RS	11 June 2020
	Determine placement of hand sanitisers available for visitors to use.	SANITISING STATIONS IN PLACE (MEDICAL GRADE SANITISER PROVIDED)	DR/RS	11 June 2020
	Determine if temporary changes are needed to the building to facilitate social distancing	NO CHANGES REQUIRED	DR/RS	11 June 2020

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
			RS	
	Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing etc.	SIGNAGE IN PLACE	DR/RS	RS 11 June 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.	DAILY AFTER OPENING HOURS	DR/RS	DR/RS 11 June 2020
	Check that handwashing facilities have adequate soap provision and paper towels, and a bin for the paper towels.	BINS TO BE EMPTIED DAILY	DR/RS/BC/MW	DR/RS 11 June 2020

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.	SIGNAGE IN TOILETS ADVISING ON WASHING HANDS	D R / R S / M W / P C C	DR/RS 11 June 2020
	Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.	BINS TO BE EMPTIED DAILY	D R / R S	DR/RS 11 June 2020
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.	UNLIKELY CHURCH WILL BE CLOSED FOR 72 HOURS TO BE REVIEWED 31 JULY 2020	D R / R S &	DR/RS 11 June 2020

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	A c t i o n b y w h o m ?	Completed – date and name
			P C C	
	If 72-hour closure is not possible then check all cleaners are not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating.		D R / R S & P C C	DR/RS 11 June 2020
	Set up a cleaning rota to cover your opening arrangements.		D R / R S & P C C	DR/RS 11 June 2020
	All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable).	DISPOSABLE GLOVES TO BE PROVIDED	D R	DR/RS 11 June 2020

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	A c t i o n b y w h o m ?	Completed – date and name
			/ R S / P C C	
	Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned.	MEDICAL GRADE CLEANING MATERIALS PROVIDED	D R / R S	DR/RS 11 June 2020
	Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site.		D R / R S / B C	DR/RS 11 June 2020
	Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site – suggested daily removal.	DAILY AFTER OPENING HOURS	D R / /	DR/RS 11 June 2020

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	A c t i o n b y w h o m ?	Completed – date and name
			R S / B C	
Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms	If possible close the church building for 72 hours with no access permitted.	BUILDING WILL BE CLOSED AND APPROPRIATE PEOPLE INFORMED	D R / P C C	DR/RS 11 June 2020
	If 72-hour closure is not possible then follow Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings.	PUBLIC HEALTH ENGLAND GUIDANCE TO BE FOLLOWED	D R / P C C	DR/RS 11 June 2020
	If the building has been quarantined for 72 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning.	PUBLIC HEALTH ENGLAND GUIDANCE TO BE FOLLOWED	D R / P C C	DR/RS 11 June 2020

INITIAL IDENTIFICATION

(DR) FATHER DAVID ROWETT,(RS) ROBERT SMITH, (BC) BILL COX, MW MICHELLE WRIGHT, (PCC) PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL.

RISK ASSESMENT APPROVED BY STANDING COMMITTEE: DATE:.....

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