

St Bride's Risk Assessment for Opening Church Building to the Public

Version Control

| Issue Date | Version Number | Issued by |
|----------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 22 nd May 2020 | 1 | The House of Bishops COVID-19 Recovery Group |
| 8 th June 2020 | 2 | The House of Bishops COVID-19 Recovery Group |
| 12 th June 2020 | 3 | The House of Bishops COVID-19 Recovery Group |
| 1st July 2020 | 4 | The House of Bishops COVID-19 Recovery Group |

Churches and cathedrals have been legally permitted to open for purposes of individual private prayer from 13th June. House of Bishops guidance provided for churches to open for funerals from 15th June. Public worship, with measures in place for social distancing, are allowed from 4th July. Other activities, except for a few still prohibited by law, may also take place in churches, subject to the government guidance in place for the relevant sector.

The [government guidance for the safe use of places of worship during the pandemic](#) requires a COVID-19 risk assessment to be carried out for every building and site open to the public. This document provides a template risk assessment, with links to the relevant advice notes. It relates to opening up church and cathedral buildings to clergy and members of the public entering for any permitted purposes. As well as offering guidance on best-practice, it is also intended to help parishes make a decision on whether to open for any or all of these purposes or not, based on their local circumstances, resources and context. You should read the advice on re-opening buildings and the guidance on public worship before completing this assessment. Both are available on the [Church of England Coronavirus pages](#).

Future versions of this document will be produced when there is any substantive change to the guidance on the safe use of places of worship.

A separate risk assessment relating to contractors and construction workers is available on the [Church of England Coronavirus pages](#).

Carrying out a risk assessment

1. Agree what activities you are planning for:
 - Public prayer meetings
 - Public worship with livestreaming
 - Rites of passage services
2. Consider the hazards:
 - Transmission of COVID-19
 - Hazards arising from the temporary closure of the church
 - Hazards arising from now using the church in a different way

Read the guidance and think about how it relates specifically to your church. What constraints are there? Consider how people will arrive at the church, including if they will need to wait or queue outside; how people will enter and leave the church; circulation inside: from the entrance to the worship space and out again; circulation within the worship space; also access to other areas including the toilet(s).

3. Consider who might be harmed and how? Read the guidance and think about how the activities you are planning will affect different groups of people. The risks are not different for larger churches so long as they are properly managed, but having more people coming through your building makes the possible impact – for example of someone with COVID-19 coming into contact with others – higher than in smaller venues with fewer people. Consider your particular circumstances and adapt the checklist below as appropriate.
4. Using the risk assessment checklist below as a template:
 - add in mitigations for any risks that are particular to your circumstances that may not be on the list;
 - record what you need to do for each activity to go ahead safely;
 - consider any equipment you need and any temporary changes you might need to make to the church;
 - check back against your list of activities to confirm which ones can go ahead and when.

Risk assessment template

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|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Church: | Assessor's name: | Date completed: | Review date: |
| St Bride's Old Trafford | Reverend Peter Matthews | 5/9/2020 | 5/10/2020 |

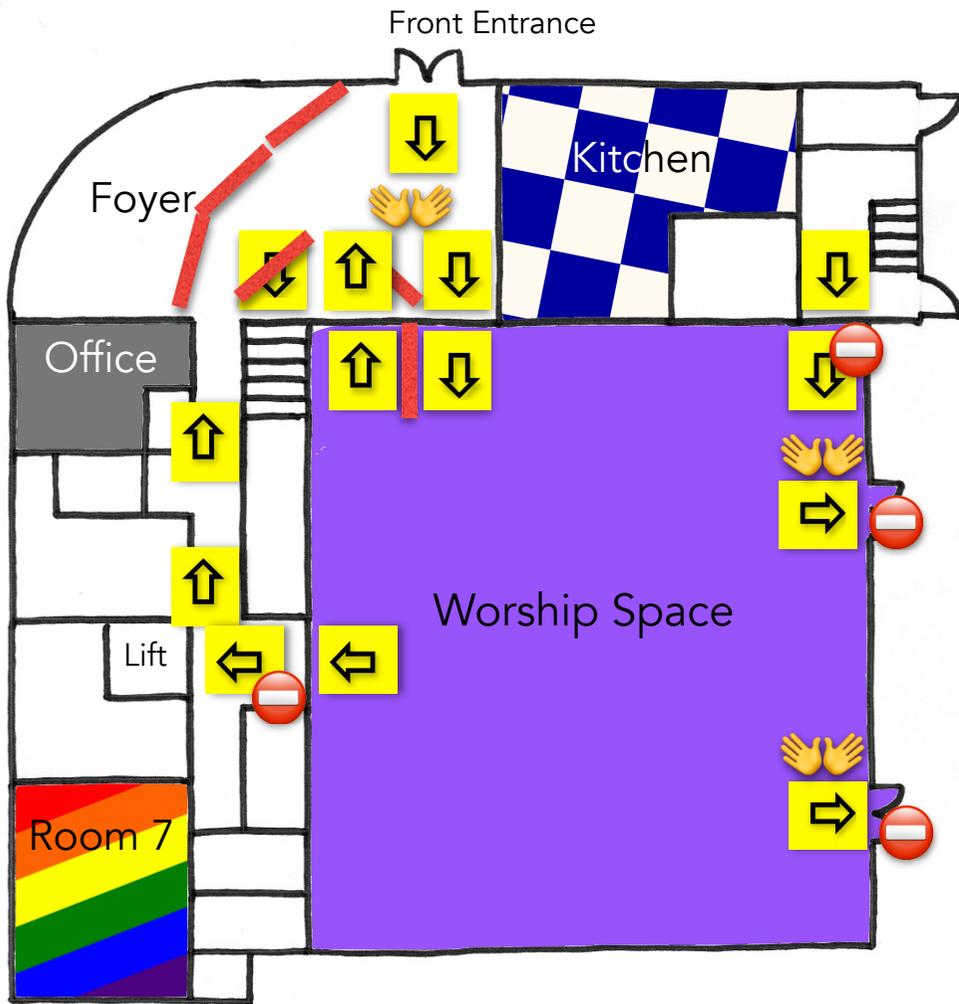
| Area of Focus | Controls required | Additional information | Action by whom? |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Access to church building for clergy for purposes of public morning prayer and/or live streaming General advice on accessing church buildings can be found here. | One point of entry to the church building clearly identified. | Front door is for entry only, exit for last person out. | Peter |
| | A suitable lone working policy has been consulted if relevant. | Policy needs to be written. Door must be locked from the inside when alone. | Clare |
| | Buildings have been aired before use. | | Person who unlocks Site team |
| | Check for general cleanliness. | | Person who unlocks Site team |
| | Ensure water systems are flushed through before use. | To be done at least once a week. See Government Guidance for organisations on supplying safe water supplies | Person who unlocks Site team |
| | Switch on and check electrical and heating systems if needed. Commission system checks as necessary. | | Church Warden Site team |
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| | Ensure safe use of equipment needed for livestreaming: avoid exceeding safe load on sockets, cables/tripod causing trip hazard | | Person setting up live streaming |

| | | | Production Team |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 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. | Informally discussed with venues, businesses and others | Peter |
| | Update your website, A Church Near You, and any relevant social media. | A Church Near You, Facebook and Instagram | Peter |
| | A booking system is needed, whether for general access or for specific events/services Ensure that visitors and worshippers will know what to expect when they come and their responsibilities. | Decided on in principle | Admin team |
| | Have at least 4 Steward Team (2 for front door leading into worship space and 2 for garden and car park and doors to , 4 Site Team and an Admin Team | Require to be Covid-19 secure, be safe Security-wise and welcoming while allowing service participants and Production Team to freely play their part. | Peter & Clare |
| Preparation of the Church for access by members of the public for any permitted purposes, including worship | Confirm that all steps (above) have been carried out before anyone else accesses the building. | | Peter & Clare |
| | Review CofE guide on cleaning church buildings. Complete the 'cleaning' section of this risk assessment (below). | Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here. | Site team |
| | | | |
| | Make any temporary arrangements for people to wait or queue outside the building (taking into account any consequential risks arising from people gathering outside). | Distancing markings made on pavement as far from road as possible between front door and car park entrance. | Site team |
| | Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation. | Person unlocking will have done this. | person who unlocks |
| | Remove Bibles/literature/hymn books/leaflets | | Peter |

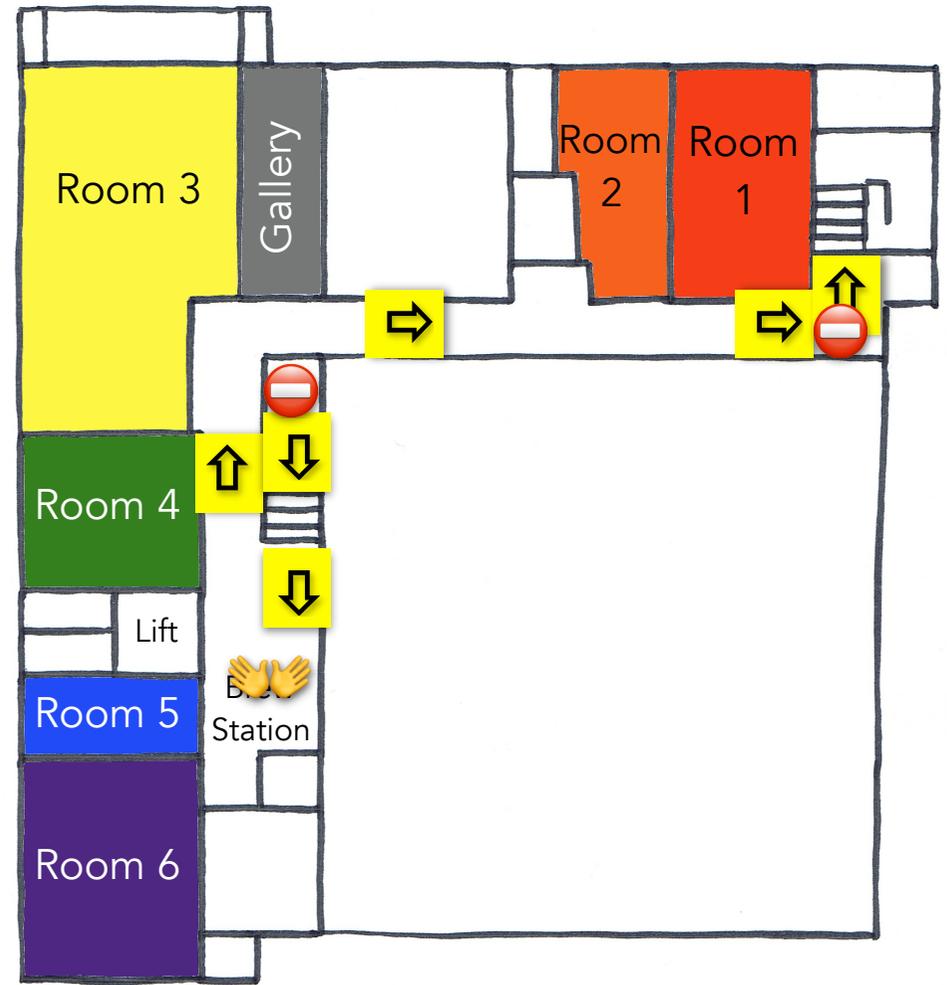
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| | Cordon off or remove from public access any devotional objects or items (if they are liable to be touched or closely breathed on) | Communion table and cross. At front behind line of chairs not for congregation use. | Peter |
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| | Remove or isolate children's resources and play areas | | Peter |
| | Walk through the church to plan for physical distancing in seats, aisles, including safe flow of visitors. Remember 2m in all directions from each person (or 1m with risk mitigation if absolutely necessary). | See diagram. | Peter and Clare |
| | Clearly mark out seating areas including exclusion zones to maintain distancing. | See diagram. For 2m distancing we leave 4 seats empty between each household/bubble. Signage to explain. | Peter and Clare. Steward team to direct. |
| | Clearly mark out flow of movement for people entering and leaving the building to maintain physical distancing requirements. | See diagram. Labelling on floor and doors. | Peter and Clare |
| | Limit access to places where the public does not need go, maybe with a temporary cordon in needed. | Doors locked and barrier posts used. See diagram. | Peter and Clare |
| | Determine placement of hand sanitisers available for visitors to use. | See diagram. At entrance and exits. Toilets and upstairs. | Peter and Clare |
| | Determine if temporary changes are needed to the building to facilitate social distancing | None needed | |
| | Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing etc. | Info about if showing symptoms as well. | Peter |

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| | Ensure high-risk surfaces and touch points have been wiped with appropriate sanitiser spray or disposable wipes | Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here. | Site team |
| | Check that handwashing facilities have adequate soap provision and a bin is available | | Site team |
| | Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and a bin is available | . | Site team |
| | Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them. | | Site team |
| | If possible, provide safe means for worshippers and visitors to record their name and contact details; retain each day's record for 21 days | As provided by Admin Team | Steward team Admin Team |
| | Give due notice of the resumption of use of the building to neighbours, congregation and wider community, including social media | | Peter |
| Communion | Create plan for safe conducting of Holy Communion | Advice on Church of England site: https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-08/COVID-19%20Advice%20on%20the%20Administration%20of%20Holy%20Communion%20v5.1.pdf from which plan put together separately. | Peter |
| 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. | Check last opening | Site team |

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| Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here. | If 72-hour closure is not possible then check all cleaners are not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating. | | Clare |
| | Set up a cleaning rota to cover your opening arrangements. | | Clare with Admin team |
| | All cleaners (Site team) provided with gloves (disposable). | | Clare |
| | Suitable cleaning materials provided. | Register with Parish Buying for procurement options. | Clare |
| | Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g.contents of bins) from the site. | | Clare with Admin team |
| | Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. contents of bins) from the site – suggested daily removal. | | Site team |
| Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms | Close the church building for 72 hours with no access permitted. | | Peter |
| | If 72-hour closure is not possible then follow Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings. | Public Health England guidance available here. | Clare and Peter |
| | If the building has been quarantined for 72 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning. | Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here. | Site team |
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Ground Floor



First Floor

Room Plans for

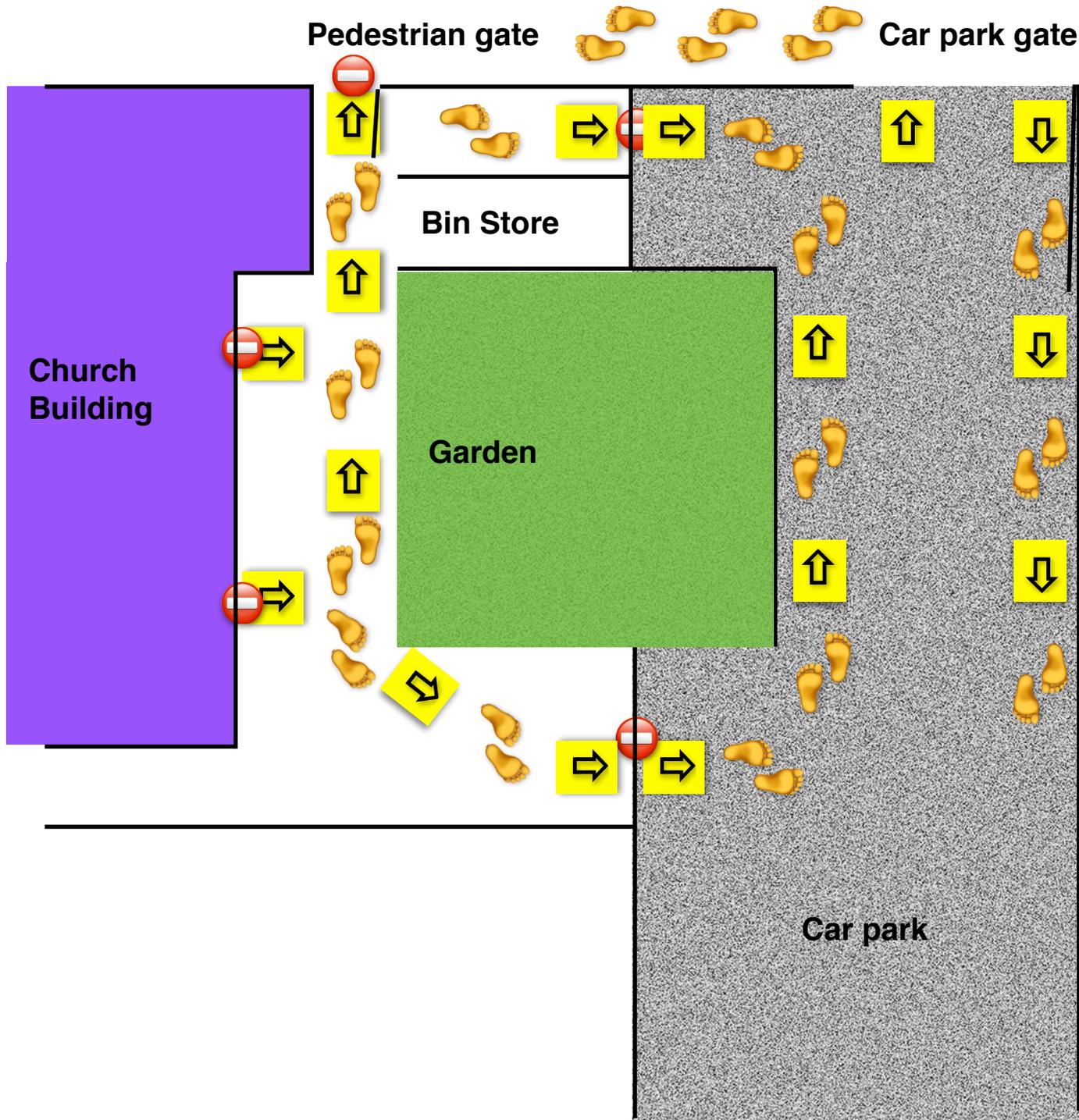
 **St Bride's Church**

 Sanitiser Station

 Barrier posts

 Door No Entry Sign

 Floor Direction Sign



Outside Space



Seating Plan for 2m Social Distancing

