# Risk Assessment for Opening Church Buildings to the Public

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| **Church: St Leonards Middleton**  **Opening church for public worship and private prayer** | **Assessor’s name:**  **David Brennan (DB) Christine Swailes (CS) Geoff Wellens (GW) Alison Bailie (AB)** | **Date completed:**  **5/8/20** | **Review date:**  **By 30 September** |

| **Area of Focus** | **Controls required** | **Additional information** | **Action by whom?** | **Completed – date and name** |
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| **Access to church buildings for clergy for purposes of private prayer and/or livestreaming**  [General advice on accessing church buildings can be found here.](https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches) | One point of entry to the church building clearly identified and separate from public entry if possible | Vestry door | DB | DB  5/8/20 |
| A suitable lone working policy has been consulted if relevant. |  | NA | NA |
| Buildings have been aired before use. |  | DB | DB 5/8/20 |
| Check for animal waste and general cleanliness. |  | DB | DB 5/8/20 |
| Ensure water systems are flushed through before use. |  | DB | DB 5/8/20 |
| Switch on and check electrical and heating systems if needed. Commission system checks as necessary. |  | DB | DB 5/8/20 |
| Holy water stoups and the font are empty. |  | DB | DB 5/8/20 |
| Ensure safe use of equipment needed for livestreaming: avoid exceeding safe load on sockets, cables/tripod causing trip hazard |  | NA | NA |
| **Deciding whether to open to the public** | Discuss with nearby venues and businesses to ensure that the timing and practical arrangements for using the church are compatible. |  | NA | NA |
| Update your website, A Church Near You, and any relevant social media. |  | AB, A+M Slim |  |
| Consider if a booking system is needed, whether for general access or for specific events/services | By telephone in previous week to DB, Moira Brennan | DB, Moira Brennan | DB, Moira Brennan 5/8/20 Ongoing |
| If opening to tourists consider applying for the Visit Britain ‘Good to Go’ standard mark |  | NA | NA |
| **Preparation of the Church for access by members of the public for any permitted purposes, including worship and tourism** | Confirm that all steps (above) for access by clergy have been carried out before anyone else accesses the building. |  | DB, CS GW, AB | DB, CS GW, AB 5/8/20 |
| Review CofE guide on cleaning church buildings. Complete the ‘cleaning’ section of this risk assessment (below). |  | DB, CS GW, AB | DB, CS GW, AB  5/8/20 |
| 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. | Entry through north porch, exit through south door, clergy access through vestry door. Flow guided by welcomers and announcements from front. Leaflet made available and guidance given when booking | DB, CS GW, AB | DB, CS GW, AB  5/8/20 |
| Make any temporary arrangements for people to wait or queue outside the building (taking into account any consequential risks arising from people gathering outside). | Socially distanced marker 2m queue outside building, one person/household enter at a time, sanitise hands, complete track and trace form, welcomer shows to specified seat | DB, CS GW, AB | DB, CS GW, AB  5/8/20 |
| Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation. | North and south doors propped open when possible | DB, CS | DB, CS 5/8/20 |
| Remove Bibles/literature/hymn books/leaflets |  | DB, CS | DB, CS 5/8/20 |
| Cordon off or remove from public access any devotional objects or items (if they are liable to be touched or closely breathed on) | All cordoned off | DB, CS | DB, CS 5/8/20 |
| Consider if pew cushions/kneelers need to be removed as per government guidance | Kneelers removed, pew cushions removed from pews which are being used | DB, CS | DB, CS 5/8/20 |
| Remove or isolate children’s resources and play areas | All resources isolated in cordoned off areas | DB, CS | DB, CS 5/8/20 |
| 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). |  | DB, CS GW, AB | DB, CS 5/8/20 |
| Clearly mark out seating areas including exclusion zones to maintain distancing. |  | DB, CS | DB, CS 5/8/20 |
| Clearly mark out flow of movement for people entering and leaving the building to maintain physical distancing requirements. | Directions marked out, welcomers will direct, on entry and exit | DB, CS | DB, CS 5/8/20 |
| Limit access to places were the public does not need go, maybe with a temporary cordon in needed. |  | DB, CS | DB, CS 5/8/20 |
| Determine placement of hand sanitisers available for visitors to use. | At entry and exit points, north and south porch | DB, CS | DB, CS 5/8/20 |
| Determine if temporary changes are needed to the building to facilitate social distancing |  | NA | NA |
| Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing etc. | Notices put up | DB, CS | DB, CS 5/8/20 |
| Ensure high-risk surfaces and touch points have been wiped with appropriate sanitiser spray or disposable wipes |  | CS | CS 5/8/20 |
| Check that handwashing facilities have adequate soap provision and paper towels, and a bin for the paper towels. |  | CS | CS 5/8/20 |
| Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available. |  | CS | CS 5/8/20 |
| Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them. |  | CS | CS 5/8/20 |
| If possible, provide safe means for worshippers and visitors to record their name and contact details; retain each day’s record for 21 days | Forms to be completed on entry, including consent form | DB, CS, Moira Brennan | DB, CS, Moira Brennan 5/8/20 |
| 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. | Given through social media and in written form. Leaflets issued, those booking places informed of what to expect | DB, CS GW, AB | DB, CS GW, AB  5/8/20 |
| **Cleaning the church before and after general use (no known exposure to anyone with Coronavirus symptoms)**  Advice on[**cleaning church buildings can be found here**](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/Keeping%20church%20buildings%20clean%20v1.pdf)**.** | 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. | Building will normally be closed for periods of 72 hours between opening. If not possible, the building will be cleaned appropriately | DB, CS GW, AB | DB, CS GW, AB  5/8/20 |
| If 72-hour closure is not possible then check all cleaners are not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating. |  | NA | NA |
| Set up a cleaning rota to cover your opening arrangements. | Arranged with Fran and cleaning team | DB, CS | DB, CS 5/8/20 |
| All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable). |  | CS | CS 5/8/20 |
| Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned. |  | CS | CS 5/8/20 |
| Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site. |  | CS | CS 5/8/20 |
| Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site – suggested daily removal. | As needed on each occasion the building is used | CS | CS 5/8/20 |
| **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 closure is not possible then follow Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings. |  |  |  |
| If the building has been quarantined for 72 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning. |  |  |  |

In addition

- masks to be worn by all

- toilets available only in emergency

- full clean of church carried out by Rentokil 10/7/20

Signed: David Brennan, Christine Swailes, Geoff Wellens, Alison Bailie

5/8/20

**Reviewed 30/9/20**

QR app sign in now displayed in porch

Each Sunday service announcement reminding people not to mingle in church grounds

2m apart strips laid down central aisle to assist in distancing for communion

Sign-in in porch to be completed as quickly as possible, to minimise length of time people have to queue outside

Umbrellas available for hose waiting if raining (to be carefully handed over to avoid touching he same surface)

Signed: David Brennan, Christine Swailes, Geoff Wellens, Alison Bailie