

**CHANCTONBURY COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS POLICY (9)  
CHURCH IN COVID PROTOCOL**

This protocol applies to all services/congregational use, including general worship, and occasional office services in church buildings.

**Cleaning:**

- Cleaning will be undertaken professionally twice per week in Ashington and Washington and once per week at Buncton.
- Those utilising the churches for essential work, private prayer or any permitted services are requested to wipe down all touchpoints with the provided disinfectant sprays and paper towels.

**Face Coverings:**

- All team and congregation members will be required to wear face coverings while in a church building.
- You do not need to wear a face covering if you have legitimate reason not to. Examples of these include, but are not limited to: those leading the service, the bride and groom, those with or talking with individuals who have communication difficulties, children under the age of 11, other medical reasons. For a comprehensive list, please visit the C of E COVID guidelines online.
- Those leading all or any part of a service will wear masks when not contributing. When leading, they can remove their mask but will ensure 2 metre social distancing between themselves and the congregation.
- We will have spare masks available for team or anyone who requests a mask, e.g. having forgotten theirs.
- Face shields may only be used with an accompanying face covering that specifically covers the nose and mouth.

**Attendance:**

- Churches are not required to meet in person and should make a decision based on the safety of all those concerned. At the point of writing, Chanctonbury Church has decided to move services online.
- In person services would be permitted under current regulations should the incumbent and PCC decide to resume in person worship, but people are advised to avoid travelling outside of their village, town or part of a city.
- Individual prayer remains open at Ashington, Washington and Buncton. Individual prayer should be an individual person, or single household or support bubble. They may enter the church to pray on their own and not as part of a wider group comprised of multiple households.
- For any services, there will be an online ticketing system in place using ChurchSuite with strict numbers pertaining to the safe numbers of attendees.
- The ticketing system will hold information for use if needed by NHS Test and Trace. A COVID-19 Privacy Policy is in place.

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- Permitted numbers allowed in the churches is currently based on 2 metre social distancing in all settings:
  - Ashington can currently accommodate a maximum of 50 attendees, not including team.
  - Washington can currently accommodate a maximum of 40 attendees, not including team.
  - Bunton can currently accommodate a maximum of 15 attendees including team.
  - Teams should be kept to an absolute minimum for any services.
- No groups larger than six should arrive or depart from church together, unless it is made up of one household (and any support bubble element).
- Attendees must not mingle inside or outside the church building with friends and family unless they are part of their household or valid support bubble.
- Name, address and phone number of unbooked attendees will be taken and added to the Church Suite record of the event subsequently.
- Where necessary, single-use service sheets will be placed on seats prior to the service starting and attendees will be asked to take them away with them by the service host.
- All church buildings in use are fitted with a free-standing hand-sanitising station on entry and a member of the hosting team will be appointed to oversee the application of hygiene requirements and social distancing.
- Services should be conducted in the shortest reasonable time.
- Once completed, participants will be encouraged to move on promptly, to minimise the risk of contact and spread of infection.
- If an attendee exhibits Covid19 symptoms during a service, the service will be stopped and all attending will be advised to proceed directly to their homes, self isolate, and follow government guidelines on Test and Trace.

## **Worship:**

- Worship taking place inside does not allow for congregants to audibly sing or shout.
- Background music should be played in the churches at a volume that makes conversation achievable at a normal volume to prevent people from having to talk louder.
- The worship team should be kept to a minimum number of participants.
- Any instrument played during worship should be cleaned thoroughly before and after use.

## **Children and Youth:**

- Currently, no children and youth activities are permitted to take place.
- Mother and baby groups can take place with multiple adults supervising children. Adults should maintain social distancing with other adults from different households. Organised groups can take place with up to 15 people, children under 5 are not included in this limit.
- Currently, schools are not able to use church buildings.

## **Occasional Offices:**

- For funerals, the national guideline of 30 attendees (excluding staff and minister facilitating) will be followed.

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- For stone setting ceremonies, scattering of ashes and other similar events, the national guideline of 6 attendees (excluding staff and minister facilitating) will be followed.
- For marriages, the national guideline of 6 attendees (excluding staff and minister facilitating) will be followed.
- For baptisms, dedications and other similar significant life-cycle events, these are currently recommended to be postponed unless essential.
- It is strongly advised that only the essential aspects of these life ceremonies take place at this time.

## **Church Office:**

- Where employees of the church can work from home, they should do so. Permission to be office based must be signed off by the Head of Operations.
- No access is currently permitted to the church office for volunteers or members of the public at this time.
- Anyone using the church office must wear a face covering at all times and sanitise on arrival and departure.
- Those using the church office are requested to wipe down all touchpoints with the provided disinfectant sprays and paper towels.

## **Other Precautions:**

- The service leader should make an announcement at each service reminding congregants of the key COVID-secure points:
  - If you display any symptoms please do not attend.
  - Unless exempt, please wear a face mask at all times when inside.
  - Unless you have a condition preventing you, please hand sanitise on arrival.
  - Please do not mingle with anyone outside your household or support bubble.
  - At the beginning and end of services, please leave the church premises promptly.
- On days when the weather is particularly cold, doors may be shut to the church as long as two windows can remain open for the duration of the service to ensure sufficient ventilation. Doors should then be reopened before and after each service.
- Where possible cash donations should be discouraged. Where this is not an option, cash should be collected in a receptacle that is set in one place and handled by one individual. Gloves should be worn to handle cash offerings.
- Food and drinks are not to be given out during services and the kitchens in all churches remain closed to all use. Where individuals may need a drink or snack they are encouraged to bring their own from home.