

# UPDATED National CofE advice on COVID-19

Further detailed advice has now been published on the Church of England website about:

- Pastoral visits
- Updated advice for clergy on access
- Keeping buildings clean
- A parish risk assessment template

## 1. Pastoral Care

In addition to the national advice, please note,

1. that where someone requesting a visit may have COVID-19 but this has not been confirmed, the circumstances should be discussed with the relevant Archdeacon before any visit is undertaken.
2. This also applies where another member of the household may be infected.

Now that up to 6 people may meet outside,

1. clergy may wish to undertake pastoral visits in private gardens, ensuring they remain two metres away from anyone else at all times.
2. The guidance note advises against going directly from one home to another when it is necessary to visit someone inside their house and clergy should note this when seeing people outside as well.

In addition:

Any lay people visiting on behalf of the church

1. should only do so with the incumbent's explicit consent for each visit
2. must already be authorised to undertake home visits, with a DBS check and confidential declaration completed.

Home Communion may not be offered at present.

**2. Please note** that in Church of England Birmingham at present, access of any kind to church buildings is only possible for repairs, maintenance or construction work:

1. with the approval of the relevant Archdeacon.
2. subject to a COVID-19 safe working environment being achieved. Where external contractors are on site, the PCC should obtain advice from their Principal Designer (Health & Safety consultant) to confirm that the contractor and site can achieve a safe working environment for the operatives on site; including a method statement (provided by or in agreement with the contractor) demonstrating how COVID-19 mitigation measures such as social distancing, hand cleansing, site and building cleaning and mitigating transmission risk, will be carried out.
3. If no Principal Designer is in place for a particular project, please contact the Property Director Daniel Mayes [danielm@cofebirmingham.com](mailto:danielm@cofebirmingham.com)

**3.** The advice about keeping buildings clean is limited to when access to church buildings becomes less restricted, but gives useful information for our future planning.

**4.** Where the PCC has tenants or regular hirers who work in their church halls, with the approval of the relevant Archdeacon such work may now be resumed and subject to a COVID-19 safe working environment being achieved. Approval will only be given for named employees or clients to use the building; there can be no public access unless the premises are being used for a Food Bank.

The Updated Guidance documents are found on the national CofE website, via the following links:

- **Pastoral visits**
- **Updated advice for clergy on access**
- **Keeping buildings clean**
- **A parish risk assessment template** which should be completed.

*The Venerable Jenny Tomlinson, Archdeacon of Birmingham*

*The Venerable Simon Heathfield, Archdeacon of Aston*