

Risk Assessment for Mellor Church Choir Return to Practices and Services

16th April 2021

This risk assessment draws on the following published guidance:

- RSCM COVID-19: Guidance for Safely Resuming Group Music-making in Church updated 7th April 2021
- Church of England: Advice on the Conduct of Public Worship [16/4/2021] the singing in worship section of this essentially directs to the RSCM COVID-19 resource.
- Government Guideline:
 - COVID-19: guidance for the safe use of places of worship during the pandemic updated 12th April 2021
 - Working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19): Performing Arts updated 15th April 2021

All these may be easily accessed via the following link: <http://www.rscm.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/FAQs-re-Singing-26th-Mar-2021.pdf>

Headline messages from the guidance:

- The choir is allowed to meet and sing indoors in church only – to rehearse, record and in front of congregations in services
- There is no difference now whether the choir is professional or volunteer
- There is no defined limit on the size of choir – this is limited only by the risk assessment eg. room size etc to allow adequate mitigation of risks (eg social distancing). As local prevalence changes and national guidance recommendations change, the choir may meet in smaller groups as appropriate. Currently smaller groups are recommended
- For spacing – it is suggested that a cautious approach would be at least 1 metre with mitigations (eg not singing ‘at’ each other but singing in a straight line facing forwards) and 2 metres from people in front of them.
- Advised to use own music and own robes only. No need to wash robes.
- Venue needs to be ‘COVID secure’:
 - Register for Track and Trace
 - Cleaning surfaces before and after (including seats/stalls/organ)
 - Hand sanitisation on entry and exit
 - One way systems to minimise contact
- Face masks to be worn on arrival and departure. Also we shall need to keep them on in vestry/church until safely arrived at our places where we can remove them in both rehearsals and services as we are leading the worship (Congregation have to keep theirs on and are also NOT ALLOWED TO SING!).
- Should not compel people back at this point!
- Singers should bring their own water – no shared refreshments
- Rehearsals should be as efficient as possible with a minimum of social contact (I like this one) ie. No unnecessary talking!
- Staggered arrival and departure times advised when in larger groups
- Maximise ventilation eg. Consider holding rehearsals in the main body of the church rather than a modestly-sized rehearsal room.

Things for all choristers to do/ think about before a session

1. Are you well? If not, tell Tom and DO NOT COME TO CHOIR
2. Make sure you use the toilet before you leave home to minimise shared use of the vestry toilet
3. Bring your water bottle (preferably named), a pencil and a face mask with you
4. Make sure you arrive on time for rehearsals and staggered times for services when we are operating a full choir (Adults without trebles get priority access until 15mins before service)
5. Have you had a recent negative result from a lateral flow test? This would ideally be done by everyone (but still DO NOT COME if you are in any way unwell). Test kits are now available freely from pharmacies.

Things for trebles to do at the beginning of the session

1. Put on face mask
2. Entry via external Vestry Door
3. Hand sanitize
4. Register
5. Get music from pigeon holes
6. Go through church to your place in the stalls (if rehearsal) or put on your robes and await start of service (stand as well out of the way of others as you can).
7. On arrival in the stalls pick up a wipe from near Organ
8. Wipe down your place
9. Sit quietly for start of rehearsal

Things for adults to do at the beginning of the session

1. Put on face mask
2. Entry via external Vestry Door
3. Hand sanitize
4. Register
5. Get music from pigeon holes
6. Go through church to your place in the stalls (if rehearsal) or pick up your robes and make your way to your place in the Lady Chapel to robe for a service.
7. Route to the Lady Chapel for a service is out via the Vestry Fire Door and back in through the Tower Door if light and dry or if dark/wet via the church but avoid close contact with the congregation.
8. Pick up a wipe from the Lady Chapel
9. Wipe down your place
10. Robe (if a service)
11. Sit quietly for start of rehearsal/service

Things for choristers to do at the end of the session

1. Wipe down place
2. Don't forget to put your wipe in a bin
3. Put on face mask
4. Adults at the end of services to remain seated until after the organ music finishes and then go to vestry by the most appropriate route
5. Music to pigeonhole
6. Don't forget to take your water bottle and pencil away with you
7. Leave through the Vestry door

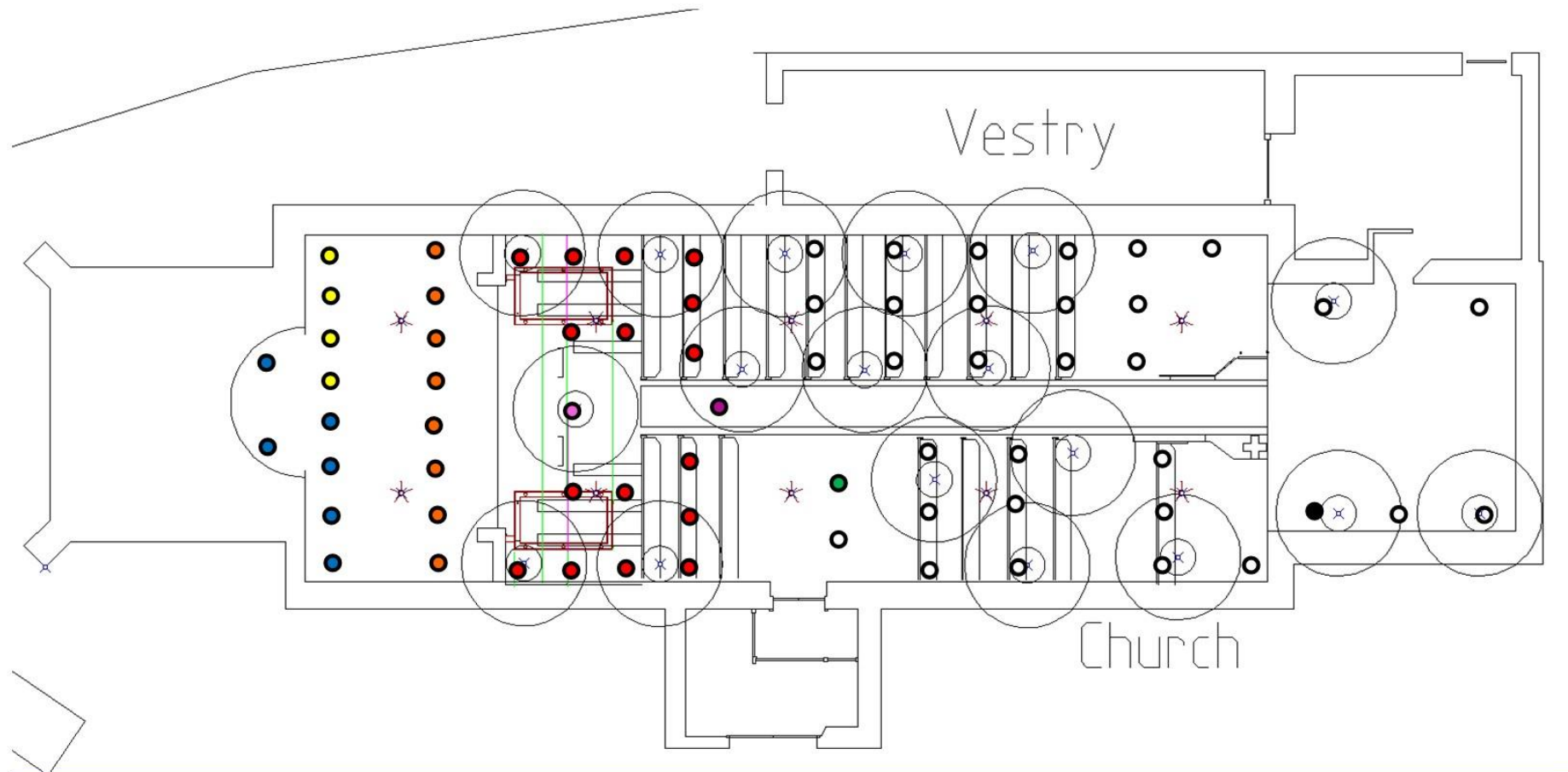
Pre Session Checklist

- Unlock vestry door x2, (South Door at break), Tower Door, Vestry Fire Door, Toilet
- Switch on camera and lights as necessary
- Check all window hoppers open in church
- Vestry toilet – touch areas wiped down, sufficient paper hand towels and soap, room in bin
- Hand sanitisation points in place (with bins) – vestry door, south door, organ, lady chapel
- Remove cords across aisle
- Anti bacterial wipes at organ and Lady Chapel
- Music in individual pigeon holes
- Cones out indicating seating places
- Register for track and trace

Post Session Checklist

- Lock vestry door x2, (South Door on exit), Tower Door, Vestry Fire Door, Toilet
- Leave all window hoppers open in church
- Vestry toilet – touch areas wiped down, sufficient paper hand towels and soap, room in bin for next time or report
- Hand sanitisation points tidy and stocked (with room in bins) – vestry door, south door, organ, lady chapel. No stray wipes.
- Replace cords across aisle
- Collect in cones indicating seating places
- Register for track and trace to be locked in Vestry (as contains contact details)
- Switch off camera and lights – remote control to PA cabinet if used.

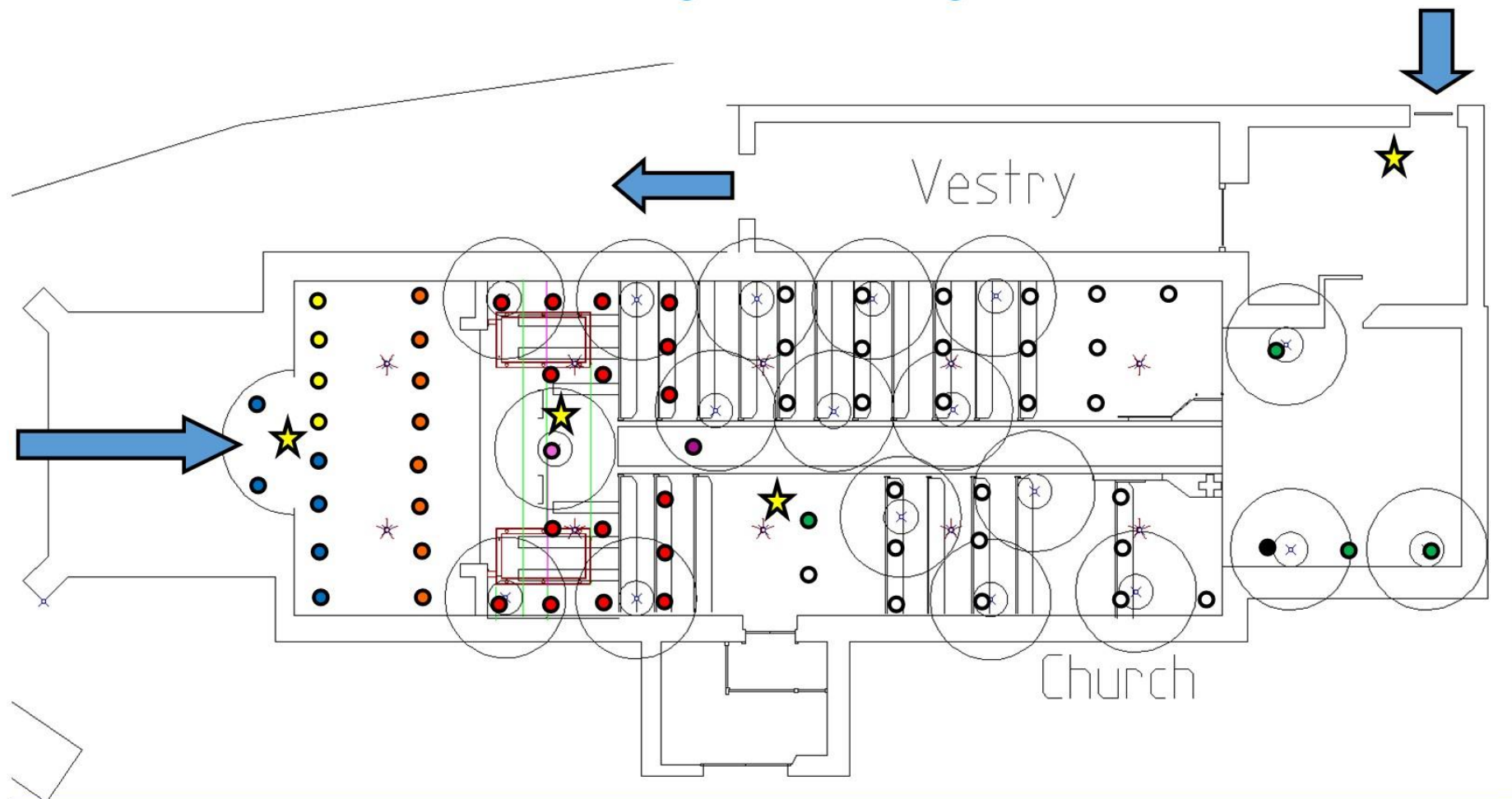
Social Distancing in Church for Choral Evensong



Trebles 16 (red) Altos 8 (orange) Tenors 4 (yellow) Basses 6 (blue) Organist 1 (pink) Conductor 1 (purple) Vicar 1 (black) Sidesperson 1 (green) other Congregation 31 (white)



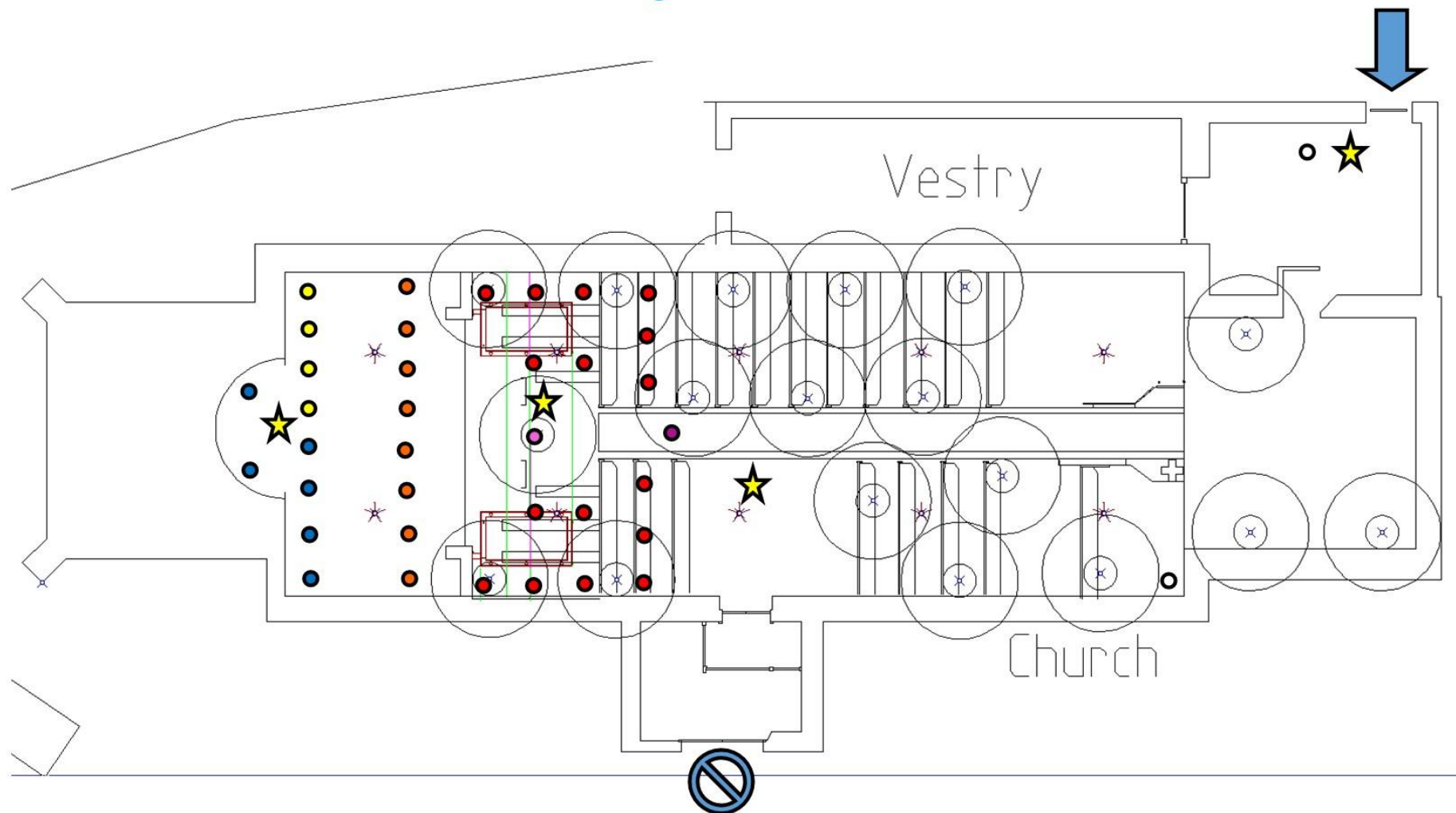
Social Distancing in Church for Sung Eucharist



Trebles 16(red) Altos 8(orange) Tenors 4(yellow) Basses 6(blue) Organist 1(pink) Conductor 1(purple) Vicar 1(black) Server/Assistant/Sidespersons 4(green) other Congregation 26 (white)



Social Distancing in Church for Choir Rehearsal



Trebles 16(red) Altos 8(orange) Tenors 4(yellow) Basses 6(blue) Organist 1(pink) Conductor 1(purple) Adult helpers 1/2 (white)



The Full Risk Assessment Using RSCM Template as Applied to the Choir for Rehearsals and Services at Mellor Church

Access to church buildings for purposes of performance in live services						
Who is at risk?	What is the outline risk?	Controls required	Additional, specific control measures to be implemented	Priority (High/Med/Low)	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
Choristers, parents, organist, director	Transmission of virus through close personal contact	Choose one point of entry into the church to manage the flow of your musicians and indicate this with notices, keeping emergency exits available at all times. Where possible use a different entrance and exit to the congregation or other attendees.	Entry will be via the vestry door for rehearsals and services. If full choir service or rehearsal, adults will pick up music from their pigeon hole and robes (for service only) and go directly to their places either via the far end of the vestry fire exit and in through the Tower door (if light outside) or through the church if dark. Trebles will go through church to seats in stalls (processing if for a service) For Upper and Lower Voices we can just use the vestry as per trebles' instructions. Do not leave valuables in Vestry, take handbags etc to your place in church.	High	Choir to be advised	TDH 16/4/2021
Choristers, organist, director	Transmission of virus in enclosed space	Buildings have been aired before use. Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation.	Window hoppers in church will remain open throughout. Rehearsals and services to be held in the main church building. Pre-service rehearsals in the vestry are suspended. Trebles to be encouraged to go outside during any rehearsal break (Via South Door) if weather suitable.	High	Choir to be advised Check hoppers at beginning of each rehearsal Open Tower door to increase ventilation	TDH 16/4/2021

Choristers, organist, director	Insufficient cleaning of shared spaces	Review the CofE guide on cleaning church buildings, which can be found here . Agree a cleaning procedure before the event or ensure the venue will take responsibility for adequate cleaning. Complete the cleaning checklist (below) if appropriate.	Each chorister to pick up an antibacterial wipe in the vestry to clean the area of seating in church on arrival and again on leaving. Wipes to be safely disposed of by each chorister putting them in the bin	High	Choir to be advised Wipes at vestry exits Bin in vestry Prompt choristers	TDH 16/4/2021
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Choristers, organist, director	Additional risk of infection	Cordon off or remove from public access the area occupied by the musicians, as appropriate.	The choir stalls and Lady Chapel are cordoned off, the Vestry is locked.	Low	None	TDH 16/4/2021
Choristers, organist, director	Separated space is not observed for musicians	Survey the area to be occupied by your musicians to plan for physical distancing in seats, aisles, and allowing for the safe flow of visitors. Remember 1m plus in all directions from each person.	Choir spacing as per plan in rear pews, choir stalls and in Lady Chapel	High	Clear indication of seating using coloured cones	TDH 16/4/2021
Choristers, organist, director	Transmission of virus through close personal contact	Consider bottlenecks such as staircases or narrow corridors. Will you need to implement a one-way system?	<p>Our main issue is the size of vestry and need to visit on arrival and on leaving.</p> <p>Need to minimize time spent in the vestry by adults robing in the Lady Chapel when full choir.</p> <p>One way in through external vestry door – pick up music and robes (robes for service only).</p> <p>Adults directly to places in Lady Chapel either via Vestry fire door and Tower Door if light outside (or via church if dark or wet).</p> <p>Adults to remain in Lady chapel or go outside in between rehearsal and Choral Evensong but not to return to vestry. Toilets available in Parish Centre.</p> <p>Choristers to minimize use of vestry toilet by going before arrival and before Choral Evensong visiting the Parish Centre toilets.</p> <p>Trebles may return to vestry to have packed tea, robe etc but continue to socially distance as much as possible.</p> <p>Secondary school age children to</p>	High	<p>Choir to be advised</p> <p>Route from vestry fire door to Tower door to be cleaned to make less slippery on the gravestones</p> <p>Route from vestry fire door to Tower door to be made level</p>	<p>TDH 16/4/2021</p> <p>Complete TDH March 2021</p> <p>ID and WH Spring 2021</p>

			<p>wear masks when not eating.</p> <p>Limiting the numbers at any one time will also be helped with staggered arrival times (trebles by 6.30pm Adults by 7.30pm) for rehearsals. Adults without trebles encouraged to arrive at church with priority access up to 15 mins before the service starts)</p>			
Choristers, organist, director		Remind your performers beforehand about important safe practices. E.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing.	<p>Arrivals to be monitored by an adult or Head Chorister for prompting on what to do eg sanitizing, one-way system, wipes etc. and keeping register.</p> <p>Wipe down touch points in toilet before and after each session. Encourage good hand washing and use of paper towels.</p>	High	Choir to be advised	TDH 16/4/2021
Choristers, organist, director		If the church has been used in the last 72 hours, ensure high-risk surfaces and touch points have been wiped with appropriate sanitizer spray or disposable wipes.	Choristers responsible for wiping their own area.	High	Choir to be advised	TDH 16/4/2021

Choristers, organist, director		Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available.	Check hand towels before and after each rehearsal/service and wipe down touch points with antibacterial wipes. Parish Centre has own cleaning regime with the toilets there.	High	Choir to be advised	TDH 16/4/2021
Choristers, organist, director		Alert attendees on arrival to any particular hazards, and the need to take care while moving around the venue (particularly if wearing robes).		Low	Choir to be advised	TDH 16/4/2021
Choristers, organist, director		Remove any items that do not need to be present, particularly those in thoroughfares.	Already done	Low	Choir to be advised Clutter to be removed from vestry.	TDH 16/4/2021

Ensuring participants' safety

Who is at risk?	What is the outline risk?	Controls required	Additional, specific control measures to be implemented	Priority (High/Med/Low)	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
Choristers, organist, director	Attendee within the group is a virus carrier	Ensure current guidance on self-isolation is emphasized in pre-event communications.	Must stress that anyone who feels in any way unwell MUST NOT ATTEND Choir to be encouraged to lateral flow test on regular basis – preferably including on Thursday or Friday.	High	Choir to be advised	TDH 16/4/2021
Choristers, organist, director	Virus spread by hands	Determine placement of hand sanitizers available for your musicians to use.	Hand sanitization stations at Vestry door and South Door and inside Tower door in Lady chapel. Bins to dispose of wipes in same locations	Medium	Implement station and bin in Lady Chapel	TDH 16/4/2021

	Illness	Consider asking two people to learn a solo in case one is taken sick.	Yes or sing something else but we have strength and depth....	Low	TDH to bear in mind	TDH 16/4/2021
	Unexpected absence	Make it clear who attendees should contact if they are unable to come.	Contact Tom as usual if you can't attend	Low	Choir to be reminded	TDH 16/4/2021
	Illness	Ensure that there are at least two people on the event team able to fulfil each role (e.g. organist) and at least one additional person approved to supervise u18s.	Continue rota for adult in rehearsals on Friday – Kathryn has taken on this responsibility at CSG. Our biggest risk here is if John Le Grove is ill at short notice. Unaccompanied repertoire, Organ scholarship, other musicians and availability of the piano all help mitigate this but it is not going to cause risk of COVID.	Low	Continue to encourage Nathan's development Continue to build unaccompanied repertoire	TDH 16/4/2021
	Venue unavailable <i>(this circumstance might arise after a COVID occurrence)</i>	Consider whether it would be appropriate to have a standby (risk assessed) venue. How would a change of venue be communicated?	N/A			
Choristers, organist, director	Virus transmitted via printed music	Ensure that everyone has their own copy of the music/worship materials. Ideally, these should be brought from home. If music is handed out on the day, ensure the music is distributed and collected by one person wearing disposable gloves and that music is individual throughout.	Continue with system of individual music in pigeonholes.	Low	Choir to be reminded Pigeonholes to be maintained in advance of day of rehearsal/service	TDH 6/9/2020

Choristers, organist, director	Virus transmitted via printed music	If loan library music is being used, minimize the number of people handling it. Ask attendees to drop it into a large box at the end of the event and leave it for 72 hours before counting and returning.	Music not to be taken home. Any returning music to be quarantined in plastic box Scans of music to be available on website private section for home rehearsal	Low	Music to website and inform choir	TDH 16/4/2021
Choristers, organist, director	Virus transmitted through sharing of items	Ask attendees to bring their own writing implements (for marking music etc.)	Encourage to bring own pencil to each rehearsal	Low	Choir to be reminded	TDH 16/4/2021
Organists	Virus transmitted via (keyboard) instruments	Minimize the number of people playing the piano or organ during the service. Ideally, have only one accompanist.	We shall continue to allow Nathan to play as well as John but with wiping down of keyboard on transfer. This is important for developing our organ scholar.	Low	Organists already very aware of this	TDH 16/4/2021
Organists	Virus transmitted through sharing of items	Disinfect the organ consoles and piano: This must be done with a soft cloth sprayed with disinfectant. Disinfectant must not be applied directly to instruments.	Continue current practice with antibacterial wipes. Stock to be kept on the organ console and bin in choir stalls as usual	Low	Organists aware	TDH 16/4/2021
Organists		Hygiene instructions should be clearly visible on the organ console and hand sanitizer must be available at the console.	Already in place	Low	Organists aware	TDH 16/4/2021

Organists	Transmission of virus through close personal contact	Consider whether a page-turner is necessary in a confined organ loft – could temporary photocopies be used instead?	Good point – allow temporary photocopying as required and discourage use of page turners.	Low	Organists to be reminded	TDH 16/4/2021
Choristers	Transmission of virus through close personal contact	Consider using a larger space for robing if the vestry is small.	Trebles and director to use choir vestry Adults to use Lady Chapel if full choir	High	Choir to be advised	TDH 16/4/2021
Choristers	Transmission of virus through close personal contact	Arrange a larger space than would usually be required for 1:1 coaching/small group work.	Ribbon work will be suspended for now and focus on rehearsing.	Low	Choir and ribbons team to be advised	TDH 16/4/2021
Choristers	Transmission of virus through close personal contact	Set out chairs in advance, spaced according to guidelines. If using fixed pews or choirstalls, indicate with signs those to be used, spaced according to guidelines.	I have small cones to indicate where people should sit.	Medium	Tom will set out as required Seating plan to take into account any bubbles at home and school	TDH 16/4/2021
Director	Transmission of virus through close personal contact	If using choirstalls, consider moving the conductor so that they are not so close to the singers at the end of the row.	I shall stand further back so 2m from the organ. This will need an extension of the raised area.	High	Tom building extension to the raised area to enable constructing from further down the aisle.	TDH completed 23/9/2020
Choristers, Director	Transmission of virus through close personal contact	Consider whether registration could be done without face-to-face contact and/or a queue.	Initially I think that having somebody on the entrance to register new arrivals will work best as someone will be needed to prompt and guide people at that point. This could be reviewed as people become more familiar with this.	Low	Choir to be advised	TDH 16/4/2021

Cleaning checklist						
Who is at risk?	What is the outline risk?	Controls required	Additional, specific control measures to be implemented	Priority (High/Med/Low)	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
Choristers, organist, director	Insufficient cleaning of shared spaces	Responsibility for cleaning the venue has been agreed beforehand. All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable). Suitable cleaning materials have been provided.	I have disposable gloves already. Most cleaning will be done by individual choristers. Additional cleaning of vestry toilet facilities will be my joy.	Low	Choir to be advised	TDH 16/4/2021
Choristers, organist, director	Risk of infecting others	Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site.	Check with Church Wardens that church cleaning and restocking hand towels etc will be or is already resumed	Low	Tom to check	TDH 16/4/2021

Someone becoming ill during the event (whether related to COVID-19 or not)						
Who is at risk?	What is the outline risk?	Controls required	Additional, specific control measures to be implemented	Priority (High/Med/Low)	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
Choristers, organist, director		Consider whether it is necessary to appoint a trained first aider (and a deputy, in case of illness/self-isolation).	GPs available to advise in the choir. Gloves and masks available in church	Low	No action	TDH 16/4/2021

		Agree procedures with the first aider before the event, including consultation of any published guidance for delivering first aid in this context				
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Unawareness of control measures amongst attendees

Who is at risk?	What is the outline risk?	Controls required	Additional, specific control measures to be implemented	Priority (High/Med/Low)	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
Choristers, organist, director	Attendees unaware of risk and procedures	Make an announcement at the start of the event to highlight the key control measures in place.	Email and info on front page of website Reminder at the door Announcements at the beginning and end of rehearsals	High	TDH to action	TDH 16/4/2021
		Make a risk assessment document available online before the event and alert attendees to its presence.	Here we are	Medium	Choir to be advised	TDH 16/4/2021
		Identify someone to whom attendees can speak if they have any concerns or questions.	Speak either to Tom, Tracy or your CSG rep	Low	Choir to be advised	TDH 16/4/2021

After a known exposure						
Who is at risk?	What is the outline risk?	Controls required	Additional, specific control measures to be implemented	Priority (High/Med/Low)	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
Choristers, organist, director		If possible, close the building for 72 hours.	Currently the church is open daily but with the choir stalls and Lady Chapel cordoned off. Only the choir will have used this area. Try to keep seating as consistent as possible.	Low	Choir to be advised	TDH 16/4/2021

Church: Mellor Parish Church

Assessor's name: Tom Howling

Date completed: 16/4/2021

Review date: 1/9/2021

