

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: 2 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.

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	5		Risk Rating after control measures	Likelihood	3
	Severity	5			Severity	2
	Overall Risk	35			Overall Risk	12

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
1. Ask everyone symptomatic not to attend	Y	Deacons	To provide pamphlet outlining what to do if you are symptomatic. Communication prior to attendance.
2. All attendees asked to follow government guidance on self-isolation after symptoms and/or positive test/contact tracing/returning from foreign travel.	Y	Deacons	To provide pamphlet outlining what to do if you are symptomatic. Communication prior to attendance.
3. Verbal symptom checks on entry	Y	Stewards	To ask people upon entry as to whether they feel they have any symptoms.
4. Ask vulnerable not to attend in person	Y	Deacons	To speak with individuals who are high risk.
5. Everyone to use hand sanitiser on entry to the building	Y	Stewards	Hand sanitation station by entrance/exit to the building.
6. Action Plan in place in case and communicated to leaders as in event of Coronavirus case known to enter premises	Y	Deacons	Follow action plan if someone has a known case.
7. Temperature/symptom checks on entry	N		
8. Undertake the Ellis Whittam's 'Pre-Event Checklist' (Appendix 2 of Guidance on Re-opening churches).	Y	Deacons	To complete pre-event checklist prior to first service
9. Display suitable posters to ask people with symptoms not to enter the building (see our Coronavirus poster library)	Y	Deacons	
10. Social distancing measures to be maintained where possible, including the arrival and departure of the venue.	Y	Stewards	To implement a one-way system, queuing dependent on the traffic flow into the church.

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
11. All contractors to complete the 'Contractor Checklist' (Appendix 6 of Guidance on Re-opening churches).	N		No contractors currently scheduled to attend the site.
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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	3
	Severity	5			Severity	2
	Overall Risk	35			Overall Risk	12

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
1. Suitable social distancing policy in place (2m or “1m plus mitigations”)	Y	Deacons	Chairs to be spaced 2m apart. Family units to sit together and one-way system implemented for entering and exiting the building.
2. No physical contact between persons from different households/bubbles	Y	Individuals	Posters to outline 2m distancing, pamphlets to be distributed outlining safe practices. Verbal communication to be given during meeting.
3. All attendees required to wear a face covering	Y	Individuals	Individuals advised to wear face coverings, or these will be supplied upon entrance to the building. How to use a face mask correctly information also to be distributed.
4. One-way system of flow through building to avoid pinch points	Y	Stewards	To control flow of traffic throughout the building to mitigate contact between people. Arrows on the walls/floors to show one-way direction.
5. Areas marked out of bounds where appropriate	Y	Deacons	No entry signs to be used in areas such as kitchen/offices/coffee lounge.
6. Seating arrangements adapted for social distancing	Y	Deacons	2m spacing to be put in place prior to the building opening. Keeping family units together.
7. Capacity monitored and entry stopped when capacity reached	Y	Stewards	To monitor entrance to the building and stop people entering when capacity is reached.
8. No singing during services	Y	Deacons	To be communicated prior to meetings, outlined in pamphlets and possibly signs displayed throughout the building.

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
9. Signage in place to remind people of safe practices	Y	Deacons	One-way system signs, vacant/occupied sign for the toilets/hand washing/cleaning/social distancing signs.
10. Any changes to entrances, exits and queues will consider reasonable adjustments to accommodate those who need them, such as worshippers with physical disabilities.	Y	Deacons	To identify and discuss with individuals who are less physically abled about the process of entering/exiting the building.
11. Visitors instructed not to gather in groups, except with members of their own household, inside or outside the building.	Y	Deacons	Communicated to individuals prior to meeting, outlined in information pamphlet regarding to Do's & Don'ts whilst in the building.
12. All individuals who fall into the vulnerable, clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable categories will be assessed and provisions made accordingly.	Y	Deacons	Identify individuals who are vulnerable and discuss measures with them regarding safe practice.
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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	5		Risk Rating after control measures	Likelihood	3
	Severity	5			Severity	2
	Overall Risk	35			Overall Risk	12

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	Deacons	Doors to be kept open where possible if it does not go against other safety regulations.
2. Regular cleaning of surfaces likely to be touched regularly with appropriate sanitiser spray.	Y	Cleaner & Team	Cleaning rota to be implemented.
3. No passing of collection plate/bag and collection not counted for 72 hours after service.	Y	Deacons	Collection buckets to be placed by entrance/exit and not be touched for 72 hours.
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	Cleaner & Team	Sanitising station outside toilets to wipe down door handles and sanitise hands. Towels to be removed and dryers to be wiped down after use.
5. Building not used again for 72 hours or building thoroughly deep cleaned between uses	Y	Deacons	Used once on a Sunday and cleaned mid-week.
6. No serving of food and drink items prior to, during or after the service.	Y	Deacons	Kitchen will be closed
7. No distribution of bibles or other books – attendees asked to bring their own and take them away with them.	Y	Deacons	Bibles/song books to be placed in creche with no access.
8. Microphones and other equipment kept to a single individual	Y	Deacons	Anti-bacterial wipes to be used after each person has spoken and then disposed of in the bins.
9. 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	Deacons & Cleaner + Team	

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
10. Keep Register of attendees	Y	Stewards	Attendance checklist to be completed upon entry into church.
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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		Risk Rating after control measures	Likelihood	3
	Severity	5			Severity	2
	Overall Risk	35			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	Cleaner & Team	Rota system in place.
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	Individuals	Sanitising station outside toilets to wipe down door handles and sanitise hands. Towels to be removed and dryers to be wiped down after use.
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	Deacons	
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	Individual	Cleaning stations and only one person to use the facilities at any one time.
5. Introducing enhanced cleaning of toilet facilities, provision of more waste facilities, more frequent rubbish collections.	Y	Cleaner and Team	Peddle bins, cleaning products/wipes and bins emptied frequently.
6. Ask people to spray clean toilet after use	Y	Individuals	Posters and prior notification when building re-opens.
7. Children under 11 to be accompanied to the toilet	Y	Individuals	Procedure to be outlined in pamphlet and communicated prior to any meeting taking place.
8.			

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	3
	Severity	5			Severity	2
	Overall Risk	35			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	Individuals	Outlined prior to meeting and posters and leaflets to outline process.
2. All waste to be assumed contaminated and handled appropriately	Y	Cleaner & Team	To be briefed on how to dispose of waste correctly to avoid cross contamination.
3. Anyone handling waste to be trained in suitable working practices	Y	Cleaner & Team	To be briefed on how to dispose of waste correctly to avoid cross contamination.
4. All waste handled with suitable PPE (see cleaning guidance for details).	Y	Deacons/Cleaner & Team	PPE to be provided for cleaning purposes.
5. All bins lined with disposable liners and all waste double bagged prior to disposal and disposed of as hazardous waste in line with normal infection prevention control policies and procedures.	Y	Cleaner & Team	To be briefed on how to dispose of waste correctly.
6. Lidded bins operated by foot-pedal to be provided	Y	Deacons	To position peddle bins to allow people to dispose of waste correctly and safely
7. Keep Register of attendees	Y	Stewards	Attendance checklist to be completed upon entry into church.
8.			

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	3
	Severity	5			Severity	2
	Overall Risk	35			Overall Risk	12

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
1. Use remote working tools to avoid in-person meetings.	Y	Anyone	Record message and upload to online platform for those who do not wish to come to church.
2. Restrict attendance of individuals at meetings to those necessary and maintain social distancing throughout.	Y	Deacons	To have the maximum quantity of people in the building at any one time with social distancing measures in place.
3. Avoid transmission during meetings, for example, by avoiding sharing pens and other objects.	Y	Individuals	Individuals encouraged to use their own pens/bibles. None will be available for multiple use by individuals.
4. Provide hand sanitiser in rooms used for meetings.	Y	Deacons	Sanitising stations to be placed throughout the building.
5. Hold meetings outdoors or in well-ventilated rooms whenever possible.	Y	Stewards	Doors and windows to be kept open during the meetings.
6. For areas where regular meetings take place, use floor signage to help people maintain social distancing.	Y	Deacons	One-way system to be implemented with arrows to mark which direction should be taken.
7. Implement cleaning procedures for goods and items entering the premises.	Y	Deacons	Cleaning stations to put in place with antibacterial wipes. Individuals advised to avoid bringing any unnecessary items into the building. No food refreshments allowed.
8.			

Review/Revision Record

Date of Review	Confirmed by	Comments
JANUARY 2020	DEACONS	TO BE REVIEWED ON A 6 MONTH BASIS

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
