

Guide to Funerals at St John's during SARS-CoV-2 Pandemic

This document will be updated regularly as guidance from the government, Public Health England and Church of England changes



Following government lock down easing to allow funerals in Churches, this document will outline the new limitations and procedures which must be followed for funerals taking place inside the Church building.

Limitation on Numbers – Given pew layout and following guidance from Public Health England and the Church of England, the number of people attending a funeral is to be limited to the following:

- Member of Clergy (must attend)
- Organist
- Funeral Verger (must attend if anyone other than Clergy and Funeral Director are present)
- Funeral Director (must attend)
- Members of the deceased household
- Close family members
- If the above 2 groups are unable to attend close friends may attend
- Total number of the above to not exceed 26

No person exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 (a new continuous cough, a high temperature or loss of taste and smell) shall attend the funeral, nor those who are self-isolating, for example after being contacted by Track and Trace or if another household member has COVID-19 symptoms

Mourners who are extremely clinically vulnerable may attend, but it is at their decision and they do so understanding the risks.

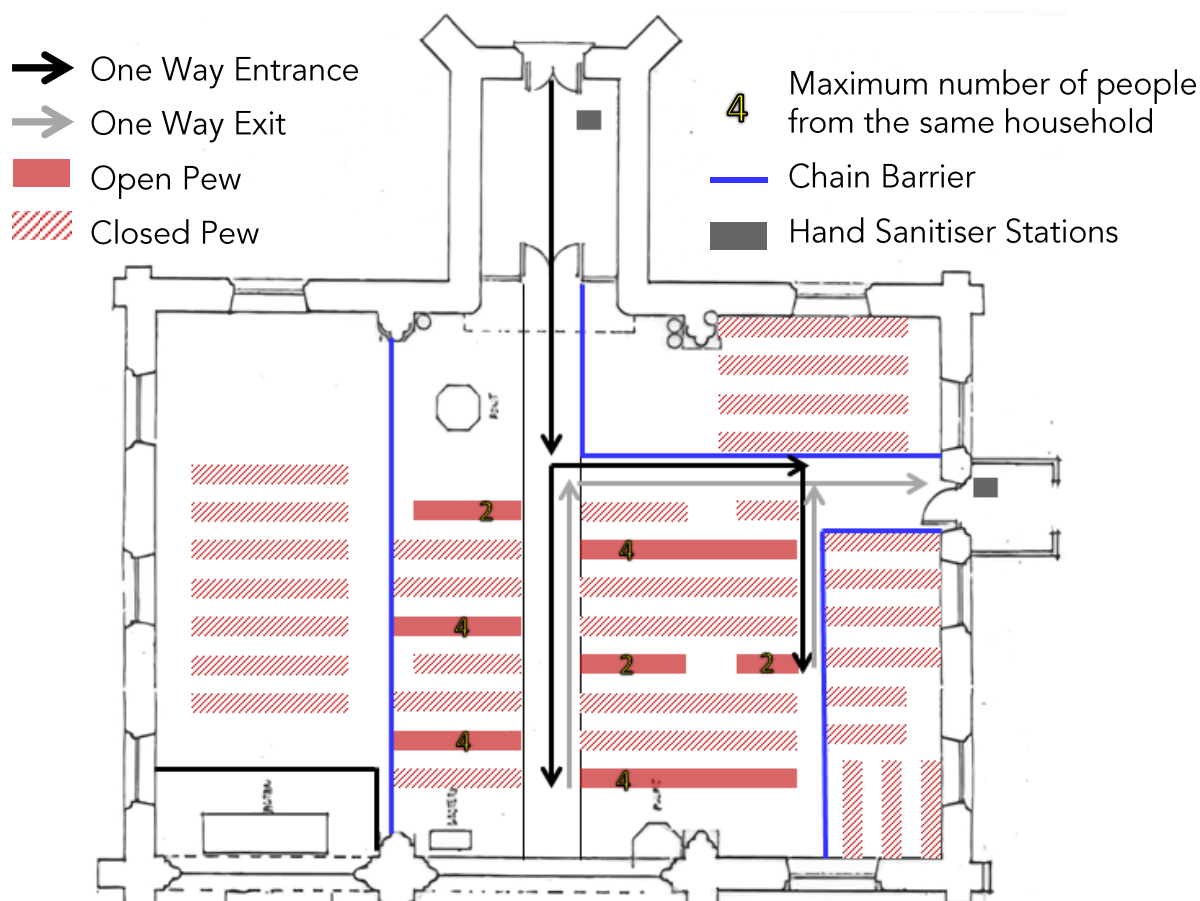
Limitation on music – Given guidance from Public Health England and the Church of England, hymns/anthems etc. cannot be sung – No singing is to be permitted as it poses extra risk of cross infection and would reduce the number of people who may attend

Our sound system, with CD player and Aux input is available for pre-recorded music but, again, no singing is to be done. Any CD's are to be given to member of Clergy before the day of the funeral so it can be disinfected for the member of Clergy to use. If using Aux input (i.e. from phone/mp3 player) it is the responsibility of the owner of the device to play the music at the appropriate times.

The Church is in the process of getting WiFi and the ability to livestream services to those unable to attend, In the meantime if you wish to stream the service yourselves using mobile data, this is permitted.

Procedure and rules for church visitors – These are rules for all visitors entering the church building:

- The number attending and their household groupings are to be given to the church at latest, the day before the service. This will allow the church to be set up safely for that number
- It is advised that Orders of Service be digital, we can add it to our website on a link only accessible by those who have it. If physical Orders of Service are being used, they must be supplied to the Church at least one day prior to the funeral so they can be safely placed on pews to reduce chance of cross infection
- Face coverings are mandatory for all who enter the church building, the only exceptions being those younger than 5, those with severe respiratory conditions and those who would find it difficult to breathe in a face mask (those living with a physical disability or the very elderly etc.)
- All visitors should enter via the west door, the only exception is for wheelchair users and the coffin, if a bier is being used
- Upon entering, all visitors must use the hand sanitising station to sanitise hands (the only exception being pallbearers who should sanitise hands before carrying the coffin)
- There is a one way system set up once in the church and the funeral verger will tell mourners where to sit to maintain social distancing
- If candles are to be lit during the service, extra care should be taken to maintain social distancing while lighting
- When leaving each household group should maintain social distance of at least 2m as they follow one way system out via north door



Extra precautions – should any person attending the funeral develop COVID- 19 symptoms within 72 hours of the funeral, the church is to be notified, via clergy, to allow for additional disinfection of the church building to protect other visitors.

We understand that this is a painful time for all involved, and the current pandemic has made that pain greater to the many people who will want to celebrate the life of the deceased. We would encourage anyone who is unable to attend the funeral to visit St Johns when we are open for private prayer (times and dates available on our website, Facebook and Google Maps) and that should the family wish, a Service of Celebration be arranged in the future, when Government rules allow.