

Re-opening our buildings for private prayer in the Parish of Berkswich

We need your help

The Government have laid out guidance for people to be able to return to places of worship for private prayer only.

The PCC are looking at this for our churches and we are aware that there are still some significant restrictions on how we could do this.

For example:

- Some groups of people are still advised not to go out (including people over 70 and people who are shielding).
- There would need to be restrictions on how many people could enter the church at any one time and social distancing would need to be maintained at all times.
- Only certain sections of the building would be open and accessible.
- Many of the normal objects we see in our building (for example books, candles, pew cushions, kneelers) would have to be removed before reopening.
- We would only be available to be open for private prayer and not acts of worship.
- We would need to ensure that everyone was safe, and would need to clean down everywhere that people went regularly afterwards with products safe to use on historic buildings.
- We would need to be able to resource a team of volunteers, all under 70 years of age, to act as co-ordinators to show people what to do and remain socially distant, and to clean between individual use.

Before we start making arrangements, it would be useful to ascertain how many people might want to use our churches for private prayer only, and how many would be willing to volunteer to enable this to happen.

To help us plan for this, we would be grateful if you could let us know your views below. The closing date for this survey is the 31st June.

Each of our buildings are different. We will only open when we know it is safe to do so for the specific building in question, and any return will be phased and managed to ensure the safety of both visitors and volunteers. Which buildings will be opened and when will be

different to what happened prior to lockdown.

Many thanks for all the support you have given to each other and our wider parish community at this difficult time.

* Required

1. What is your preference (please choose one) *

- At the current, time I am content to use the current virtual services and other forms of worship/prayer in the parish
- In addition to the current provision, I would use the church building for private prayer, but only in "my" specific church
- In addition to the current provision, I would use the church building for private prayer, and would be happy to use whichever church is open

2. If we do reopen for private prayer, we will need volunteers who are not in an at risk category to help supervise and clean between use.

The government suggest that the following groups are at increased risk of severe disease from COVID-19

- aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)
- under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (that is, anyone instructed to get a flu jab each year on medical grounds): chronic (long-term) mild to moderate respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis
- chronic heart disease, such as heart failure
- chronic kidney disease
- chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis
- chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), or cerebral palsy
- diabetes
- a weakened immune system as the result of certain conditions, treatments like chemotherapy, or medicines such as steroid tablets
- being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)
- pregnant women

If you are not in one of those categories, would you be willing to volunteer to supervise and clean *

- Yes, but only in 'my' church
- Yes, in any of the churches in the parish
- No

3. Are there any other comments you would like to make about re-opening for private prayer?

Enter your answer

4. Many thanks for completing this survey.

If you would like to volunteer to help open the church, or if you are happy for us to contact you to discuss this further, please place your email below *

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