



RISK ASSESSMENT

Based upon Government Guidance issued for the safe use of places of worship during the pandemic in England and available on www.gov.uk updated 3rd August 2020. Then amended 21.7.21 following the new Government Guidance issued on 16.7.21
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship>

Notes:

1. We have deemed the risk of ending social distancing and mask wearing and allowing singing is a reasonable risk for the following reasons:
 - The government has clearly judged the risks of singing and ending mask wearing and social distancing are such that they are no longer legal requirements.
 - In the press briefings the government has an expectation that masks would continue to be worn in "enclosed crowded places like public transport where you come into contact with people you don't normally meet". Church meetings are not that crowded, we will maintain good ventilation.
 - Although case rates are rising it is still a relatively moderate to low risk that a highly infectious person will attend our meeting, given the awareness and responsibility of our members and the fact that the laws about isolation remain in place.
 - The mitigations we have in place reduce the likelihood of transmission further.
 - A large proportion of the congregation are vaccinated
 - The risk of serious illness and death as a result of contracting Covid-19 has been reduced so that the case infection mortality rate is now of the order of seasonal flu.
 - Mask wearing will be supported for those who wish to continue doing it.
2. We will review this risk assessment on a monthly basis at the Elders' and Deacons' meeting where any updated government or local authority laws or guidance will be considered.

Risk Assessment 1

Coronavirus entering the church premises and potentially infecting users of the building.

Persons at risk: Pastor, Elders, Deacons, members, attendees, cleaners, contractors.

Control measures in place:

- Communicate information regarding procedures to members and attendees before starting to open the buildings for services.
- Ask anyone symptomatic to not attend
- Ask all attendees to follow government guidance on self-isolation after symptoms and/or a positive test or contact tracing or return from overseas.
- Display signage asking anyone with symptoms not to enter.
- Clinically extremely vulnerable people are advised to follow the same guidance as everyone else. However, they are advised to make their own personal assessment of their risk and consider whether to attend. They can ask for reasonable consideration to be given to any way in which the church can further mitigate their risk.
- Hand sanitiser to remain available on entry and around the building and in toilets.
- Undertake the checking of the premises and the cleaning before a meeting.
- Giving and accepting lifts in cars is a matter of personal choice.
- Social distancing is no longer required before entering, upon entering, within the building and upon exiting.

Action:

- Cleaning according to the existing schedule by church cleaner, checked by a Deacon.
- Clean all chairs with anti-bac spray and dispose of cloths.
- Hand sanitiser provided at entrances and strategic points. Advice not to touch face.
- Ventilation – open all windows and doors (internal and external but not fire exits) before a meeting and keep open until locking up in rooms being used.
- Self - isolation: encourage and advise anyone with symptoms not to attend, including anyone with a persistent cough or feeling generally unwell.
- Remote attendance: Zoom will continue to be provided for Sunday morning services for those unable or feeling unsafe to attend.
- Contact details: contact details are no longer required but may be given if that is the personal choice of an attendee. To that end, the QR codes will continue to be displayed and a registration sheet will be available. Information given will be retained for 21 days.

Risk Assessment 2

Transmission of coronavirus to an individual direct from an infected person.

Persons at risk: Pastor, Elders, Deacons, members, attendees, cleaners, contractors.

Control measures in place:

- Social distancing will no longer be required.
- Face coverings are no longer required to be worn by all attendees. Wearing one is a personal decision and will be accepted by everyone else.
- Personal hygiene behaviours: Physical contact (e.g. hand shaking, hugging, kissing) between people from different households/bubbles is no longer forbidden.
- Capacity monitored and entry stopped when capacity is reached but this is unlikely to happen. This is approximately 110 and an overflow area can be arranged in the Old Hall.
- Signage to remind of handwashing, hand sanitising.
- Assess and provide for those who are vulnerable at any level.

Action:

- Seating will be at least a metre between rows with all rows facing the front.
- Personal hygiene behaviours: consideration will be given to the wishes of other people and a respectful request should be made to see if the other person minds being approached with physical contact.
- Continued advice will include: i) washing hands with soap and water or using hand sanitiser regularly, ii) avoiding touching eyes, nose and mouth, and washing hands before and after needing to touch the face and iii) covering the mouth and nose with disposable tissues when coughing or sneezing, or sneezing into the crook of the arm (not the hands) if there's no tissue available.
- Singing with or without a mask is a personal choice and will be respected by others.

Risk Assessment 3

Transmission of coronavirus to an individual via a contaminated surface or item (not including toilet facilities).

Persons at risk: Pastor, Elders, Deacons, members, attendees, cleaners, contractors.

Control measures in place:

- Where possible, doors kept open to reduce contact with door handles (not if a fire exit or temperature too low).
- Regular cleaning of surfaces likely to be touched regularly with appropriate anti-bac spray.
- The offertory box will continue to be available rather than the passing offertory bags.
- Attendees are encouraged to bring their own Bibles and take them away with them. Church Bibles will be available on the way in and those people using them are asked to return them to a second box where they will be quarantined for at least 72 hours before re-use.
- Coat racks available for use according to personal preferences.
- Microphones etc. to be used by one person, each item, as far as reasonably possible.
- Keep register of attendees who wish to supply their details. Keep the QR codes displayed for use by those who wish to do so.

Action:

- Minimise contact with “touchpoints”. As far as possible, stewards open doors, if not already wedged back.
- Food and/or drinks provided by specified people on each occasion. Kitchen used in line with the guidance at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-covid-19/restaurants-pubs-bars-nightclubs-and-takeaway-services>. This is referred to by the “places of worship” page on gov.uk There is no requirement to provide socially distanced tables but consideration will be given to those preferring to have more space. Option of taking refreshments outside when weather is suitable.
- Offering: continue to encourage online giving. Offertory box provided on table in church. Care taken to avoid touching it. Envelopes available if using to identify Gift Aid.
- Coats racks returned to church.

Risk Assessment 4

Transmission of coronavirus to an individual via toilet facilities.

Persons at risk: Pastor, Elders, Deacons, members, attendees, cleaners, contractors.

Control measures in place:

- Regular cleaning of surfaces likely to be touched regularly using anti-bac spray.
- Toilets supplied with disposable paper hand towels, anti-bac hand wash, anti-bac wipes in each cubicle.
- One person in ladies or gents or disabled toilet at a time, regardless of there being more cubicles.
- Signage reminding of need to handwash, wipe toilet and other touch points.
- Pedal bins with instructions not to touch the lid. Lined with plastic sack.
- Children under 11 to be accompanied by a parent/carer.
- Waste bin to be monitored, bag removed and tied, put inside a second bag, tied and stored for 72 hours before disposal with general rubbish.

Action:

- Encourage attendees to use facilities at home before attending.
- Cleaner to deep clean toilets, cubicles, sinks, fixtures and fittings on each cleaning day.
- Provision of anti-bac wipes, anti-bac spray, paper towels, pedal bin, bin liners, cleaner's PPE, disposable mop heads and cleaning cloths.
- Encourage attendees to wipe/spray toilet and all touched areas after use.

Risk Assessment 5

Transmission of coronavirus via contaminated waste

Persons at risk: cleaners, anyone handling waste

Control measures in place:

- Attendees asked to take home own personal rubbish and waste including nappies and used sanitary products.
- All waste to be assumed to be contaminated and handled appropriately.
- Cleaner or anyone handling waste to be advised as to practice to be taken.
- All waste to be handled using suitable PPE.
- All bins to be lined with disposable liners and all waste to be double bagged, stored in the cleaner's cupboard for at least 72 hours and then put into general rubbish.
- All bins to be pedal, foot controlled with signage not to touch the lid.

Action:

- Provision of suitable plastic bags.
- PPE provided for cleaner.
- Emptying of bins and handling of waste restricted to the cleaner, where possible.

Risk Assessment 6

Transmission of coronavirus to an individual via working in the church building (other than main services/meetings).

Persons at risk: Pastor, Elders, Deacons, members, attendees, cleaners, contractors.

Control measures:

- Respect the wishes of any attendees to space out.
- Provide hand sanitiser in rooms for meetings.
- Ventilate room(s) used.

Action:

- Minimise interaction between individuals and touching objects. Encourage attendees to bring their own materials, including Bibles, to meetings.

Risk Assessment 7

Protective measures for children, young people and families during the pandemic.

Persons at risk: Pastor, Elders, Deacons, members, attendees, cleaners.

Control measures:

Action:

- Apply all the usual Safeguarding policy and procedures and make sure measures are in place.
- A separate page of protocols attached for children's group known as Sunday Buzz.