

Coronavirus Risk Assessment for Opening Baptist Churches

The Baptist Union of Great Britain has developed this risk assessment template working with health and safety consultants from Ellis Whittam to assist churches as they plan for re-opening their premises. Prior to completing this document, it is recommended that churches read our leaflet [Coronavirus: Guidance For Reopening Church Buildings](#) and review the [government guidance and regulations relating to churches re-opening](#).

This template is designed to allow Trustees of a Baptist Church to consider the specific risks relating to Coronavirus in opening their premises. It should be considered as a supplement to a general risk assessment of the premises.

This risk assessment contains some generic risks, and potential control measures but you may wish to add some risk or control measures of your own that are specific to your church building and church circumstances. Space has been left in the template for this, but feel free to add additional pages if you believe this to be necessary.

You may also find some of the risks and control measures to not be suitable for your circumstances. If that is the case, we would recommend you make notes as to why these are not suitable as this will allow you to explain your position if it is questioned in future.

It is also important to say that this document should be a living document subject to regular review. You should certainly review it after the first few times your church gathers and after any change in government regulations or guidance to ensure that the assessment of risks remains appropriate and the control measures are appropriate and are functioning as intended.

We also recommend that churches conduct a [general risk assessments relating to staff and volunteers returning to work at church buildings](#) using the template provided on our website and an [individual risk assessment relating to each volunteer](#), also using this template provided on our website.

Date of issue: 9 July 2020

Risk Assessment Matrix

The following tables give a framework for assessing the risks identified, with some guidance to assist you with what a score might mean. The scoring system deliberately places additional emphasis on risks with the most severe consequences but are not very likely over those that are likely but have limited consequence. This aligns with the most recent best practice in assessment and management of risks. Please note that this framework is a generic one for evaluating risks and not specific to Coronavirus.

In the Coronavirus pandemic, it is likely that most risks, before controls are implemented will be scored as 5 (high probability) and 5 (high severity) as the likelihood of a case being observed within 12 months is significant and the consequences are potentially death of an individual or multiple individuals. This goes to emphasis the importance of taking control measures seriously in order to reduce the likelihood and severity of the risk.

Likelihood / Probability
5. Likely to occur at least once in any 12 month period
4. Likely to occur at least once in a 3 year period
3. Likely to occur at least once in a 10 year period
2. Likely to occur at least once in a 50 year period
1. Unlikely in a 50 year period

Severity / Significance / Consequence
5. Expected to result in church closure or significant harm to multiple individuals, death of an individual
4. Material threat to continued existence of church, or significant harm to single individual
3. Substantial adaptation required to ongoing operations
2.. Minor adaptation required to ongoing operations
1. Inconvenience to ongoing operations

RISK / PRIORITY INDICATOR MATRIX						
LIKELIHOOD / PROBABILITY	5	7	14	21	28	35
	4	6	12	18	24	30
	3	5	10	15	20	25
	2	4	8	12	16	20
	1	3	6	9	12	15
	1	2	3	4	5	
	SEVERITY / SIGNIFICANCE / CONSEQUENCE					

Score = (Severity x Likelihood) + (2 x Severity)
(this formula places additional emphasis on high severity issues)

Summary		Suggested Timeframe for Action
20+	High	Immediate / within days
15-19	Medium	Within weeks
1-15	Low	Whenever viable to do so

Risk:		Coronavirus entering the premises and potentially infecting users of the building	
Persons at risk		Ministers, leaders, members, attendees, contractors, cleaners	
Risk Rating before control measures	Likelihood	4	Risk Rating after control measures
	Severity	3	
	Overall Risk	18	
		Likelihood	1
		Severity	2
		Overall Risk	6

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
1. Restrict attendance to pre-invited list as far as possible and notify all attenders that they are not to attend if they have. a) symptoms of Covid 19, or b) you have been told to isolate by the NHS because of Covid 19 in their household or c) there is the possibility of Covid 19 infection in their household	Y	GT	Complete – to be followed up by verbal check on the door
2. In addition to above, attendees need also be asked to follow government guidance on self-isolation after symptoms and/or positive test results and/or after returning from foreign travel.	Y	RE	
3. Instructions to leaders should also include a verbal check on attendees when they arrive, that they are symptom free	Y	WP	
4. Everyone to use hand sanitiser on entry to the building, Signage and a table with sufficient hand sanitiser supplies will be placed near the front door	Y	WP	Verbal instruction to be given on entry to the building
5. Action Plan in place and communicated to leaders in event of a known Coronavirus case entering premises	Y	RM	Contingency plan written
6. Undertake the Ellis Whittam's 'Pre-Event Checklist' (Appendix 2 of Guidance on Re-opening churches).	Y	RM	PAT Testing completed (next years review required before 1/9/2021)
7. Display suitable posters to ask people with symptoms not to enter the building (see our Coronavirus poster library)	Y	PE	

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
8. Social distancing measures to be maintained where possible, including on arrival to and departure from the venue. Issue guidance to individuals and groups to give space between others when moving about the building. use the fire exits as the standard exit routes to avoid two-way traffic in the corridors.	Y		
9. All contractors to complete the 'Contractor Checklist' (Appendix 6 of Guidance on Re-opening churches).	Y	DE	When cleaning contractor appointed use Appendix 6

Risk: Transmission of Coronavirus to an individual direct from infected person			
Persons at risk Ministers, leaders, members, attendees, contractors, cleaners			
Risk Rating before control measures	Likelihood	5	Risk Rating after control measures
	Severity	3	
	Overall Risk	21	
	Likelihood	2	
	Severity	3	
	Overall Risk	12	

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
1. Suitable social distancing policy in place.	Y		One way system no longer applies but people should use the fire exits as far as possible. Provide spaced-out seating Issue guidance to people to continue to give each other space
2. Minimise physical contact between persons from different households/bubbles	Y		Guidance to be given to groups and individuals, including signage.
3. All attendees required to wear a face covering while moving around the shared areas of the building.	Y	RM	
4. Capacity monitored and entry stopped when capacity reached	Y		Attendance is pre-booked unless someone turns up "on spec" where they will be accommodated if there is room and if they assert, they are symptom free and not isolating. Contact details should be requested.
5. No singing during services	Y		Music tracks will include singers and congregation reminded not to sing by speaker.
6. Signage in place to remind people of safe practices	Y	PE/HS	
7. Any changes to entrances, exits and queues will take into account reasonable adjustments to accommodate those who need them, such as worshippers with physical disabilities.	Y		

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
8. Visitors instructed not to gather in groups, except with members of their own household, inside or outside the building.	Y		Gathering in groups outside the building is permitted
9. All individuals who fall into the vulnerable, clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable categories will be assessed and provisions made accordingly.	Y	RM	
10. Good ventilation required at all times, Patio Doors and Fire Exits to remain open while groups in attendance.	Y	RM	Fire exit to remain open during the service, Advice to groups to continue to have the fire exits open while rooms are in use (Note that fire doors should remain closed)
11. Serving of tea/coffee/light refreshments can be resumed with specific measures.	Y		Only two people to be allowed in the kitchen at any one time. No service at hatch – take orders and table service only Use patio and entrance hall for seating rather than medium hall
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Risk:		Transmission of Coronavirus to an individual via a contaminated surface/item (excluding toilet facilities)	
Persons at risk		Ministers, leaders, members, attendees, contractors, cleaners	
Risk Rating before control measures	Likelihood	2	Risk Rating after control measures
	Severity	4	
	Overall Risk	16	
	Likelihood	1	
	Severity	4	
	Overall Risk	12	

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
1. Regular cleaning of building.	Y	BS	Request groups sanitise surfaces they have touched when leaving
2. No passing of collection plate/bag and collection not counted for 72 hours after service.	Y		No collection to be taken
3. Toilets supplied with disposal hand towels or dryers (not a reusable linen towel), hand sanitiser. Limit to 1 person per toilet unit (even if it has multiple cubicles), posters etc.	Y		
4. Undertake the 'Pre-Event Checklist' (Appendix 2 of Guidance on Re-opening churches) and Cleaning Checklist (Appendix 3 of Guidance on Re-opening churches)	Y	PE and HS	
5. Keep Register of attendees	Y	RE	This is to be a requirement for all groups & written into guidance for group leaders/hirers
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Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
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Risk: Transmission of Coronavirus to an individual via toilet facilities	
Persons at risk Ministers, leaders, members, attendees, contractors, cleaners	
Risk Rating before control measures	Likelihood 5
	Severity 2
	Overall Risk 18
Risk Rating after control measures	Likelihood 4
	Severity 2
	Overall Risk 12

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
1. Regular cleaning of surfaces likely to be touched regularly with appropriate sanitiser spray.	Y	PE	
2. Toilets supplied with disposal hand towels or dryers (not a reusable linen towel), hand sanitiser. Limit to 1 person per toilet unit (even if it has multiple cubicles), posters etc.	Y	PE	Remove linen towels
3. Undertake the 'Pre-Event Checklist' (Appendix 2 of Guidance on Re-opening churches) and Cleaning Checklist (Appendix 3 of Guidance on Re-opening churches)	Y	HS	
4. Setting clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets to ensure they are kept clean and social distancing is achieved as much as possible.	Y		Signage to be updated to advise people to keep their distance and use face coverings when using shared areas
5. Ask people to spray clean toilet after use	N	RM	Look at feasibility of this / include cleaning materials
6. Children under 11 to be accompanied to the toilet	Y	HS	
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Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
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Risk: Transmission of Coronavirus to an individual via contaminated waste			
Persons at risk Cleaners and anyone else handling waste			
Risk Rating before control measures	Likelihood	2	Risk Rating after control measures
	Severity	4	
	Overall Risk	16	
	Likelihood	1	
	Severity	4	
	Overall Risk	12	

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
1. Everyone asked to take waste home with them if possible	Y	RM	Waste originating from attendees to service likely to be very limited so not a big risk
2. All waste to be assumed contaminated and handled appropriately	Y	RM	Liners to be used in bins and group leaders need to remove waste
3. Anyone handling waste to be trained in suitable working practices	Y	RM	See (2) above
4. All waste handled with suitable PPE (see cleaning guidance for details).	Y	RM	Taking standard waste away in liners does not require PPE.
5. All bins lined with disposable liners and all waste double bagged prior to disposal and kept for 72 hours prior to disposal in general waste.	Y	RM	See (2) above. (Govt guidelines have changed. Double bagging not necessary, nor keeping waste bags for 72 hours if no Covid contact.)
6. Lidded bins operated by foot-pedal to be provided	Y	RM	No lidded bins to be used
7. Keep records of who has carried out cleaning and the tasks completed	Y	RM	
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Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
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Risk:		Transmission of Coronavirus to an individual via working in the church building	
Persons at risk		Ministers, leaders, members, attendees, contractors, cleaners	
Risk Rating before control measures	Likelihood	4	Risk Rating after control measures
	Severity	4	
	Overall Risk	24	
		Likelihood	1
		Severity	4
		Overall Risk	12

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
1. Use remote working tools to avoid in-person meetings.	Y		Interim arrangement for church services is a hybrid and technology has been implemented to enable on premise service to be accessed by Zoom
2. Restrict attendance of individuals at meetings to those absolutely necessary and maintain social distancing throughout.	Y		
3. Avoid transmission during meetings, for example, by avoiding sharing pens and other objects.	Y		
4. Provide hand sanitiser in rooms used for meetings.	Y		
5. Hold meetings outdoors or in well-ventilated rooms whenever possible.	Y		
6. For areas where regular meetings take place, use floor signage to help people maintain social distancing.	Y		
7. Implement cleaning procedures for goods and items entering the premises.	N	RM	May need policy to be developed with anything that is introduced into the church
8. Create a guide for anyone working in the Church building	Y	RM	Updated guide issued
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Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
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Risk:					
Persons at risk					
Risk Rating before control measures	Likelihood			Risk Rating after control measures	Likelihood
	Severity				Severity
	Overall Risk				Overall Risk

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
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Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
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APPENDIX

Review/Revision Record

Date of Review	Confirmed by	Comments
24/8/2020	Richard Mann	Initial version published to web site
27/8/2020	Richard Mann	Updated following deacons' comments (updated regarding face coverings, use of toilets and signs suitable for children.
14/10/2020	Richard Mann	Updated now cleaning regime in place
8/4/2021	Richard Mann	Update to recognise current situation – General risk of harm lower due to vaccine roll-out Emphasis on ventilation due to current knowledge of the predominance of airborne transmission of SARS-COV-2 virus Use of Medium Hall by Pilgrims Progress and separation of parts of the building used by the different groups to make things safer and simplify cleaning.
20/5/2021	Richard Mann	Specific version for resumption of services in main hall
21/5/2021	Richard Mann	Version aligned with end to government restrictions – to take effect from Thursday 22 July

I have read the risk assessment and understand and accept its contents form part of my job role. I will keep myself informed of any changes

Staff Member Name (Print)	Signature	Date