

Risk Assessment Template for Opening Church Buildings to the Public

Version Control

Issue Date	Version Number	Issued by
16 th July 2021	10	The House of Bishops COVID-19 Recovery Group

This update has been reviewed to reflect step 4 of the [roadmap to ease restrictions](#) issued by the UK government and is intended for use from 19th July onwards. As step 4 sees the easing of all legal restrictions it is recommended that risk assessments currently in place are re-run to ensure they fit the new circumstances. The Church of England's [guidance on step 4](#) may be a helpful reference point.

It is recommended that you carry out a separate risk assessment for each activity type e.g. public worship, use by community groups, concerts etc. and that these are regularly reviewed with reference to local Covid infection rates and other relevant circumstances. You may decide to have different mitigations or safety measures in place for different events. Where activities run simultaneously or back-to-back, each iteration of the risk assessment should address the shared or consequential risk.

Risk assessment templates for outdoor worship and for contractors and construction workers are also available on the [Church of England Coronavirus page](#).

Risk assessment template

Church: St Peter's Hinton St Mary	Assessor's name: Rev'd Philippa Sargent	Date completed: 17 July 2021	Review date: 17 September 2021
Event or service this assessment relates to:		All regular Sunday and midweek services	

Risk	Controls to consider (delete or detail as appropriate to your location and event)	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed: date – name
Aerosol or droplet transmission of Covid-19	Increase ventilation in your building: natural ventilation by opening doors, windows and vents or mechanical ventilation if appropriate/necessary.	Keep at least 2 doors open throughout the service	Churchwardens	19 Jul 21 – RG / KPB
	Use outdoor spaces if appropriate and available.	Consult with Vicar	At discretion of Officiant/President	As required
	Request or consider requiring people to wear a face covering, unless exempt, when inside your building. This may particularly apply to activities that increase risk of aerosol spread such as singing.	If a service becomes crowded Consult with Vicar is possible	At discretion of Officiant/President	As required
	Put in place measures to reduce contact between people e.g. retaining social distancing	Transepts at St Mary's to be reserved as socially distanced seating with face coverings worn. Details shared with regular attenders.	Vicar	19 Jul – PMS
	If practical in your building, 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 door for exit.	Main door only available Chancel door will continue to be used to manage flow at Communion	Churchwardens	19 Jul 21 – RG / KPB
	For events where the building is likely to be especially busy, or the activity is particularly	Consult with Vicar	At discretion of Officiant/President	As required

Risk	Controls to consider (delete or detail as appropriate to your location and event)	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed: date – name
	energetic, pay particular regard to the need for additional mitigations such as social distancing and face coverings.			
Surface transmission of Covid-19	Provide adequate hand cleansing stations. Provide hand sanitiser for the occasions when people can't wash their hands.	Hand sanitiser available by main door and in Vestry	Churchwardens	19 Jul 21 – RG / KPB
	Identify where you can reduce the contact of people with surfaces, eg. by leaving open doors that are not fire doors, using electronic documents rather than paperwork.	Doors propped open wherever possible. Papers documents to be quarantined between services.	Churchwardens	19 Jul 21 – RG / KPB
	Good hygiene and cleaning of the building.	Weekly cleaning rota	Churchwardens	19 Jul 21 – RG / KPB
	Consider hygiene around shared items such as Bibles, prayer and hymn books that are used by multiple people.	Quarantine system in place	Churchwardens	19 Jul 21 – RG / KPB
	If providing single-use service sheets or prayer cards, either place these on seats or ask people to sanitise hands before picking one up, and request that people take these home with them.	Quarantine system in place	Churchwardens	19 Jul 21 – RG / KPB
	Cordon off or remove from public access any devotional objects or items (if they are liable to be touched or closely breathed on).	None in place		Not required
	Put in place a cleaning rota/system for children's materials and toys, and consider providing cleaning materials for these if safe to do so (keeping all such materials out of the reach of children).			Not applicable
	Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available.			Not applicable

Risk	Controls to consider (delete or detail as appropriate to your location and event)	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed: date – name
	Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.		Churchwardens	19 Jul 21 – RG / KPB
Visitors are unclear on requirements for attending church or visiting the building for other purposes, or anxious about attending.	Display an NHS Track and Trace QR code, with an alternative option for those who cannot use that system. Encourage visitors to use one or other of these options.	In place	Vicar	19 Jul 21 – PMS
	Update your website, A Church Near You, and any relevant social media with information for visitors. Communicate details on requirements or requests such as bringing a face covering and options for those who may be anxious.		Vicar	19 Jul 21 – PMS
	Consider specific advice for those who may struggle with continuing restrictions, such as those who are deaf or hard of hearing, or visually impaired.	Large print service and pew sheets available with details of continuing measures		19 Jul 21 – PMS
	Consider if a booking system is needed, whether for general access or for specific events/services.		Vicar	As required
	Communicate with nearby churches to ensure offered provisions are complementary.		Vicar	19 Jul 21 – PMS
	Provide welcoming notices that outline safety measures.		Vicar	19 Jul 21 – PMS
	Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms	If possible close the church building for 48 hours with no access permitted.		Vicar
If 48-hour closure is not possible then follow Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings.		Public Health England guidance available here.	Vicar	As required
If the building has been quarantined for 48 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning.		Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here.	Vicar	As required