**Parish of St Paul’s Wilford Hill West Bridgford**

**Risk Assessment**

**Activity: COVID risk assessment for conducting funerals Date of risk assessment: 11 May 2021**

**Location: St Paul’s Church, Boundary Road, West Bridgford**

**Name of person with Responsibility: Charles George (Church warden) Date to be reviewed: TBA**

**This Risk Assessment assesses the risks arising from conducting funerals. This document recognises the natural wish to offer comfort at a time of grieving, but that personal contact must be avoided, or at the very least restricted, if transmission of the virus is to be brought under control.**

**CJG: Charles George**

**WP: Wendy Pearce**

**TF: Rev Tim Fox**

**Planning for the service:**

1. **Communication with the bereaved must be done safely; this may mean by telephone or a form of video link. Documents, books, photographs or other artefacts cannot be shared.**
2. **Inevitably there are limits to being able to offer a traditional family service, for example, due to the Covid secure restriction on numbers and not being able to sing, and, therefore, consideration to be given to a memorial service when government guidance permits.**
3. **There is a likelihood that families or friends may not be able to attend either because of the Covid secure limitation on numbers, or due to self-isolating or having symptoms. There is the possibility of streaming on Zoom, but this is reliant on us having capacity at the funeral service. The bereaved family should be made aware that we cannot guarantee being able to do this, but consideration will be given to any request, which in most circumstances should be possible. Aside from the possibility of remote participation, consideration will be given to recording the service, which can be sent to anyone unable to attend and, if this is also not possible, an order of service may be provided (sent by e-mail or post) either by the funeral director or TF.**

**Regard should also be had to the Risk Assessment for Opening Church Buildings to the Public, the contents of which are not repeated in this document.**

**This document will be reviewed based upon our experience and ongoing Government and Church of England guidance. In this respect we will have regard to:**

1. **Government Guidance:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-a-funeral-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic>
2. **Church of England Guidance:** <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-10/COVID%2019%20Advice%20on%20Conducting%20Funerals%20v5.4.pdf>

| **What are the hazards?** | **Who might be harmed and how?** | **Controls required** | **Do you need to do anything else to manage this risk?** | **Action by whom?** | **Action by when?** | **Done** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Spread of COVID 19 | All attendees, those whom they subsequently contact and those subsequently coming to church. | **Numbers attending**  As from 17 May 2021 there is a no longer a legal maximum of 30 people, but this is subject to our Covid secure maximum. | Our maximum for services is approximately 50 people depending on the number of individuals or couples or other groups attend bearing in mind 2 households can now sit together and also the Rule of 6. | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| As above | As above | **Social Distancing**   1. All present will always be asked to maintain a safe distance of at least 2 metres between households (from 17 May 2021, 2 households can sit together) and not to sit in groups of more than 6 (Rule of 6). 2. 2 empty chairs will be left between households (as defined above). | We have notices on display in the foyer and in the church.  The church warden or agreed verger will provide instructions about the seating arrangements.  There will be an expectation that the funeral directors will assist with good stewarding and in advance of the funeral explain to the deceased’s family the limitations and mitigations impacting on the attendance at church to include reminding mourners there should not be shaking of hands, hugging or kissing outside of own households, but to be alert to Government guidance that as from 17 May 2021 hugging is allowed with friends and family but with care. | CJG/WP | At the service. |  |
| As above | As above | **Entry (by attendees)**  By the main door.  **Exit**  By the priest’s door (sign in place). This avoids any mingling in the foyer.  **Route of casket**  Entry and exit through the main door. | Guidance given by church warden or agreed verger. | CJG/WP | At the service. |  |
| As above | As above | **Consider any possible impact on Willow.** | Aside from Monday afternoons and holidays, Willow use the halls and have access through the foyer to the disabled toilet. It is best to agree a date or time when Willow are not open, but if this is not possible, we will need to liaise with Willow and the funeral directors to limit cross over use of the foyer and toilet. | TF | In advance and at the service. |  |
| As above | As above | **Hand sanitation**  Sanitisers are to be used on entry and exit. These are positioned in the foyer, in the body of the church and by the exit. | No | CJG/WP/TF | At the service. |  |
| As above | As above | **Ventilation**  Good ventilation is a key mitigation. We have external doors that will be opened in advance and can be left open if conditions permit. However, we also have window louvres and vents in the roof that will be opened. | Consider informing the funeral directors that due to increased ventilation the conditions may be cooler than preferred and mourners should dress accordingly. | CJG/WP/TF | In advance and at the service. |  |
| As above | As above | **Face coverings**  It is mandatory to wear face coverings subject to medical exemptions. | Notices in place.  We have a stock of spares should any be needed.  Those officiating or making an address or reading can take their face coverings off. There is more than adequate social distancing from the raised dais and the rows of chairs in the body of the church. Funeral directors to remind the deceased’s family about face coverings and that they can be removed if someone is speaking from the front of the church. | CJG/WP/TF | In advance and at the service. |  |
| As above | As above | **Music**  In line with current guidance there can be no singing to minimize the risk of infection, but music can be provided by an organist or using our sound system. | Music provision to be discussed with funeral directors. | TF | In advance of service |  |
| As above | As above | **Worship material**  The use of bibles should be avoided. | On request we can provide bibles which we can quarantine.  Usual practice is for Orders of Service to be provided safely by the funeral directors and taken away by mourners or safely disposed of by the funeral directors. | CJG/WP | At service. |  |
| As above | As above | **Toileting**  The toilet in the foyer can be used but not those off hall 1 as required by Willow. | The warden will clean the toilet after the service. In addition, there is a daily cleaning regime on site carried out by Willow Cleaners. | CJG/WP | At service. |  |
| As above | As above | **Attendance Record**  A record of attendance will be retained for 21 days in line with NHS Test and Trace guidelines. | It is our expectation that the funeral directors will retain this information. | TF | In advance of service and on the day. |  |
| As above | As above | **Mourners who are self-isolating or are extremely clinically vulnerable.** | Guidelines recognise that individuals in either category can be facilitated to attend (although this is discouraged), but not at the same ceremony. Detailed guidance is as set out in Sections 9 and 10 of Church of England Advice for Attending Funerals (see link in preamble to this document). **NOTE**: The diocesan position is to strongly advise that close family members who have tested positive or have symptoms do not attend. However, if such a person wants to attend TF should be notified so that he can take appropriate measures, including deciding whether he can officiate or needs to identify an alternative officiant. | TF | In advance of service and on the day. |  |
| As above | As above | **Cleaning**  Steps must be taken to ensure cleaning before and after the service. | Our main risk assessment details our cleaning regime and cleaning materials used. If there is less than 72 hours from a service preceding the funeral service, or after that service, we will ensure the church is cleaned paying attention to frequently touched objects and surfaces. | CJG/WP | In advance of service and on the day. |  |