

Last updated: 28 March 2021 jb

# St Andrew's

- CULLOMPTON -

## Reopening St Andrew's

### Risk assessment for reopening of church for Wednesday and Sunday services

\*\*Please note this document should be read in conjunction with previous risk assessment written for opening the church for private prayer\*\*

[Risk Assessment Template for Opening Church Buildings to the Public](#)

#### Version Control

Issue Date	Version Number	Issued by
25 <sup>th</sup> March 2021	9	The House of Bishops COVID-19 Recovery Group

- This update has been reviewed to reflect the [roadmap to ease restrictions](#) issued by the UK government and is intended for use from 29<sup>th</sup> March onwards ('phase 1b'). It incorporates sections on singing, workplace testing, and planning for wider use of buildings including for non-worship purposes. At all times churches should check national and, if relevant, local restrictions to ensure the activity planned is currently permitted. Risk assessments carried out using an earlier template may still be valid but should be reviewed regularly and checked against this latest version of the risk assessment.*

- England entered the government’s roadmap out of lockdown on 8<sup>th</sup> March with the re-opening of schools and other education settings, and an increase in permitted reasons to leave home to meet one person outside for social purposes. As they have been throughout the third lockdown (from 5<sup>th</sup> January) churches are permitted to open for communal worship, private prayer and a number of essential purposes where they can be carried out in a Covid-safe way. There may be specific local regulations recommended by local authorities, that place additional restrictions on certain activities. Before completing this risk assessment you can see what is permitted by checking the guidance on permitted activities on the national church coronavirus webpage. Guidance on opening cathedral and church buildings to the public during COVID-19 can also be found [there](#).
- 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. This document provides a template risk assessment, with links to the relevant advice notes. It relates to opening up church and cathedral buildings to clergy and members of the public entering for any permitted purposes. As well as offering guidance on best practice, the template is also intended to help parishes make a decision on whether to open for any or all of these purposes or not, based on their local circumstances, resources and context. Specific guidance linking to advice on the lockdown period is available on the [Church of England Coronavirus pages](#).
- The government acknowledges that places of worship play an important role in providing spiritual leadership for many individuals, and in bringing communities and generations together. However, their communal nature also makes them places that are particularly vulnerable to the spread of the virus. In drawing up a risk assessment for your church, or revising it in the light of the current situation, you will need to think carefully whether the public benefits you achieve by opening are justified by the risks involved, however much you can mitigate them. This judgement will vary depending on the location and nature of your church building and the make up of your congregation and visitor profile. You will need to discuss the factors with your governing body, whether the PCC or chapter. Remember that this is your collective choice whether to open: while our churches are permitted by government to open, they are not obliged to do so. If you decide not to open, you can continue to have a valuable role serving the community in a number of ways. Guidance on this can be found on the [Church of England Coronavirus pages](#).
- Guidance indicating how churches might arrange access and events in a Covid-safe way has been produced as part of a government initiative to encourage re-opening in a safe and reasonable way. This includes a number of case studies that may help you think about your church building.
- Future versions of this document will be produced when there is any substantive change to the guidance on the safe use of places of worship.

Separate risk assessments for outdoor worship and for access by contractors and construction workers are available on the [Church of England Coronavirus pages](#).

### Carrying out a risk assessment

Agree what activities you are planning for:

- ~~Private prayer~~
- Public worship
- Funerals, weddings, baptisms, ordinations
- Livestreaming or recording services
- A choir or music group singing indoors as part of a public, livestreamed or recorded service (congregational singing may take place outside, but at present is not permitted indoors)
- ~~Formal childcare or where part of a school~~
- ~~Essential voluntary and public services~~
- ~~Use as a vaccination centre~~
- ~~Other exempted activities such as support groups~~
- ~~Provision of youth services~~
- ~~Opening shops/cafes (may be permitted in Step 2, depending on access arrangements)~~
- ~~Opening for visitors/tourists/educational visits as a heritage attraction (not permitted until Step 3)~~
- ~~Opening for concerts, plays etc (not permitted until Step 3)~~

1. Consider the hazards:

- Transmission of COVID-19
- Hazards arising from using the church in a different way to usual

Read the guidance and think about how it relates specifically to your church. What constraints are there? Consider how people will arrive at the church, including if they will need to wait or queue outside; how people will enter and leave the church; circulation inside: from the entrance to the worship space and out again; circulation within the worship space; also access to other areas including the toilet(s).

2. Consider who might be harmed and how. Read the guidance and think about how the activities you are planning will affect different groups of people. The risks are not different for larger churches as long as they are properly managed, but having any significant numbers of people coming through your building makes the possible impact – in particular someone with COVID-19 coming into contact with others – higher than in smaller venues with fewer people. Consider your particular circumstances and adapt the checklist below as appropriate. Gathered congregations and major services may attract people from far afield, which is likely to add to the risk profile and go against the general guidance that people should stay local for any activities outside the home. Consider whether you need to consult your wider membership and users.

3. Using the risk assessment checklist below as a template:

- add in mitigations for any risks that are particular to your circumstances that may not be on the list;
- record what you need to do for each activity to go ahead safely;
- consider any equipment you need and any temporary changes you might need to make to the church;
- check back against your list of activities to confirm which ones can go ahead and when.

**Risk assessment template**

**Church: St Andrew's Church**  
**Assessor's name: Jo Bailey & Amelia Jerreat**  
**Date completed: January - March 2021**  
**Review date: Ongoing as circumstances change**  
**21 March 2021 JB**  
**28 March 2021 JB**

JB – Jo Bailey Church Warden  
 AJ – Amelia Jerreat Church Warden  
 EH – Ed Hobbs – Vicar  
 BC – Beth Collier – Ops director

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
<b>Access to church buildings for purposes of recording and/or livestreaming services (with no congregation present)</b>  <b>Risk:</b> contracting or spreading the virus by not social distancing or by	Consider if anyone required for recording or broadcasting is clinically extremely vulnerable or has household members who are. Can someone else fulfil their role in the recording/livestreaming? Ensure that the people who need to attend the church building to enable the livestreaming or recording to take place are willing to do so and can do so safely. Make sure that only those essential for livestreaming or recording enter the church.	Advice on livestreaming and recording can be found here.	Small team only for live streaming. No one is clinically extremely vulnerable and all happy to do it. Teams offered option of	JB  Jan 2021

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
touching contaminated services			opting out Jan 2021. EH/BC	
	Identify one point of entry to the church building, and a separate exit if possible.	Entrance & exit main door – so few people that pinch point is avoided	Team	JB Jan 2021
	A suitable lone working policy has been consulted if relevant.	An example can be found here.	No one working alone	JB Jan 2021
	Consider staggered arrival times if multiple people from different households are coming into the building.	Team queue outside 2 m apart as needed and check in.		JB Jan 2021
	Holy water stoups and the font are empty.	Have been empty since March 2020		JB Jan 2021
	Ensure safe use of equipment needed for livestreaming: avoid exceeding safe load on sockets, cables/tripod causing trip hazard	Equipment installed by professional team API	API	JB Sept 2020
	Provide adequate hand cleansing stations. Provide hand sanitiser for the occasions when people can't wash their hands	Hand sanitiser at entrances exits, band area, PA desk	JB	JB Sept 2020
	Review CofE guide on cleaning church buildings. Complete the 'cleaning' section of this risk assessment (below).	Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here.  Building cleaned by a professional cleaner weekly. Church not open for private prayer so 72 hours between services. Team members	Teams Cleaner	JB Sept 2020

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
		clean high risk/high usage areas		
	Read the CofE guide on face coverings and produce or download signage or other relevant materials to indicate compliance with the law and requiring these for all except those exempt.	Advice on face coverings can be found here.  All team wear face coverings apart from when singing/speaking	Teams	JB Sept 2020
	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	Band use iPads. Each person has own mic to avoid sharing	Band PA team	JB Sept 2020
	Ensure you have an NHS Track and Trace QR code available, with an alternative option for those who cannot use that system.	Consult advice on complying with Track and Trace.	Signage at two places on entry. All team sign in with church suite as well	JB Jan 2021
<b>Deciding whether to open to the public for private prayer, public worship and other permitted activities</b>	Consider how the national lockdown applies to the particular circumstances of the church and the worship or other activities envisaged. For gathered congregations or other activities drawing people from a wide area, consider the implications of where people travel from and the distance involved.	PCC decision not to open for public or private worship in Jan 2021. In March 2021 with numbers of cases dropping & vaccine roll out going well in area, decision to reopen on Wednesdays & Sundays later in months but not for private prayer as this increases risk	PCC	JB March 2021

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
		(cleaning, unknown people & numbers in church)		
	Discuss with nearby venues and businesses to ensure that the timing and practical arrangements for using the church are compatible.	Website and social media all up to date with church decisions.	Office team/EH	JB March 2021
	Check if any clergy, staff or volunteers required for opening to the public fall into clinically extremely vulnerable categories or have members of their household who do, and ensure there are enough people safely able and willing to facilitate opening and cleaning the building.	All considered	PCC	JB March 2021
	Consider whether to discourage clinically extremely vulnerable members of the congregation or visitors from attending services altogether or setting aside a time for them to attend for individual devotions.	Live streaming gives those who are vulnerable option to be part of church but stay at home. Announced at Sunday services	EH	EH March 2021
	Consider if a booking system is needed, whether for general access or for specific events/services	Booking system in place.  Wednesdays: Church suite via website & paper/phone booking  Sundays: Church suite via website & Phone booking	Office team	BC March 2021
	Communicate with nearby churches to ensure offered provisions are complementary.	EH on the local COVID group who look at community as a whole	EH	EH Ongoing
	Check current guidance on singing to establish what is permitted. This can be found in the	Small choirs/bands allowed	Josh Baldwin/JB	Ongoing by Josh & SLT

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
<b>Deciding whether to have a choir or music group singing/performing</b>  <b>Risk:</b> Aerosol spread of coronavirus may be increased by singing and playing of wind instruments	Church of England guidance on conducting public worship and on in the Government guidance for places of worship.			
	Ensure that singers from different households can be socially distanced from one another, and from anyone else present (including a conductor, camera or microphone operator or, if present, a congregation).	PA/visual team sit at back of church socially distanced and well away from musicians/band.  Max 6 allowed in band to allow for social distancing. 2 on floor, 4 on stage (to be reviewed when new staging in place end of March 2021). Service leader stands in front of band. All musicians wear mask unless singing. Each musician has a separate mic and tablet with music (no paper)	Josh Badwin/JB/EH	Sept 2020 & Ongoing by Josh & SLT
	Put in place measures to create a physical barrier between singers and any congregation.	Distance between stage with musicians and first pew is at least 2.5 m. Walkway is in front of all congregation.	Josh Badwin/JB/EH	Sept 2020 & Ongoing by Josh & SLT

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	Remind any members of congregation present that at present they are not allowed to sing indoors.	Leader of service reminds each week.	Service leader	Sept 2020 & Ongoing by service lead
<b>Preparation of the Church for access by members of the public for any permitted purposes</b>  <b>Risk:</b> Getting or spreading coronavirus in common use high traffic areas such as corridors, toilet facilities, entry/exit points and other communal areas.	Confirm that all steps (above) for access for livestreaming/broadcast have been carried out before anyone else accesses the building.	Confirmed		JB 2021
	Update your website, A Church Near You, and any relevant social media with information for visitors. Communicate details on requirements such as bringing a face covering. Clearly state the limits on attendance for weddings, funerals, commemorative events and any other permitted activities where upper limits apply (or provide a link to this document).	Information clearly displayed on church door, through live stream services, website & social media	Production team, JB ongoing	Production team, JB ongoing
	Update your website to remind people who are clinically extremely vulnerable to COVID-19 to stay at home as much as possible and observe social distancing guidance, and either strongly discourage them from attending church in person during this time or indicate a time for them to attend for individual devotions.			
	Review CofE guide on cleaning church buildings. Complete the 'cleaning' section of this risk assessment (below).	Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here. JB read guidance. Professional weekly cleaner. Team clean high risk areas/high usage as needed	Cleaner Teams	JB March 2021

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	Read the CofE guide on face coverings and produce signage or other relevant materials to indicate compliance with the law requiring these for all except those exempt.	Advice on face coverings can be found here.  All team and congregation must wear a face covering unless exempt by law or leading service. Signage at entrance of church	Individuals Steward Team Service leader	Ongoing JB 2021
	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.	Entrance – all worshippers enter via main door (bar those who use disabled access).  Exit – worshippers will exit via disabled access. EH/ leader will direct worshippers to leave a row at a time, keeping a 2m distance at all time. Stewards to manage this.	Service leader, steward teams	JB Sept 2020 Reviewed March 2021
	Make any temporary arrangements for people to wait or queue outside the building (taking into account any consequential risks arising from people gathering outside).  Make any temporary arrangements for managing the approaches to the entry points and any parking areas to ensure social distancing can be observed	One way system from car park. Stewards in car park directing people and managing flow of people. Markers show 2m distance on path.	Steward team	JB Sept 2020 Reviewed March 2021

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	(taking into account any consequential risks arising from changes to circulation).	Steward outside ensuring people queue 2m apart. Door opener allows one bubble into foyer, no others allowed in until they have checked in and moved on to seating seating stewards		
	Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation.	Main doors opens, disabled exit open. Building is large with high ceiling	Steward team	JB Sept 2020 Reviewed March 2021
	If heating is required check your system is safe to use and test it before people are allowed in.	Guidance on church heating can be found here. Heating services autumn 2020	Gas engineer	BC Oct 2020
	Remove Bibles/literature/hymn books/leaflets unless they are absolutely essential and participants cannot bring their own. Hardcopy literature should be quarantined for at least 48 hours between use.	No books used on Sundays. Hymn books and Bibles removed. Wednesdays: Gloves used to place red liturgy book in the pews in advance, not used for 72 hours before or after the service	Wed steward team	JB Sept 2020, reviewed March 2021
	Cordon off or remove from public access any devotional objects or items (if they are liable to be touched or closely breathed on)	All removed before reopening in Sept 2020	JB and teams	JB Sept 2020, reviewed March 2021
	Consider if pew cushions/kneelers need to be removed as per government guidance on soft surfaces.	Pew cushions placed on seats to allow more comfort. (govt guidance that soft furnishings	JB	JB Sept 2020, reviewed March 2021

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		are less likely to pass on virus). If worshippers are concerned, bring own cushion.		
	Remove or isolate children’s resources and play areas.	Children’s area taped off with no entry sign	JB	JB Sept 2020 reviewed March 2021
	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>No worshippers to leave seats or be in aisles other than when being seated and leaving.</p> <p>Clergy/designated team will distribute bread only for communion. Clergy/dt to walk down centre of each aisle, wearing a visor. Clergy /dt (wearing gloves) will release wafers into the worshipper’s hand only, in such a way to avoid any contact between them and those receiving it. If accidental contact does occur, both people should cleanse their hands immediately.</p> <p>Peace can be said but no worshippers to touch each other.</p>	JB/AJ	JB Sept 2020 Review March 2021

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	Clearly mark out seating areas including exclusion zones to maintain distancing.	Two pews closed off for every one pew open.	Office team Steward team	JB Sept 2020 Reviewed March 2021
	Clearly mark out flow of movement for people entering and leaving the building to maintain physical distancing requirements.	One way system in church. White tape and stickers placed on floor to mark out flow of people. Entrance & exit managed by stewards and clergy announce that people leave church pew by pew to main distancing.	Steward team	JB Sept 2020 Reviewed March 2021
	Limit access to places where the public does not need go, maybe with a temporary cordon is needed.	Altar area, coffee area and space behind rood screen taped off to limit public access during services		
	Determine placement of hand sanitisers available for visitors to use.	Register with Parish Buying for procurement options. Hand sanitiser placed at front door, ramp entrance and at top of steps along with wipes and tissues. Gloves also available	JB/AJ Office team	JB Sept Review Mar 2021. All hygiene items in place
	Determine if temporary changes are needed to the building to facilitate social distancing	Consult advice on gaining temporary permissions.  Temporary faculty in place for accessible ramp March 2021	AJ	AJ March 2021

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
		No other permissions required, areas taped off, temp tape on floor, chairs moved to block of areas.		
	Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing etc.	Signs in place on outside of door, inner doors and on tables with hygiene items.	Office team	JB Sept 2020 Reviewed March 2021
	Ensure high-risk surfaces and touch points have been wiped with appropriate sanitiser spray or disposable wipes	Church cleaned weekly. High risk surfaces cleaned when locking and unlocking & after the Wednesday service.	Cleaner & service teams	JB Sept 2020 Reviewed March 2021
	Check that hand washing facilities have adequate soap provision and paper towels, and a bin for the paper towels.	Register with Parish Buying for procurement options. Hygiene materials checked at each unlocking/locking and topped up as necessary.	Service teams	JB Sept 2020 Reviewed March 2021
	Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available.	Register with Parish Buying for procurement options.  One isolated toilet available for congregation, one in , one out, users must follow one way system to reach it. Toilet cleaned before and after Sundays services, hand sanitiser and wipes available. Hand towels, soap etc.	Centre staff	JB Sept 2020 Reviewed March 2021

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
		provided by centre staff, checked daily. Bin in toilet		
	Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.	Pedal bin (no need to touch with hand) provided at each hygiene station. Emptied at end of each session.	Steward team Cleaner	JB Sept 2020 Reviewed March 2021
<b>Use of the church for baptisms, weddings, funerals and commemorative services</b>	Consider the specific guidance in place for those activities and assess the additional controls and limits on attendance in place.	Advice on baptisms can be found here. Advice on weddings can be found here (scroll down to Can weddings go ahead?).  Advice on funerals can be found here.  The government’s advice on commemorative events can be found here.	EH Funerals, weddings and baptism will only go ahead in line with govt guidance.  After a wedding/funeral verger will clean high risk areas. Verger will seat congregation 2m apart.	JB Sept 2020 Reviewed March 2021
<b>Use of the church for permitted activities other than private prayer or worship</b>	<del>Consider the specific guidance in place for those activities and assess the additional controls and limits on attendance in place. Check that any external group using the church has COVID-secure working practices in place, including their own risk</del>	The government’s guidance on the safe use of multi-purpose community facilities for permitted activities (including formal childcare	Church not open for private prayer or community activities. Centre used	JB Jan - March 2021

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	<del>assessment where necessary, and will comply with what is required by the church.</del>	<p>and support groups) can be found here.</p> <p>Advice on use of churches as vaccination centres can be found here.</p> <p>The government’s guidance on the use of hospitality spaces can be found here.</p>	<p>for these – contact JB for separate risk assessments.</p>	
<p><b>Cleaning the church before and after general use (no known exposure to anyone with Coronavirus symptoms)</b></p> <p>Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Getting or spreading coronavirus by not cleaning surfaces, equipment and shared facilities.</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>If 48-hour closure is not possible then check all cleaners are not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating.</p> <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.</p> <p>Keep surfaces clear to make it easier to clean and reduce the likelihood of contaminating objects.</p>	<p>Please read previous risk assessment written for opening the church for private prayer - June 2020</p> <p>Cleaning ongoing by professional cleaner during lockdown.</p> <p>High risk/high usage cleaning undertaken as needed after live streaming/services by steward team. Services over 48 hours apart and on Sundays pews staggered so that no one sits on a pew already used.</p> <p>Surfaces kept clear</p>	<p>Cleaner Steward teams</p>	<p>JB Sept 2020 Reviewed March 2021</p>

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	<p>Bibles/literature/hymn books/leaflets deemed essential for services should be quarantined for 48 hours after use.</p> <p>All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable).</p> <p>Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned.</p> <p>Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site.</p> <p>Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site – suggested daily removal.</p>	<p>Red liturgy books placed in pews, removed afterwards and not used for over 48 hours</p> <p>Gloves available at entrance Cleaning materials provided by cleaner or office team/JB. Stored under drawers and in cleaning area.</p> <p>Steward team/cleaner empties bin using gloves after each service</p>	<p>Steward team/cleaner empties bin using gloves after each service</p>	<p>JB Sept 2020 Reviewed March 2021</p>
<p><b>Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms</b></p>	<p>If possible close the church building for 48 hours with no access permitted.</p> <p>If 48-hour closure is not possible then follow Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings.</p> <p>If the building has been quarantined for 48 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning.</p>	<p><b>Public Health England guidance</b> available here.</p> <p>Advice on <b>cleaning church buildings can be found here.</b></p>	<p>If occurrence happens SLT to make timely decisions about opening/closure of church, cleaning and how to contact and protect those</p>	<p>JB/AJ and Senior leadership team</p>

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
			potentially impacted.	