

Risk assessment for use of St Mary's building during Covid

St Mary's, Wheatley Version 8	Assessors: Jeremy Johnson and Andy Flood (church wardens), Andy Thomas (minister)	Completed: 15 July 2020 Reviewed: 17 Sep, 31 Oct, 1 Dec 2020, 7 Jan 2021, 21 Feb, 23 Apr, 23 June	Review date: 31 Aug 2021
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We're following the national health guidance to keep church as safe as it can be. Here are the main areas:

- Keeping apart – distancing from each other, and sitting in household groups
- Keeping hands clean – using sanitizer as we arrive and leave, and keeping main doors propped open
- Keeping surfaces clean – especially those we touch more often e.g. toilets, door handles
- Keeping air clean – listening rather than singing, wearing face coverings
- Keeping away – if we have symptoms or have had recent contact with the virus

For further details, please see below.

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
Preparation of the church for access by members of the public for any permitted purposes, including corporate worship and tourism	<p><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></p> <p>(a) External main entrance door into corridor fixed open, except during winter (but hand sanitiser available immediately upon entering). Signs inside: ‘welcome’, ‘please keep 2m apart’, ‘please wear a face covering’.</p> <p>(b) Door from corridor into main room fixed open. Table with sanitiser. Sign: ‘please sanitise your hands before entering’.</p> <p>(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.</p> <p>(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’; by prior arrangement we will unlock temporarily to allow easy access for members with very limited mobility.</p> <p>(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.</p> <p>(f) External vestry door not to be used</p> <p>(g) Jazz Club car park currently available to use</p>		Jeremy, Andy F, Andy T	Wed 15 July 2020; Jeremy, Andy F, Andy T
	<p><i>Leading corporate worship</i></p> <p>All leaders will wear face coverings, except when upfront because 2m or more from others. See below about communion.</p>		Andy T et al	9 Aug 2020: Andy T
	<p><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></p> <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 directed to leave one pew at a time, whilst maintaining social distancing.</p>		Jeremy, Andy F	
	<p><i>Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation.</i></p> <p>Doors and windows can be opened for short periods when there is no security risk when wardens/staff are on the premises.</p>	e.g. This can be achieved when setting up church.	Jeremy, Andy F	Weekly: Jeremy, Andy F

<p><i>Remove Bibles/literature/hymn books/leaflets.</i></p> <p>(a) Bibles can still be used; they will self-clean after 48 hours.</p> <p>(b) We won't produce weekly service sheets. Info onscreen and given verbally.</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>(d) Place offering plate at the rear of church for cash gifts or envelopes. Offerings to be collected by Treasurer. Encourage safer online giving.</p>		Andy T, Ellie, Moira	Weekly: Andy T, Ellie, Moira
<p><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></p> <p>There are no devotional items that required cordoning off.</p>			
<p><i>Consider if pew cushions/kneelers need to be removed as per government guidance.</i></p> <p>Any kneelers, cushions and pew coverings will not be used more than once per 48 hours, and so will self-clean.</p>	Church practice is generally not to use kneelers.		
<p><i>Remove or isolate children's resources and play areas.</i></p> <p>Soft toys etc in parent and child room removed. Parents alerted to bring own toys. Bags of easy-wipe hard toys available for parents who don't bring their own; these are left for 48 hours after service, so self-clean.</p>		Becky F	End Feb 2021: Becky F
<p><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></p> <p>(a) Entering and exiting as above</p> <p>(b) Alternate pews marked with red crosses and green ticks. Ensures almost 2m distancing front-to-back (1.65 – 1.85m), but with risk mitigation (no singing, all facing one way, all wearing face coverings). If people sit a little to the side instead of directly in front of someone, 2m 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 where possible.</p> <p>(e) See below about communion.</p>		Jeremy, Andy F, Andy T	10 July 2020: Jeremy, Andy F, Andy T. Weekly: welcomers

<p><i>Clearly mark out seating areas including exclusion zones to maintain distancing.</i> As above.</p>		Andy T, Becky F, Ali	13 July 2020: 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> With entry and exit provisions (above), this happens naturally. 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 2020: Andy T
<p><i>Limit access to places were the public does not need go, maybe with a temporary cordon in needed.</i> Doors of unused rooms to remain locked. Corridor door onto car park has 'no exit' sign, as above.</p>		Jeremy, Andy F	15 July 2020: Jeremy, Andy F
<p><i>Determine placement of hand sanitisers available for visitors to use.</i> Hand sanitisers to be placed at door between corridor and main room. See below regarding communion.</p>		Andy F	
<p><i>Ensure safe use of equipment needed for video recording (for YouTube services).</i> 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 2020: Craig
<p><i>Music and singing</i> No corporate singing. No raised voices in corporate responses. No background music loud enough to make people raise voices in conversation. Multiple musicians including wind instruments possible if in same household, or 2m away, or 1m divided by transparent screen. More than one singer if essential, but limit it to as few as possible. Musicians are also all facing same direction. One person doing both laptop and sound desk (because 2m apart not possible).</p>		Mark	19 July 2020: Mark
<p><i>Vulnerable members serving upfront</i> 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> 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> See signs mentioned above.</p>			
<p><i>Ensure high-risk surfaces and touch points have been wiped with appropriate sanitiser spray or disposable wipes.</i> Main room normally in use less frequently than every 48 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> 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, Ellie	Weekly: Jeremy, Andy F, Ellie
<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> 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> Names of congregation to be recorded on sheet by welcomers, 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> They should go home immediately and look at NHS 111 online (or call 111). People who have been in contact need only wash their hands thoroughly, unless they develop symptoms themselves.</p>			
<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> 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	18 July 2020: Andy T, Emily H
<p><i>If the church building has been closed for 48 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 for half the week (and all the week during lockdown). See below about cleaning.</p> <p><i>If 48-hour closure is not possible then check all cleaners are not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating.</i></p> <p>We will. See below about cleaning.</p>			
	<p><i>Set up a cleaning rota to cover your opening arrangements.</i></p> <p>Churchwardens to check over building before opening and check for cleanliness. Weekly cleaning as usual on Wednesday. See below for activities on Sun-Wed.</p>		Jeremy, Andy F	15 July 2020 then weekly: Jeremy, Andy F; people on cleaning rota; group leaders
	<p><i>All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable).</i></p> <p>These are available.</p>			
NHS app	Display posters for NHS Covid-19 app with QR code in corridor		Becky F	4 Oct 2020: Becky F
Children's work	<p><i>Measures taken to help children socially distance themselves during the children's group in the large hall.</i></p> <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. Additional measures we could take: keeping them still by showing a video, prize for best listener. Children will also sanitise their hands like everyone else when entering and exiting the building.</p>		Becky F and co-leaders	Weekly: Becky F and co-leaders
	<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 48 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,</p>		Becky F (sign)	15 July 2020: Becky F

	where they can still see and hear the service. Only one family at a time can be in there because of limited space (a sign has been put up).			
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 and 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 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. Minister wears face covering. Both hold hands outstretched. Bread is dipped in wine then 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 48 hours.</p>		Andy T, Andy F, Jeremy, welcomers	Andy T, Andy F, Jeremy, welcomers – on weeks we have communion
Baptisms	<p><i>Measures taken to ensure social distancing and safety.</i></p> <p>(a) Parents and godparents wear face coverings at front of church, and distance from each other (depending on household groups)</p> <p>(b) During baptism itself, parent or carer holds child, minister wears face covering and pours water from bowl</p>		Andy T	4 Oct 2020, Andy T
Cleaning the church before and after general use (no known exposure to anyone with	<p><i>Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned.</i></p> <p>Suitable cleaning materials are available including disposable anti-septic wipes.</p>			
	<p><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></p>		Ellie, and people on cleaning rota	Weekly: Ellie, and people on cleaning rota

Coronavirus symptoms)	<i>Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site – suggested daily removal.</i> Weekly – this is safe given the frequency with which the building is used.		Jeremy	15 July 2020: Jeremy
Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here.	<i>If possible close the church building for 48 hours with no access permitted.</i> We will do this in the second half of each week (Wed-Sun) under normal conditions, and for the full week during lockdown.		Staff and wardens	Weekly: staff and wardens
	<i>If 48-hour closure is not possible then follow Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings.</i> We will do this in the first half of each week (see below for activities on Mon and Tues), except when not necessary during lockdown. Following PHE guidance, we will use standard cleaning products such as detergents and bleach, paying attention to all surfaces but especially ones that are touched frequently, such as door handles, light switches, and work surfaces.	Public Health England guidance available here.		Wardens or leaders as appropriate (see below), weekly
	<i>If the building has been quarantined for 48 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning.</i> We will.	Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here.	Ellie, and people on cleaning rota	Weekly: Ellie, and people on cleaning rota
Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms	The building will self-clean after 48 hours (see above). If 48 hours will not elapse before the next meeting, we will clean it carefully in line with PHE guidance.	Public Health England guidance available here.		
After-School Club (Tues afternoon, main hall)	<i>Safe numbers</i> - In line with National Youth Agency guidelines there is now no number limit for children under 18 - Continue to ensure appropriate ratio of adults to children - See below for details about social distancing			13 Apr 2021, then weekly: Becky F and leaders
	<i>Building</i> - Hall and disabled toilet to be cleaned between Sunday service and After-School Club (see above for PHE details) (less than 48 hours later) - clean again after Club ends (if over-70s cleaning on Wed)			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children to use disabled toilet only - No adults to use toilets while children on premises except in an emergency - Church cleaned between After-School Club and Sunday service (as usual on Wed afternoons) 			
	<p><i>Drop off/pick up</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Timing changed to avoid unnecessary waiting times (now 15.50 - 16.50) - Parents/carers will not be admitted into the building but will wait outside with their children until doors open, to minimise transmission risk. - Children signed in/out at external church door. - Leaders wear face coverings when interacting with parents/carers and when signing in/out children. - All to sanitise their hands on way into building. - Door will be put on chain during the group to avoid any unaccounted-for adults entering the building. - Register to be kept as usual; this can be used for test and trace if needed 			
	<p><i>Games</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appropriate games for the space we are in - where possible games will take place outside to reduce transmission risk. - Where games cannot take place outside, social distancing will be encouraged more strictly. 			
	<p><i>Snacks</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Members asked to bring their own water bottles. - Give no snack, or give individually wrapped snack items. 			
	<p><i>Indoor activities (e.g. Bible teaching and craft)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chairs spaced out at appropriate distances. - Craft materials quarantined for 48 hours before and after use. No sharing of materials. 			
Monday or Tuesday meeting in large hall (e.g. home group, church council, staff meeting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - because less than 48 hours since Sunday service or previous meeting, clean hall and disabled toilet at start (see above for PHE details) - wipe tables and chairs and put away at end - ask all to bring own Bible - keep test and trace register 			Small group leader or wardens, weekly

(when allowed by restrictions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - if having hot drinks, have one person make them, and clean carefully afterwards (in line with PHE guidance above), then put aside for 48 hours - if having lunch, bring own packed lunch 			
Wednesday Bumps and Babies group, main hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - because less than 48 hours since previous meeting (under normal conditions, i.e. not lockdown), clean hall and disabled toilet at start (see above for PHE details) - limit numbers to 15 or as many as distancing will allow (not including babies nor leaders) - inform parents / carers of restrictions - use NHS Test and trace QR code or take details for test and trace - provide a space for each mum and baby, 2 metres from each other. No one should mingle. - each adult to bring their own baby toys, blanket, provisions for the baby - adults to wear a face covering unless exempt - no one should attend if they show any Covid symptoms, have a positive test result or have been told to self-isolate. - if having hot drinks, have one person make them, and clean carefully afterwards (in line with PHE guidance above), then put aside for 48 hours 			Ali, Becky F, weekly
Wed eve church prayer meeting in halls and back of main room (when allowed by restrictions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - because less than 48 hours since previous meeting, clean hall and disabled toilet at start (see above for PHE details) - set chairs out in large hall at least 1.5m from each other (people will wear face masks and be >2m from person they are facing) - pews in main room will have self-cleaned since Sunday service - chairs and pews will self-clean before next use (Sunday) - keep test and trace register 		Staff	Staff, monthly
Pastoral meeting in vicarage office (when allowed by restrictions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use hand sanitizer as enter; no need for face coverings; sit 2m apart - keep test and trace register (on google calendar) - wipe chairs as leave 		Staff or lay leader	Staff or lay leader, as needed
Toddler group (Mon morning, main hall)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - because less than 48 hours since previous meeting (under normal conditions, i.e. not lockdown), clean hall and disabled toilet at start (see above for PHE details) - limit numbers to 7 parents (which is what distancing allows) - inform parents / carers of restrictions 			26 April 2021, then weekly; Becky F

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use NHS Test and Trace QR code or take details for Test and Trace - provide a space for each adult; no adults should mingle - in line with national early years advice toddlers are not expected to socially distance and may share toys - only wipeable toys will be used and will be cleaned after each session - adults to wear a face covering until the point of sitting down, and will put on again if leave seat for any reason - up to six adults can sing - we won't provide snacks but instead have a dedicated snack time with adult bringing snacks for their own children - if having hot drinks, have one person make them (sanitise hands first), and clean carefully afterwards (in line with PHE guidance above), then put aside for 48 hours - when weather allows consider running session outside - no one should attend if they show any Covid symptoms, have a positive test result or have been told to self-isolate 			
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