

GUIDE FOR LIVE-STREAMING OR RECORDING IN METHODIST PROPERTY

Version 1	10/07/2020	Integration with overall churches guidance; additions regarding singing and relaxation of restrictions
Version 2	29/09/2020	Overhaul of guidance to reflect current restrictions, including Covid-19 Secure working, rule of 6 and choirs/singing and links for Wales & Scotland

Introduction

During the period of closed churches, it appears many have turned to alternative ways for people to access worship and teaching – particularly through live-streamed services or pre-recorded worship and teaching. As churches reopen, it is encouraged to continue providing this alternative access to ‘church’ which many have found beneficial. It can help in a number of ways:

- Pastorally it allows those who are unable to attend a place of worship in person to still have an opportunity to be part of a church community;
- Social distancing will limit the number of people safely accommodated in a place of worship and therefore live streaming a service (or alternatives) will help manage the number of people using the building;
- Giving alternatives to attending in person will reduce contact between people and will help manage risk and protect the more vulnerable to the effects of the virus;
- Those who are experiencing symptoms or are quarantining and therefore cannot access a place of worship will still be able to access services etc.

It is acknowledged that already many have found creative ways and locations to deliver spiritual support and continue to worship. This guidance is not intended to replace this, but to encourage Ministers, or others, who wish to use their place of worship to undertake acts of worship either via ‘live streaming’ or recording for viewing on the internet or through other forms of media during this time.

General Considerations

- All spaces that are to be used for recording or undertaking worship should be [COVID-19 secure](#)¹, which means they meet the [7 Steps for Working Safely Together](#) for opening and running as outlined in the government guidance.
- Those in attendance should gather in groups of no more than 6 people. This relates to the maximum group size before attendees enter the church and therefore can sit together in church. It is not a directive to sit people together in groups of 6 as part of worship.
 - a. You can continue to space chairs and people as before with 2m distancing between household groups, which could be individuals, couples, larger families, etc.
 - b. Within each group of 6, those who are not in the same household should continue to practise social distancing.
 - c. Each group of 6 should **not** mingle with any other groups (see FAQ’s below for more information).

¹ England -

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/903464/staying-covid-19-secure-2020-230720.pdf

Wales - <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-08/keep-wales-safe-at-work-five-key-steps.pdf>

Scotland - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-general-guidance-for-safer-workplaces/>

Practical Considerations before using a Church Property for Live Streaming, Recording etc.

If this is the only reason for opening your church building or is the first time the church has been opened, please refer to the overarching [Guide to How to Re-open and Manage your Church Building](#).

Practical Considerations for Undertaking this Activity (if working in a group)

Under this guidance it is suggested that the following can happen:

- This is to allow for recording or streaming via the internet or for distribution via other media as a standalone activity in the building and not part of a congregational service. If a recording is being undertaken as part of a congregational service then please also follow the guidance for Using your Worship Space and the practical considerations outlined here.
- Ensure you are using the building in accordance with church security & fire risk procedures.
- Any books, pens etc. to be used should be brought from home and taken back again afterwards.
- Ensure hand sanitiser is available at the entrance door for use on entry and exit of the building.
- Ensure that other hand washing facilities are stocked with soap, paper towels etc.
- Ensure that there are cleaning products easily available so that cleaning of surfaces which may be touched can easily be cleaned after using the room e.g. door handles, light switches etc.
- A minister or other worship leader should undertake prayer and other acts of worship only.
- Another person should operate the camera/tripod or if multiple cameras, then an individual per camera to avoid contamination of surfaces (unless these individuals are part of the same household or support bubble, as per the 'rule of six').
- A small group of singer/musicians is allowed (see separate note below).
- This guidance should be read in conjunction with other current government guidance such as local lock-down restrictions, travel restrictions and social distancing.
- It should be noted that some guidance is only relevant to England, and that you should also follow the local guidance from the devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales if relevant.

Practical Considerations for Undertaking this Activity (if lone working)

- If you are alone, ensure you are working in accordance with your church's lone working policy.
- Ensure you are using the building in accordance with church security & fire risk procedures.
- Any books, pens etc. to be used should be brought from home and taken back again afterwards.
- Ensure hand sanitiser is available at the entrance door for use on entry and exit of the building.
- Ensure that other hand washing facilities are stocked with soap, paper towels etc.
- Ensure that there are cleaning products easily available so that cleaning of surfaces which may be touched can easily be cleaned after using the room e.g. door handles, light switches etc.

Specific Guidance for Music and Singing:

- England

Allowed (inside and outside):

- Professional and non-professional individual singing;
- Professional and non-professional singing groups of no more than 6 people;
- The playing of musical instruments (including wind instruments)², as part of a worship group or similar. They must be accommodated safely, ensuring that

² Please refer to <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts>

others are protected from potential virus transfer through increased social distancing, screens or other solutions. This must be assessed for risk;

- Playback of recordings of singing and music at a reasonable level to avoid the need for raised voices.
- Places of Worship can be used for rehearsals and performances for both professional and non-professional choirs, musicians and other performing arts. This is guided by the Government's Performing Arts guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts>).

Not Allowed (inside or outside):

- Congregational singing, shouting or raising voices;
- Congregational playing of musical instruments that are blown into;
- Scotland
 - Inside and outside - Singing as a congregation is **not** allowed.
 - Inside - the use of music is allowed and musical instruments (except wind instruments) can be used.
 - Outside – the use of music is allowed and all musical instruments³, including wind instruments can be used if safety precautions are followed.
 - Inside and outside – A individual is allowed to sing, as long as it can be accommodated safely, ensuring that others are protected from potential virus transfer through increased social distancing, screens or other solutions. This must be assessed for risk.
 - Outside – Groups of professional and non-professional singers **Error! Bookmark not defined.** can perform to worshippers, but this should be assessed for safety and the number of singers limited to a number suitable for the space available, while achieving safe social distances.
- Wales
 - The use of music is allowed and all musical instruments, except wind instruments, can be played⁴.
 - Inside and outside - singing as a congregation is **not** allowed.
 - Inside and outside – An individual is allowed to sing, as long as it can be accommodated safely, ensuring that others are protected from potential virus transfer through increased social distancing, screens or other solutions. This must be assessed for risk.
- Those leading a service are encouraged to use a PA system to avoid projecting their voice and risk transferring the virus. If a PA system is not available, then increased social distancing, screens or such like solutions are suggested.

³ Please refer to <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-the-performing-arts-and-venues-sector/pages/overview/>

⁴ <https://gov.wales/rehearsing-performing-and-taking-part-performing-arts-guidance-phased-return-html>