

The Parish of Higham with Merston

COVID 19 SPECIAL RISK ASSESMENT FOR CHURCH RE-OPENING – 12th July 2020

Assessment Carried out by Members of the Standing Committee on Monday 29th June 2020 - Review Date: **weekly** during July 2020

Reviewed 21st July by PCC

Reviewed 16th August by Standing Committee

Hazard	Who might be Harmed and How?	Already Doing	Further Action	Who is Responsible	When is Action needed by	DONE
Contamination of Eucharistic Species and Liturgical Books	All Church Users Risk of infected hands touching items	Implement Guidance offered by Bishops	Purchase single use gloves for use by clergy, sacristan and readers. Purchase of alcohol sanitiser and bottles. Placing of sanitiser bottles in correct locations	Clergy and Wardens	Before Public Masses resume And ongoing	Gloves and sanitiser in position throughout church.
People sitting too close to each other in church	All Users	Standing Committee have devised a policy of allowing congregants to sit only in certain designated pews which limits no. attending	Mark designated pews and close off others Advise congregants to consider wearing masks in church (bulletins)	Churchwardens	Between Church Clean and resumption of Public Masses	Church divided appropriately. 7/7/20 Booking system in place 7/7/20 Advice on facemasks in email to all
Unsafe Entry into Church – infection risk	All Church Users Risk of too close contact between people	Standing Committee Devised Policy for entry and exit of Congregants for Services and Distribution of Holy Communion (See Appendix One)	Training Sidespersons and Marking path at 2 metre intervals	Wardens (Assisted by Sidespersons)	Before Public Masses Resume And ongoing	Training given. Guidance notes distributed 11/7/20 2m marking on path leading to church 10/7/20

Hazard	Who might be Harmed and How?	Already Doing	Further Action	Who is Responsible	When is Action needed by	DONE
Unsafe queueing for Holy Communion / Unsafe Exit from Church	All Church Users Risk of too close contact between people	Standing Committee Devised Policy for entry and exit of Congregants for Services and Distribution of Holy Communion	Training of Sidespersons. Congregation to be instructed on safe procedures.	Wardens (Assisted by Sidespersons)	Before Public Masses Resume And ongoing	Guidance notes issued 11/7/20; Furniture arranged.7/7/20
Contamination from paper / books and soft furnishings	All Church Users Risk of infected hands etc touching items	Plan to remove all such risky items from church	Remove all items from church and store in hall	Wardens (Assisted by clergy and volunteers)	Before church is cleaned	Completed 9/7/20 Items removed from hall and stored safely to facilitate opening for outside use 17/8/20
Church not sufficiently clean at present	All Users. Increased risk of spreading infection	Plan to employ cleaner to give church thorough clean	Execute Plan	Vicar and Wardens	Before Public Masses Resume.	Cleaning completed 7/7/20
Communicant and priest too close	Priest and communicants	Implement guidance offered by Bishops including place barrier between priest and communicant. Arms fully stretched. Silent administration of Communion	Place a prie-dieu between priest and communicant (kneeler towards priest). Congregation to be instructed on safe procedures.	Clergy	Before Public Masses Resume And ongoing	Furniture in place 7/7/20 Congregation instructed by email
Contamination of areas of church used	All Users. Increased risk of spreading infection	Main area of church open only for public worship, otherwise closed off – access limited on weekday to Lady Chapel for mass No Crèche facility to be used as family 'place' Lobby and Hall closed except for use as fire exit and for access to toilet. Office to be closed.	Cleaning of church after each service to enable daily services to be held Toilet to be cleaned with wipes before use by user.	Wardens (Assisted by team of volunteer cleaners)	Before daily Masses resume and ongoing immediately	Daily cleaning regime in place from 7/7/20

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Contamination by passing collection bags	All Users. Increased risk of spreading infection	No collections to be taken	Plate to be left at back of church for donations, which will be left for 72 hrs before being prepared for banking	Wardens (Assisted by Asst. Hon. Treasurer)	When Sunday Masses resume and ongoing	Ongoing in place
Contamination between Bell Ringers	All Ringers. Increased risk of spreading infection	Only one ringer or family/bubble at a time permitted in Ringing Chamber	Tower Captain/Secretary to make sure all Ringers are aware.	Wardens (Assisted by Tower Captain/Secretary)	When Sunday Masses resume and ongoing	Ongoing
Contamination by use of sallies/chime ropes/tower handrail/door handles	All Ringers. Increased risk of spreading infection	Only one ringer or family/bubble at a time permitted in Ringing Chamber Sallies are currently tied up out of reach and are unused	Ringers to wipe sallies (if used), chime ropes, door handles and handrail after use	Wardens (Assisted by Ringers)	When Sunday Masses resume and ongoing	Ongoing
Unsafe use of the Vestry Hall by organisations / groups who hire it out.	All users of Vestry Hall. Increased risk of catching and spreading infection.	Standing Committee met to discuss and agree safe use of Vestry Hall protocols.	St John's Church Vestry Hall Covid-19 Guidance document to be written up and agreed. Leaders of organisations/ groups using the Vestry Hall to read, agree and sign guidance before using the hall.	Wardens (Assisted by Hall Bookings Secy.)	To be in place before organisations / groups resume using the Vestry Hall.	Vestry Hall Covid-19 Guidance document completed and agreed 25/8/20; Ongoing

APPENDIX 1: People Arriving at, and Leaving Church: Sidespersons' Responsibilities

Ideally FIVE people (including Wardens) need to be on duty.

1. One Person outside to make sure that (if necessary) the queue is socially distanced.
2. Second person to admit people into church – inviting people to use hand sanitiser as they do so.
3. Third person (who is wearing disposable gloves / has used hand sanitiser) handing out service sheets etc. (This person needs to indicate the collection plate to people).
4. Fourth and Fifth persons to take people to their seats.

NB No admittance to church until person 4 or 5 is ready to receive them.

ORDER FOR FILLING CHURCH

The Church should be filled in THIS order:

1. The central aisles should be filled from the front – filling alternately left and right sides until all centre pews are taken.
2. The central pew right and left sides and the North (*S.John*) and South (*Lady Chapel*) aisles should be filled (from the front) back from Our Lady's statue on the Lady Chapel (South) side and back from St John's statue on the North side.

ORDER FOR LEAVING CHURCH

Holy Communion will be administered at very end of Mass as people leave Church. People should be invited to use sanitiser (just after they pass the statue of Our Lady of Walsingham) BEFORE receiving Holy Communion.

People shall leave in THIS order:

1. **The North Aisle** alternate left and right sides – the people at the BACK [by OL of Walsingham] leaving first.
2. **The Central Aisle** alternate left and right sides – the people at the FRONT leaving first. People should make their way out via St John's statue and Our Lady of Walsingham.
3. **The South Aisle** alternate left and right sides – the people at the FRONT leaving first. People should make their way out via the Eagle Lectern, past the Pulpit, St John's statue and Our Lady of Walsingham.