

Towards Re-opening Church Buildings: Covid-19 Risk Assessment Checklist for Parish Churches

Version Control

Issue Date	Version Number	Issued by
22 nd May 2020	1	The House of Bishops Covid-19 Recovery Group

This document provides a template risk assessment, with links to the relevant advice notes. It relates to situations where there is limited access to church buildings the purposes of private prayer, livestreaming, construction, carrying out of contractual work, building maintenance and cleaning. This template relates exclusively to Covid-related risks, not general risks. If you would like more information about your responsibilities under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations then information and templates can be found on the [HSE website](#).

A further version of this will be produced when small services such as weddings and funerals are allowed, then for private prayer, then for some form of public worship. At present no public access is permitted to church buildings under government guidance.

Issue Date	Version Number	Issued by
13 June 2020	Leybourne V1	PCC working group
13 June 2020	Leybourne V2	PCC working group
17 June 2020	Leybourne V3	Extraordinary PCC Meeting
02 July 2020	Leybourne V4	Opening for services

Risk assessment template

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by who?	Completed – date and name
<p>Preparation of the Church for: - private prayer and/or livestreaming by a single member of the clergy (and a member of their household if needed)</p>	<p>One point of entry to the church building clearly identified.</p>	<p>Only one point of entry available – limited access to the vestry will be implemented and marking needs to be managed. One-way system for entry and exit. Entry main aisle exit north aisle.</p>	<p>Cleaning and clearing actions to start from 10 June 2020 in agreement with Fr Matthew.</p>	<p>Cleaning and clearing completed 17/06/20</p> <p>Final marking up will be completed prior to opening.</p>
	<p>A suitable lone working policy has been developed and agreed, subject to checks regarding the church insurance policy.</p>	<p>Diocesan policy amended and circulated for agreement.</p> <p>Other than the Parish priest, who will work in line with the policy, there will be no lone working by volunteers during the implementation of Church Opening.</p>	<p>Amended and agreed</p> <p>Agreed by PCC</p>	<p>13/06/20</p> <p>17/06/20</p>
	<p>Buildings have been aired before use.</p>	<p>Building has been opened and accessed daily for distribution of the food bank.</p> <p>The church will be cleaned before opening to remove dust and soft furnishings</p>	<p>Building has been aired during cleaning</p>	<p>Completed 17/06/20</p>

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	Check for animal waste and general cleanliness.	See the advice note on keeping church buildings clean.	Completed during cleaning, all floors and surfaces	17/06/20
	Ensure water systems are flushed through before use.	Guidance has been reviewed and during cleaning of the church prior to opening the water will be run and WC cleaned to ensure all systems are flushed through.	Completed	13/06/20
	Switch on and check electrical and heating systems if needed.	Heating systems will be kept off until further opening is scheduled. Safety checks will be carried out in line with our standard process.	No further action required	
	Holy water stoups and the font are empty.	Font is emptied after use and checks will be carried out during Pre-opening.	No further action required	
Preparation of the Church for: - construction workers and/or professional contractors Advice on access for construction workers and advice on access for contractors available here.	Confirm that all steps (above) for access by clergy have been carried out before anyone else accesses the building.		On hold	
	Confirm that each contractor has carried out their own risk assessment (for themselves and their staff and sub-contractors) and has employers and public liability insurance in place.	Ensure they have included any work equipment, emergency equipment (such as fire extinguishers), ventilation systems and access routes.	On hold	

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	Have hand sanitiser available for people to use on entry and exit of the church building.	Parish Buying will launch procurement routes for supplies for church use on 28 th May.	On hold	
	Confirm who has responsibility for locking and unlocking the building.		On hold	
	Confirm whose responsibility it will be to carry out cleaning, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toilets • Kitchen/servery areas if it is necessary for these to be used • Frequently touched surfaces e.g. doors 	See the advice note on keeping church buildings clean.	On hold	
	Whoever has responsibility for toilets, ensure a supply of soap and disposable hand towels will be available.		On hold	
	Confirm who is responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste e.g. hand towels from the site.		On hold	
	All waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk of those responsible for removing them being exposed		On hold	
	Prepare a suitable form to record contact details of people entering the building.		On hold	
	Confirm evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.		On hold	

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	Direct all users to leave the building by one exit only, avoiding bottlenecks.		On hold	
Cleaning the church after general use (no known exposure to anyone with Coronavirus symptoms)	Check all cleaners are not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating.	An initial cleaning rota will be established to prepare the church for first phase of opening for personal prayer. This will be reviewed during each phase of activity and changes made to rotas. No members of the congregation living with shielding or vulnerable people will be asked to participate. Volunteers for inside cleaning will only be drawn from non-vulnerable groups.	Initial cleaning completed.	
	Check PCC/Chapter liability insurance is up to date.	Insurance to be reviewed by MB	MB by 22/06/20	
	All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable) to protect their skin from exposure to cleaning materials.	Parish Buying has been reviewed by the PCC working group to register with and review 08 June 2020	Review undertaken and the appropriate supplies acquired locally in line with PHE Guidance.	

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	Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned.	PCC working group to register with and review 08 June 2020	Cleaning commenced 12 June 2020	Cleaning and zoning completed 16 June
Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms	If possible close the church building for 72 hours with no access permitted.	Decision will be taken by Fr Matthew to lock down the building if exposure to the virus has been reported.		
	If 72-hour quarantine is not possible then follow Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings.	72 lockdown hours locked will be implemented unless the church is required for a service. In which case a member of the PCC working party, without vulnerability and with PPE will undertake cleaning in line with PHE advice.		
	If the building has been quarantined for 72 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning.	Normal cleaning process for this incident will be implemented.		
Staffing phase 1 of opening for prayer	Presence of a volunteer to note and register attendees. These records will be kept for 12 weeks. Voluntary rota should have at least one member of the PCC in attendance in order to record those accessing the building in phase 1 of reopening. Volunteers should be given a copy of the lone working policy and confirm with the Church Wardens or Parish	Any volunteer in the vulnerable category should remain outside whilst supervising the prayer slot. This also applies to those living with a member of their household who is shielding.	Opening session 1 25/06/20 10:00 – 12:00 Kirstie De-Machen inside Janet & Patrick Tootal Outside	

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	<p>Priest they have read and understood the requirements.</p>	<p>Any PCC Member in receipt of a Shielding letter or medically classified as extremely will not be permitted to support cleaning or supervising entry.</p> <p>Supervision of sessions should be conducted by pairs within the same household or two individuals socially distancing.</p>	<p>Session 2 Monday 29/06/20 18:00 – 20:00 Diane Trollope Philippa Trollope Kirstie De-Machen inside</p> <p>Session 3 Thursday 02/07/20 10:00 to 12:00 Janet and Patrick Tootal and Philippa Trollope</p>	
<p>Managing opening for prayer</p>	<p>Information to be shared prior to opening:</p> <p>Ss Peter and Paul Church will be opening for three trial dates to allow private, quiet prayer. Everyone attending is asked to wear a face covering before entering Church. Entry will be supervised by two people outside and one inside.</p>	<p>Written Instructions will be issued to the parish prior to opening.</p> <p>Instructions will also be on the notice board visible on entry.</p>	<p>Instructions shared and will be printed</p>	<p>02/07/2020</p>

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	<p>Only Five people will be permitted entry at any one time. This will mean six people inside church including one of the supervisory team.</p> <p>Those attending will be asked to:</p> <p>Sanitise hands on entry and exit. Take two disinfectant wipes, clean the space where they sit before and after prayer. Dispose of wipes in the pedal bin provided</p> <p>Toilet and kitchen facilities will be closed for use and signs put up.</p> <p>The back of Church in front of the vestry, the Chancel and Lady Chapel will be cordoned off.</p>			
<p>Managing Church Opening for Services</p>	<p>Back to church 10am Sunday 05 July. 13 people can book a slot – Emma B to provide a doodle poll for this for the month of July.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The booking will be for 13 only • 1 person/bubble or household per pew. • All participant details will be retained for the purposes of track and trace for 28 days. • Procedure for lockdown of Church outlined above will be followed 	<p>In assessing the risks and setting mitigations the Communion Guidance from Church or England has been followed.</p>		

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	<p>should notification of an incident of infection be advised.</p> <p>Fr Matthew has managed distancing and 13 pews and chairs have been allocated, all 2m apart for the congregation.</p> <p>Pew reserved for reader by lectern and warden and sides person at west end.</p> <p>Disposable order of service – also circulated by email for use at home.</p> <p>Checks completed with internet dongle which works for zoom. Service to be broadcast live on Zoom (we have an account so unlimited time and numbers) – Patrick Tootal to admit attendees to maintain muting for all apart from the feed from home. Also, to be recorded and put on website.</p> <p>Communion – Fr Matthew will thoroughly wash hands and communion will be in one kind only. (Bread no wine)</p> <p>No tea/coffee, toilet locked. No hymns – said service.</p>			