

Guidelines for use of Augustine United Church following the Coronavirus lockdown

AUC takes its health and safety responsibilities very seriously and church staff and trustees will do everything they can to keep building users safe during these uncertain times. To help us do this, we need all our users to comply with these guidelines when using the building. Use of the church building will look a little different to pre-pandemic times and we ask for your patience as we all navigate a different way of operating.

The booking process

New bookings can be made in the usual way, via email (centre.manager@augustine.org.uk), telephone (0131 2201677) or the enquiry form on the website (augustine.org.uk/room-hire/booking-enquiry/).

Existing bookings have been retained in our diary and, once the building is fully open, we will endeavour to contact all groups with an existing booking to ascertain if it is going ahead or not. We are not operating a strict cancellation policy at this time but we reserve the right to issue a charge if a group fails to arrive for a booking they have said is going ahead.

For both new and existing bookings, the Centre Manager will contact event organisers to establish the details of the event and confirm that booking contracts are in place. We may ask you to alter your start time slightly if we have large groups arriving simultaneously in the building and need to stagger arrivals, though we hope to avoid this with use of different entrances to the building (see below).

We will require you to have a registration system in place for your event so that you know how many people will be attending. While the legal requirement for physical distancing has been removed, we still wish to exercise caution in not overcrowding our building and ensuring we can keep our users safe. We will operate discretion at the time of booking to make sure that events taking place will not cause clashes or congestion. Event organisers will need to operate a monitoring system on the day so they have a record of who is in the building during their event.

In order to comply with the Scottish Government's Test and Protect scheme, AUC will require you to share your register of attendees with us. We will need a contact phone number for each individual so we can pass on details to the Test and Protect team if required. We will only keep these contact details for a period of 21 days, as mandated by the Scottish Government. You can read our updated data privacy statement [here](#)

Last, but by no means least, we need you to stress to your group that if they are experiencing any of the symptoms of Covid-19 they should stay home and not attend your event.

Entrance to the building

At the times when both levels of our building are in use simultaneously, we will operate different entrances and exits for each group to ensure that the two groups are kept separate.

If your event is taking place in the Sanctuary, you will enter (and exit) the building through the main front doors. If your event is taking place in the Studio, you will enter (and exit) the building through the south stairwell door – located to the right of the main doors.

Hygiene

Unless you are exempt, please wear a face covering while moving around the building and while taking part in your event/meeting. You may remove your face covering if you're speaking as part of the meeting.

Hand sanitiser will be available at each entrance/exit to the building, along with signs to hand washing facilities.

Stewarding

In order to prevent people having to touch multiple door handles, we will try to wedge all non-fire doors open, at least during your group's arrival and departure. This will include the front doors which obviously presents us with a security risk if left unattended. We will require all groups to nominate a door steward to monitor (and record on their attendance list) their group's arrival and departure and to ensure that the front doors are closed and locked behind them once the group has safely arrived/departed.

Room layouts

Room layout options are no longer limited by law, however, church trustees are minded to proceed with caution and ensure we all feel as comfortable as possible returning to the building. We are also aware that many of our building users will still wish to maintain a physical distance from people outside their household. To this end, we have reduced our usual maximum capacities in each of our rooms to allow chairs to be more generously spaced even without any formal distancing in place. The table below also outlines capacities at both 1m and 2m distancing for those users who wish to mandate stricter distancing – all are 'theatre style' rows unless otherwise stated and take account of the maximum number of individuals able to be seated. Other than the 'no distancing' column, capacities increase the more household groups you have attending an event so the numbers in the 1m and 2m columns are minimums:

Room	No distancing (but extra 'breathing room')	1m distancing	2m distancing
Sanctuary	100	43	17
Studio	70	27	18
Iona	20 (or 10 around a board table)	10	6

Mull	20 (or 10 around a board table)	10	6
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Audio visual systems

Our usual AV system in the Sanctuary has been upgraded to include the ability to live stream your event to people watching/participating at home. A pan, tilt and zoom camera gives a variety of angles and the presentation being shown on the screens in the Sanctuary can also be streamed direct to people's screens at home. We intend to ensure that the operation of the system is as simple as possible so that, after an appropriate number of training sessions, building users can operate the technology themselves. This means we can offer this service free of charge but it must be booked in advance through the Centre Manager so we can make appropriate arrangements.

You can see a video of how the system works here: <https://youtu.be/tSJRO2rORXw>

Refreshments

We have introduced a protocol for use of the pantry so that groups are able to access the facilities:

- Only 2 people permitted in the Pantry at any one time.
- The window should be kept open for ventilation as much as possible.
- Those preparing food and drinks for groups should maintain thorough and regular hand hygiene. Gloves will be made available for those who wish to use them.
- Face coverings should be worn at all times during the preparation and serving of food and drinks.
- All crockery and cutlery that has been taken out of the Pantry cupboards should be put through the dishwasher before being put back into the cupboards again.
- Where food and drinks are being served to a group of people, table service is the preferred option. Where this is not possible, the number of people serving themselves from a buffet table must be limited to prevent crowding.
- Please ensure that no food or equipment belonging to your group is left behind after your event.

Cancellation by AUC

Should the church building be required to close in response to contact from NHS Scotland's Test & Protect service, AUC will cancel all affected bookings, refund any applicable hire fees and assist the group in arranging a suitable alternative venue.

Should the church be required to close due to more general Covid-19 restrictions/lockdown, AUC will cancel all affected bookings and refund any applicable hire fees. It is highly unlikely that we would be able to assist in arranging alternative accommodation, however.

Building cleaning & ventilation

We will be operating an enhanced cleaning schedule in the building, including increased cleaning of toilets and frequently touched surfaces like door handles and light switches. All chairs, tables and microphones (if used) will be disinfected between each group.

We will also position 'clean as you go' stations in the toilets and other public spaces to enable building users to disinfect as they feel necessary/able.

We will keep windows open throughout the building as far as practicable.