

Risk Assessment for Opening Church Buildings to the Public – Sunday and Wednesday Services

Mandatory use of masks from 10th December – Plan B

Church: Newchurch - St Nicholas w St John and St Michael	Assessor's name: A Abbey	Date completed: 1 st July 2020	Review date: Updated 8 December 2021 in light of Plan B
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Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
Opening to the public	Buildings have been aired before use.	Main doors, glass doors, narthex doors and door to the carpark will be open at least 20mins before welcoming visitors to ensure a flow of air through the building.	AA/JB	
	Check for animal waste and general cleanliness.	General walkthrough of areas where visitors will pass to ensure no waste or debris, though not thought to be an issue.	AA/JB	
Preparation of the Church for access by members of the public for any permitted purposes, including worship and tourism	Consider if a booking system is needed, whether for general access or for specific events/services	Not necessary as there is no maximum number for a venue	AA/JB	
	Choose one point of entry into the church to manage flow of people and indicate this with	Entry into church will only be by means of the front main door which will be open, as	AA/JB	

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	<p>notices, keeping emergency exits available at all times. Where possible use a different exit.</p>	<p>will all other doors into the body of the church to reduce number of ‘touch points’, and to facilitate ventilation.</p>		
	<p>Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation.</p>	<p>All doors will be open approx. 20mins before welcoming visitors to generate a flow of air through the building – no windows are available for opening.</p>	AA/JB	
	<p>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).</p>	<p>Though social distancing is not mandatory under plan b, many of the congregation will expect some distancing.</p>	AA/JB	
	<p>Clearly mark out seating areas including exclusion zones to maintain distancing.</p>	<p>Available seats will be marked with a hymn book and service sheet. Pews at back of church and south aisle will be in alternate use to enhance social distancing</p>	AA/JB	
	<p>Determine placement of hand sanitisers available for visitors to use.</p>	<p>Hand sanitizers on entry into church</p>	AA/JB	
	<p>Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing etc.</p>	<p>Signs in narthex reminding the need to restrict socialising.</p>	AA/JB	

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		Encourage use of hand sanitisers on entering and leaving church.		
	Ensure high-risk surfaces and touch points have been wiped with appropriate sanitiser spray or disposable wipes	Church will have been closed for 72 hours prior to opening, therefore no need to wipe down surfaces at the beginning or end of services.		
	Check that handwashing facilities have adequate soap provision and paper towels, and a bin for the paper towels.	No handwashing facilities, other than in toilets available as kitchen will not be accessible. Bin in toilets will have plastic bag lining for easy disposal.	AA/JB	
	Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available.	Toilets have liquid soap and paper hand towels etc.	AA/JB	
	Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.	Waste bins to be emptied at the end of each opening. As above, all bins will have disposable linings.	AA	
	If possible, provide safe means for worshippers and visitors to record their name and contact details.	No longer a requirement to take names, however QR code available for any	JB	

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		members of the congregation who wish to use it.		
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.	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.	Church only open twice per week, therefore no need for additional cleaning.		
	If 72-hour closure is not possible then check all cleaners are not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating.	N/A		
	Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site.	Churchwarden to remove waste after each opening.	AA	
	Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site – suggested daily removal.	As above		
Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms	If possible close the church building for 72 hours with no access permitted.	72 hour closure will be imposed as deep cleaning will not be possible because of the delicate fabric of the building and contents		
	If 72-hour closure is not possible then follow Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings.	Church will only be open once a week		
	If the building has been quarantined for 72 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning.			
Use of masks	Use of Masks is now mandatory in public places including places of worship	Spare disposable masks to be available in the narthex		

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Social Distancing	Distance between individuals decreased from 2m to 1-1.5m	As mentioned above, social distancing no longer mandatory but encouraged		
	Zone of increased social distancing > 1m	An area down the south aisle remains at 2m to accommodate anyone who feels insecure at the 1m distance.		
Distribution of communion	Ensure social distancing	<p>Members of the congregation to move initially from the front of the North and South aisles, moving to the back of church and then down the main aisle maintaining social distancing.</p> <p>Other members of the congregation join the end of the queue as it passes, maintaining a one way system.</p> <p>Members of the choir will receive communion first at the altar rail</p>		
	Avoidance of contamination of the host	Communion will be distributed at the base of the chancel steps. This will be offered in both kinds with the priest intincting the host before distribution. The		

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		chalice will be covered between communicants. Masks will be worn throughout except when the host is consumed.		
Readings and intercessions	Minimise droplet transmission	Readings and intercessions will be done from the lectern in the chancel. The ‘Eagle’ will not be used to avoid the reader ‘breathing’ over members of the congregation		
Choir	Entry and exit of the choir	Choir will enter from the narthex to the chancel and will remain there throughout the service. At the end of the service they will process back to the narthex.		
Refreshments	Refreshments are now allowed at the end of the service	Access to the kitchen will be only to those serving refreshments. ‘Fly-screen’ minimising droplet transmission through the hatch. Servers to wear masks and gloves at all times. Open Milk jugs and sugar bowls to be kept in the kitchen, milk and sugar by request.		

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