

RISK ASSESSMENT FOR RE-OPENING THE PASTORAL CENTRE AND CHURCH ROOM – ST. NICOLAS CHURCH BOOKHAM

The purpose of this risk assessment is to help determine whether or not with appropriate changes and adaptations it would be possible to re-open the Pastoral Centre and Church Room.

The risk assessment considers: the preparations that would be needed before the Pastoral Centre and Church Room are re-opened; the precautions that should be taken before each use of the rooms; the special measures that should be taken during events; and the procedures that should be followed after events. It deals solely with the additional risks arising from the coronavirus pandemic and assumes that the normal safeguards remain in place. It is, however, recognised that substantial changes to past practice are necessary in order to minimise risks to those attending and comply with Government guidance for the safe use of multi-purpose community facilities – see, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-multi-purpose-community-facilities/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-multi-purpose-community-facilities>. The rationale for risk scoring is based on a likelihood and impact model, as set out in Appendix 1.

Action No:	Actions	Comments	Risks	Risk Score < mitigation	Mitigation	Risk score > mitigation
1.	<p>Preparations necessary prior to re-opening</p> <p>Make the rooms as safe as possible.</p> <p>Set safe limits on the number of people who can use the rooms.</p> <p>Thoroughly clean and air the rooms to minimise other health risks as a result of them having been unused for a considerable period.</p> <p>Inform potential users of the additional restrictions on, and</p>	<p>As currently furnished and equipped both the Pastoral Centre and Church Room would pose significant risks for the transmission of coronavirus. In particular the chairs in the Pastoral Centre have fabric covers that are difficult to clean; there are far more chairs than the number of people who can safely be accommodated; and there are other items that could be touched (and so would need cleaning) and which reduce the floor area available, thereby making social distancing harder.</p>	<p>Person to person contact Allowing too many people to use the rooms at the same time would make social distancing impossible. Having more chairs available for use than the safe capacity might encourage users to exceed the limit.</p> <p>Pastoral Centre has floor area of 10.4m x 7m. At 2m separation that would allow 6 rows of 4 chairs (i.e. 24 seats) but that would leave no circulation space and no space at the front for the person(s) leading an event.</p>	12	<p>Person to person contact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform potential users of additional conditions of use and of the requirement to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ confirm that the event is permitted under government guidance ○ provide a risk assessment ○ show they have adequate public liability insurance (unless they are an approved church user). • Put up notices outside both rooms and in lobbies encouraging social 	3

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	requirements for, the use of the rooms.		<p>Allowing for both would suggest a maximum of 4 rows of 4 chairs plus space for 2 people leading the event i.e. 16 + 2 = 18.</p> <p>The Church Room has a floor area of about 10.2m x 6m but a large part of this is currently used as storage. The remaining floor area can accommodate a maximum of 10 people seated.</p> <p><u>Cross contamination</u> Fabric covered chairs and unnecessary items that might provide scope for cross contamination need to be removed</p>	9	<p>distancing, the use of hand sanitiser and the wearing of masks. Notices in toilets to encourage thorough hand washing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform potential users of maximum capacity of the Pastoral Centre (18) and the Church Room (10). <p><u>Cross contamination</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get both rooms professionally cleaned prior to re-opening, paying particular attention to the toilets. • Remove fabric covered chairs in Pastoral Centre and replace with 18 black plastic chairs from the Church Room. • Remove all unnecessary items from the Pastoral Centre to minimise cleaning required and maximise circulation space. • Lock Pastoral Centre kitchen to prevent unauthorised use and the need to clean it. Back door key moved from 	3

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					kitchen to cleaning cupboard. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install hand sanitiser in lobbies to both Pastoral Centre and Church Room. • Put stocks of anti-bac spray and J-cloths in both rooms. • Inform potential users of cleaning and other requirements and restrictions (see below). 	
2.	Preparations prior to each event	Although each user will be asked to clean the rooms, toilets, door handles etc. after each use and the church will do all it can to encourage this we cannot guarantee that it will have been done thoroughly.	Person to person contact Those setting up the rooms run the risk of infecting each other. If events are scheduled too close to one another there is a risk of contact between those leaving one event and those arriving to set up or even attend the next. This is a particular issue as the path from the Pastoral Centre to Church Road is narrow	6	Person to person contact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 metre social distancing is observed by those setting up for events and masks should be worn. • At least an hour should be allowed between bookings and the time booked should allow for the time needed for a thorough clean after participants have left i.e. <u>the room should be cleaned and locked before the end of the booked time.</u> • Room to be set out <u>before participants arrive</u> in a layout that facilitates social distancing. 	3

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			<p><u>Cross contamination</u> Risk exists unless all surfaces and equipment that have been used by previous users have been thoroughly cleaned in the interim</p>	12	<p>Entrance doors to be locked until room is ready for use and only opened shortly before advertised start time of event.</p> <p><u>Cross contamination</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Those arriving to set up for an event should wash their hands with soap and water and put on plastic gloves (which they should bring with them) prior to cleaning.</u> • Users required to clean before and after each event. If equipment that has been used in the last 3 days cannot be thoroughly cleaned then it should not be used. • Users should check that hand sanitiser dispensers are in place and adequately stocked and that there are sufficient supplies of soap and paper towels in the toilets. 	3
3.	Managing the arrival of participants		<u>Person to person contact</u>	9	<u>Person to person contact</u>	3

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			<p>The narrow paths to both venues and the limited space for queuing pose risks of person to person contact</p> <p><u>Cross contamination</u> Risk from touching door handles and surfaces</p>	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs encouraging 2 metres social distancing on approaches to both rooms. • Someone should be designated to log those arriving to support NHS Test and Trace. • Entry should only be permitted via the main entrance. “No entry” notices should be displayed on the other entrance. • People arriving should be encouraged to use hand sanitiser as they go through the lobby. They should be encouraged to move quickly through the lobby as the space there is limited and a potential bottle neck. <p><u>Cross contamination</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doors should be propped open so that handles do not need to be touched. • People should be asked not to touch anything they don’t have to. 	3

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4.	During the event	<p>The government guidance states that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face coverings are mandatory. • Steps should be taken to avoid people needing to raise their voices unduly e.g. not playing loud music. • Improve ventilation where possible. 	<p><u>Person to person contact</u> Risk of failing to maintain social distancing.</p> <p><u>Cross contamination</u></p>	12	<p><u>Person to person contact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event organiser to provide risk assessment which should include explanation of how social distancing will be maintained. • Maximum of two people in Pastoral Centre lobby at a time; one person in Church Room lobby. • No loud music or other background noise. • Weather permitting, windows and doors should be opened to maximise ventilation. • Depending on numbers attending event and whether there is any significant coming and going during event, there may be a case for requiring those leaving to exit via the back door and, in the case of the Pastoral Centre, to leave via the churchyard rather than the gate to Church Road. <p><u>Cross contamination</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event organiser's risk assessment to explain 	3

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			Touching anything handled by others carries the risk of cross contamination.	9	<p>precautions to be taken. <u>This should be submitted and vetted before the event is put in the diary.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kitchen to be locked both to minimise areas needing cleaning between uses and to prevent the use of church crockery etc. which could be a source of cross contamination. • At the beginning of the event those attending should be reminded of the importance of maintaining social distancing and regular hand washing/sanitising as well as any additional precautions appropriate to the particular event. 	3
5.	After the event		<p><u>Person to person contact</u> If more than one person is involved in tidying up and cleaning there is a risk of person to person transmission. This would be exacerbated if any of the participants in the event are still present.</p>	9	<p><u>Person to person contact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Room is closed and locked whilst it is being tidied up and cleaned, thereby avoiding contact with members of the public. • Social distancing to be maintained during clean up. 	3

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			<p><u>Cross contamination</u> Inevitable touching of a large number of surfaces and objects that will have been touched by others.</p>	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The chairs should be lined up neatly around the walls of the room facing inwards (not stacked) before being cleaned <p><u>Cross contamination</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All involved in cleaning up should use disposal gloves and wash hands thoroughly afterwards. 	3

APPENDIX 1: RISK SCORING MATRIX MODEL

Risk has been scored using a simple model of 'likelihood' and 'impact' with specific reference to transmission of Covid-19. It is recognised that risk of transmission cannot be eliminated, not least because of variables that are out of the direct control of those preparing for and supporting services in Church. In particular, if individuals choose to attend despite government guidance not to meet with groups indoors if they are among more vulnerable groups, as set out in Government guidance for places of worship, summarised in Appendix 2.

Covid-19 infections range from being asymptomatic with the vast majority being treated at home. Most do not resulting in serious illness requiring hospital admission, serious long term effects on health or death. The likelihood of increased risk of serious illness or death must be considered alongside Government guidance for vulnerable groups and individual decisions to attend services. For these reasons, it is not possible to attribute a full range of impact scores because of the multiple variables. An impact score of 3 has therefore been applied throughout the assessment.

- *Likelihood* = How likely risk is to result in cross infection (from minimal to extremely likely)
- *Impact* = The potential seriousness of an individual contracting Covid-19
- *Risk Score* = Likelihood score multiplied by Impact score

The matrix below provides a guide to assigning degrees of risk depending on the score.

		Impact				
		1	2	3	4	5
Likelihood	1	1	2	3	4	5
	2	2	4	6	8	10
	3	3	6	9	12	15
	4	4	8	12	16	20
	5	5	10	15	20	25

Risk score 1-7 – suggests that risks sufficiently minimised to proceed

Risk score 8-12 – suggests some further mitigation may be required or advisable

Risk score 15 and above – suggests that high risks persist unless significant mitigation is applied

APPENDIX 2: Government Guidance for Places of Worship and individual decisions to attend services

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>

Vulnerable Groups

In Section 5, Government guidance reiterates general guidance for individuals aged 70 years and over attending a place of worship.

"Certain groups of people may be at increased risk of severe disease from COVID-19, including people who are aged 70 or older, regardless of medical conditions. Individuals who fall within this group are advised to stay at home as much as possible and, if they do go out, to take particular care to minimise contact with others outside of their household. You should consider informing these groups in particular of the symptoms of COVID-19 and current stay alert and social distancing guidance."

The guidance also states in Section 5, that:

"Shielded patients are currently advised not to meet more than one person from outside of their own household, and therefore not currently advised to attend places of worship. From Monday 6 July, those shielding individuals may choose to gather in groups of up to 6 people outdoors and form a support bubble with another household, they will therefore still be advised not to attend places of worship indoors."

It goes on to say:

"Advice for both the clinically vulnerable and extremely clinically vulnerable is however advisory and they can choose how to manage their own risks."

The Government offers this as advice under the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020 and not as legal requirements.

This risk assessment has been undertaken and appropriate measures to reduce risk of spread of infection to others introduced within St Nicolas Church. This includes reduced numbers of people to attend services and through a pre-booking system; provision of hand sanitizers; carefully considered advice prior to attending and on arrival to the Church; and systems for movement of people within and through the Church.

Individuals aged over 70 looking to attend places of worship should take this guidance into consideration together with local measures to minimise risk adopted by St Nicolas Church and consider how they should best manage their own risks. Each Sidesman and Welcomer volunteering to assist in preparation and during services has received a letter and invited to advise whether or not they wish to return to resume their duties now or in due course when they feel safe to do so. Individual decisions will be fully respected and return to rotas at a later date warmly welcomed. On booking places at services, each person receives confirmation that includes request not to attend if showing symptoms of Covid-19 or contact with anyone with symptoms in the previous seven days.

All considered, everyone must consider their own situation and make their own decision as to when the time is right to come to the Service in Church or to continue to enjoy the service online, and also when it would be appropriate for them to be involved in various roles once again.