

NOTE: From 4 July, churches in England will be allowed to resume communal worship provided measures are in place to ensure the least possible risk of transmission. Premises in Wales fall under the guidelines issued by the Welsh Government which, at the time of writing, differ from those in England.

The following checklist is supplementary to the COVID-19 Premises Reopening Checklist which will already have been completed by most churches in order to reopen for private prayer. This checklist must be completed first as it covers the fundamentals such as statutory premises maintenance, cleaning, hand sanitising and social distancing. This checklist relates to those precautions required in addition as we progress to communal worship. Guidelines for resuming communal worship are available in the COVID-19 section of Resources and should be read before completing this checklist.

Protecting vulnerable clergy

The clergy should be mindful of their personal circumstances in respect of COVID-19. Those in the extremely clinically vulnerable group for COVID-19 should continue to shield in line with government guidelines. Those vulnerable due to age (70+ age group) or ethnicity (Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic) may celebrate Mass but are strongly advised not to distribute Holy Communion and take extra care to remain socially distant from the congregation.

Church name and location	
Person completing this checklist: Name and role	
Person signing off this checklist: Name and role	
Date:	
Review date: <i>This checklist should be reviewed in a few weeks to incorporate any changes needed in the light of experience or revised guidelines.</i>	

		Yes/ No/ N/a	Comments/ notes
<p>Social distancing</p> <p>As a general rule, 2m distance around individuals from separate households should continue to be observed. Where this is not viable, the distance may be reduced to 1m with mitigations. In reality this means the mandatory wearing of face coverings. The maximum safe numbers should be clearly signposted at the entrance and the number and position within the church overseen by stewards.</p> <p>You should also consider how social distancing might be challenged if people have to queue whilst awaiting entry to the church.</p> <p>The priest, and if present, the deacon and server, should remain socially distant at all times on the sanctuary during Mass. This is particularly important at the Gospel (for the deacon's blessing), the Preparation of Gifts, and during the Liturgy of the Eucharist.</p>			
1.	Have you established the maximum safe occupancy for the congregation based on the social distance you intend to apply in your church (2m without mitigating factors reducing to not less than 1m with mitigation)?		
2.	Has seating on the sanctuary been arranged to ensure social distancing is observed?		
3.	Have you made arrangements to avoid congestion which might make it difficult for people to observe social distancing outside the church as they await admittance to the church?		
4.	Has a team of stewards been assembled to oversee social distancing, hand sanitising and containers for the collection of cash offerings positioned at the entrance and exit to the church? <i>Stewards may also need to assist with queries, provide access to toilets and assist in the event of a fire evacuation or in the event of an accident.</i>		
<p>The Liturgy</p> <p>Refer to the guide "Liturgical considerations for communal acts of Worship" in the COVID 19 section of Resources and the UK Government guide "COVID-19: Guidance for the safe use of places of worship from 4 July."</p>			

		Yes/ No/ N/a	Comments/ notes
5.	Have you established a supply of disposable gloves for use in the sacristy when preparing for Mass and for Readers?		
6.	Have arrangements been made to ensure the additional laundry of reusable liturgical linens used during Mass e.g. palls and lavabo towels?		
7.	Has the liturgy been adjusted to ensure that Holy Communion will be celebrated in line with CBEWC and government guidelines?		
8.	Are the holy water stoops dry?		
9.	Is congregational singing excluded from the liturgy?		
10.	Where a cantor is used, will a Perspex screen be installed between the singer and the congregation and social distancing increased?		
11.	Where communion will be distributed, will a physical barrier be installed between the priest and communicants? <i>At the place where communion is to be distributed, a physical barrier should be placed, for example a prie-dieu (kneeler on the priest's side) or small table to socially distance the priest distributing Holy Communion from communicants.</i>		
12.	Will stewards be familiar with arrangements to avoid breaching social distancing among communicants waiting to receive or leaving after receiving Holy Communion?		
13.	Where volunteer church florists will be providing displays have the risks and precautions during COVID-19 been discussed and agreed? <i>Volunteer florists should be briefed on working safely during COVID-19 using the briefing sheet in the COVID-19 section of Resources. This should be supplemented with any additional information relevant to your church. Keep a record of the briefing.</i>		

		Yes/ No/ N/a	Comments/ notes
<p>Handling Cash</p> <p>There should be no sharing of the collection plate or bag. People should be encouraged to make their donation to the church online or via standing order. Plates or other collecting boxes for cash offerings should be placed at the entrances and exits of churches, and this should be overseen by stewards. The collection should be consolidated into plastic bags, sealed, placed into a secure location and left for 72 hours before counting. Counters should wear gloves when doing this task and the area should be well ventilated and cleaned before and afterwards.</p>			
14.	Are the CBEWC guidelines for handling cash in place?		
<p>Cleaning</p> <p>The church must be cleaned and disinfected after Mass unless you intend to leave the building unoccupied for at least 72 hours. Particular attention must be paid to those surfaces which are frequently touched by multiple people e.g. door handles, hand rails, pews etc. The church should be given a general clean before the next reopening.</p> <p>You must allow enough time between services for the church to be cleaned, paying particular attention to cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces touched frequently by multiple people e.g. door handles, door plates, pews, hand rails. How much time you allow will depend on the number of visitors, how much of the church was occupied and whether the toilets were used.</p> <p>Cleaners should not be from the vulnerable group if the building is to be cleaned less than 72 hours after Mass.</p>			
15.	Have you arranged for the additional cleaning requirements associated with the resumption of Mass?		
16.	Does your Mass schedule allow enough time between services for the church to be cleaned properly?		
17.	Have soft furnishings likely to be touched frequently by multiple users been temporarily removed from use e.g. upholstered chairs, cushions and kneelers? <i>These items are a source of transmission and are difficult to clean and sanitise properly.</i>		
<p>Toilets</p> <p>As a general rule, toilets should be available to members of the public on request rather than having unrestricted access. This is so that social distancing can be observed more easily and to make it easier to control the contact points and consequent cleaning requirement.</p>			

		Yes/ No/ N/a	Comments/ notes
<p>Toilets must be well ventilated, supplied with liquid soap and water for hand washing and disposable towels for hand drying (reusable towels and hand dryers should not be used). It is also useful to remind people to close the toilet lid before flushing to avoid a contaminated vapour plume to develop and to wash their hands. Posters or notices can help with this (a hand washing poster is available in the COVID-19 Signs and Notices section of Resources).</p> <p>If you allow free access to toilets, you will also need to clarify social distancing by markings on the floor, notices about maximum numbers and consider what to do about congestion where queues develop.</p> <p>If the toilet is used, it will have to be cleaned. Cleaning in toilets is higher risk than elsewhere, particularly if this is done within 72 hours of use. Cleaners should NOT be from the vulnerable group.</p>			
18.	How do you intend to allow access to toilet facilities? <i>Delete as appropriate</i>	On Request OR unrestricted access	
19.	Are you confident you can manage the additional cleaning requirements and that social distancing will be observed?		
20.	Are toilet facilities well ventilated and supplied with appropriate facilities for hand washing during COVID-19?		
21.	Have you included toilet facilities in your cleaning arrangements? <i>Adjust the cleaning plan (use the template in the COVID-19 section of Resources)</i>		
<p>Use of the Church Hall</p> <p>Different Bishops have different views when it comes to use of the Church Hall for Mass, either as additional seating with live streaming or as a temporary location for Mass where the church cannot accommodate the COVID-Secure measures necessary.</p> <p>NOTE: You should check with the person in your diocese responsible for coordinating COVID-19 or health and safety before committing to use of the church hall. Church halls are not permitted to reopen for Mass in the Diocese of Brentwood.</p> <p>At the time of writing, the church hall should not be used for social gatherings.</p> <p>If access to toilet facilities requires access to the church hall, please ensure you have answered Q21 – Q24 inclusive.</p>			
22.	Will the church hall be used e.g. additional seating for the congregation or toilet facilities?		

		Yes/ No/ N/a	Comments/ notes
23.	Has the building been checked for obvious health and safety hazards? <i>Use the Premises Inspection Checklist (in the Safe Access and Egress section of Resources) to guide your hazard spotting checks</i>		<i>Answer this question if you will be using the hall for access to toilet facilities</i>
24.	Has the hot and cold water system been flushed through where this has not been used during lockdown?		<i>Answer this question if you will be using the hall for access to toilet facilities</i>
25.	Is statutory maintenance up to date, or, where this has lapsed due to COVID-19 are arrangements in hand?		<i>Answer this question if you will be using the hall for access to toilet facilities</i>
26.	Does the layout of seating enable your social distancing measures to be observed?		
27.	Is the seating easy to clean? <i>Upholstered seating which uses a textile covering is difficult to clean to the standard necessary during COVID-19. This type of seating should not be used.</i>		
28.	Have the manual handling risks been addressed for setting up and removing seating and other items of furniture and equipment?		
29.	Will trailing leads be located away from thoroughfares and covered with a non-slip, non- conductive cable protector where necessary?		
30.	Where candles will be placed on a temporary altar, has the fire hazard been considered and mitigating measures put in place e.g. stable surface on which candles are placed, avoidance of flammable materials in proximity to lit candles, fire extinguisher available? <i>Votive candles for the congregation should NOT be used in outdoor spaces</i>		
Outdoor Mass Mass may be held within the church grounds. COVID-19 precautions will still apply in addition to other health and safety considerations e.g. slips and trips, fire etc. At the time of writing, government guidelines exclude the use of outdoor settings outside the church grounds. Clarity is being sought from CBEWC.			
31.	Will Mass be held in an outdoor setting within the church grounds?		

		Yes/ No/ N/a	Comments/ notes
	<i>Please contact the person in your diocese responsible for coordinating COVID-19 or health and safety if you are intending to use outside space which is not within the church grounds.</i>		
32.	Does the layout of seating enable your social distancing measures to be observed?		
33.	Is the seating easy to clean? <i>Upholstered seating which uses a textile covering is difficult to clean to the standard necessary during COVID-19. This type of seating should not be used.</i>		
34.	Have you assessed the space for its suitability taking into account slip and trip hazards, exposure to hot or wet weather, personal security, disabled access etc. and put mitigating measures in place to minimise the risks?		
35.	Have the manual handling risks been addressed for setting up and removing seating and other items of furniture and equipment?		
36.	Where candles will be placed on a temporary altar, has the fire hazard been considered and mitigating measures put in place e.g. stable surface on which candles are placed, avoidance of flammable materials in proximity to lit candles, temporary structure is fire retardant, minimising drafts, fire extinguisher available? <i>Votive candles for the congregation should NOT be used in outdoor spaces</i>		
37.	Will you be using a temporary structure?		
38.	Will the structure be installed by a competent person with due diligence checks carried out to establish their professionalism, safety record and insurance details?		
39.	Will the structure be checked regularly, particularly after bad weather?		

		Yes/ No/ N/a	Comments/ notes
40.	Will you be using any portable electrical equipment?		
41.	Will trailing leads be located away from thoroughfares and covered with a non-slip, non- conductive cable protector where necessary?		
42.	Will the equipment be suitable for use in an outdoor setting and be protected by a fully operational residual current device?		
<p>Test and Trace</p> <p>At the time of writing the government guidelines for places of worship from 4 July do not require contact details of visitors attending Mass to be collected, however this is encouraged to assist with contact tracing. Visitor contact details would be collected and kept for 21 days. In the event of a local outbreak, these details could help NHS Test and Trace to alert people who have been in close contact with someone testing positive for COVID-19 and tell them to self isolate.</p> <p>CBEWC are in consultation with government bodies to agree a process for recording visitor names which is manageable and compliant with data protection requirements. Further details will follow. In the meantime, churches should consider a booking system for visitors which will also assist with limiting numbers to observe social distancing.</p>			
43.	Are you intending to use a pre-booking system to manage numbers attending Mass?		

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