

Risk assessment

Church: St John Flixton	Assessor's name: Robert Beale and Graham Dey	Date completed: 24 July 2020	Review date: 24 Aug 2020
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Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed?
General advice on accessing church buildings				
	Buildings have been aired before use.		GD	yes
	Ensure water systems are flushed through before use.		Cleaners	yes
Preparation of the Church for access by members of the public for worship				
	Consider if a booking system is needed for general access	For Sunday service	No	
	Booking system for specific events/services?	Funerals, ashes, etc	Yes – clergy	

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	Review CofE guide on cleaning church buildings. Complete the 'cleaning' section of this risk assessment (below).		GD, RB	yes
	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.	Exit will be to Memorial Garden (except those with mobility issues): signs and notices needed	GD, RB, clergy	
	Make temporary arrangements for people to wait or queue outside the building (taking into account any consequential risks arising from people gathering outside).	Small number of tape markers outside entrance to ensure distancing	GD	
	Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation.		GD, clergy	
	Remove Bibles/literature/hymn books/leaflets		GD	yes
	Cordon off or remove from public access objects liable to be touched or closely breathed on	Side chapel and vestry out of bounds except to ministers and wardens: signs needed	GD	
	(Large collection bowls at back)	Signs and notices needed: GD only to handle	Clergy, GD	
	Remove or isolate children's resources and play areas	Side chapel out of bounds: signs & parents' info. needed	GD, RB	
	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).	Altar rails to stay, but Communion to be brought to members of congregation by priest	GD, clergy	Yes, but ongoing

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	Clearly mark out seating areas including exclusion zones to maintain distancing.		GD	
	Clearly mark out flow of movement for people entering and leaving the building to maintain physical distancing requirements.		GD	
	Limit access to places where the public does not need to go	Side chapel – see above		
	Determine placement of hand sanitisers available for visitors to use.	Entrance and exit	GD	yes
	Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. no physical contact, practise hand washing etc.		RB, GD	
	Ensure high-risk surfaces and touch points have been wiped with appropriate sanitiser spray or disposable wipes		Cleaners Sidespeople yes ...
	Check that handwashing facilities have adequate soap provision and paper towels, and a bin for the paper towels.	Agreed by Standing Committee 14.03.2020	GD, cleaners	yes
	Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available.	Agreed by Standing Committee 14.03.2020	GD, cleaners	yes
	Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.	Agreed by Standing Committee 14.03.2020	GD, cleaners	yes
	If possible, provide safe means for worshippers and visitors to record their name and contact details; retain each day's record for 21 days	Named sidesperson to man a reception desk each time; ask for names and phone nos.	RB, GD	

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	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.	Website, social media, signs at church	RB, CH	
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.			
	If 72-hour closure is not possible then check all cleaners are not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating.	Not needed at present		
	Set up a cleaning rota to cover your opening arrangements.	Existing paid cleaners		
	All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable).		GD	yes
	Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned.		GD	yes
	Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site.		GD	
	Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site – suggested daily removal.	Once a week (after Sunday Service) at present	GD	

NOTES TO ACCOMPANY ST JOHN'S CHURCH RISK ASSESSMENT JULY 2020

1. Our considered view is that the maximum number of attenders compatible with 2m social distancing is 38 (including some chairs at the back for sidespeople and wardens), plus 2 worship leaders at the front. The existing chairs have been positioned on this basis. We do not expect attendances for the time being to exceed this number; so a booking system will not be needed at present. (For funerals, etc., there is still an overall limit of 30, and booking will probably be needed).
2. Attenders may move their individual chairs closer to each other when they are members of the same household, if they wish. No one should move anyone's else's chair.
3. Providing only one service per week takes place, there is no need for furniture to be touched or cleaned between services. If a funeral is to take place within 72 hours of a Sunday service (this will be booked in advance), then plastic chairs will be put in place of the usual ones prior to the first of those two events and left in position for the second, and special cleaning arrangements will be made for sanitizing these chairs between events.
4. We must be clear that 'socializing' is not part of Sunday gathering and worship at present. People should be encouraged to go home as soon as possible after they leave the church; there are no refreshments; and the Meeting Room is not open. The Disabled toilet will be accessible (other toilets will be closed to discourage any clustering within the room space), but services will be shorter than they used to be and we should discourage people from using the toilet unless they have to. The vestry is out of bounds to all except ministers and wardens, so there will be no general access there for photocopying, leaving notes, checking rotas, etc. (the prayer chain will have to work around this if photocopied sheets are still wanted). Graham will be the only person handling money, etc., left in collection bowls and completing collection record sheets. People with mobility issues can wait until others have left and then leave by the entrance door.
5. Only service leaders will use the existing service sheets, and they must take home copies they handle and retain them for future use. We may provide light-weight single sheets with a service outline and congregational words on, which can be placed on seats 48 hours prior to worship and should then be either disposed of in bins as people exit or taken home for members of the same household to bring another time. We may also use the projector to display the service outline and congregational words.
6. We do not expect any Sunday School activity to happen for the time being, and service leaders should make worship child-friendly as far as possible. Services will be shorter than they used to be anyway. We will provide 2 or 3 tables, with chairs, at the back for families to use so children can be occupied with colouring, etc.

7. We have a special duty to those who are 'vulnerable', which includes all over-70s, as they make up a high proportion of our usual attenders and particularly our volunteers. The PCC's duty of care to its volunteers is the same as that of an employer to employees: we need to be able to show that we took all reasonable steps to carry it out. So Licensed Readers, sidespeople and lesson readers will have to be individually contacted before services resume, to ensure to the best of our ability that the over-70s understand their position as vulnerable to Covid-19; know that they are under no pressure to undertake any duties at all, even if their names are on a rota; and understand that they are taking full personal responsibility for the consequences if they choose to attend church at present. We will need to keep some record of these conversations as evidence that they were carried out. There should also be action to see that other potential attenders aged 70-plus (or otherwise vulnerable) understand their position and that they are taking full personal responsibility for the consequences if they choose to attend church at a time when Government advice is still that they 'should stay at home as much as possible and ... minimize contact with others' – this should include personal conversations where possible (in some cases it may be desirable to speak to members of the families of those concerned), plus effective signage at the church entrance. If Government advice on this group changes, then of course this policy will change accordingly.
8. In the light of no. 7, we will need to have lists of ministers, sidespeople and lesson readers who have said they will be available for voluntary duties and make temporary rotas involving those people alone.
9. One sidesperson each Sunday should occupy a 'reception' desk in the church porch and request those who attend to write down their name and a contact phone number (one per household or bubble), for our reference under our Track and Trace responsibility. Pens or pencils should be either the attender's own, or sanitized between users.
10. The lists and contact details so obtained need to be identified by the date they refer to and then kept securely and safely for 21 days in each case.