

Risk Assessment for Opening Church Buildings to the Public

Church: St Peter's Dumbleton

Assessor's name: Paul Steggles

Date completed: 13 May 2022

Review date: 13 July 2022

(13 May 2022 changes in purple. Some items have also been removed.)

* Note that "event" may also apply to the opening of the church for occasional daytime visitors.

1. Activities planned for:

- Private prayer - **yes**
- Public worship with or without congregational singing - **yes**
- Funerals, weddings, baptisms, ordinations - **yes**
- Live-streaming or recording services - **no**
- A choir or music group singing indoors as part of a public, live-streamed or recorded service - **yes**
- Formal childcare or where part of a school - **no**
- Essential voluntary and public services - **no**
- Use as a vaccination testing centre - **no**
- Community and support groups - **no**
- Provision of youth services - **no**
- Opening shops/cafes - **refreshments served after services; coffee mornings to be held**
- Opening for visitors/tourists/educational visits as a heritage attraction - **yes**
- Opening for concerts, plays etc - **yes**

2. The hazards:

- Transmission of COVID-19
- Hazards arising from the temporary closure of the church
- Hazards arising from using the church in a different way to usual
- Shared or consequential risks of activities running simultaneously or back-to-back (eg crossover of people at entry/exit points)

Name abbreviations: PS - Paul Steggles; TS - Tricia Steggles

Risk (or area of focus)	Controls	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and 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.	Consult HSE guidance on identifying poorly ventilated areas Do not prop open fire doors. Unlikely to be able to open windows. At most times, doors can only be left partially open due to birds. Dependent on weather conditions. In daytime, and when the church is not in use for services or other community events, only the north door will be left unlocked in order to give access to visitors. It will not be left ajar.	Person in charge of event	recurring
	Use outdoor spaces if appropriate and available.	Not appropriate	N/A	N/A
	Consider if you will ask attendees to wear a face covering (unless exempt). This is no longer a legal requirement but remains recommended by government guidance.	Wearing of a face covering inside church is a personal choice.	N/A	N/A
	Put in place measures to reduce contact between people e.g. retaining social distancing	Seating position is a personal choice. Use of some pews at the back of the nave may be restricted to enable social distancing for those who still require this.	Person in charge of event	recurring

Risk (or area of focus)	Controls	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	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.	Entrance by north or south door. Emergency exits - north & south doors & WC door. (Only north door unlocked when church left open unattended for visitors).	Person in charge of event	recurring
	For events where the building is likely to be especially busy, or the activity is particularly energetic, pay particular regard to the need for additional mitigations such as social distancing and face coverings.	Make it clear to attendees that face coverings and social distancing may be a consideration for larger gatherings, especially when attendees come from a range of geographical areas.	Person in charge of event In guidance document	recurring PS 13/05/22
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	Buildings have been aired before use.	Not necessary for occasional daytime visitors when the church is not in use.	Person in charge of event	recurring
	Clearly mark out seating areas including exclusion zones to maintain distancing.	Use of some pews at the back of the nave may be restricted to enable social distancing for those who still require this.	Person in charge of event	recurring

Risk (or area of focus)	Controls	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
Surface transmission of Covid-19	Provide adequate hand cleansing stations. Provide hand sanitiser for the occasions when people can't wash their hands.	Hand gel provided inside north door, on bookcase and by entrance to vestry. Also on altar for communion. N.B. repeated procurement necessary	Person in charge of event	recurring
	Identify where you can reduce the contact of people with surfaces, e.g. by leaving open doors that are not fire doors, using electronic documents rather than paperwork.	(a) Main doors left open during services when weather allows. Vestry door left open when access needed by several people. (b) Documents sent electronically when appropriate.	(a) Person in charge of event (b) Secretary & others.	(a) recurring (b) as needed
	Good hygiene and cleaning of the building.	See the cleaning section of Church of England guidance See cleaning section below.		
	Consider hygiene around shared items such as Bibles, prayer and hymn books that are used by multiple people.	You could consider a long-term loan system for Bibles and other books to ensure people have access to these. A hymn book can be taken from the bookcase in the nave after suggested hand sanitisation on entry and then returned to the bookcase on leaving the building. Hymn books not re-used until after at least two days.	Person in charge of event	recurring

Risk (or area of focus)	Controls	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	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.	A service sheet/booklet can be taken from the bookcase in the nave after suggested hand sanitisation on entry and then returned to the bookcase on leaving the building. Sheets/booklets not re-used until after at least two days, and usually two weeks.	Person in charge of event	recurring
	Cordon off or remove from public access any devotional objects or items (if they are liable to be touched or closely breathed on).	N/A	N/A	N/A
	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).	Toys etc stored in bags at rear of nave. Not put out for sharing yet.	PS	11/04/20 PS
	Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available.	Paper hand towels purchased. N.B. repeated procurement necessary	Person in charge of event	recurring
	Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.	N.B. repeated procurement necessary	Person in charge of event	recurring
	Clean organ before and after use.	Not necessary if re-use is more than 48 hours on, or if the same person is playing.	Person in charge of event	recurring

Risk (or area of focus)	Controls	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
Visitors are unclear on requirements for attending church or visiting the building for other purposes, or anxious about attending.	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.	website and AChurchNearYou entries updated	PS	13/08/20 PS & regularly since
	Communicate with nearby churches to ensure offered provisions are complementary.	Nearby churches are in the same benefice.	N/A	N/A
	Provide welcoming notices that outline safety measures.	Hand gel signs still in use.	Person in charge of event	recurring
Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms	Ventilate the building as fully as possible to disperse aerosol particles.		PS	PS - as needed
	Clean all touchable surfaces, with reference to the cleaning section of the Church of England guidance		TS	TS - as needed
	If ventilation and cleaning is not possible then close the church building for 48 hours.	Public Health England guidance available here.	PS	PS - as needed
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	If the building has been quarantined for 48 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning.	See the cleaning section of Church of England guidance	TS	TS - as needed
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Cleaning the church before and after general use (no known exposure to anyone)	If the church building has been closed for 48 hours between periods of being open then there is no need for extra cleaning to remove the virus from surfaces.	no action needed	N/A	N/A

Risk (or area of focus)	Controls	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
<p>with Coronavirus symptoms)</p> <p>Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here.</p> <p>Risk: Getting or spreading coronavirus by not cleaning surfaces, equipment and shared facilities.</p>	Identify surfaces that are frequently touched and by many people (often common areas), e.g. handrails, door handles, shared equipment, toilets, and specify the frequency and level of cleaning and by whom.	Door handles that are commonly touched are wiped at the end of each day. The toilet is cleaned regularly.	Person in charge of event	recurring
	All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable).	Disposable gloves purchased. N.B. repeated procurement necessary	TS	TS - as needed
	Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned.	Ecover washing up liquid purchased for use when wiping wooden surfaces. N.B. repeated procurement necessary	TS	TS - as needed
	Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site.		Person in charge of event	recurring
	Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site – suggested daily removal.	After every event or daily if more than one event in a day.	Person in charge of event	recurring
	Set up a cleaning rota to cover your opening arrangements.	Cleaning coordinator has set up rota.	TS	TS - as required

Risk (or area of focus)	Controls	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	It is recommended that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cleaners use hand sanitiser on entering and leaving the building • the building is aired by leaving the north and south doors open when working • gloves are worn • individuals work away from others to minimise virus risk • face coverings may be appropriate in some circumstances • pew seats, pew shelves and tops are wiped with a slightly damp cloth using a solution of water and “ecover” washing up liquid 		cleaners	recurring
Serving refreshments after a service Risk: Getting or spreading coronavirus while preparing, serving or consuming food and drink.	Masks to be worn when preparing or serving food and drink.		Preparers/ servers	recurring
	Hands to be cleaned before preparing or serving food and drink.		Preparers/ servers	recurring
	Glasses, cups, plates, utensils etc are clean before use and are cleaned after use, and gloves are available to be worn, if wanted, while handling used items.		Preparers/ servers	recurring
	Surfaces used when preparing or serving food and drink to be cleaned before and after use.		Preparers/ servers	recurring