

Text in purple relative to St Mary's Church Hawkshaw

## Risk Assessment for Opening Church Buildings to the Public

### 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
1st July 2020	4	The House of Bishops COVID-19 Recovery Group

Churches and cathedrals have been legally permitted to open for purposes of individual private prayer from 13<sup>th</sup> June. House of Bishops guidance provided for churches to open for funerals from 15<sup>th</sup> June. Public worship, with measures in place for social distancing, are allowed from 4<sup>th</sup> 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](#).

**Risk assessment template**

<b>Church:</b> St Mary's Hawkshaw	<b>Assessor's name:</b> Michael Booth, Jo Sumsion	<b>Date completed:</b> 3/7/20	<b>Review date:</b> 30/9/20
--------------------------------------	--	----------------------------------	--------------------------------

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
<b>Preparation of the Church for access by members of the public for any permitted purposes, including worship and tourism</b>	Buildings have been aired before use.	Day before first opening main door and vestry door open for one hour	Warden/Deputies	
	Check for animal waste and general cleanliness.	Warden or Deputies inspect building weekly and check carried out by Welcomers before worship (See appendix 2.) Hand sanitiser gel in entrance. Liquid soap, paper towels and pedal operated bin in toilet.	Warden/Deputies/Welcomers	
	Ensure water systems are flushed through before use.	Run all taps for 5 minutes the day before first opening for worship	Warden/Deputies	
	Switch on and check electrical and heating systems if needed. Commission system checks as necessary.	Check lighting and power sockets are working on the day before first opening for worship. Heating?	Warden	
	Holy water stoups and the font are empty.	No water kept in font	-----	-----
	Confirm that all steps (above) for access by clergy have been carried out before anyone else accesses the building.	Distribute this risk assessment and accompanying notes to PLT/PCC/Tony Bliss/Welcomers. List of each person notified to be recorded in PCC PLT minutes Hold meeting with Welcomers and Deputy Wardens	JS via PS  MWB PS	

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	Review CofE guide on cleaning church buildings. Complete the ‘cleaning’ section of this risk assessment (below).	Advice on <a href="#">cleaning church buildings can be found here</a> .	PCC PLT to read	SN distributed 14/6/20
	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.	Notice outside main entrance showing way in and reminding of social distancing. Main entrance will be used for both entrance and exit. To minimise hand contact main double doors left open. Inner doors left open if weather conditions allow. If not, inner doors closed, contact areas wiped down regularly. Vestry door unlocked to facilitate emergency exit if needed.	PCC ask SW to produce sign. One welcomer to wipe door regularly	
	Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation.	See above		
	Remove Bibles/literature/hymn books/leaflets	JS will remove Printed notice sheets (and guidance?) to be placed on chairs. People will be asked to take these home with them	JS Welcomers to place notice sheets on chairs	
	Remove or isolate children’s resources and play areas	Remove all toys, equipment, chairs and table from children’s area	JS	
	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 (or 1m with risk mitigation if absolutely necessary).	Chairs to be laid out in groups for households/ social bubbles according to results of survey	MWB JS	

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.	See above		
	Limit access to places where the public does not need go.	Sign on kitchen door – temporarily closed	MWB	
	Determine placement of hand sanitisers available for visitors to use.	Register with <a href="#">Parish Buying</a> for procurement options.	SN already registered	SN 18/6/20
	Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing etc.	Pop up banner outside the door and inside. Notice in the toilet.	SW? JS	
	Ensure high-risk surfaces and touch points have been wiped with appropriate sanitiser spray or disposable wipes	Advice on <a href="#">cleaning church buildings can be found here</a> .		
	Check that handwashing facilities have adequate soap provision and paper towels, and a bin for the paper towels.	Welcomers to check: supplies of hand sanitizer placed on table inside the entrance; ??Other locations around the building??	Welcomers	
	Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available.	Welcomers to check the toilet for supplies of liquid soap and paper towels, that the pedal bin is in place.	Welcomers	
	Baby changing facilities to be relocated from the toilet.	Sign advising users to clean the facilities before and after use with wipes provided.	JH	
	Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.	Welcomers to check the bin has a liner in it before worship. After worship to remove the liner to the outside grey bin - seal before removing. Disposable gloves should be worn.	Welcomers	
	If possible, provide safe means for worshippers and visitors to record their name and contact details; retain each day's record for 21 days	Welcomer to record name. Only need to collect other details if not on our GDPR list. Stored in safe for 21 days	JS create form Welcomer	

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	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.	Notice via website, email distribution list, phone calls. Communication of what worship will entail; what church looks like (photos/video); info about track and trace sent by email/letter. This info also placed on seats. C of E poster on door	JS PS to work on content. Liaise with SN SW  JS	
	Treatment of money/envelopes placed in the collection plate	Any money/envelopes placed in collection plate, along with the plate to be placed in the safe for 72 hours before counting. Handle with single use gloves	Welcomers	
	Serving refreshments	Refreshments will not be served. Congregation can bring own drinks for own consumption. Service leaders will be encouraged to bring own water bottle if needed. Cups/plastic beakers from the kitchen should not be used.	Include in the information to congregation	
<b>Administering Holy Communion</b>	Sharing the peace	No sharing of the peace through physical contact		
See <a href="#">Advice on the Administration of Holy Communion</a>	The minister should sanitise hands before taking bread and wine and again before distributing the bread. The people should be encouraged to sanitise their hands before receiving the bread.	Hand sanitiser on the communion table and placed around the building.		
	Ministers should not speak over uncovered bread/wafers	The president receives Communion in both kinds. The people take bread only. Distribution is administered in silence. ??blessing of children??		

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	Avoiding contact with the altar rail	Rails not used. Verbal direction given to form a line 2 metres away from another household as marked on the floor.		
<b>Cleaning the church before and after general use (no known exposure to anyone with Coronavirus symptoms)</b>  Advice on <a href="#">cleaning church buildings can be found here.</a>	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.	Tony will clean the interior midweek	PS to liaise	
	If 72-hour closure is not possible then check all cleaners are not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating.	Tony not self-isolating	SN confirmed with Tony	16/6/20
	Set up a cleaning rota to cover your opening arrangements.	Tony will clean the interior midweek	PS to liaise	
	All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable).	?Gloves?		
	Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned.	?Cleaning wipes and spray available. Cleaning touched surfaces Spares Cleaning supplies for toilet etc?		
	Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site.	Welcomers to remove waste. Single use gloves to be worn and all bags sealed before removing	Welcomers	
	Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site – suggested daily removal.	Materials removed after each building use and placed in the grey bin by the back steps. ?School use – caretaker?	Welcomers	
<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.	Completely close building for 72 hours with NO permitted access. With usual clean before next use. Tony to be asked not to	SN has notice? Warden or Deputy to put	

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
		clean until 72 hours have elapsed. Notice placed on door informing NO access	up notice and contact TB	
	If 72-hour closure is not possible then follow Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings.	<a href="#">Public Health England guidance available here.</a> Building WILL be closed for 72 hours. Any planned opening will be cancelled except in the case of a funeral service or wedding, when guidance will be followed.	Warden/ PS	
	If the building has been quarantined for 72 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning.	Advice on <a href="#">cleaning church buildings can be found here.</a> With usual clean before next use.		