

St Anne's Church Tottington - Risk Assessment for Private Prayer

Scope of Risk Assessment

This risk assessment is for private prayer at St Anne's. It is based on the most recent government guidance during this second lockdown period from 5th November to 2nd December 2020.

See the separate risk assessment for funerals.

The risk assessment takes account of government guidance issued on 5th November 2020.

At this time places of worship are also permitted to be used, for the purposes of broadcasting worship. When used for this purpose controls similar and proportionate to those outline here will be applied.

Date of Risk Assessment: 6/11/20

Review Date: 2nd December 2020

This risk assessment has been agreed by the Coronavirus working group and the PCC standing committee.

Aspect of Control	Controls in place
Social Distancing	A maximum of 30 worshippers may be present in the ground floor of the church at any one time in order to maintain 2 m social distancing
	Clergy and NCO's are also able to maintain social distancing because of the areas of the church where they will be located
	If necessary, then the upstairs balcony seating can be used, and therefore more than 30 worshippers can be accommodated.
	When the upstairs seating are is used then only every other 'boxed pew area will be used. At all other times the area is cordoned off.
	A fixed seating pattern is used to manage social distancing and allow access/egress from pews
	Seating positions are marked
	Family groups from the same household or support bubble can be seated on the same pew but only in a specified part of the church, again permitted seating positions are marked on every other row of pews
	All worshippers will be directed to the appropriate seating positions by the nominated church officials (NCO) on duty

Aspect of Control	Controls in place
Access/egress at the Church continued...	A strict one-way system will be operated with worshippers entering via the right-hand west door and leaving by the left-hand west door. This system would be overridden should an emergency evacuation be necessary
	Steps to the balcony are cordoned off, when not in use.
	Outer entry/exit doors will be permanently propped open at all times the church is in use, to minimise touch points and enhance ventilation. The NCO will open the inner doors to minimise the number of people in contact with these surfaces
	At least two NCOs will be on duty at all times that the church is open, one positioned outside to greet and record names and one inside to manage the door opening/closing, so touch points are minimised
	The NCOs will be issued with a copy of this risk assessment and briefed about their role
	A notice is placed outside church indicating that at this time no one but the Clergy and NCO's must unlock church. No other key holders may do so
Record of attendance	Worshippers will be required to give for their name and contact details, in case track and trace is necessary in the event of local covid-19 cases. We verbally check everyone's consent with this requirement at the time the attendance is recorded.
	Records of attendance will be kept securely for 21 days and destroyed when no longer needed, in line with requirements of GDPR
	The list of those booked to attend a service will be available to the NCOs before the service, so they can confirm who actually did attend. These records too will be kept for 21 days
	The NHS QR code is displayed outside and inside church for use by visitors
Hygiene	Hand sanitiser will be available at both the entry and exit points to the church
	NCOs will request all worshippers to use the sanitiser
	The sink in church will not be available for use and will be cordoned off for general use. The NCOs, in the event of an emergency, may use the sink
	The toilets in the church hall will not be available and worshippers are informed of this
	A lidded bin with foot pedal will be available for use in church and will always be lined with a plastic liner

St Anne's Church Tottington - Risk Assessment for Re-opening for Private Prayer

Aspect of Control	Controls in place
Face Coverings	Social distancing at 2 m is possible and is being complied with at St Annes. This remains the most effective control measure in the hierarchy of control. However Government guidance extended the wearing of face coverings continues.
	Clergy may or may not wear a visor or other face covering, and this is based on an assessment of risk and other requirements such as their ability to be able to communicate clearly and be understood by Worshippers.
	Disposable facemasks are provided in church for any Worshippers who may require one on arrival at Church.
	In line with Government guidance exceptions to wearing face covering are permitted and these include if putting on, wearing or removing a face covering will cause you severe distress. Anyone not wearing a face covering may feel more comfortable showing something that says they do not have to wear a face covering. Therefore exception badges/notices will also be available in Church. These are also available free on the Gov.uk website.
	It is not the role of NCO's or other Church officers to enforce the use of face covering by Worshippers, but instead reasonable steps are taken to achieve this. Enforcement is a matter for the police. In line with Government Guidance anyone with reason not to wear a face covering should not be routinely asked to give any written evidence of this.
Church Cleaning	Weekly thorough cleaning of the church is arranged by a professional cleaning company, each cleaning session lasting 3.5 hours
	All touch points and the entry areas will be the focus of the cleaning regime
	Cleaning regime includes the use of Fumite OPP that is a type of fogging and this cleaning will be used regularly and as required.
	In church there are sanitising wipes and gloves for use by NCOs, who will wipe down surfaces during the breaks between private prayer opening times on any one day
	The use of the church remains infrequent, with more than 72 hours elapsing between use, therefore additional cleaning is not required
	All soft furnishings, kneelers, banners etc. and all other loose materials have been removed from church for the time being to assist with the cleaning processes
Nature of Worship	In line with government advice formal services will not take place at this time, only private prayer
	Church will be open at specified and extended times to help manage social distancing and ensure NCOs are available
	The times for private prayer will be decided week by week and the schedule will be published in advance and communicated via the website and other means. Worshippers will be encouraged to stagger arrival and departure times
	Recorded music may also be used to support the private prayer
	St Anne's organ is maintained by the organist and positioned more than 2 m from the pew area, so it is possible to offer organ music intermittently and informally while the church is open for private prayer

Aspect of Control	Controls in place
Nature of Worship continued...	Singing by the congregation is not permitted at present and the choir will not form part of private prayer
	Prayer books will not be available and neither will these be needed at this time, as there are no formal services
	Worshippers may bring their own prayer books/bible/other texts for personal use during the private prayer
	The single church bell may be rung for 5 minutes before each private prayer time. It will always be rung by one of the NCOs from the wardens pew (not upstairs) and they will wear gloves
	Candles can be lit by worshippers, using a single use taper and while social distancing is maintained. A metal bin is provided for the disposal of the used tapers
Coronavirus Symptoms	In line with government guidance anyone self-isolating with symptoms or from a household where there is someone self-isolating, or they have been requested by test and trace to self-isolate, should not come to church for private prayer until their period of self-isolation is over.
	If it is subsequently determined that a worshipper who recently attended the church is confirmed as having coronavirus then the church may if considered necessary, be closed and thoroughly cleaned by a professional cleaning company prior to any reopening. This may result in a revised schedule for private prayer being published.
Role of NCOs	As indicated above at least two NCOs will be on duty at all times that the church is open, one positioned outside to greet and record names and one inside to manage the door opening/closing, so touch points are minimised
	The NCOs will greet worshippers, record name and contact details, while maintaining social distancing and indicate if there is sufficient space available for them to enter the church at this time (max 30 people)
	NCOs will explain the seating arrangements, the one-way system and exit point, the location of the hand sanitisers etc. They will also explain the nature of the worship.
	It may be necessary for worshippers to wait outside for a short period of time if social distancing does not allow them to enter just at that time
	NCOs will record the name and contact details of the worshippers before they enter the church
	The NCOs in church may need to discreetly and at a social distance indicate to existing worshippers that others are waiting
	In the event of an emergency the NCOs will give clear instruction on how to leave the building (both doors can be used for exit in this event) and how social distancing can be maintained at that time
	NCOs are recommended to use the gloves provided and bring their own pens to record details of worshippers