

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

### Version Control

Issue Date	Version Number	Issued by
22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2020	1	The House of Bishops COVID-19 Recovery Group
8 <sup>th</sup> June 2020	2	The House of Bishops COVID-19 Recovery Group
12 <sup>th</sup> 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](#).

SC – Stuart Cockman - Churchwarden

JC - Jane Cockman - Sacristan

RW – Revd Rosie Webb - Rector

**Risk assessment template**

<b>Church:</b>	<b>Assessor's name:</b>	<b>Date completed:</b>	<b>Review date:</b>
St Andrews Clewer	Stuart Cockman	30 Jun 2020	07 Jul 2020

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
<b>Access to church buildings for clergy for purposes of private prayer and/or livestreaming</b>  <a href="#">General advice on accessing church buildings can be found here.</a>	One point of entry to the church building clearly identified and separate from public entry if possible	Only one entry possible	SC	SC 30 Jun 2020
	A suitable lone working policy has been consulted if relevant.	An example can be <a href="#">found here</a> . Will always be 2 people	SC	SC 30 Jun 2020
	Buildings have been aired before use.		RW	RW 30 Jun 2020
	Check for animal waste and general cleanliness.		RW	RW 30 Jun 2020
	Ensure water systems are flushed through before use.	See <a href="#">Government Guidance for organisations on supplying safe water supplies</a>	SC	SC 29 Jun 2020
	Switch on and check electrical and heating systems if needed.		SC	SC 29 Jun 2020
	Holy water stoups and the font are empty.		SC	SC 29 Jun 2020
<b>Preparation of the Church for individual prayer and funerals</b>	Confirm that all steps (above) for access by clergy have been carried out before anyone else accesses the building.		SC	SC 29 Jun 2020
	Review CofE guide on cleaning church buildings. Complete the 'cleaning' section of this risk assessment (below).		RW	RW 30 Jun 2020

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	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 door. Vestry door and door to outside to be open for fire exit only.	SC	SC 29 Jun 2020
	Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation.	Main door, windows open if possible.	SC	SC 29 Jun 2020
	Remove from use all books (inc. hymn books and Bibles) plus leaflets except single use material that will be removed by user.	Hymn books covered, all other leaflets, books removed	SC	SC 29 Jun 2020
	Cordon off or remove from public access any devotional objects or items		SC	SC 29 Jun 2020
	Consider if pew cushions/kneelers need to be removed as per government guidance	All removed	SC	SC 29 Jun 2020
	Remove or isolate children’s resources and play areas	All removed	RW	RW 22 Jun 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.	One way system in place, signed. Social distancing signs in place	SC	SC 29 Jun 2020
	Clearly mark out seating areas including exclusion zones to maintain distancing.	Signage implemented	SC	SC 01 Jul 2020
	Clearly mark out flow of movement for people entering and leaving the building to maintain physical distancing requirements.	One way system in place, signed.	SC	SC 29 Jun 2020
	Limit access to places where the public does not need go, maybe with a temporary cordon in needed.	Done. No entry signs in place	SC	SC 29 Jun 2020
	Determine placement of hand sanitisers available for visitors to use.	Inside main door, signed	SC	SC 29 Jun 2020

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	Determine if temporary changes are needed to the building to facilitate social distancing	N/A		
	Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing etc.	Inside main door, signed	SC	SC 29 Jun 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.	Church will be open Wednesday and Sunday only. Cleaning will be Monday or Tuesday	RW	
	Check that handwashing facilities have adequate soap provision and paper towels, and a bin for the paper towels.	No handwashing for public. Bin needed for towels with sanitisers	JC	
	Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available.	N/A. Lodge will not be open		
	Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.	Bins near coffee area to be removed	JC	
<b>Cleaning the church before and after general use (no known exposure to anyone with Coronavirus symptoms)</b>	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.	No need between Wednesday and Sunday		
	If 72-hour closure is not possible then check all cleaners are not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating.	Using professional cleaner, Monday or Tuesday She will be made aware of the cleaning recommendations	RW	
	Set up a cleaning rota to cover your opening arrangements.	Professional cleaner	RW	
	All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable).	“	RW	

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned.	“	RW	
	Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site.	“	RW	
	Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site – suggested daily removal.	After each opening. Gloves to be used.	JC/RW	SC/JC 01 Jul 2020
<b>Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms</b>	If possible close the church building for 72 hours with no access permitted.	No need between Wednesday and Sunday		
	If 72-hour closure is not possible then follow Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings.	Using professional cleaner, Monday or Tuesday	RW	
	If the building has been quarantined for 72 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning.	“	RW	