

# Church and Hall Lettings Risk Assessment for Coronavirus Infection – St Paul’s URC 2021



From 19 July – Step 4 of the [Roadmap out of lockdown](#)

## Introduction

This assessment covers use of St Paul’s church for public worship and the halls for lettings. It is based on current Government guidance for [places of worship](#), [community facilities](#) and [people who are clinically extremely vulnerable](#) plus the [\(NYA\) guidance](#) for children and young people’s activities. The [URC guidance](#) and Moderators’ letter (8 July) underpin the approach.

It can be shared widely and will be published on the church website. Please ensure the latest document is used – government guidance is changing rapidly. We will review in early Autumn

## Philosophy

- As a church in our local community we are aware of our members, visitors, neighbours and reputation; we will maintain high standards of compliance and keep people informed and feeling as comfortable as possible.
- We will bear with each other, showing respect understanding, continuing care and kindness for others. Some people may have more concerns than others about the virus and this may not be easy to identify. We will keep this in mind, listen carefully, discuss, and demonstrably minimise risk of infection. We continue to support the vaccination programme.
- In line with guidance from the URC, we strongly recommend people continue to wear a face covering indoors (including whilst singing), but we recognise this is now a matter of personal choice and will bear with one another in good grace.
- Worship arrangements will continue as during May and June 2021 but will incorporate seated singing. Services may be a little longer, up to an hour. Communion will continue with Minister-only serving for now. Hymn books/ bibles are optional, words will be in the order of service.
- To help reduce crowding in the corridor, we will continue to use the main doors for church and the large hall, with the car park entrance for those with limited mobility or for circulation when the large hall only is in use.
- Indoors, we will continue to keep spaces well ventilated and maintain distancing where possible. All entrances will have hand sanitiser. People will be encouraged to wash their hands regularly.
- Cleaning of regularly touched surfaces will be done frequently. The church will be sanitised after morning worship on Sundays and halls between users where appropriate Toilets will be cleaned regularly and we ask users to clean surfaces after themselves with materials provided.
- Halls lettings will resume for all activities with numbers limited to the pre-covid capacity of the building. The halls can be sanitised between lets if required and we will request that hirers follow recommended government guidance around numbers, face coverings and behaviours.
- Junior church groupings and activities are at the discretion of the leaders. Crèche will be available with arrangements at the discretion of helpers
- We will collect and keep records of attendees for 21 days as required by the NHS Track and Trace system manually or via QR code. This will be GDPR compliant and secure Use of the Track and Trace App will be encouraged.

Completed by: SE with MK, CS and CH Date of assessment 15/7 /21\_v12 Contact Sue Eardley: Secretary@StPaulsURC.org.uk 07971 068887

**Process** We carried out a full, scored risk assessment during 2020 and updated it to match the government guidance. A simplified updated version is below which provides an easier reference and a better chance of implementation. This was agreed by elders in July 2020

Risk No	Details	Mitigation
1	Seating close together indoors for public worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Sanctuary recommended capacity 54 individuals/couples.</li> <li>➤ Specify with markers on seats to encourage distancing</li> <li>➤ Strongly recommend face coverings indoors and offer on entry</li> </ul>
2	Handling of items – cross-infection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Collect own service sheet and bible / hymn book if desired</li> <li>➤ Communion process continues – gloves for prep, minister serving, help yourself</li> <li>➤ Offerings – deposit on exit or entry into box or basket (envelopes for communion)</li> <li>➤ Refreshment providers minimise touching and include wrapped biscuits.</li> <li>➤ Hand sanitisers on entry</li> </ul>
3	Minimising airborne transmission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ One way system in with clear signage – avoiding corridors</li> <li>➤ Announcements, written materials, encouragement by elders</li> <li>➤ Singing will be incorporated in worship – seated with face coverings recommended</li> <li>➤ Secure doors and windows open where permissible – close afterwards to maintain fire safety</li> <li>➤ Refreshments after worship outside with big tables or by large hall doors if wet</li> </ul>
4	Too many people in the halls to distance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Suggest to hirers including CoP that guidance is followed.</li> <li>➤ For church events limit numbers and encourage distancing</li> </ul>
5	People attend with symptoms of COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Discourage attendance</li> <li>➤ Advise to go straight home and take a test</li> <li>➤ Rigorously clean everywhere that may have been contaminated</li> <li>➤ If test positive close building immediately for up to 72 hours</li> <li>➤ Advise attendees and NHST&amp;T as appropriate</li> </ul>
6	Insufficient cleaning – contaminated surfaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Regular cleaning of high-touch areas and cleaning materials available for hirers</li> <li>➤ Use 'fogger' after worship and available for use between lets.</li> </ul>
7	Toilet facilities – enclosed space and multi-touch surfaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Cleaning plan in place, provide sprays and wipes in toilet areas</li> <li>➤ One in one out system recommended</li> </ul>
8	Data breach – track and trace records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Store completed forms in locked office</li> <li>➤ QR code used wherever possible</li> <li>➤ Clear GDPR notices available at all signing points</li> <li>➤ Clarify with hirers their responsibilities</li> </ul>

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### **Specific considerations for Specific Groups and Lettings**

#### **Contract – revised contract to include**

- Letting to groups permitted under current guidance
- Use largest available hall to encourage distancing and ventilation
- Doors and windows to be open, sanitiser and face coverings to be used where possible
- Request users to clean toilet and high use points regularly and after let if possible
- Details to be kept by hirer of all attendees for 21 days / QR codes to be used.

#### **Youth Council / Nearly new sales, jumble sales, card sales**

- Refreshments can be offered for consuming outdoors
- Sanitising on entry, QR codes and face coverings recommended indoors.

#### **St Paul's Guild, Church meetings and elders meetings**

- Meetings permissible indoors, face coverings and ventilation recommended
- Guild future format still being agreed, summertime gatherings are outdoors, with care and face coverings recommended if wet and people are consequently meeting indoors.