

Risk assessment for returning to church building after lockdown

St Mary's, Wheatley Version 1	Assessors: Jeremy Johnson and Andy Flood (church wardens), Andy Thomas (minister)	Date completed: 15 July 2020	Review date: 31 Aug 2020
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Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
Deciding whether to open to the public	<i>Discuss with nearby venues and businesses to ensure that the timing and practical arrangements for using the church are compatible.</i> There are no incompatible activities with surrounding businesses i.e. Martial Arts Centre, Jazz Club, nearby shops. But let Martial Arts Centre and Jazz Club know we're reopening.		Jeremy	14 July: Jeremy
	<i>Update your website, and any relevant social media.</i> Website, Facebook and Instagram to be updated, and church members notified through YouTube service, weekly phone calls, email and letter.		Andy T, Emily H	
	<i>Consider if a booking system is needed, whether for general access or for specific events/services.</i> The church is not open to visitors nor is it a 'heritage church'. Queuing to enter church did not occur before lockdown and is not considered a significant risk.			
	Leadership team and church council agree on which Sundays to delay reopening for reasons of safety		Church council	6 July, church council

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Preparation of the church for access by members of the public for any permitted purposes, including corporate worship and tourism	<i>Check for animal waste and general cleanliness.</i> There has been no evidence of bats in the church.			
	<i>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.</i> (a) External main entrance door into corridor fixed open. Signs inside: ‘welcome’, ‘please keep 2m apart’. (b) Door from corridor into main room fixed open. Table with sanitiser. Sign: ‘please sanitise your hands before entering’. (c) Use same route out when exiting; no danger because everyone going same way. Table with sanitiser. Sign: ‘please sanitise your hands as you leave’. Doors fixed open. (d) Corridor door onto car park unlocked (fire door), but sign: ‘no exit except in emergency’. Car park gate locked with sign: ‘no entry, please use St Mary’s Road entrance’. (e) Men’s and women’s external toilet doors fixed open (there are internal doors for privacy) and only one person to use at a time. (f) External vestry door not to be used (g) Jazz Club car park currently available to use		Jeremy, Andy F, Andy T	Wed 15 July; Jeremy, Andy F, Andy T
	<i>Make any temporary arrangements for people to wait or queue outside the building (taking into account any consequential risks arising from people gathering outside).</i>		Jeremy, Andy F	

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	<p>Not considered a significant risk as queuing rarely occurred before lockdown. Masking tape every 2m along aisles in main room to guide people.</p> <p>At end of service, congregation encouraged to leave one block of pews at a time, whilst maintaining social distancing.</p>			
	<p><i>Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation.</i></p> <p>The church has not been used since lockdown and will not be used in between Sundays hence no significant risk or need to ventilate. Doors and windows can be opened for short periods when there is no security risk when wardens/staff are on the premises.</p>	<p>e.g. This can be achieved when setting up church.</p>	<p>Jeremy, Andy F</p>	<p>Weekly: Jeremy, Andy F</p>
	<p><i>Turn hot water on and flush water systems through before use for a few minutes to guard against legionella.</i></p>		<p>Jeremy, Andy F</p>	<p>15 July, Jeremy, Andy F</p>
	<p><i>Switch on and check electrical and heating systems if needed. Commission system checks as necessary.</i></p>		<p>Jeremy, Andy F</p>	<p>15 July, Jeremy, Andy F</p>
	<p><i>Remove Bibles/literature/hymn books/leaflets.</i></p> <p>(a) Bibles can still be used; they will self-clean after 72 hours.</p> <p>(b) We won't produce weekly service sheets. Info to be given verbally and/or put on website.</p> <p>(c) We will produce a few word sheets to be picked up, not handed out. Same with service outlines for pre-service meeting.</p>		<p>Andy T, Becky F, Moira</p>	<p>Weekly: Andy T, Becky F, Moira</p>

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	(d) Place offering plate at the rear of church for cash gifts or envelopes. Offerings to be collected by Treasurer. Encourage safer online giving.			
	<i>Cordon off or remove from public access any devotional objects or items (if they are liable to be touched or closely breathed on).</i> There are no devotional items that required cordoning off.			
	<i>Consider if pew cushions/kneelers need to be removed as per government guidance.</i> Any kneelers, cushions and pew coverings will not be used more than once per 72 hours, and so will self-clean.	Church practice is generally not to use kneelers.		
	<i>Remove or isolate children’s resources and play areas.</i> Soft toys etc in parent and child room to be removed. Parents alerted to bring own toys.		Jeremy, Andy F, Andy T	15 July: Jeremy, Andy F, Andy T
	<i>Walk through the church to plan for physical distancing in seats, aisles, at the communion rail, including safe flow of visitors. Remember 2m in all directions from each person (or 1m with risk mitigation if absolutely necessary).</i> (a) Entering and exiting as above (b) Alternate pews marked with red crosses and green ticks. Ensures almost 2m distancing front-to-back (1.7 – 1.9m), but with risk mitigation (no singing, all facing one way). If people sit a little to the side instead of directly in front of someone, 2m		Jeremy, Andy F, Andy T	10 July: Jeremy, Andy F, Andy T. Weekly: welcomers

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	<p>is achieved. Marking alternate pews also ensures 2m distancing sideways across aisles.</p> <p>(c) Welcomers will sit people carefully to ensure 2m distancing side-to-side. Pews in central blocks can accommodate two individuals/households/bubbles; pews in side blocks can accommodate one individual/household/bubble.</p> <p>(d) Welcomers to direct families to front pews for all-age services.</p> <p>(e) See below about communion.</p>			
	<p><i>Clearly mark out seating areas including exclusion zones to maintain distancing.</i></p> <p>As above.</p>		Andy T, Becky F, Ali	13 July: Andy T, Becky F, Ali
	<p><i>Clearly mark out flow of movement for people entering and leaving the building to maintain physical distancing requirements.</i></p> <p>With entry and exit provisions (above), this happens naturally.</p> <p>The vestry is now too small for the pre-service meeting, given social distancing. Hold it around communion table, everyone 2m apart.</p>		Andy T	15 July: Andy T
	<p><i>Limit access to places were the public does not need go, maybe with a temporary cordon in needed.</i></p> <p>Doors of unused rooms to remain locked. Corridor door onto car park has 'no exit' sign, as above.</p>		Jeremy, Andy F	15 July: Jeremy, Andy F
	<p><i>Determine placement of hand sanitisers available for visitors to use.</i></p>		Andy F	

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	Press-down hand sanitisers to be placed at door between corridor and main room. See below regarding communion.			
	<p><i>Ensure safe use of equipment needed for video recording (for YouTube services).</i></p> <p>Camera battery-powered so socket capacity irrelevant. Cables will be run through cable protectors on floor. Camera tripod not placed in aisle. Central stand mic used by most people in service has large pick-up range so height doesn't need adjusting.</p>		Craig	15 July: Craig
	<p><i>Music and singing</i></p> <p>No corporate singing. No raised voices in corporate responses. No background music loud enough to make people raise voices in conversation. One singer up front, behind transparent screen. Other musicians possible if in same household or 2m away. No wind instruments. One person doing both laptop and sound desk (2m apart not possible).</p>		Mark	
	<p><i>Vulnerable members serving upfront</i></p> <p>We have one leader who is over 70, who is happy to continue serving upfront.</p>			
	<p><i>Determine if temporary changes are needed to the building to facilitate social distancing.</i></p> <p>These are not considered required.</p>			
	<p><i>Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing etc.</i></p> <p>See signs mentioned above.</p>			

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	<p><i>Ensure high-risk surfaces and touch points have been wiped with appropriate sanitiser spray or disposable wipes.</i></p> <p>Building in use less frequently than every 72 hours, so self-cleans. But see below about cleaning.</p>			
	<p><i>Check that handwashing and toilet facilities have adequate soap provision and paper towels, and a bin for the paper towels.</i></p> <p>Supply of paper towels are available with bins provided in toilets. Electric hand-dryers to be turned off in toilets (because touch on and off).</p>		Jeremy, Andy F, Tony & Elaine	Weekly: Jeremy, Andy F, Tony & Elaine
	<p><i>Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.</i></p> <p>Toilet bins currently use liners.</p>			
	<p><i>If possible, provide safe means for worshippers and visitors to record their name and contact details for NHS Test and Trace; retain each day's record for 21 days.</i></p> <p>Names of congregation to be recorded on sheet by welcome, held in vestry for 21 days, then shredded by wardens. Newcomers' details to be asked for as usual, then name added to above list.</p>		Welcomers, Jeremy, Andy F	Weekly: Welcomers, Jeremy, Andy F
	<p><i>If anyone becomes unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 whilst in our building (a new, continuous cough or a high temperature or loss of or change to sense of smell or taste).</i></p> <p>They should go home immediately and look at NHS 111 online (or call 111). People who have been in</p>			

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	contact need only wash their hands thoroughly, unless they develop symptoms themselves.			
	<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>Church members and local community alerted through YouTube services, email or letter, phone calls, notice board, website, social media.</p>		Andy T, Emily H et al	
	<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>This is the case.</p> <p><i>If 72-hour closure is not possible then check all cleaners are not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating.</i></p> <p>Not applicable.</p>			
	<p><i>Set up a cleaning rota to cover your opening arrangements.</i></p> <p>Not required: churchwardens to check over building before opening and check for cleanliness. Weekly cleaning to begin again as usual, on Wed afternoon (more than 72 hours after service).</p>		Jeremy, Andy F	15 July: Jeremy, Andy F
	<p><i>All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable).</i></p> <p>These are available.</p>			
Children’s work	<i>Measures taken to help children socially distance themselves during the children’s group in the large hall.</i>		Becky F and co-leaders	Weekly: Becky F and co-leaders

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	<p>Primary School aged children find social distancing difficult. Measures we will take to help: sanitise hands as enter large hall, sitting at low tables in sibling groups, opening windows in large hall for ventilation, no singing, avoid raised voices.</p> <p>Additional measures we could take: keeping them still by showing a video, prize for best listener. The group is fewer than 15 and has a stable attendance. Children will also sanitise their hands like everyone else when entering and exiting the building.</p>			
	<p><i>Measures taken to help children socially distance themselves during all-age services, and services where they sit in with activity packs.</i></p> <p>Families will sit together, and will be distanced from others (as above). Parents will be responsible for ensuring this. Pencil crayons etc returned at the end will self-clean after 72 hours. Activity packs will be taken home.</p>			
	<p><i>Parents with babies and toddlers too young to be part of the children’s group.</i></p> <p>A parent and baby/toddler can sit at the rear of the main room. They must bring their own toys. They must be 2m away from others – there is plenty of space. If a baby/toddler becomes disruptive, the parent can move with them into the Parent and Child Room, where they can still see and hear the service. Only one family at a time can be in there (put up a sign) because of limited space.</p>		Becky F (sign)	15 July: Becky F

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Communion	<p><i>Measures taken to ensure social distancing and safety.</i></p> <p>(a) Welcomer who prepares table will sanitise hands beforehand. Divide bread up in advance as usual. Wine for minister only. Bread left covered.</p> <p>(b) No saying of ‘the peace’ with shaking hands.</p> <p>(c) Minister sanitises hands before liturgy. He can speak near bread and wine because bread covered. The bread he breaks is only for him to eat. The words ‘The body and blood of Christ keep you in eternal life’, ‘Amen’ are said corporately before distribution, rather than individually during distribution.</p> <p>(d) First welcomer to direct people to come one block of pews at a time, and one row at a time, and to queue 2m apart. Approach using central aisle. Return using side aisles.</p> <p>(e) Table with sanitiser at front. Sign: ‘Please sanitise your hands’. Each church member stands in front of minister. Both hold hands outstretched. Bread is dropped into church members’ hands in silence.</p> <p>(f) If the minister accidentally touches a church member’s hand, both must sanitise their hands immediately.</p> <p>(g) The cup and plate will be washed and put away as normal. It won’t then be touched for at least 72 hours.</p>		Andy T, welcomers	Andy T, welcomers – on weeks we have communion
Cleaning the church before and after general use (no	<i>Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned.</i>			

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known exposure to anyone with Coronavirus symptoms)	Suitable cleaning materials are available including disposable anti-septic wipes.				
Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here.	<i>Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site. Waste bins to be emptied into single black bin bag weekly.</i>		Tony and Elaine	Weekly: Tony and Elaine	
	<i>Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site – suggested daily removal. This would be weekly. This is safe given the frequency with which the building is used.</i>		Tony and Elaine	Weekly: Tony and Elaine	
	<i>If possible close the church building for 72 hours with no access permitted. We will do this.</i>		Jeremy, Andy F	Weekly: Jeremy, Andy F	
	<i>If 72-hour closure is not possible then follow Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings. The building will be closed for over 72 hours between use.</i>	Public Health England guidance available here.			
	<i>If the building has been quarantined for 72 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning. We will.</i>	Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here.		Tony and Elaine	Weekly: Tony and Elaine
	Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms	The building will self-clean after 72 hours (see above). See above about someone experiencing symptoms in the building.			