

## Risk Assessment for Opening Church Buildings to the Public (UPDATED 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020 – revised 3.10.2020)

<b>Church:</b> St Leonard's Lexden	<b>Assessors' names:</b> The Rev'd Matthew Simpkins (Priest in Charge) David Watkins (Church Warden) Esther Heptonstall (Church Warden)	<b>Date completed:</b> 14.9.2020 Revised 3.10.2020	<b>Review date:</b> w/c 9.11.2020
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Updated in this version: (1) added section on Singing; (2) self-isolation; (3) avoiding 'mingling' before and after the service

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
<b>Access to church buildings for clergy for purposes of private prayer and/or livestreaming</b>  <a href="#">General advice on accessing church buildings can be found here.</a>	One point of entry to the church building clearly identified and separate from public entry if possible	North West door for individual prayer. South East door exclusively for Parish Administrator. South West door for other authorised people.	MJS	MJS 16.6.2020
	A suitable lone working policy has been consulted if relevant.	The Ecclesiastical Insurance lone working policy has been consulted. Those authorised to enter the building to ensure that at least one other person knows where they are.	Those entering St Leonard's for church business.	Ongoing
	Buildings have been aired before use.		Stewards, president or person opening up.	Ongoing
	Check for animal waste and general cleanliness.		Stewards, president or person opening up	Daily inspection undertaken by MJS or DW (David Watkins) or other nominated individual
	Ensure water systems are flushed through before use.	See <a href="#">Government Guidance for organisations on supplying safe water supplies</a>	Church systems flushed through before public worship resumed on 5 <sup>th</sup> July 2020. Hall systems	Ongoing MJS or person checking the hall.

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			are being flushed through each week.	
	Ensure safe use of equipment needed for livestreaming: avoid exceeding safe load on sockets, cables/tripod causing trip hazard	Devices will run on battery and be positioned out of public reach.	MJS/officiant	1.7.2020
<b>Deciding whether to open to the public</b>	Discuss with nearby venues and businesses to ensure that the timing and practical arrangements for using the church are compatible.	Because of the position of the church, this is not an issue	N/A	N/A
	Update your website, A Church Near You, and any relevant social media.	Website and social media to be updated.	MJS	Ongoing. Administrator or MJS
	Consider if a booking system is needed, whether for general access or for specific events/services	To ensure public worship is open to the parish and visitors, we are holding two identical back to back services, asking regular attenders to consider attending a particular service by first letter of surname, and using the collection of test and trace information to indicate demand.	Parish Administrator and Stewards.	Ongoing
	If opening to tourists consider applying for the Visit Britain 'Good to Go' standard mark	<a href="#">Apply here.</a> At present, opening for worship and private prayer considered sufficient.	N/A	N/A
<b>Preparation of the Church for access by members of the public for any permitted purposes, including worship and tourism</b>	Confirm that all steps (above) for access by clergy have been carried out before anyone else accesses the building.		MJS	MJS
	Review CofE guide on cleaning church buildings. Complete the 'cleaning' section of this risk assessment (below).	Advice on <a href="#">cleaning church buildings can be found here.</a>	MJS, DW, EH (Esther Heptonstall) have read documents	MJS, DW, EH 16.6.2020
	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 exit.	<b>For individual prayer:</b> extension is kept locked for security reasons and to provide protected hygienic space for parish administrator. NW door used for entry and exit for individual prayer. SE chancel fire exit is open. SE extension door used exclusively for parish administrator. SW door for other authorised individuals. <b>For funerals:</b>	Individual opening for private prayer or preparing for funeral. Usually MJS.	Planning completed by MJS 16.6.2020. Arrangements to be enacted by person opening up the church for each funeral or period of prayer.

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		<p>In addition to arrangements for individual prayer detailed above, SE extension door <i>may</i> be opened – but kitchen and extension kept out of bounds, and toilets used for emergencies.</p> <p><b>For public worship:</b> In addition to arrangements for individual prayer detailed above, SE extension door will be open throughout. Kitchen, and extension (other than path to exit and/or toilet) will be kept out of bounds. Toilet will be available for use in emergencies.</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).	Entry door indicated with signage and publicised beforehand in correspondence. Steward to be positioned on this door to manage the queue. 2 metre gap markers positioned on main path leading to the entry door	Steward team.  Signage and equipment already in place (MJS)	Work to be undertaken by stewards at each service.
	Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation.	<p><b>For individual private prayer:</b> short period of ventilation before each session.</p> <p><b>For public worship:</b> NW (Lexden Road double doors), SE Extension (Church Lane), fire exit, and internal double doors all fixed open throughout period of public opening.</p>	Individual opening for private prayer or preparing for funeral. Warden on duty, MJS or officiant.	Individual opening for private prayer or preparing for funeral. Warden on duty, MJS or officiant
	Remove Bibles/literature/hymn books/leaflets	All books and booklets either removed or stowed away with do not touch signs	MJS	MJS 16.6.2020
	Cordon off or remove from public access any devotional objects or items (if they are liable to be touched or closely breathed on)		MJS	MJS 16.6.2020
	Consider if pew cushions/kneelers need to be removed as per government guidance	Cushions and kneelers moved to inaccessible cordoned off pews.	MJS	MJS 18.6.2020
	Remove or isolate children’s resources and play areas		MJS	MJS 16.6.2020
	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).	2m to be maintained throughout the public space, with the exception of time spent in pews where a distance of 1.6m is absolutely necessary because of the width of the aisle and the depth of the pews. This is explicitly permitted in the government regulations, provided ‘risk mitigating factors’ are in	MJS DW  Wardens/Priest in Charge	MJS DW 2.7.2020 Ongoing

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	<p><b>CAPACITY FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP (NOT OCCASIONAL OFFICES) SET AT 40 IN THE NAVE</b> (not including ministers, or others socially distanced musicians in the choir and sanctuary)*</p> <p><b>CAPACITY FOR OCCASIONAL OFFICES – in line with latest Government regulations (WEDDINGS, BAPTISMS, FUNERALS, MEMORIAL SERVICES):</b> As of 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2020 these are: <b>30 for funerals</b> <b>15 for weddings (not including ministers and stewards/staff)</b> <b>6 for stand-alone baptisms (not including ministers and stewards/staff)</b></p>	<p>place. It is also within the current World Health Organization recommendations. Risk mitigating factors introduced at St Leonard’s include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face-to-face seating has been avoided</li> <li>• Non-essential social spaces have been closed</li> <li>• Ventilation has been improved by keeping the North West, South East, and Emergency exit doors, and internal double doors open at all times</li> <li>• We require the use of face coverings, except for those exempt in the Government’s regulations.</li> </ul> <p><i>*Where the seating of members of the congregation in bubbles or household groups increases the capacity of the nave (because more people have been safely accommodated in certain pews), the Warden on Duty or Priest in Charge can decide to allow others into the building above the limit of 40, until the remaining vacant socially distanced places are filled.</i></p>		
	Clearly mark out seating areas including exclusion zones to maintain distancing.	Pews and exclusion areas cordoned off or signage installed.	MJS	MJS 18.6.2020
	Require the use of facemasks inside the Church Building.	<p>All people entering the building are told by stewards that facemasks are required (with the exception of those exempt in the Government’s guidance: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own#when-you-do-not-need-to-wear-a-face-covering">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own#when-you-do-not-need-to-wear-a-face-covering</a>). This has also been communicated through email and online.</p> <p>Ministers are not presently wearing face coverings while speaking during worship. This is on the basis that:</p>	Stewards and ministers	Ongoing

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Those ministers who are speaking are a minimum of 3 metres away from the congregation.</li> <li>This allows those who are hearing impaired to lipread, and for good sound quality to the hearing loop microphones.</li> </ul>		
	Clearly mark out flow of movement for people entering and leaving the building to maintain physical distancing requirements.	Vinyl signs on the floor. Other signage installed.	MJS	MJS 18.6.2020
	Limit access to places where the public does not need go, maybe with a temporary cordon in needed.	Chancel, Lady Chapel, balcony, and extension (other than exit route and toilet access) are out of bounds.	MJS	MJS 16.6.2020
	Determine placement of hand sanitisers available for visitors to use.	Hand sanitiser positioned at main entrance and by toilets and exit. Also available near chancel steps for the distribution.	MJS	MJS 17.6.2020
	Determine if temporary changes are needed to the building to facilitate social distancing	Consult <a href="#">advice on gaining temporary permissions</a> . All changes fall outside the need for faculty or temporary permission	MJS	MJS 1.7.2020
	Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing etc.	Signage installed in church space.	Parish administrator to add further signage in toilets.	MJS 16.6.2020 Parish admin. 2.7.2020
	Ensure high-risk surfaces and touch points have been wiped with appropriate sanitiser spray or disposable wipes	(Advice on <a href="#">cleaning church buildings can be found here</a> .) This is to be undertaken between Sunday services, and after the final service. This will include switches, door handles (especially in the toilet) and pew tops.	Pair of cleaners for each Sunday co-ordinated by Kathleen Scrimgeour (KS)	Ongoing
	Check that handwashing facilities have adequate soap provision and paper towels, and a bin for the paper towels.	(Register with <a href="#">Parish Buying</a> for procurement options.) Stocks kept in extension kitchen.	Warden on duty ahead of each public service	Warden on duty ongoing
	Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available.	(Register with <a href="#">Parish Buying</a> for procurement options.)	Warden on duty or steward ahead of each public service. Supplies arranged through Kathleen Scrimgeour.	Warden on duty ongoing

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	Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.	Liners kept under kitchen sink in extension.	Liners to be moved after each period of opening to Nicholls Room for DW to dispose of when undertaking Saturday check.	DW Ongoing.
	If possible, provide safe means for worshippers and visitors to record their name and contact details; retain each day's record for 21 days	Worshippers strongly encouraged to send details in advance to Parish Administrator. On the day, a steward with a clipboard will "tick off" those arriving who have submitted their contact details and record the details of those who have not yet submitted.	Parish Administrator. Steward.	Ongoing from 5.7.2020
	Give due notice of the resumption of use of the building to neighbours, congregation and wider community, ensuring that visitors and worshippers will know what to expect when they come.	Information sent out by social media, website on email on Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> July.	MJS	MJS 2.7.2020
<b>Avoiding unlawful social gatherings ('mingling') before or after services</b>	Clergy, stewards, and congregation members, to avoid mingling before, during or after the services. Entrance and exit points and paths to be kept clear and flowing.	Stewards to monitor access, entry and exit points to church and through churchyard to facilitate social distancing. Service PowerPoints emphasise that mingling is not appropriate Occasional updates and reminders given in weekly email on need not to mingling.	Stewards to monitor access and exit at worship.	Ongoing Stewards and clergy.
<b>Ensure NHS guidance on self-isolation is followed and plan for potential impact on services and use of church.</b>	All clergy, stewards and other volunteers and workers to self-isolate for 14 days and to inform the priest in charge and churchwardens if they or another person in their household or bubble show Covid 19 symptoms or test positive.	Services flexible (can become warden-led morning prayer, sermon can be omitted) in case of short-notice clergy self-isolation. Other members on stewarding and clergy team to cover absences when possible. If number of stewards required by risk assessment not available, then worship to be cancelled.	Clergy, wardens, stewards, volunteers.	Ongoing.
<b>Cleaning the church before and after general use (no known exposure)</b>	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.	This has been noted and incorporated into planned schedule for opening for individual private prayer. Once a week – usually on a Tuesday – a couple of cleaners observing social distancing will clean switches,	Those on rota organised by KS	KS 1.7.2020 and ongoing

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<b>to anyone with Coronavirus symptoms)</b>  Advice on <a href="#">cleaning church buildings can be found here.</a>		handles and shared surfaces. This will also happen after Sunday services.		
	If 72-hour closure is not possible then check all cleaners are not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating.	No cleaner to be in self-isolating group. Cleaners aged under 70 to be used wherever possible. No cleaners to be from the Government's 'extremely clinically vulnerable group'	MJS, DW, EH	MJS, DW, EH 16.6.2020
	Set up a cleaning rota to cover your opening arrangements.		KS	KS 25.6.2020
	All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable).	Register with <a href="#">Parish Buying</a> for procurement options.	KS/MJS	ongoing
	Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned.	Register with <a href="#">Parish Buying</a> for procurement options.	KS/MJS	ongoing
	Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site.	DW to remove on weekly inspection.	DW	DW (ongoing)
	Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site – suggested daily removal.	Used hand towels removed from shared spaces daily – within plastic waste bag. Put into Nicholls room and then removed each week on a Saturday.	Person closing up, warden on duty, and toilet cleaner.	Person closing up, warden on duty, and toilet cleaner. (ongoing)
<b>Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms</b>	If possible close the church building for 72 hours with no access permitted.		Wardens and MJS	To be actioned if and when necessary
	If 72-hour closure is not possible then follow Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings.	<a href="#">Public Health England guidance available here.</a>	Wardens/MJS/Cleaner	To be actioned if and when necessary
	If the building has been quarantined for 72 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning.	Advice on <a href="#">cleaning church buildings can be found here.</a>	Wardens/MJS/Cleaner	To be actioned if and when necessary

**AREA OF FOCUS: Access to the church building for the purpose of choral performance in worship**

Who is at risk?	What is the outline risk?	Controls required	Additional, specific control measures to be implemented	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
Congregation, ministers and stewards, choir members.	Transmission of virus through close personal contact	Choose one point of entry into the church to manage the flow of your musicians and indicate this with notices, keeping emergency exits available at all times. Where possible use a different entrance and exit to the congregation or other attendees.	Choir restricted to maximum four members (this includes conductor) to <b>enter</b> Church from organ door, to sing and remain in the sanctuary for the duration of the service. <b>Exit</b> from the Church will be via the usual one-way system (down the side aisle and to the extension door), after the congregation has left.  The ‘organ’ chancel door is a restricted space used by the ministers before and after the service, so distancing must be maintained.  Choir to be in individual seats places in sanctuary 10 minutes before beginning of service to allow for ministers to use this entrance.	Choir members	Each week.
Congregation, ministers and stewards, choir members.	Transmission of virus in enclosed space	Buildings have been aired before use. Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation.	SEE WORSHIP RISK ASSESSMENT FOR MEASURES		
Congregation, ministers and stewards, choir members.	Insufficient cleaning of shared spaces	Review the CofE guide on cleaning church buildings, which can be found <a href="#">here</a> .	SEE WORSHIP RISK ASSESSMENT FOR MEASURES. (shared spaces left for 72 hours prior to use, or cleaning undertaken)		
	Additional risk of infection	Cordon off or remove from public access the area occupied by the musicians, as appropriate.	Signage in place	Priest in Charge Wardens, and Stewards	July 2020
	Separated space is not observed for musicians	Survey the area to be occupied by your musicians to plan for physical distancing in seats, aisles, and allowing for the safe flow of visitors. Remember 1m plus in all directions from each person.	Four faux-leather covered chairs to be placed in a line in the sanctuary, 2m apart.	Director of music to check seats in position	Before each service
		Remind performers beforehand about important safe practices. E.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Director of music to remind choir members of required conduct each week and at rehearsals.</li> <li>Face masks to be worn at all times unless singing.</li> <li>“Instructions for choir members” document to be circulated to the choir.</li> </ul>	Director of Music, all choir members	Ongoing – each week.
		Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available.	Choir members asked to use toilets only in an emergency and to access them by observing the one way system (down the side aisle, and then out of the Church Lane door).	Choir members	Ongoing



**AREA OF FOCUS: Ensuring participants' safety**

Who is at risk?	What is the outline risk?	Controls required	Additional, specific control measures to be implemented	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
Choir members, congregation, ministers	Attendee within the group is a virus carrier	Ensure current guidance on self-isolation is emphasised in pre-event communications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Director of Music to email and speak with Choir members – emphasizing how critical self-isolation is, even if there is the smallest hint of infection.</li> </ul>	Director of Music (Sarah)	Ongoing
Choir members, congregation, ministers	Virus spread by hands	Determine placement of hand sanitisers available for your musicians to use.	Hand sanitiser available at the organ door entrance.	Priest in Charge, cleaning team or Wardens	Before first service with choir
	Unexpected absence	Make it clear who attendees should contact if they are unable to come.	Choir members to contact Sarah if unable to come.	Choir members, Sarah	Ongoing
Choir Members	Virus transmitted via printed music	Ensure that everyone has their own copy of the music/worship materials. These should be brought from home. (If music is handed out on the day, ensure the music is distributed and collected by one person wearing disposable gloves and that the music stays with one individual throughout the performance.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choir to bring and take home their own music.</li> <li>If music is to be re-used it must be quarantined for at least 72 hours before use by another individual.</li> </ul>	Choir members, Director of music	Each week
Choir members	Virus transmitted through sharing of items	Ask attendees to bring their own writing implements (for marking music etc.)	Choir members to bring and take home their own pencils	Choir members	Ongoing

Organist	Virus transmitted via (keyboard) instruments	Minimise the number of people playing the piano or organ during the service. Ideally, have only one accompanist.	Simon to play all accompaniments. Because of the need for social distancing elsewhere in the chancel, the organ is to be preferred to the electric piano for accompaniments.	Simon (Organists)	Ongoing – when needed.
Organist	Virus transmitted through sharing of items	Disinfect the organ consoles and piano: This must be done with a soft cloth sprayed with disinfectant. Disinfectant must not be applied directly to instruments.	Organist to wipe down the manual keyboards as and when needed.	Simon (Organist)	Ongoing – when needed.
Choir members	Transmission of virus through close personal contact	Consider using a larger space for robing if the vestry is small.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choir robes will not be worn for the time being</li> </ul>	Choir	Ongoing.
Choir Members	Transmission of virus through close personal contact	Arrange a larger space than would usually be required for 1:1 coaching/small group work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If a run-through of the anthem is needed, this must take place away from all entrance points to the church and paths in the church yard.</li> <li>Under the canopy of the Church Hall is the suggested area.</li> <li>The chancel ‘organ’ door is a pinch point for social distancing with the ministers using this entrance, and so it and the surrounding area must be kept clear at all times</li> </ul>		Each week.
	Transmission of virus through close personal contact	Set out chairs in advance, spaced according to guidelines. If using fixed pews or choirstalls, indicate with signs those to be used, spaced according to guidelines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chairs to be distanced and left in the sanctuary at a 2m distance.</li> <li>Choir stall remain out of use pending any change in social distancing requirements.</li> </ul>	Wardens or stewards. Director of Music to check things are in place	Each week.
		Consider whether registration could be done without face-to-face contact and/or a queue.	The contact details of the 4 singers to be given to Sarah 72 hours before the service. These details will be forwarded to the Parish Administrator for the purposes of Test & Trace no later than Friday Morning.	Sarah (Director of Music) Parish Administrator	By Friday Morning each week.