



THIS IS A PLANNING DOCUMENT ONLY. IT WILL BE UPDATED AND CONTENT MAY CHANGE ONCE GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE ON REOPENING PLACES OF WORSHIP HAS BEEN PUBLISHED. We are awaiting clarification from government on the extent and nature of what 'supervised individual prayer' means and what exactly will be required. We will update this document as further information becomes available.

On 7th June the government announced that places of worship may open for individual prayer in line with social distancing guidelines from 15th June. The government 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 individual private prayer. As well as offering guidance on best-practice, it is also intended to help parishes make a decision on whether to open for individual private prayer or not, based on their local circumstances, resources and context.

This risk assessment relates to the opening of churches for private prayer only. Future versions of this document will be produced when small services such as weddings and funerals with limited numbers are allowed and then for different forms of public worship.

Guidance and recommended risk control measures will be sourced directly from the GOV.UK website wherever possible. Control measures to be revised and updated when the latest government guidance is reviewed and published.

Face Coverings Government has advised that cloth face coverings (and not surgical masks) could be worn for reassurance by people in enclosed areas but are not strictly necessary. Churches do not need to supply face coverings. People should not see their voluntary use disrespectful to prayer or the sacred space.

Children While children are unlikely to become very ill, they are capable of both being infected by the virus and of spreading it. Parents or guardians bringing children into a church should not be discouraged from doing so, but it will be important for parents to manage their children appropriately, particularly ensuring they touch as few surfaces as possible for their own safety.

Vulnerable People It remains a person's own choice to come to church to pray. Churches may wish to consider setting aside a section only for people who are more vulnerable to serious disease if infected, and clearly signposted as such, or otherwise having a designated time only for people who are more vulnerable and wish to pray privately.

VERSION CONTROL

Version 1	11/06/2019	Checked by Director Estates	Checked by H&S Manager	Reviewed by COO



Coronavirus Risk Assessment

Parish: St James & St William of York Reading		Date Assessed: 12/6/2020			Assessed by: A E Reed		
Task/Activity: Access to church buildings for clergy for purposes of private prayer and/or livestreaming		Review Frequency: Daily to ensure assessment reflects latest government guidance			Reference: COVID- 19 Risk Assessment		
Activity/ Task	Hazard/Risk	Persons at Risk	Controls in Place	Severity (1-5)	Likelihood (1-5)	Risk/ Priority	Additional Controls Required
Access to church buildings for clergy	Lone Working Legionella Lapse of compliance certificates	Clergy	Lone Working Policy Ensure that all taps, toilets and other water storage devices are run well to flush the systems before anyone uses them, especially if the church has not been in use for some time. Holy water stoups and the font are empty. Review Parish certificates for Gas safe, Electrical Inspections etc and instruct specialists where necessary	5	2	10	The Diocesan Lone Working Policy can be found here See Government Guidance for organisations on supplying safe water supplies Contact Diocesan Estates Team for support where H&S/parish staff furloughed/shielding





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Activity/ Task	Hazard/Risk	Persons at Risk	Controls in Place	Severity (1-5)	Likelihood (1-5)	Risk/ Priority	Additional Controls Required
Preparation of the church for individual prayer	Harm due to Legionella/ Gas/electrical non-compliance	Clergy Parishioners Visitors	Confirm that all steps (above) for access by clergy have been carried out before anyone else accesses the building. Carry out H&S walk round to identify hazards, eg blocked exits etc Check emergency lighting and fire extinguishers.	5	1	5	Contact Diocesan H&S Manager Email: scripps@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk





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Preparation of the church for individual prayer	Contact with Coronavirus leading to infection causing illness – by not maintaining social distancing	Clergy Parishioners Visitors	<p>Walk through the church to plan for physical distancing in seats, aisles, at the altar rail, including safe flow of visitors. 2m in all directions from each person.</p> <p>Flow of movement for people entering and leaving the building considered to maintain physical distancing requirements.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Maintain as much ventilation within the church space as possible; keep doors open to decrease transmission risk through touching and allow a flow of fresh air into the church.</p> <p>Clearly mark out seating areas including exclusion zones to maintain distancing</p> <p>Further mitigating actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing off intermediate pews (avoid self-adhesive tape, use ribbon or non- adhesive hazard warning tape) • Numbers within the buildings sufficiently reduced to assist in maintaining two metre distances at all times. 	5	2	10	<p>Determine if temporary changes are needed to the building to facilitate social distancing. Contact Diocesan Estates Team on gaining relevant consents.</p> <p>LISTED or LISTABLE BUILDINGS All restrictions on making alterations or any permanent damage to surfaces of listed buildings still apply. Contact Diocesan Estates team for advice on non-destructive solutions.</p> <p>Consider online booking systems eg ticketsource.co.uk which is free for free events when open for services in future.</p> <p>Indicate at entrance maximum number of occupants, beyond which a queuing system must be used.</p> <p>Signage installed within the building to remind occupants to maintain two metre distance at all times.</p>





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Preparation of the church for individual prayer	Exposure to Coronavirus leading to infection – by touching contaminated surfaces	Clergy Parishioners Visitors	<p>Remove Bibles/Missals/hymnbooks. Single use leaflets may be provided. Consider if pew cushions/kneelers need to be removed</p> <p>Confessional boxes to be closed</p> <p>Remove bulk boxes of candles, tapers & matches. Unlit candles may be placed in holders and parishioners to light their candle from an existing candle if they do not carry a personal form of ignition. For electric candle stands, sanitiser should be provided to clean between use.</p> <p>Ensure high-risk surfaces and touch points have been wiped with appropriate sanitiser spray or disposable wipes</p> <p>Determine placement of hand sanitiser available for visitors to use.</p> <p>Toilet facilities in churches should remain closed. If facilities for hand washing only can be provided, and these can be cleaned frequently, then these can be opened to allow people to wash their hands but only if liquid soap can be provided and disposable paper towels are used. Cloth towels must not be used.</p>	5	2	10	<p>Physical veneration of relics or objects such as statues, crucifixes and shrines is not permitted.</p> <p>Maintain social distance during confession</p> <p>Gloves to be worn while placing candles in holders</p> <p>Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing etc.</p> <p>Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk of those responsible for removing them.</p> <p>If toilets are used in an emergency, they must be fully cleaned before reuse.</p>





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Cleaning the church before and after general use (no known exposure to anyone with Coronavirus symptoms)	Exposure to Coronavirus leading to infection causing illness – by touching contaminated surfaces	Cleaners	<p>If the church building has been closed for 72 hours between periods of being open, then there is no need for cleaning.</p> <p>If opening more frequently cleaning to be scheduled.</p> <p>cleaning rota established to cover your opening arrangements</p> <p>All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable).</p> <p>Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned.</p> <p>Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site.</p> <p>Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site – suggested daily removal.</p>				Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here





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Responding to visitor falling ill potential coronavirus exposure	Exposure to Coronavirus leading to infection causing illness – by touching contaminated surfaces	Clergy Parishioner Visitors Cleaners	Emergency access to toilets should be available, but they must then be closed until fully cleaned. If a visitor presents with temperature and/or persistent cough, NHS 119 should be called for advice and the church should be vacated. The church building must then be closed for 72 hours with no access permitted. If the building has been quarantined for 72 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning.	5	2	10	Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings. Public Health England guidance available here All people present in the church must be instructed to self-isolate for 14 days .





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Preparation of the church for individual prayer	Exposure to Coronavirus leading to infection causing illness – by individual non-compliance with procedures	Steward	<p>At least two stewards present in the church throughout the time it is open for prayer;</p> <p>Stewards to ensure that hand sanitisation occurs at entry and exit points, social distancing including a one way system is maintained by people in the church and if a pre-determined capacity is reached, restrictions imposed on entering the church. (Through, for example, a “one in, one out” policy families to be treated as a unit.) People with cold or flu-like symptoms should be asked not to enter.</p> <p>Stewards not from vulnerable or shielding group</p> <p>Stewards practice good hand hygiene through either regular hand washing and following guidance refraining from eating or drinking.</p>	5	2	10	Training for stewards provided and documented.





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Use of Candles	Fire	All	<p>Stands ensure that votive candles are held safely and will not ignite the fabric of the building.</p> <p>Bucket of sand placed near votive candles to be used to extinguish lit candles in an emergency. Bucket not required at St James as votive candles sit in sand trays.</p> <p>Volunteers to monitor amount of candles burning and check that votive candles have not been placed at other sites around the Cathedral Church and if they have extinguish them.</p> <p>Candles must be extinguished by stewards before closing the church</p> <p>Votive candles are to be spaced apart to enable individuals to light with the greatest safety.</p>	5	2	10	
	Burns as a result of lighting votive candles	All					





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Stewardship	Physical & emotional abuse	Clergy Stewards	<p>Stewards to work in pairs, and be aware of visitors behaviour, in particular to be aware that some people may be visiting church for the first.</p> <p>Stewards are advised that while comforting the distressed, social distancing must be maintained.</p> <p>When noticing that rules are being broken stewards should approach individuals and draw attention to the rules in a non-threatening manner</p> <p>Stewards must have access to a mobile phone and a number to call for assistance/support.</p> <p>A register must be maintained of who is working on any day and any issues that arise, this register must be checked daily by the priest and kept for 6 months post Covid.</p>	5	2	10	Should any stewards experience a distressing situation, a free confidential helpline service is available. For further information please contact Hilary Foley, 023 94 216481.





Risk/Priority Indicator Key

Severity (Consequence)
1. Negligible (delay only)
2. Slight (minor injury / damage / interruption)
3. Moderate (lost time injury, illness, damage, lost Parish)
4. High (major injury / damage, lost time Parish interruption, disablement)
5. Very High (fatality / Parish closure)

Likelihood
1. Improbable / very unlikely
2. Unlikely
3. Even chance / may happen
4. Likely
5. Almost certain / imminent

RISK / PRIORITY INDICATOR MATRIX						
LIKELIHOOD	5	5	10	15	20	25
	4	4	8	12	16	20
	3	3	6	9	12	15
	2	2	4	6	8	10
	1	1	2	3	4	5
		1	2	3	4	5
		SEVERITY (CONSEQUENCE)				

Summary		Suggested Timeframe
12-25	High	As soon as possible
6-11	Medium	Within the next three working days
1-5	Low	Whenever viable to do so





Weekly Review Checklist

Action	Yes	Confirmed by	Comments
Parish have reviewed the updated guidance from the government	Yes	A E Reed	
Reviewed and update the risk assessment to incorporate any changes to the guidance	Yes	A E Reed	
Ensured sufficient stocks of soap, hand sanitiser and disinfectant are available	Yes	A E Reed	
Identified and implemented any new recommended control measures	Yes	A E Reed	
As numbers increase within the offices church, review the risk assessment and social distancing procedures	Yes	A E Reed	
Signage recommended has been in installed where necessary	Yes	A E Reed	
Procedures arising from the reviewed risk assessment to be communicated to all employees volunteer welcomers/stewards.	Yes	A E Reed	