

The Pilgrims Rest

Coronavirus Risk Assessment for wedding ceremonies

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Risk assessment version control

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A PDF copy of any changes to the risk assessment will be documented and kept on record to ensure amendments and versions can be tracked.

INTRODUCTION

This risk assessment aims to set out steps taken by staff and requested steps to be taken by visitors to the building in order to mitigate the risk to all parties of the spread and infection of Coronavirus.

On Tuesday 7th July 2020 we received confirmation from the East Sussex Ceremonies hub that legal wedding ceremonies at licensed venues were allowed, by law, to take place from Tuesday 21st July 2020 provided they can comply with COVID secure guidance.

Conducting wedding ceremonies with limited numbers of people at The Pilgrims Rest presents far fewer risks than many other business activities being carried out at this time. We are able to maintain 2 meter distance for staff, guests and other visitors such as registrars at all times provided all guests to the building follow the procedures in place.

In this document we explore the risks posed by Coronavirus directly when conducting wedding ceremonies and also explores the indirect risks posed by the measures put in place to mitigate these.

We have referred to many different government approved guidance documents and considered examples of other relevant business's risk assessments to help identify the risks involved in conducting ceremonies. In addition to this we have had direct input from the East Sussex Ceremonies hub on what steps their staff will be taking and what is expected of licensed venues.

Objectives of the risk assessment

- To ensure The Pilgrims Rest is 'COVID Secure' by following the governments suggested steps:
 - We have carried out a COVID-19 risk assessment and shared the results with the people who work here
 - We have cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures in line with guidance
 - We have taken all reasonable steps to help people work from home helping to minimise the chances of staff contracting the virus and passing on to guests of the building.
 - We have taken all reasonable steps to maintain a 2m distance for guests, the couple and registrars during the event.
 - Where people cannot be 2m apart, we have done everything practical to manage transmission risk.
- To ensure all registrar's requirements are adhered to in order for a legal ceremony to take place.
 - No more than 28 people, including the couple and their witnesses, can be present during a ceremony. This is to comply with the Government maximum guidelines of 30 people including all officiants.
 - All attending other than the couple must wear a face covering when at the venue.
 - All room capacities are subject to a local Covid-19 risk assessment that should be carried out by the venue in line with Government recommendations.
 - Please note that, in line with Government guidelines, only the legal minimum required for a marriage or civil partnership to be valid will be allowed. This means that we cannot accommodate couples being escorted into the room, music, readings, additional vows or ring words in the ceremony.
 - Please ensure that there is a clear pathway from the entrance doorway to the front of the ceremony room, enabling our Registrars to maintain 2 metres social distancing.
 - The room layout must also ensure that our Registrars can maintain 2 metres social distancing throughout.
 - To minimise contact time for all parties, Registrars will interview the couple by telephone from their car when they arrive. Please ensure that the couple are in a private room together ready to receive this call at least 20 minutes before the start time of the ceremony.

- All parties, including the couple, must then be in the ceremony room ready for the proceedings to begin at the time of the booking before the Registrars will enter the room.
- Once the legal proceedings have been concluded, the Registrars will leave the ceremony room.
- For a Civil Partnership, the couple and witnesses will have signed the schedule in front of their guests as this constitutes the legal minimum required to form the partnership.
- For a Marriage, the Registrars will move to the interview room to complete the register alone. Once this is done, they will ask the on-call Responsible Person to escort the couple and their witnesses to the interview room for the register to be signed by all parties.
- The couple and their witnesses will be required to sanitise their hands before signing the register. Please ensure that hand sanitiser is available.
- Couples and their witnesses will also need to provide their own pens to sign the register or schedule. These can be biros but must contain either blue or black ink.
- Our Registrars will provide you with their names and contact phone numbers so that you can comply with the Government's NHS Test & Trace service if required.

<u>Hazard</u>	<u>Severity x Likelihood (1-5)</u>	<u>Potential Risk</u>	<u>Persons at risk</u>	<u>Actions taken to minimise risk</u>	<u>Severity x likelihood post-action taken</u>	<u>Person responsible for ensuring action is taken</u>
Direct risks of Coronavirus						
Someone (Customer or staff) infected with Coronavirus	5x4(20)	Customers/guests/staff who present symptoms of COVID-19. As the virus passes through coughing/sneezing, a person with symptoms presents a higher risk of spreading the virus than someone asymptomatic.	Customer Guests Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customers and guests who present symptoms of the virus/have been in contact with someone who does will be asked to postpone the ceremony until they are well again and must not enter the building. Staff members presenting symptoms of the virus will be asked to take sick leave and self isolate for at least 14 days. Staff work from home at all times other than when conducting viewings, hosting a ceremony or checking on the building. All couples will need to supply us with details of everyone attending the ceremony via The Pilgrims Rest Track & Trace form. They will also be required to supply the venue with a list of guests & their household groups. The venue will be cleaned thoroughly after each ceremony. 	2x2(4)	Staff to notify customers & enforce rule with other staff members
Shaking hands/ physical contact with customers	4x3(12)	Passing on or catching the virus from touching a customer.	Customer Guests Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Washing hands regularly for a 20 second period, with soap or rubbing alcohol based hand rub into hands. Do not offer a handshake. Request all customers entering the venue to wash their hands/ use hand sanitizer before entering the building. 	2x1(2)	TPR staff

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff & customer/guest to observe a 2 meter distance at all times. 		
Being in close proximity with others (Less than 2m)	4x4(16)	Transmitting the virus through being in close proximity to customers.	Customer Guests Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Pilgrims Rest staff member conducting the ceremony will keep a 2 meter distance between themselves and the couple and their guests. Staff will wear face shields in order to protect themselves and guests. Before the ceremony begins guests will be asked to wait in the front garden until instructed by a staff member to come into the building. A ceremony seating plan will be created before the ceremony to allow quick and easy movement of guests around the venue while maintaining a 2 meter distance. Guests will be required to wear a face covering unless medically exempt for the duration of their time at the venue. The building is left empty other than when viewings or ceremonies take place, except when being cleaned. No other activities that present this risk can take place. 	2x1(2)	Amy-Lou
Sneezing/ Coughing	4x3(12)	Carriers of the virus cough or sneeze to easily spread the COVID-19 Virus.	Customer Guests Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone entering the venue must wash hands or use rubbing alcohol based hand sanitizer made available by the venue. Customers/guests/staff experiencing symptoms of the virus must not attend the venue. Guests will be asked to wear masks until they are seated, once they have taken their seats it is their choice whether they remove them. Staff will wear their face shields for the 	2x3(6)	Amy-Lou

				<p>duration of the event.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venue will be cleaned thoroughly after the ceremony. 		
Touching eyes/nose/mouth	4x2(8)	Droplets containing the virus on a person's hands, eyes, nose or mouth, allows for spread of the virus	Customer Guests Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone entering the venue must wash hands or use rubbing alcohol based hand sanitizer. • Guests will wear masks until seated. • Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth until you have washed your hands. • Request customers & guests not to touch anything in the venue where possible. • Venue cleaned thoroughly after the ceremony. 	2x2(4)	Amy-Lou
An infected person touching an object causing cross contamination	3x2(6)	Virus could transfer to your hands if you have touched the same surfaces as others with or carrying the virus.	Customer Guests Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of hand sanitiser by all people entering the building • Washing hands regularly for a 20 second period, with soap or rubbing alcohol based hand rub into hands. • Minimise contact with places/objects likely to have the virus such as handrails etc. (Touchpoints) - Upstairs spaces will be locked during this time. • Minimise numbers of people inside the building at one time. • Controlled process for guests entering the building. • Encourage guests not to touch objects/ surfaces during the ceremony. Ensure all doors are left/propped open to allow for easy access to all rooms with minimal contact. • Hand sanitizer will be available outside the toilets, guests will be asked to sanitizer their hands before and after using the facilities. • Give plenty of time between each 	1x1(1)	Amy-Lou

				<p>ceremony for a thorough clean of all touch points & surfaces within the venue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venue will remain empty when no viewings or ceremonies, except when being cleaned. 		
Guests from different households	3x3(9)	Mixing of household groups is now allowed with relevant mitigations and/or social distancing measures in place (2 meters or 1 meter+)	Customer Guests Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guests will be seated in a seating plan according to their household groups, this can also include support bubbles formed with older relatives if formed prior to the ceremony. • On information sent prior to the ceremony the couple will be asked to send over a list of their party and their household groups/support bubble's. • The guests will also be sent a contact form to fill out prior to the ceremony in order to comply with NHS Test & Trace system. 	2x1(2)	Amy-Lou
Using handrails/ropes to go upstairs	3x4(12)	Cross contamination on handrails/ropes	Customer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both dressing rooms will be locked and unavailable for use during this time thus eliminating the risks of cross contamination in these areas. 	0x0(0)	Amy-Lou
Additional risks for those who have been advised to shield during this time	4x3(12)	Those being asked to shield during the pandemic are much more vulnerable and often more susceptible to the virus.	Customer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We request that those shielding during this time take precautions they deem necessary. • We advise all couples to consider using Skype/Zoom/video call to allow particularly vulnerable guests to watch. 	1x1(1)	Amy-Lou
Young children	3x4(12)	Children pose more of a risk as they are more likely to touch surfaces/objects.	Guests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We do ask that any young children are seated with their parents • Children must remain seated and remain the responsibility of their parents at all times. 	2x3(6)	Parents of child

Parts of the ceremony where social distancing could be compromised	3x5(15)	Giving of rings by a member of the party, witnesses signing the register.	Customer Guests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rings must be held by the couple to allow their guests to continue social distancing. • The signing of the register will be done in a separate room to allow for social distancing. • The couple and their witnesses must bring their own pen to avoid cross contamination. • Hand sanitizer will be provided by the venue. 	2x2(4)	Couple
Registrars requirement to socially distance	N/A	The registrars will need 2 meter between them and guests, the couple and each other.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registrars will enter the building through the back door and will be situated directly inside the doorway to minimise having to walk past guests or the couple. • The couple will stand directly in front of the stairs. • The registrars will use the bar area for the signing of the register to minimise walking past guests. • Information will be sent to the ESCH before the ceremony. 	N/A	Amy-Lou
Indirect risks of Coronavirus						
Customers not wanting to touch safety equipment in fear of picking up or passing on the virus	4x3(12)	Some customers may decide against using handrails due to the risk of cross contamination, this could result in serious injury	Customer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dressing rooms will be locked for the duration of the ceremony therefore there will be no need for anyone to use handrails. 	1x1(1)	Amy-Lou

Ceremony routine

- Anyone presenting symptoms of the virus, or who has been in contact/ living with someone who has tested positive, must not attend the ceremony and advise the couple of this.
- Those shielding are advised to take precautions they deem necessary. Streaming/Zoom/video call ceremonies are encouraged for those especially at risk.
- Those with children are asked to have any infants on their laps, children must remain seated for the duration of the ceremony.
- **Guests will be required to wear a face covering for the duration of their time at the venue. Children under 11 and those with specific medical conditions are exempt.**
- **The Pilgrims Rest staff reserve the right to ask anyone not adhering to current guidelines to leave the premises.**

Before the ceremony

- The couple will be asked to send over a list of all attendees group into their households for us to put together a seating plan, including details of witnesses and of any children attending. Using brackets (W) for witnesses and (C) for children.
- Prior to all visitors arrival at the venue they will be asked to fill out a contact form to aid NHS Test and Trace.
- We ask that the couple and guests arrive 30 minutes before the ceremony time and call the oncall staff member to notify them that they have arrived. The staff member will collect the couple from the door and escort them to the bar area where they will wait for the registrars to call them for their remote interview.
- Guests will be asked to arrive 30 minutes prior to the ceremony in order for us to have everyone seated for a prompt start to the ceremony. The Pilgrims Rest staff member will summon each guest into the building by household group.
- Each person attending will have an assigned seat, they are unable to be changed on the day so they must let us know if anyone has any special requirements.
- **Guests will be required to wear a face covering for the duration of their time in the venue.**
- When moving around the venue including using the toilets we ask that everyone's mask is replaced before leaving their seat. (Other than the couple when stood at the front of the ceremony room.)

When attending the ceremony

- The Pilgrims Rest staff members will adhere to the 2 meter physical distancing rules and have no physical contact with visitors, including but not exclusive to handshakes.
- Guests are asked not to enter the building until asked to by a staff member.
- The Pilgrims Rest staff member will summon the couple into the building and show them to the bar, once they are in the bar area the guests will be brought in and shown where they will sit.
- All visitors will be asked to use hand sanitizer before entering the building. (Provided by the venue)
- We ask that guests don't bring any additional family members with them to the venue. Each person must be specifically invited by the couple.
- Children must be seated on their parents lap or remain seated next to them throughout the ceremony. They must not get up from their seat and walk around.
- We ask that all visitors avoid touching objects & surfaces for the duration of their time in the building.
- All doors in the building will be left or propped open to ensure as little physical contact as possible is used to move around the venue. The dressing rooms will be off limits.
- The toilet facilities will be available before and after the ceremony, we ask that guests do not use them throughout the ceremony to allow for 2 meter social distancing.
- We ask that guests use the hand sanitizer provided before and after using the toilet facilities.
- Please note that, in line with Government guidelines, only the legal minimum required for a marriage or civil partnership to be valid will be allowed. This means that we cannot accommodate couples being escorted into the room, music, readings, additional vows or ring words in the ceremony.
- The couple will be asked to stand between the two flower arrangements at the front of The Great Hall to allow guests & the registrars space to socially distance.
- The couple must ensure the rings are nearby to where they are standing so they are able to retrieve them without compromising distance with guests. Guests need to remain seated therefore they cannot bring rings to the front of the room. Hand sanitizer will be provided before the couple put the rings on.
- The registrars will leave the room to complete the register, once they have completed this The Pilgrims Rest staff member will collect the couple and witnesses and take them through to the bar where they will complete the register.

After the ceremony

- Guests will be asked to please remain seated until a member of staff from the venue asks them to leave the building.
- We will ask that guests keep their face coverings on before when leaving the building, these can be removed once they are outside again.

- The Pilgrims Rest staff member will request guests move row by row to allow for social distancing to take place.
- When leaving the building we ask that you use the hand sanitizer provided again.
- **The couple or their guests are required to inform us if they begin showing symptoms and/or test positive for Coronavirus after the ceremony. They must inform The Pilgrims Rest as soon as possible to allow our staff to contact the NHS Test and Trace service, self isolate and for the venue to have a deep clean.**

In conclusion, we have mitigated all of the risks established to a level that allows us to conduct ceremonies while still protecting our staff and customers effectively.

Sources:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/shops-and-branches#shops-4-1>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/5-steps-to-working-safely>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/maintaining-records-of-staff-customers-and-visitors-to-support-nhs-test-and-trace>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-small-marriages-and-civil-partnerships/covid-19-guidance-for-small-marriages-and-civil-partnerships>