

St. Giles' Cripplegate

Risk Assessment for Opening Church Buildings to the Public: Bell Ringing

Version Control

Issue Date	Version Number	Issued by
23 rd . August 2020	1.4	Gwen Rogers/Chris Rimmer

Churches and cathedrals have been legally permitted to open for purposes of individual private prayer from 13th June. House of Bishops guidance provided for churches to open for funerals from 15th June. Public worship, with measures in place for social distancing, were allowed from 4th July. Other activities, except for a few still prohibited by law, may also take place in churches, subject to the government guidance in place for the relevant sector.

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, it 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. You should read the advice on re-opening buildings and the guidance on public worship before completing this assessment. Both are available on the [Church of England Coronavirus pages](#)

This risk assessment is in addition to that issued when opening the church buildings to the public. Ref. <https://www.stgilesnewsite.co.uk/app/download/31617010/Parish+Risk+Assessment+Template+v.4.1.pdf>.

Guidance for Bell Ringing has been agreed between the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers (CCCBR) and the House of Bishops COVID-19 Recovery Group. It is published on the CCCBR website at <https://cccb.org.uk/coronavirus/>.

Risk assessment template

Church: St Giles' Cripplegate		Assessor's name: Gwen Rogers		Date completed: 23.08.2020		Review date: 23.11.2020	
Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name			
Mechanical checks of bells and fittings. Bells and fittings may have deteriorated through lack of use. Water ingress. Pigeons and/or other pests.	Complete the CCCBR recommended health and safety checks for bells after a period without ringing.	https://cccbr.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/2-CCCBR-SMWG-Tower-and-bells-risk-assessment-after-non-use-15-June-2020.pdf	Henry Coggill or Phil & Gwen				
	Bells to be rung up and ropes secured.			Phil & Gwen			
Church neighbours Possible complaints about noise.	After a long silence, it is advisable for the Incumbent and ringers to alert church neighbours and the local community that limited ringing will be resuming at specific times, and that the ringing may sound "different" from normal ringing, at least for an initial period.						
Covid-19 symptoms Possible source of infection.	Anyone with Covid symptoms, who has tested positive or been in contact with anyone with symptoms, must not enter church or tower until they have self-isolated for the recommended time (2 weeks)		All Ringers				

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Access to the tower for the bell ringers. Possible sources of infection among ringers and/or congregation. Separation necessary for Test and Trace.	Congregation access to the church is via the north door. Use of the west door is recommended for the ringers. The key holder only will enter via the north door and open the west door from inside.		All Ringers	
	Ringers should meet outside the west door 15 minutes before ringing commences to allow time to climb the stairs.		All Ringers	
	Social distancing of at least 2 metre between households/bubbles must be observed on the stairs.		All Ringers	
	Ringers must not cross on the stairs.		All Ringers	
	Each ringer should wear a soft face covering (not a visor), put on before entering the church and removed only after leaving the church. Make sure that the face covering used will not risk catching in a rope or anything else as you ring.		All Ringers	
	The ringers may not use the toilets because to do so would bring them into contact with congregation and/or clergy.		All Ringers	
	Hand sanitiser will be provided at the base of the tower and must be used by all entering the tower.	Ask Jake to arrange dispenser at west door.	Parish Administrator & All Ringers	
Access to the tower for non-ringers. Covid-19 survives on surfaces for less than 72 hours.	Before and after ringing the tower should not be entered, except by the ringers involved, for 72 hours.		Parish Administrator	

<p>Ringling Chamber. Possible infection if items are handled by more than one person.</p>	Must be cleaned before ringing and all loose items e.g. spare ropes stored securely.		Phil & Gwen	
	Open doors and/or windows to create a gentle draught but avoid a strong draught that could blow ropes or dislodge things. N.B only one person should operate door handles, windows and light switches.		All Ringers	
	Use hand sanitiser before catching hold to ring.		All Ringers	
	One person only, to operate the rope spider.		All Ringers	
	Each ringer is responsible for removing their own property to avoid the need for others to touch it.		All Ringers	
<p>Ringling Possible infection if ropes are handled by more than one person. Aerosol transmission.</p>	A ringer may only ring one bell at a session.		All Ringers	
	Ensure the ropes used comply with the social distancing requirements. Ref. Annex 1.		All Ringers	
	Minimise loud speaking to reduce risk of exhaled droplets (aerosols). This is a particular consideration for the conductor with loud bells or with ringers who are hard-of-hearing.		All Ringers	
	In the unlikely event of someone losing control, helping recover the bell takes precedence over transmission risk. DO NOT RING AGAIN UNTIL any risk of virus transmission has been minimised (hand washing etc, as appropriate) and actions have been taken to prevent a similar incident recurring.		All Ringers	
	Face coverings will muffle commands, so keep the ringling simple.		All Ringers	
	An interval of at least 72 hours must occur between ringling sessions unless the same bells are rung by the same ringers each time.		All Ringers	
<p>Test and Trace</p>	Ringling will be by invited bands and contact details recorded by the organiser.		PCC or Tower Secretary	

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ANNEX 1 BELLS THAT CAN BE RUNG WITH SOCIAL DISTANCING

H Household or Social Bubble

R Single ringer.

Bells	Distance between Ropes (cms)	Bell to be Rung	Social Distance 2m	Social Distance 2m	Social Distance 2m	Social Distance 1m	Social Distance 1m	Social Distance 1m with footprints/adjustments
1-2	61.6	1					H1	
2-3	85	2 (2#)		R	R			
3-4	77	3	R			H1	H2	
4-5	91.5	4		R	H2	H1	H2	
5-6	93	5	R		H2			R (7cm right)
6-7	110	6		R		R	R	R
7-8	116	7	R		R	R	R	R
8-9	123	8		R		R	R	R
9-0	113	9	R		R	R	H3	R
0-E	87	0					H3	R (13cm right)
E-T	86	E	H1		H1	H2		R
T-1	89	T	H1		H1	H2	H1	R (11cm left)