

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. 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. EBC general risk assessment was last conducted by Mike Mircic. David Flatman and Andrew Edwards are awaiting training to enable them to undertake the role of Safety Advisor and perform a general risk assessment.

You may 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.

Initial Risk Assessment using this guidance undertaken on 27th July 2020 by Andrew Edwards, David Flatman and Rosie Midson noting recently updated advice from BUGB dated 23rd July. Third version with updates produced 27th September 2020.

It will be necessary for someone to be allocated to monitoring the changing advice from Gov. UK and BUGB on a regular basis. The following risk assessment should be reviewed once all required control measures are put into action in order to reassess risk rating.

All other contractor issues are dealt with in the **separate appendices** sent with this risk assessment; which includes the Action Plan, Pre- Event Checklist, Cleaning Checklist and Example Privacy Statement.

Risk Assessment Matrix

During 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 emphasise the importance of taking control measures seriously in order to reduce the likelihood and severity of the risk as far as possible.

It is unlikely that the severity score will reduce until such time as there are effective treatments or a vaccine. The control measures you put in place will mostly impact upon the likelihood of occurrence, but you may conclude their impact is sufficient to reduce it below a rating of 5. This does not mean your control measures are not of value because the scoring bands are fairly broad. For example, reducing the likely rate of occurrence from once a week to once every 50 weeks would be a factor of 50 improvement in likelihood but still have a score of 5.

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		Recommended timeframe for implementing any identified control measures
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	5		Risk Rating after control measures	Likelihood	
	Severity	5			Severity	
	Overall Risk	35			Overall Risk	

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
1. Ask everyone symptomatic not to attend	Yes	Val Statt	Advice to be emailed or by letter before the building is opened as to what to expect and not to attend if at all unwell or having any Covid-19 symptoms
2. All attendees asked to follow government guidance on self-isolation after symptoms and/or positive test/contact tracing/returning from foreign travel.	Yes	Val Statt	As above
3. Verbal symptom checks on entry	Yes	Rota for door duty	Greeting Deacon on door to ask this
4. Ask vulnerable not to attend in person	Yes	Val Statt as per point 1	Those still advised not to go out should be advised by us to continue to follow that guidance and await advice from GP/ Gov.uk
5. Everyone to use hand sanitiser on entry to the building	Yes	Door steward	Sanitiser in vestibule for all to use before registration. Ideally they will not have to fill in the pre populated register but if this is required for newcomers or to add details then they will have sanitised before handling that pen/ document
6. Action Plan in place in case and communicated to leaders as in event of Coronavirus case known to enter premises	Yes	Door deacon	See action plan
7. Undertake the Ellis Whittam's 'Pre-Event Checklist' (Appendix 2 of attachments).	Yes	Event leader or deputised person	See Appendix 2 for completion prior to each event held in the church building.

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
8. Display suitable posters to ask people with symptoms not to enter the building.	Y	Rosie M	To be prepared and displayed on outer doors
9. Social distancing measures to be maintained where possible, including the arrival and departure of the venue.	Y	Door Deacon and stewards	2m distancing. Face coverings required in indoor meetings [with some exemptions].
10. All contractors to complete the 'Contractor Checklist' (Appendix 6 of Attached)	Y	David Flatman	DF dealing with external contractors as mentioned later in this document

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	Likelihood
	Severity	5			Severity
	Overall Risk	35			Overall Risk

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
1. Suitable social distancing policy in place (2m or “1m plus mitigations”)	Y	Door Deacon/stewards	It has been agreed at 2m . Room capacities measured to assist this decision. See point 13
2. No physical contact between persons from different households/bubbles	Y	Internal Door steward	Internal door steward to assist family groups or bubbles to sit together as a group of 6 maximum.
3. All attendees required to wear a face covering	Y	Door deacon	To remind people as they are greeted but also for prominent notice to require wearing before entry. A small stock of disposable masks will be available for those who arrive without one.
4. One-way system of flow through building to avoid pinch points	Y	Door deacon and stewards	Single entry via Nobles Green door as this is fully wheelchair accessible. Guide to positioned seat. Following ‘event’ egress via entry door but one row at a time commencing from the back and under the supervision of stewards.
5. Areas marked out of bounds where appropriate	Y	Rosie M	Rayleigh Road main door to be labelled no entry
6. Seating arrangements adapted for social distancing	Y	Cleaning Team and/or Door stewards	See capacity for each room below. Using white garden chairs from Party in the Park store for ease of cleaning, moving around and labelling. Fabric chairs are now safely stowed on baptistry and upper platform out of use. Exception being the 3 large comfortable chairs for those who need them because of medical conditions and the 3 vinyl seated wooden

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
			arm chairs for those too heavy for the white plastic chairs
7. Capacity monitored and entry stopped when capacity reached	Y	Door Deacon	Only seating allowed meeting decided maximum capacity to be available. Which is measured as 29 in the sanctuary
8. No congregational singing during services	Y	Service leader	Adapt services accordingly, maybe have some quiet background music to enhance atmosphere for worship. See also point 14. Live music is permitted at the front
9. Signage in place to remind people of safe practices		Rosie M	Minimal number of signs to avoid overload but to provide clarity
10. 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	Door deacon	Patient welcome with ability to prioritise those with mobility difficulties to avoid queueing if this occurs. Have doors open and stewards on duty in good time to enable this to work well. 1 deacon to meet and greet and 2 stewards for registration and seating directions
11. Visitors instructed not to gather in groups, except with members of their own household, inside or outside the building.	Y	Val Statt	Advance information circulated and reinforced by advice during notices. N.B. groups of 6 maximum
12. Room Capacity	Y	Event organiser	Sanctuary: 29 chairs at 2m . Sound desk 2 persons only at 1m+ Vestry: 3 chairs at 2m Upper Hall: 12 Lower Hall: 10 at 2m Office: 3 at 2m
13. Music Corner	Y		Currently all instruments, stands etc. are together under dust covers at rear of music corner which has been deep cleaned.

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
14. Ventilation	Y	First person in /Duty Deacon	Person opening building up should if at all possible open windows in room[s] to be used and leave doors open to allow adequate ventilation before use. As the sanctuary has a hot air circulation heating system this cannot be used whilst services are being held or groups present.

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	5		Risk Rating after control measures	Likelihood
	Severity	5			Severity
	Overall Risk	35			Overall Risk

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
1. Doors kept open where possible to reduce contact with door handles (may not be appropriate for fire safety or to maintain suitable temperature)	Y	Door deacon	First person in to open doors that are to be used and also windows to ventilate before events start. As the sanctuary has hot air heating system this cannot be used whilst services are being held or groups present.
2. Regular cleaning of surfaces likely to be touched regularly with appropriate sanitiser. See appendix 3 for full schedule	Y	Cleaning Team	Supply of hard surface wipes available and readily visible. Sprays to be avoided except for use by cleaners as they can trigger asthmatic reactions.
3. No passing of collection plate/bag and collection not counted for 72 hours after service.	Y	Andrew Edwards	Pewter plate in situ at door for offerings. [Wooden plate turned by Len David is missing]. Cashiers to be organised by Andrew for later counting or using disposable gloves.
4. 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	Cleaning Team	Hand towels and hot water and soap all in situ. To have sanitiser dispenser outside between the two vestibule toilets. Cost of extra disposables to be noted.
5. Building not used again for 72 hours or building thoroughly deep cleaned between uses	Y	Bookings deacon/ Cleaning Team	Cleaning organised to happen after every event. See Appendix 3.
6. No serving of food and drink items prior to, during or after the service.	Y	Rosie Midson	Kitchen has had deep clean. Those using the kitchen should be aware of food hygiene and safety requirements.

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
7. No distribution of bibles or other books – attendees asked to bring their own and take them away with them.	Y	Stewards/ Val Statt	If Bibles are used they must be quarantined for 72 hours before being put back into bookcase. In introductory letter people should be advised to bring their own Bibles if possible.
8. Microphones and other equipment kept to a single individual	Y	Sound desk	Roving worn microphone for service leader, Lectern microphone church secretary for notices and for other service participant use hand held microphone. Musicians will also have use of separate stand microphones. Wipes for quick cleaning
9. Undertake the 'Pre-Event Checklist' (Appendix 2) and Cleaning Checklist (Appendix 3)	Y		This is to be begun by the person cleaning beforehand then the person opening up to complete.
10. Keep Register of attendees	Y	Val Statt/ Stewards	Register of regular attenders with contact details to be added to at each event for any newcomers. 21 day rolling record retained before information can be destroyed. <i>Val Statt is responsible for Data Protection</i> Folder kept safely in office for storing this information for the required period.
11. Floor Plan	Y	Rosie M	Prepared floor plan [once chair layout agreed] with numbered seats so that location of each person can be mapped and readily available for Test and Trace PHE if contact made. Keep for 21 days in folder as above then destroy by shredding.
12. Children's corner	Y	Val Back	A single low red table [which are 1m+ in length] and some small children's chairs ready in the sanctuary for anyone who attends with small children who might need to be kept occupied. Drawing paper, small book supply can then be taken home by that family. Pencils, crayons or felt tips should not be shared outside the family bubble and will be sanitised after use.

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
13. Communion items	Y	Service Leader and preparer of sacraments	Procedure as agreed by the leadership team.

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		Risk Rating after control measures	Likelihood	
	Severity	5			Severity	
	Overall Risk	35			Overall Risk	

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	Cleaning Team	Before and after every event as per Appendix 3
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	Cleaning Team	Before and after every event
3. Undertake the 'Pre-Event Checklist' (Appendix 2) and Cleaning Checklist (Appendix 3)	Y	Event leader or delegated person	Before every event. Cleaning checklist will have been begun by cleaning team as per Appendix 3.
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	Rosie M	Wipes in every toilet for person using to clean seat etc. Signage for queuing may be required?
5. Introducing enhanced cleaning of toilet facilities, provision of more waste facilities, more frequent rubbish collections.	Y	Cleaning team	All adequate currently
6. Ask people to wipe clean toilet after use and also baby changing surface if used	Y	Rosie M	Signage
7. Children under 11 to be accompanied to the toilet		Door stewards	Parental escort, can wait outside but to oversee cleaning and handwashing. <i>This may be an issue for children's work once we extend opening.</i>

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	5		Risk Rating after control measures	Likelihood
	Severity	5			Severity
	Overall Risk	35			Overall Risk

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
1. Everyone asked to take waste home with them if possible	Y	Val Statt	Advance notice to be circulated with other guidance
2. All waste to be assumed contaminated and handled appropriately	Y	Cleaning Team	Restrict to those really required, limit numbers of those handling waste.
3. Anyone handling waste to be trained in suitable working practices	Y	Cleaning Team	See point 7. Suggest Tina and Rosie plus back up volunteer[s] could be trained by Rosie if desired.
4. All waste handled with suitable PPE (see cleaning guidance for details).	Y	Cleaning Team	PPE of gloves, visors, aprons and cleaning fluids, disposable cloths etc. to be stocked at all times
5. All bins lined with disposable liners and all waste double bagged prior to disposal	Y	Cleaning Team	All waste currently double bagged.
6. Lidded bins operated by foot-pedal to be provided	N	Cleaning Team	Swing bins in use can be operated without handling the lids. Pedal bins may need to be purchased
7. Keep records of who has carried out cleaning and the tasks completed	Y	Cleaning Team	Records kept in kitchen drawer by fridge and event cleaning record in Covid folder in vestibule.

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	5		Risk Rating after control measures	Likelihood
	Severity	5			Severity
	Overall Risk	35			Overall Risk

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
1. Use remote working tools to avoid in-person meetings.	Y	Meeting Chair	Currently zoom and telephone and email and social media in use
2. Restrict attendance of individuals at meetings to those absolutely necessary and maintain social distancing throughout.	Y	Meeting Chair	This is about meetings other than services, room capacity for 2m spacing as for services
3. Avoid transmission during meetings, for example, by avoiding sharing pens and other objects.	Y	Meeting participants	Use of own equipment etc.
4. Provide hand sanitiser in rooms used for meetings.	Y	Cleaning Team	Available throughout building
5. Hold meetings outdoors or in well-ventilated rooms whenever possible.	Y	Meeting Chair	All rooms have easily opening windows except lower hall. Hot air system for heating sanctuary may not be used when services are being held or groups are present
6. Implement cleaning procedures for goods and items entering the premises.	N/A		People are going to be asked to limit their personal items to essentials and other items coming in will be either for immediate use or for cleaning/hygiene purposes and therefore cleaned and stored appropriately.

Review/Revision Record

Date of Review	Confirmed by	Comments
18.09.2020		Points for amendment noted by leadership team
27.09.2020		Protocol for Communion. Warm air heating cannot be used in Sanctuary.

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