

Risk Assessment for Opening St Paul’s Church building to the Public: for individual private prayer, services & youth ministry, meetings and pastoral visiting.

Version Control

Issue Date	Version Number	Issued by	Changes
29 th June 2020	1	Caroline Dennis	
6 th July 2020	2	Caroline Dennis	Additional assessment for use for services
16 th July 2020	3	Caroline Dennis	Additional assessment for weddings, changes to toilet use, and access for volunteers, church members & public (Track & Trace)
19 th July 2020	4	Adam Rylett	Additional assessment for use of the building for Youth Ministry
21 st July 2020	5	Caroline Dennis	Additional assessment for pastoral visiting
10 th August 2020	6	Caroline Dennis	Additional assessment for meeting. Plus additions to include face coverings.
2 nd September	7	Caroline Dennis	Updated assessment for meetings to include small groups. Updated guidance for staff.

Churches and cathedrals are legally permitted to open for purposes of individual private prayer from 13th June, for funerals from the 15th June and for the purposes of public worship, with measures in place for social distancing, from 4th July. Church buildings can be used for ministry to young people and children in accordance with government guidelines for educational settings, and for meetings.

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. It relates to opening up church and cathedral buildings to the staff team and members of the public entering for any permitted purposes.

Church: St Paul's Kingston	Assessor's name: Caroline Dennis	Date completed: 29 th June 2020	Review date: Ongoing
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Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed
Access to church buildings for the staff team	One point of entry to the church building clearly identified and separate from public entry if possible	Adam (vicar) will use the vestry door into the offices, all other staff will use the ambulatory door. Access is adhoc with permission from Adam – staff mostly working from home.	AR / staff team	Ongoing
	Buildings have been aired before use. Check for animal waste and general cleanliness.	Weekly check of the building	AR	Ongoing
	Ensure water systems are flushed through before use.	To be done with cleaning of the toilets and kitchens.	CD to speak to the cleaners	12 th June
	Switch on and check electrical and heating systems if needed.	N/a during the summer		
	Rearrange staff offices so that each staff member has their own space to work.		Staff team	August
	Face coverings are not required in the work place, so staff don not have to wear face coverings, but they should maintain social distancing at all times.	This includes during staff meetings.	Staff team	Ongoing
	An individual should not go to the workplace if they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms • are told to self-isolate by a government test and trace service. • need to self-isolate because someone in their household has symptoms 		Staff team	Ongoing

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> need to self-isolate because they've returned to the UK after a holiday or business travel 			
Information to Congregation and Community	Inform community of re-opening	Weekly email, notices in services, Social Media and notice outside of church (A-frame on Alexandra Road and in notice boards).	AR & CD	26 th June & ongoing
	Appeal for volunteer Stewards	Weekly email	CD	19 th June
	Appeal for volunteers for additional rotas	Weekly email and targeted emails	CD	Ongoing
	Communicate the requirement for face coverings to be brought and worn for all activities in the building.	Weekly email; booking for services form; information for weddings, funerals & meetings. Appropriate signage.	CD & staff team	Ongoing
Access to the building for volunteers, church members and the public	Everyone entering the building should use hand gel, be reminded of social distancing rules and hand washing practices.	Signs to be in place and stewards/welcomers/group leaders to remind people.	CD, AR & volunteers	Ongoing
	Ensure everyone is aware of the need for face coverings within the church building (except staff working in the building - see as above). Those attending services need to bring their own face coverings.	Appropriate signage & information for all entering the building.	CD	Ongoing
	Anyone testing covid-19 positive within 14 days of should let the Operations Manager know for Track & Trace.	Signs displayed.	CD	26 th June

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed
	Anyone contacted by Track and Trace or NHS Test and Trace about potential exposure to Covid-19 should not enter the building for 14 days – even if they are not showing any symptoms.	All staff and volunteers to be informed. Sign to be put up by entrance.	CD	16 th July & ongoing for new volunteers
	Volunteers entering the church to carry out duties (eg to do flower arrangements) should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> enter and exit via the west doors only, wear a face covering unless they are the only person in the building, inform the Operations Manager when they intend to be in the building for Track and Trace. 	Volunteers to be reminded by email.	CD	Ongoing
Preparation of the Church for individual prayer	Confirm that all steps (above) for access by staff team have been carried out before anyone else accesses the building.		AR / CD	25 th June
	Review CofE guide on cleaning church buildings. Complete the 'cleaning' section of this risk assessment (below).	Cleaning by current paid cleaners on Wednesday & Saturday afternoons. Special attention to be given to high touch/high access areas.	CD to keep in contact with the cleaners.	12 th June & ongoing
	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.	With all double doors open, entrance & exit will be through the west door only. A Steward will be present whenever the building is open for prayer.	CD / Stewards	25 th June & ongoing
	Remove from use all books (inc. hymn books and Bibles) plus leaflets except single use material that will be removed by user.	Bibles have been moved to the office. Notices and leaflets moved to the tabora room cupboard	CD / AR	25 th June

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed
	Remove or isolate children's resources and play areas	Tabora room with toys to be kept locked. Toys behind the yellow curtain put out of sight & notice to be displayed saying no access.	AR CD	2 nd July
	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.		AR / CD	25 th June
	Clearly mark out seating areas including exclusion zones to maintain distancing.	Chairs put out in distanced rows in the nave. Signs to put on chairs by Stewards saying 'this chair has been sat on today'	AR / CD CD/Stewards	25 th June Ongoing
	Limit access to places where the public does not need to go.	Chairs placed to block off the side aisles and top of the chancel area. Stairgate in place to prevent access upstairs. Notices to be displayed saying no access.	AR / CD CD	25 th June Ongoing
	Determine placement of hand sanitisers available for visitors to use.	Hand Sanitiser table placed in welcome area as people come in with bottles of hand sanitiser provided.	AR / CD	25 th June
	Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing etc.		CD	2 nd July
	Prepare a suitable form for Stewards to record contact details of people entering the building.		CD & Stewards	2 nd July

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed
	If the church has been used in the last 72 hours ensure high-risk surfaces and touch points have been wiped with appropriate sanitiser spray or disposable wipes.	Currently more than 72 hours between opening. Cleaners go in between the opening times to clean all high touch surfaces.	CD & cleaners	Ongoing
	Toilets – Ensure an adequate supply of soap in the toilets, and hand gel outside the toilets. Convert all toilets to unisex toilets, wedge the doors open into the area between the toilets and kitchen and the handwashing area that was reserved for the ladies toilets. Impose a queuing system by the kitchen hatch – leaving space for people to exit the toilet area past the queue.	Cleaners to ensure there is plenty of soap in the toilets & hand gel by the kitchen hatch. Appropriate signage, queue markings on the floor (allows space for three people to queue socially distanced)	CD & cleaners CD	Ongoing 16 th July
	Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.	Bin by the Steward table in the welcome area. Cleaners to remove and replace bin bags between opening times.	CD / Cleaners	2 nd July & ongoing
	Ensure Stewards are aware of the need for face coverings for themselves & those coming for prayer.	Email all Stewards to tell them of the requirement.	CD	7 th August
Preparation of the Church for services	Ensure steps for private prayer are followed, with changes as follows: - Seating in rows 2m distant, central aisle 4m wide with markers for keeping distance during communion, side aisles minimum 2m wide (seating in the middle only to allow this). - 3 empty seats to be left between each individual or family bubble	4 rows only on each side as follows: 7 seats, 8 seats, 10 seats, 5 + 3 seats. Set up to be arranged by cleaners/verger. Will need Seating Steward.	CD & AR	Assessed 2 nd July, set up ongoing

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed
	<p>- Toilet facilities available as above.</p>			
	<p>Consider if a booking system is needed, whether for general access or for specific events/services.</p>	<p>Book either via ChurchSuite or by calling the office</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maximum depends on number in bubbles, from 20 to 40 people. - Contact details for 'Track & Trace' kept with booking. 	CD	
	<p>Consider new rotas for volunteers to facilitate services:</p> <p>9am communion in church:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sound/technical - Welcome area Steward - Seating Steward - Pianist <p>10.30am LiveStream from church:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preacher - Service Leader - Sound/technical - Zoom coffee leader 	<p>Recruit volunteers via weekly email and personal requests.</p>	CD	
	<p>Make any temporary arrangements for people to wait or queue outside the building (taking into account any consequential risks arising from people gathering outside).</p>	<p>Use of booking system and limited numbers should be enough.</p>	AR & CD	
	<p>Ensure safe use of equipment needed for livestreaming: avoid exceeding safe load on sockets, cables/tripod causing trip hazard,</p>		AR & sound / technical volunteers	Ongoing
	<p>Ensure singing, shouting and chanting are not part of the service. Music needs to be kept at a low volume.</p>	<p>Monitor what is included in services so that people</p>	AR & service leaders	Ongoing

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed
		attending do not sing, shout or chant.		
	Ensure catering facilities are not used – no access to the kitchen. No food or drink to be served at any service.	Lock kitchen.	CD	Ongoing
	Children and youth can come to services but are the responsibility of their parent or guardian. No separate activities for children/youth are planned during services at this stage.		CD, staff & volunteers	Ongoing
	<p>Ensure everyone is aware of the need for face coverings. Those attending services need to bring their own face coverings. Those on rotas need to wear face coverings, some face masks will be available. Except:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • those who are leading services • those who assist, eg by reading, preaching, or leading prayer (while they are doing this) <p>Although one should be worn if physical distancing cannot be maintained (i.e. distributing communion).</p>	<p>Appropriate signage & information in weekly email, website & booking system.</p> <p>Advise volunteers in procedures & remind them in the duty reminder emails.</p> <p>Purchase disposable face masks.</p>	CD	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>July</p>
	<p>Make extra arrangement for cleaning to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean toilets • Wipe door handles and any high touch areas (door push plates etc) • Empty bins 	Cleaner to come in at 11.45am and again at 5.15pm every Sunday	CD & cleaners	Ongoing from 6 th Sept
Additional considerations for weddings	As per the government guidelines limit of maximum 30 to attend the service (including the couple and clergy, musician(s) and any St Paul's support team). Seating to be socially distanced (set up as above for communion service)	Clear communication needed with the couple.	Clergy / couple / verger	

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	Visitors are to be asked not to gather as groups outside the church before and after the service. And to be reminded of the guidance to clean hands and maintain social distancing.	Couple to communicate this to their guests in advance. St Paul's support staff to remind people as they arrive – may need two support staff.	St Paul's support staff	
	Orders of service: These are permitted if these are collected on entry from table at entrance and guests to keep them and not leave them behind. OR No orders of service?	Discuss and agree options with the couple	Clergy	
	Rings: These should be handled by as few people as possible	Discuss and agree options with the couple	Clergy	
	Signing the register: All those signing the register should sanitize their hands before signing, complete all the signatures necessary for them and then sanitize them again. Apart from the bride and groom, all those signing should maintain physical distancing and, where available, individual pens for each signatory can be used.	If additional pens with registrars ink cannot be sourced, wipe the pen with antibacterial wipes between signatures.	Clergy / CD	
	Ensure everyone is aware of the need for face coverings. Those attending services need to bring their own face coverings. St Paul's support staff & any musicians need to wear face coverings. Except: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • those who are leading services • those who assist, eg by reading, preaching, or leading prayer (while they are doing this) • wedding couples 	Appropriate signage. Wedding couple to inform their guests. Advise any support staff & musicians.	CD Clergy Clergy / CD	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed
	Although one should be worn especially if physical distancing cannot be maintained (i.e. distributing consumables).			
Additional considerations for Hanbeet using the building for their Worship	Consider different stacks of chairs for St Paul's & Hanbeet to use.	St Paul's chairs to be packed away into Tabora room after our services; A different & completely separate set of chairs to be available at the other end of Tabora room for Hanbeet use.	CD & AR Those on rotas to help with chairs	Ongoing
	Consider changes to rental agreement if necessary – and get it agreed to by Hanbeet.		CD	New version sent 8 th July, Signed copy received
	Communicate with Hanbeet that they need to comply with all Government and Church of England guidelines, including providing their own risk assessment which St Paul's needs to approve before hire restarts.		CD	Sent 2 nd July Documentation (including risk assessment) agreed for start of hire from 6 th September.
Additional considerations for Youth Ministry	All safeguarding policies and procedures contained within the Diocese of Southwark Safeguarding Policy – A Safe Church, will be adhered to as they would during normal youth ministry		Every member, all leaders, PSO's & AR	Ongoing
	Controls outlined above will apply to youth ministry undertaken in the building	This policy must be made available to youth leaders & parents	CD & Youth Leaders	July 2020 Ongoing
	Youth ministry will operate within bubbles of no more than 15 people (including leaders), wherever		Youth Leaders	Ongoing

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed
	possible these bubbles will remain constant for each activity			
	Entry and exit will be via the west door, which will be closed (but not locked) once the session begins to avoid members of the public gaining entrance. The ambulatory door will be unlocked so that it is available for emergency exit.	Youth Leaders will have designated contact in case they require help with a member of the public	Youth Leaders	Ongoing
	Young people will be regularly reminded of best practice for handwashing, hygiene and social distance	As detailed above	Youth Leaders	Ongoing
	Seating will be arranged socially distanced and young people and leaders will use the same chair throughout the session		Young People & Leaders	Ongoing
	Indoor sports are not permitted before the 24 th July 2020, after this they should follow relevant government guidelines	Review guidelines when issued	CD & AR, Youth Leaders	
	Current government advice states that singing, shouting and raised voices should be avoided, the young people will be reminded of this and the youth leaders will select activities accordingly		Youth Leaders	Ongoing
Additional considerations for meetings (including PCC sub committees and small groups).	Controls outlined above will apply to meetings taking place in the building.		CD / meeting coordinators	Ongoing
	All meetings need to be booked with the Operations Manager.	Meetings need to be noted in ChurchSuite	CD / meeting coordinators	Ongoing
	A list of all attendees & contact numbers must be given to the Operations Manager for Track & Trace.		CD / meeting coordinators	Ongoing
	Seating to be arranged socially distanced and everyone will use the same chair throughout the meeting – this should be in the main body (nave) of the church.	Only chairs by the door to the ambulatory to be used. Signs to be placed on chairs used so	CD / meeting coordinators	Ongoing

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed
		that they are not used again for 72 hours.		
	Everyone attending must wear a face covering – some face masks will be provided.	Purchase face masks	CD	July
	Everyone attending should be reminded to use the hand sanitiser provided as they enter.		CD / meeting coordinators	Ongoing
	Current government advice states that singing, shouting and raised voices should be avoided, meeting attendees to be reminded of this.		CD / meeting coordinators	Ongoing
	Group size should be limited to the minimum which allows the meeting to take place	Maximum number 20	CD / meeting coordinators	Ongoing
	No refreshments of any kind are to be served.	Meeting participants can bring their own hot or cold drinks and take them home with them.	CD / meeting coordinators	Ongoing
	No paper resources should be shared or given out	Participants can bring their own books or documents	CD / meeting coordinators	Ongoing
	The duration of the meeting should be kept as short as possible – and where possible the main doors need to be kept open throughout to allow for ventilation.		CD / meeting coordinators	Ongoing
	Toilets can be used as above		CD / meeting coordinators	Ongoing
	At the end of the meeting, the meeting coordinate must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure all chairs are restacked and returned to the correct area • toilets are wiped down if they have been used • door handles and high touch areas are wiped down 	Cleaning wipes, sanitiser spray, kitchen towels & gloves to be available in the welcome area cupboard.	CD / meeting coordinators	Ongoing

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed
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.	Currently more than 72 hours between opening. Cleaners also in between the opening times to clean all high touch surfaces.	CD & cleaners	Ongoing
	Set up a cleaning rota to cover your opening arrangements.	Cleaners in on Wednesday & Saturday afternoons. Cleaners also in on Sundays at 11.45am & 5.15pm to cover Sunday usage.	CD & cleaners	Ongoing
	All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable).		CD & cleaners	25 th June
	Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned.		CD & cleaners	25 th June
	Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site.	Cleaners to remove and replace bin bags every Wednesday/Saturday.	CD & cleaners	Ongoing
Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms	Close the church building for 72 hours with no access permitted.		AR / CD	
	Review attendance list and contact Government Track and Trace.		CD / AR	
	After the building has been quarantined for 72 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning.		CD & Cleaners	
Resuming Pastoral Care Visits	Pastoral Care Team members must wash hands or use hand gel before and after visiting any individual.	Pastoral Care Team members should bring their own hand gel.	Pastoral Care Team	

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed
	As per current guidance, visits should be outside where possible. However, current government guidelines state that a maximum of two households can meet indoors.	Pastoral Care Team members need to agree where the visit will take place (outside/inside) prior to the visit.	Pastoral Care Team	
	A distance of 2m must be kept at all times with no touching or shaking of hands. If possible, face coverings should be worn.	Pastoral Care Team members need to explain this to the person they are visiting. They should have a face covering with them.	Pastoral Care Team	
	No refreshments should be accepted.	Pastoral Care Team members can bring their own drinks.	Pastoral Care Team	
	Each Pastoral Care Team member should only visit one person per day.	A record must be kept of pastoral care visits made.	Pastoral Care Team	