

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

Version Control

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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.

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>Advice on access for the clergy available here.</p>	One point of entry to the church building clearly identified.			
	A suitable lone working policy has been consulted	An example can be found here .		
	Buildings have been aired before use.			
	Check for animal waste and general cleanliness.	See the advice note on keeping church buildings clean.		
	Ensure water systems are flushed through before use.	See Government Guidance for organisations on supplying safe water supplies		
	Switch on and check electrical and heating systems if needed.			
	Holy water stoups and the font are empty.			
<p>Preparation of the Church for: - construction workers and/or professional contractors</p> <p>Advice on access for construction workers and advice on access for contractors available here.</p>	Confirm that all steps (above) for access by clergy have been carried out before anyone else accesses the building.			
	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.		

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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.		
	Confirm who has responsibility for locking and unlocking the building.			
	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.		
	Whoever has responsibility for toilets, ensure a supply of soap and disposable hand towels will be available.			
	Confirm who is responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste e.g. hand towels from the site.			
	All waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk of those responsible for removing them being exposed			
	Prepare a suitable form to record contact details of people entering the building.			

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	Confirm evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.			
	Direct all users to leave the building by one exit only, avoiding bottlenecks.			
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.			
	Check PCC/Chapter liability insurance is up to date.			
	All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable) to protect their skin from exposure to cleaning materials.	Parish Buying will launch procurement routes for supplies for church use on 28 th May.		
	Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned.	See the advice note on keeping church buildings clean.		
Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms	If possible close the church building for 72 hours with no access permitted.			
	If 72-hour quarantine is not possible then follow Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings.	Public Health England guidance available here.		
	If the building has been quarantined for 72 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning.	See the advice note on keeping church buildings clean.		