Diocese of St Albans

Delivering services online: streaming and recording services, equipment and technical requirements, permissions and sources of information

1. Delivering services online

During the Coronavirus restrictions many parishes shared services online with worshippers unable to go to church and reached new people at the same time. You may be considering how to continue to do this when your church reopens.

Other parishes may be weighing up whether to start providing services online for people who find it difficult or impossible to get to church or want the choice of experiencing worship in that way.

Advice from the Diocese's Flourishing Churches team helps you think through how worship is changed and challenged by the fact that it may now happen online as well as in our buildings: https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/Public-Worship-Online-30th-June-2020.pdf

2. Technical issues and streaming and recording services

There are a number of things you should think about if you plan to deliver services online:

- What format and social media platform is right for your on-line services?
- Have you got protocols in place for streaming or recording services as public events?
- Do you need to replace fixed or portable AV equipment and cameras?
- Will a broadband connection be required?
- For live streaming, an upload speed of 10 Megabits per second is recommended.

An important question is whether you want to record services for broadcast (e.g. via YouTube), live stream services (e.g. via Facebook Live or Instagram) or a mixture of live and pre-recorded sections.

3. Permissions

The Registry has provided advice on telecoms including Community broadband installations at: https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/Telecoms-Guidance-Note-November-2016.pdf.

The Minor Matters Lists A and B helpfully include such matters as the installation of a Wi-Fi router without impact on the fabric (List A) and the installation of fixed and portable AV equipment (see below for exceptions). The main items requiring a faculty (which the Chancellor is willing to consider via the *Interim Faculty* route in the current circumstances) are:

- Installation of CCTV for purposes other than security
- Installation of fixed AV equipment in a listed church
- Installation of fixed camera positions for live streaming or recording (to ensure parishes address the issues of safeguarding, data protection and licensing)
- Installation of a new phone line, cable or antenna for broadband

Please contact your Archdeacon and Emma or upload your application via the online portal to find out how we can help with specific proposals.

Please note that even if you are using a mobile phone or unfixed camera with a tripod, so that no permission is needed under the faculty rules, the PCC still needs to consider and document its policy on the matters of **safeguarding, data protection/privacy and licensing requirements** for any recording or live-streaming of services. The Diocesan Registrar has said that this will depend on the nature of the live streaming or recording facility. If a camera is to be used in a fixed position which will only have, for example, the Incumbent in view (and no-one else) and no music or texts other than those of authorised Church of England liturgies are being used, then the consideration should be a relatively straightforward matter. Where members of the congregation are visible (especially if there are children present), some hymns or worship songs are used or where recorded music is played, or where information is given out - for example in the notices - which may relate to identifiable individuals, a rather wider set of considerations come into play.

4. Broadband options

There is a range of options for parishes to consider if they want to install a broadband connection. The following have been used or considered by churches in the Diocese.

Proposal	Advantages	Disadvantages
Provision of Wi-Fi using existing phone line	Minimal impact on the fabric	Needs existing phone line
Point-to-point wireless link to the neighbouring vicarage and installation of a wireless access point in the church.	Simple solution with little visual impact or effect on the fabric.	Only suitable if the vicarage is close to the church and the existing signal is strong.
Connection using mobile phone	No impact on fabric. Inexpensive.	Requires good mobile phone signal in the church building.
4G Wireless Routers	No permanent fixture to the fabric necessary where there is a good mobile signal	Initial equipment and installation costs are higher than a phone line. Small antenna may need to be fixed inside/outside the tower for areas of weak mobile signal
Connection using new phone line – above ground	Secure, permanent connection including in a remote location. No impact on burials/archaeology.	Openreach or other infrastructure provider likely to require 12 month contract before site assessment – no opportunity for consultation and permissions. May have significant visual impact (e.g. new telegraph pole).
Connection using new underground cable	No visual impact	Openreach or other infrastructure provider likely to require 12 month contract before site assessment – no opportunity for consultation and permissions. May have significant impact on archaeology/burials.
Wireless broadband antenna on tower	Does not involve commercial infrastructure provider. No impact on burials/archaeology.	May have significant visual impact.

The options will need to be assessed against the circumstances and context of each church. Different options will suit different parishes and churches.

Parish Buying will give advice on different solutions https://www.parishbuying.org.uk/categories/phone-and-broadband and has this information on wireless broadband solutions: https://www.parishbuying.org.uk/categories/phone-and-broadband/wireless-community-broadband.

Occasionally the longer-term solution may be for the church to host Community broadband equipment as has happened at a couple of our parishes. If this is an option you would like to explore further, please have a look at the Registry guidance at https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/Telecoms-Guidance-Note-November-2016.pdf and contact Emma at an early stage.

Further help and advice

Sources of information and guidance are given above. For further help or advice contact the DAC team at dac@stalbans.anglican.org

v.2 30/7/20