

## CENTRAL ENGLAND QUAKERS TRUSTEES

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### C19 project team

*COVID-19: Guidance for Local Meetings/Branches on the re-opening of Meeting Houses & Offices*

### Information on Cleaning, Hygiene and Signage

As we begin to look at the possibility of reopening our buildings, very careful consideration needs to be given to cleaning and hygiene and following other public health advice.

For help with this please see the Government guidance on working safely with information about hygiene <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/5-steps-to-working-safely>

Given that more frequent and thorough cleaning will need to be done there are some questions to consider.

- If there are multiple users at any one time or over the course of a day, is it possible for your building to be adequately cleaned? If not, does reducing the number of users make the cleaning possible? You may want to consider a step by step approach to reopening for room hire initially starting with one group per day.
- Is it economically viable to re-open if the cost of cleaning outweighs the income the building can generate?

### Prior to reopening – necessary steps

**HSE Advice:** Please look at the following advice from the Health and Safety Executive <https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/assets/docs/working-safely-guide.pdf> . This gives an overview of the tasks involved in safely opening a public building and the issues around hygiene.

**Increased frequency of cleaning:** We have a duty of care to all users of our buildings. An enhanced cleaning regime and increased frequency of cleaning is required where practically possible. This will include enhanced cleaning for busy areas and frequent cleaning and disinfecting of objects and surfaces that are touched regularly. Best practice recommends cleaning between use. This is a major undertaking and may not be feasible for all LMs. In order to determine how much and what kinds of safe use of the building there can be, there needs to be a clear assessment of the level of cleaning required against what the meeting is realistically able to provide. The level of use and gaps between use will be different for each Local Meeting and judgements made accordingly.

**Risk Assessment:** The level of cleaning required for the safe use of the building will need to be included in a risk assessment. Please see the separate guidance on Risk Assessments and example templates available on the Coronavirus Guidance section of the CEQ website.

**Space:** As part of this assessment, you will need to identify those spaces that are practical to allow for and comply with current social distancing measures. Friends might also wish to consider limiting the spaces people can access in order to reduce cleaning and allow time to concentrate on doing it efficiently in the spaces that are in use. Clear compliant signage to encourage the observance of social distancing will need to be displayed. Further information on signage follows below.

**Hirers:** All users and hirers will need to observe current social distancing measures in the building. You will also need to let hirers know what levels of cleaning they can expect and what is expected of them. Eg.

spray cleaning high touch points when they arrive or cleaning their own equipment before leaving. This will form part of the hirer's own risk assessment.

**Hand Hygiene** is vital to reduce the transmission of the Coronavirus. Liquid soap should be available in toilets and kitchens along with paper towels. Textile hand towels should not be used. Hot air hand dryers are not recommended as they distribute droplets. You will need to provide facilities for handwashing on entering the building. There is likely to be pressure on washroom space so make hand sanitizing stations available. It would be advisable to look at "hands free" dispensers for sanitizing liquid which should be at least 60% ethanol based to be effective. Advice on good hand hygiene should be displayed in kitchens and toilet facilities. Please see the section on signage for further information.

**Respiratory Hygiene:** Ask people to bring their own tissues and to take their own rubbish (tissues, face masks etc) away with them. Provide bins with plastic liners in the building.

At present face masks are not compulsory and we suggest that Friends bring their own if they wish.

**Cleaning Cloths and Fabric tea towels.** Government advice recommends that you use disposable cloths. If you do use cotton cloths, then they must only be used once and by a single user before being laundered at as high temperature as possible and at least over 60 degrees. If fabric tea towels are used in the kitchen then the same regime applies. You may want to suggest that users bring their own tea towels and cloths. Please note that anyone dealing with the laundry needs to wear protective gloves whilst handling used cloths.

**Regulation of access to the premises by keyholders:** Many people may have keys to premises and have accessed the building without particular regulation – quite reasonable in the past but maybe not permissible in the current climate. Each premises committee will need to ensure it has made provision for sensitive control of anyone entering or leaving their Meeting House. We recommend that you draw up a "code of conduct" for anyone using keys or key pads.

**Keys:** We advise regular cleaning of the frontage of keyholes and locks, key boxes, keyed padlocks and numerical padlocks as they may be touched by many people.

**Safety of staff and volunteers:** Following a risk assessment, any requirements for the safety of staff and volunteers when cleaning will need to be implemented. Appropriate protective clothing will need to be provided and used by staff and volunteers (e.g. at least gloves and aprons). Guidance will need to be given and followed on correct cleaning procedures. The safety of staff and volunteers is an important consideration in all decisions. Please consider a backup plan for cleaning in case the person who regularly cleans needs to self-isolate for 7-14 days.

## **Prior to reopening – things to consider**

**Thorough clean and system checks:** Prior to reopening your building, you will need to consider giving the building a thorough clean. It would be sensible to check your emergency lighting, fire and smoke alarms and emergency pull cords in accessible toilets.

If you have air conditioning and heating units fitted in your building check them and make sure they are regularly cleaned.

**Kitchen:** Please consider carefully whether to reopen kitchen spaces as they pose significant risks in terms of virus transmission. If you do decide to open your kitchen your regular cleaning procedures will need to be enhanced and high touch objects will need to be disinfected regularly. Special attention will need to be given to cleaning of worktops and handles (including handles to white goods and electrical appliances) and kettles. You may wish to remove crockery and cutlery and ask users to bring their own. Social distancing will need to be adhered to in any use of the kitchen space. There should be facilities for hand washing in kitchens or the provision of hand sanitizers.

**Toilets and washrooms:** An enhanced cleaning regime will need to be followed and toilets should be cleaned more regularly. Door handles, locks, toilet roll holders, toilet flushes and toilet seats will need to be cleaned and disinfected frequently. Due to the demands of social distances the number of people accessing washrooms and toilet facilities may be restricted. You may need to consider limiting the number of people using facilities at any one time. Signage to promote good hand hygiene should be displayed in toilets and washrooms.

**High Touch Items:** You may wish to consider fitting sensors to light switches and taps especially in washrooms. Consider changing over to pedal bins or bins with sensors to reduce the need to touch bins.

**Common Areas:** Particular attention will need to be given to cleaning common area especially toilets and kitchen areas but also lobbies and stairways as well as frequently touched areas eg. doorknobs, switches and handrails. For safety reasons light switches and electric sockets should be cleaned with a cloth rather than with a spray.

**Upholstery:** The best method of cleaning upholstery safely is by using a steam cleaner. If you would like further advice on this type of cleaning which can be used across the building not just on upholstery, we have a resource person who is willing to help. You may wish to remove some soft furnishing.

**Cleaning Products:** Ordinary cleaning products can be used but if you have a positive case of Coronavirus in the building you may wish to look at virucidal cleaning products. Any effective virucidal cleaner needs to be tested to E 14476 standards. There is a link to an online supplier below.

**Books and Pamphlets and other objects:** You need to consider what to do with books, leaflets and objects which can be touched repeatedly by different individuals and which are difficult to clean. You might want to store books in locked cupboards or remove from the building temporarily or implement measures to minimise any possible risk. Encourage Friends to bring their own copies of books to Meeting for Worship and consider different ways of accessing books from your Meeting House library.

**Ventilation:** Friends and Hirers should be encouraged to keep the spaces well ventilated, opening doors and windows as far as possible.

**Rubbish Disposal:** If there is a case of Covid-19 in your building or if anyone has displayed symptoms then you should follow the government guidance to tie and double-bag their **waste** and wait 72-hours before **disposing** of it in the dustbin.

## **After reopening if you have a case of Covid-19 in building**

If you have an identified case of Covid-19 in building, please refer to government guidance as more stringent cleaning will be required including the safe disposal of rubbish.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

If possible you will need to close the building for 72 hours or close off the contaminated area and carry out a thorough clean.

### **Suppliers**

The **Green Office** is the UK leader in environmentally friendly, eco-friendly, recycled, and **green office** supplies. You will be able to purchase cleaning products and PPE. [www.thegreenoffice.co.uk](http://www.thegreenoffice.co.uk)

Hand Sanitizers: Wall mounted "hands free" dispensers for hand sanitizers

<https://www.phs.co.uk/products/auto-hand-sanitiser-dispenser/>

Steam Cleaners: <https://www.polti.co.uk/steam-cleaning/cylinder-steam-cleaners>

Virucidal cleaners: <https://www.janitorialdirect.co.uk/antiviral-disinfectant-effective-against-coronavirus-6-x-750ml.html>

## Signage

To reinforce social distancing measures and hand washing hygiene we recommend the use of professionally produced compliant signage.

We encourage you to display signage in common areas, toilets and washroom facilities and kitchens.

We have identified a local Coventry firm, Fixfire, as a supplier.

Click on this link to access their online catalogue <https://www.fixfire.co.uk/category/covid-19-products-services-hub>

There is a range of different forms of signage including posters, stickers, floor signs, free standing boards. Please choose what is appropriate for your building.

It is recommended that you select signage from Fixfire ranges on

- General Information and Guidance
- Social distancing (social distancing rules may change)
- Cleaning and hygiene

CEQ Trustees have agreed to pay for signage so we ask that you select what you need and place your order with Fixfire by email or telephone, asking them to invoice CEQ Trustees. They will arrange delivery to an address of your choice.

The Fixfire sales contact is:-

Lydia Wheatcroft | Compliance Customer Support

**DDI:** 024 7658 7603

**Mobile:** 07848 454562

Email: [ljw@fixfire.co.uk](mailto:ljw@fixfire.co.uk)

Please identify your Meeting when you email or call, as Lydia will have a list and will need to verify that you are on it! She will be very happy to discuss your requirements with you on the telephone, and give you advice before you commit to an order, and will welcome orders by phone.

The cost of items varies from £5 to £60, and you can download a price list, but we have negotiated a special discount for our Quaker Meetings, so will not be paying list prices. Please order what you need, but not more than you need!