



## GUIDANCE FOR LIVE STREAMING / WEB STREAMING CHURCH SERVICES

This guidance covers all forms of transmission of live images via the internet and includes Web Broadcasting, Periscope, Facebook Live and YouTube. CCTV is covered in separate guidance.

It is possible that cameras can have a dual function – acting as security or CCTV systems as well as providing internet webcast. This should be made clear on the signs you will need to put up. This also means that both this guidance for the web streaming facility and the separate Diocesan guidance relating to CCTV should be followed.

Video recordings are not covered by these guidelines.

### Terminology

Although the term 'live stream' tends to denote content that is broadcast live as it happens, the term is frequently used to refer to any content that is broadcast or streamed, whether it is live or not. For the purposes of this guidance web streaming or live streaming refers to content that is available online, i.e. internet broadcasting or content that is streamed, rather than being downloaded.

### Why use Live / Web Streams?

- Housebound parishioners can access weekly or even daily Mass in a way that works against isolation.
- Relatives who cannot attend a baptism/wedding/funeral can access it in a way that brings great comfort.
- The tabernacle can be used as a focus for private prayer for those who cannot get to church.
- As a tool for evangelisation, those who for any reason cannot/do not attend church can access the Church's worship from anywhere in the world.

All of these reasons are within the legitimate interests of the church.

### Arrangements for those Not Wishing their Image to be Streamed

It is important there is **an area of the church where there are no cameras** where members of the congregation can avoid being captured in the footage, live or otherwise and appropriate arrangements should be made for Holy Communion for those people.

There should be **clear signage** upon entrance of these arrangements and it would be good practice to be clear on parish websites that web streaming is in operation and alternative arrangements are in place, in order to reassure those who may be concerned about their image being streamed before attending.

For some vulnerable groups there are safeguarding implications if services are web streamed, for example those fleeing abuse or children who are looked after and so it is important that these arrangements are in place and clearly communicated in order for people to feel safe and to promote access to all.



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## Streaming Live

- Cameras should be installed discreetly with due care and respect to church buildings. They should not be permanent fixtures; they should be easily removable without any impact on the building. For further guidance on this please consult the Property Department. Listed churches will need Faculty Approval from the Historic Churches Commission. Other churches will need Faculty Approval from the Art and Architecture Committee. In each case applications should cover both cameras and any permanent signs.
- Cameras should be trained on the sanctuary. Images of those sat in the congregation should not be transmitted. This is to ensure that the images web streamed are only those which can be justified in the legitimate interests of the church set out above. If using mobile equipment this should preferably belong to the parish not to individual parishioners. Any footage should be wiped after use.
- Cameras should only be switched on for the duration of Mass or other Liturgy and switched off at the end. There should be **no live streaming of Churches when there is no Mass or Liturgy taking place**. The only exception is when the transmission is from a camera focussed on a close-up of the sanctuary that ensures that no visiting persons are recorded.
- If connecting to the parish broadband connection, ensure that your broadband package has unlimited usage for uploading, or you risk incurring significant costs from your provider.
- During any broadcast **it should be possible to stop transmission**, if necessary, by quickly accessing the control panel of the system. If this cannot be done by the priest from near the altar, someone should be delegated to break transmission if needed. Transmission should be stopped if anyone whose image is being streamed is taken ill.

## Data Protection

There are Data Protection issues that must be met in relation to internet broadcasting:

- Recording people via a web camera and displaying those images over the internet constitutes the processing of personal data. That processing can only be done with the consent of the people who will be identifiable from the footage which is streamed.
- Members of the clergy should sign forms consenting to their image being used for web broadcasting in the course of their regular duties.
- Altar servers, Ministers of the Word and of the Eucharist will need to sign consent forms, as will anyone else whose image will be identifiable from the footage which is streamed. In the case of children, consent from a parent/guardian is required. Ask the safeguarding team for help if consent is needed in relation to a looked after child or a child in foster care. Adults who lack capacity may also require the consent of someone who has legal authority.
- Signs should be placed at all entrances to the church and in other prominent locations informing people that web cameras are in operation. Draft wording is provided.
- Provided that there are signs at each entrance and the camera is not trained on individuals, consent of members of the congregation should not generally be needed, as they should not be recognisable from the footage which is transmitted.
- A consent form for adults and a separate form for children is provided. Copies of completed consent forms should be kept securely on parish property.
- There should be a statement in all your newsletters stating "This church live streams Mass



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and other events. Please see notices in church for more detail"

- Special events such as funerals, marriages, baptisms, Holy Communion - all parishes that live stream should ensure their privacy notices include information that personal data may be collected by live streaming.
- Camera shots (images) of the congregation should be wide angle shots – minimising the possibility of easily identifying individuals with close up images. As with any social media post, streaming brings the opportunity for members of the public to comment on posts. These posts need to be monitored for defamatory or abusive language, and on some platforms, comments can be turned off.
- **Transparency** and lawfulness are key to how we manage personal data we collect – at the point at which we collect that personal data, i.e. at the time of the recording or streaming, we need to ensure that signage is in place.

## How Long Should We Retain any Streamed Content?

It is not reasonable for streamed content to be available online forever and we have therefore set a **retention period of three months maximum** for all events or services that are available online, in whatever format. However we recognise that some events are special and those involved may wish for them to be available for longer or until they download a personal copy. This can be done, but signed consent must be in place. Forms are available and should be retained by the parish for as long as the content remains available online.

It should be noted however, that once content is uploaded to the internet, it is quite difficult to fully control what happens to it and those involved need to be aware that anyone can view any content over the internet, anywhere in the world and download a copy.

## Music

Great care needs to be taken when transmitting live or recorded music over a webstreaming service, to ensure compliance with the law relating to licensing of music.

We are grateful to the *Churches' Legislation Advisory Service* who have provided the following guidance, originally produced by the Church of England:

## Live Music

CCLI introduced a streaming licence in 2020. It is available to any church which holds a CCLI Church Copyright Licence.

For many churches, this licence will cover them for their streaming activity:

- For churches who are streaming their services via YouTube or Facebook, the CCLI Streaming Licence will cover them for live worship music performed as part of that stream. (This would include services streamed or webcast via YouTube but embedded into the church's own website). \*
- You can check on the CCLI website as to whether permissions for a particular hymn or song are covered by them.
- If the church is hosting the stream/webcast on their own website, they will need the PRS for Music Limited Online Music Licence (LOML) in addition to the CCLI Streaming Licence.



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- The CCLI Streaming Licence includes the right to show the words on screen.
- The CCLI Streaming Licence allows a church to make recordings of the services available on their website indefinitely provided you keep renewing your streaming licences.
- Another licence, One License is available which covers an additional range of church and choral music e.g. Taizé, GIA Publications, Oxford University Press, Wild Goose Resource Group, Kevin Mayhew.
- While some materials from these publishers may already be covered by a CCLI Church Copyright Licence, this is worth exploring if you wish to stream a wider range of music.

\*We understand that there can be problems if using YouTube for streaming services because YouTube spot streaming of music very quickly and may mute or stop the stream or show adverts. One possibility to consider may be to mute the stream during any music but that will be unsatisfactory for those participating from elsewhere and may be difficult to arrange practically.

## **Recorded Music**

- The licences referred to above only cover 'live' music performances. If a church is using recorded music as part of the stream, additional rights come into play.
- Commercially available CDs or music recordings cannot be played unless specific permission is granted by the copyright holder.
- There are several other Christian organisations that provide apps or software that provide backing tracks for worship, some of which are giving churches permission to use their pre-recorded tracks as part of their streams. Please carefully check first before using this material.

## **Using other Copyrighted Material**

- Permission should also be sought from the owner(s) of any other creative works included in the service. If reproducing bible verses, or liturgy, usually there will be copyright information in the front of the publication, and usually they will allow for a certain proportion to be reproduced.
- For any images etc. the same rules would apply as in normal circumstances. Never assume that you can take an image found on Google and use it in a church service or include it in a service sheet or similar without permission.
- Regarding a Service Sheet, as long as there are appropriate licences/permissions in place, making that service sheet available online should be fine.

## **Advice on using Zoom to Stream Services**

Churches using Zoom to stream services need both the CCLI Streaming Licence and the PRS for Music LOML. This is because Zoom doesn't currently have an agreement with PRS for Music as YouTube and Facebook do.

## **Online Harm**

Please be aware the Online Safety Act 2023 seeks to reduce online harms. Anyone who manages an online platform within the scope of the legislation will have a duty to protect users against illegal content. Whilst this is unlikely to impact upon our streaming, we just need



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to be mindful of the legislation and the requirement to protect children. This duty is already in place and is covered in the section on data protection.

## Further Guidance

Anyone seeking further advice or information should contact the Communications Office on [communications@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:communications@rcaob.org.uk) or 0121 230 6286 or the Data Compliance Manager at [debbie.jones@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:debbie.jones@rcaob.org.uk) 0121 230 6271 for any data protection issues that may arise around live streaming.

VERSION CONTROL			
Primary Location	Policy title	Version No.	Next Review date
Website - Parish Resources	Web Streaming Policy	2	October 2026
<b>Policy owner(s)</b>		Data Compliance Manager	
<b>Related Policies</b>		Privacy Notice CCTV Guidance	
VERSION HISTORY			
Version No.	Date	Created/amended by (Name & job title)	Amendment
Version No. 1	2020	Diocesan Solicitor	New policy
Version No. 2	24 October 2023	Data Compliance Manager	Minor and technical update
Version No. 3	1 February 2024	Data Compliance Manager	Minor and technical update