

Church Re-opening Risk Assessment post-Coronavirus Lockdown

Introduction

When Government regulation permits your building to re-open, whether fully or for limited use (e.g. private prayer, funeral services, etc.) Deacons' Meetings (or the equivalent council in LEPs) must undertake a Risk Assessment and wherever possible identify steps to reduce and mitigate risk.

Fuller guidance on risk assessment can be found at https://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/index.htm, and advice obtained through your Synod office.

For each area of risk that you are able to identify, you must assess the likelihood of the risk occurring and the impact it would have if it did occur. Score both items on a scale from 1 to 5 (5 being highest) and multiply the two together to get a Risk Score. Then identify steps that can be taken to reduce or remove the risk. Does the mitigation give a significantly lower risk score? If not, what further mitigation must be put into place to bring the Risk Score to an acceptable level? If the risk remains "Catastrophic" or "unacceptable," what can you do to remove that activity or area of risk completely? For example, if the state of the church roof is such that it is likely to collapse on anyone inside the building, and be arried out on the injuries caused would probably be major or severe (which includes fatal injury), the risk recore would be at the catastrophic" and "unacceptable" in "Catastrophic" and "unacceptable" is keep it locked and post clear would probable or "Acceptable" is keep it locked and post clear would probable or "Acceptable" is keep it locked and post clear would probable or "Acceptable" is keep it locked and post clear would probable or "Acceptable" is keep it locked and post clear would probable or "Acceptable" is keep it locked and post clear would probable or "Acceptable" or "Acceptable" is keep it locked and post clear would probable or "Acceptable" is keep it locked and post clear would probable or "Acceptable" or "Acc

NOTE: The risks listed on the following pages are <u>suggestions</u>. Your local context will mean that some of the risks and the necessary mitigations will be different and so you <u>must</u> adapt this to suit your buildings and circumstances.

	Severe	5	5	10	15	20	25	
t	Major	4	4	8	12	16	20	Key to Risk Level
Impact	Moderate	3	3	6	9	12	15	Catastrophic
=	Minor	2	2	4	6	8	10	Unacceptable
	Insignificant	1	1	2	3	4	5	Undesirable
			1	2	3	4	5	Acceptable
			Remote	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Highly Likely	
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Church: Christ Church URC/Baptist Ipswich Risks assesse	by: Rob King, Neil Coulson, Mike Smith, June Thornton, John Durnford	Date:	31st August 2020
Assessment accepted by Deacons' Meeting: 20t	August 2020 (Signature of meeting chair or secretary)	Date:	

		Inherent risk Residual risk								
Risk No	Risk	Type*	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Score	Mitigation	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Score	Notes
Preparin	g the buildings for reopening				JCOTE				Jeore	
1	A Build-up of dust and possibly mould whilst building closed	Property	5	3	15	➤ Open doors and windows to allow airflow. ➤ Restrict access into building until building aired ➤ Minimise access to building and close off until task complete	4	2	8	No one allowed into building until task completed
2	A General cleanliness of building	Property	5	4	20	 Clean inside of building and review if additional action such as a deep clean required All fitting and fixtures (including door handles, hand rails and light switches) MUST be wiped down with anti-bacterial wipes and sanitisers 	1	4	4	Restricted access into building until task completed.
3	A Potential contamination of water system (legionella)	Property	3	4	12	Water system flushed through: all taps to be run for at least 20 mins after lockdown then at least 5 mins weekly thereafter; all toilets to be flushed at least twice weekly, Mike to start middle of August	1	4	4	If weekly checklist has not been carried out, the water system should be checked
4	A Safety measures against fire are not securely in place	Property	2	5	10	➤ Fire Risk Assessment must be in place and up to date ➤ All fire extinguishers to be checked and ensure functioning and in date All fire signage and exit are clear	1	5	5	Fire Risk Assessment must be in place before opening last done 2017
5	A Alterations to layout in order to maintain current Government social distancing measures mean a clear evacuation route is not obvious or needs to be changed	People	2	5	10	 Review evacuation and emergency response procedures to ensure they remain suitable with the altered layout and social distancing in place Where occupants require assistance evacuating the premises, ensure a plan is in place to provide appropriate support Display clear signage and ensure the identified route is free of obstruction and accessible to all 	1	5	5	All fire escapes will be unlocked and available in usual way
6	A Seating in areas to be used for private prayer, and public worship once permitted, is too close together.	Property	5	5	25	➤ Label seats in pews in accordance with agreed plan so that required distancing can be strictly followed. Remove excess chairs and stack safely	1	5	5	Building must not open until measures in place.
7	A Electrical and heating systems (including emergency lighting) fully functional	Property	1	5	5	➤ Ensure all satutory compliance checks are up to date (gas and electrical safety) ➤ All systems to be checked and signed off	1	5	5	Systems to be repaired as required prior to opening
8	A litems stored and displayed on surfaces makes cleaning regime difficult	Property	3	5	15	➤ Clear surfaces as much as possible and move items to safe storage	1	5	5	Ensure all items removed as appropriate prior to opening
9 .	A High value items at risk of theft	Property	2	2	4	 ➢ Secure items that are not needed (such as audio-visual equipment). ➢ Ensure the premises are staffed and supervised whilst open to the public. 	1	2	2	Ensure all items removed as appropriate prior to opening
10		Service delivery	0	0	0	➤ Daily Rotas of volunteers in place with reserve indicated ➤ Building only opens if minimum of 2 people in place with NO LONE WORKING	0	0	0	Close the building until sufficient people are available.
11	A Items may be handled by more than one person, increasing the risk of cross contamination	People	4	5	20	 Church building will be closed beween services with no access except on Wednesdays for cleaning. This will allow 72 hours to ensure no active viruses on surfaces. Hand sanitisers in place at exit and entrance for mandatory use when entering and leaving the building 	0	5	0	Building must not open until measures in place
12	A issues with outside of building	Property	1	5	5	Check guttering/ downpipes/gullies Check overgrown shrubs or trees across walkways Check for any loose fence panels as appropriate Check for any loose headstones in grave yard if appropriate NOTE: unless these are a danger to individuals entering the church building they will not stop it re-opening BUT must be actioned	0	5	0	Any issues must be put onto an action plan and addressed

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Risk No	Risk	Type*	Likelihood	Impact	Risk	Mitigation	Likelihood		Risk	Notes
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13 A	A Flow of people within the church causes congestion or makes social distancing impossible	People	4	5	20	Investigate and implement processes to ensure flow of people in church adheres to government guidelines currently applicable (e.g. one way system signage)	1	5	5	Must be in place before church opens
14 A	A Excess rubbish builds up at the premises	People	1	5	5	> All rubbish to be taken away by church attendees where appropriate > Replace all bins with automatic open and close lids to minimise touch point > Bins regularly emptied by nominated person	0	5	0	Cleaning regime must be in place prior to opening
15 A	Safeguarding information missing or out of date	Legal	1	3	3	> Ensure safeguarding poster and statement of policy, including contact details for local safeguarding co-ordinator are displayed prominently > Ensure stewards are briefed on the safeguarding policy and know who to contact if a concern is raised	1	3	3	Safeguarding policy is up to date and displayed including contact details.
Social Dis	stancing				_		-	-	-	
16 A	Too many people gather in the building.	People	4	5	20	Control numbers entering the church which will be agreed by the Deacons prior to church opening and all stewards fully aware trained and briefed in the protocol. Initially stewarding will be done by Deacons	1	5	5	Stewards MUST adhere to agreed numbers
17 A	Those using the building don't respect distancing guidance.	People	5	5	25	 ▶ Place distancing marks outside the building where possible and inside the building at 2.5m spacing. Display clear signage at the entrance and throughout the space about maintaining distancing during their vist, including when greeting others. ➤ Ensure stewards are properly briefed to reinforce the message. 	1	5	5	Stewards be briefed to remind people to adhere to distancing guidance
18 A	People attend who have symptoms of coronavirus	Legal	5	5	25	> Stewards to be briefed to ask people if they believe they have symptoms and if so, respectfully decline entry to them. > Clear signage reminding people of the symptoms of Covid-19 and of the importance of self-isolation. > Door stewards to wear masks	2	5	10	This MUST be adhered to and if suspected people will not leave, church to be closed immediately NOTE: if required support will be requested (police)
19 A	Congestion at choke points prevent distancing being respected	People	5	5	25	 ➢ Flow of people into church will be controlled by Deacons/Stewards to maintain 2m separation. On leaving the building rows of pews/seats will be released one at a time. ➢ Ensure all relevant signage and floor marking in place ➢ All stewards to be briefed in flow of building 	1	5	5	
20 A	A person known to be on the sex offenders' register attends	People	0	0	0	➤ Brief stewards that known offenders are not to be admitted as they cannot be supervised during private prayer ➤ When it is possible to resume corporate worship, review the covenant of care/offenders' contract and amend it to provide socially distanced supervision.	0	0	0	
Cleaning										
21 A	Nominated company or rota of volunteers not in place to ensure regular cleaning	Service delivery	1	5	5	Delay opening until employed cleaners or volunteers are in place. Follow current Government guidance on cleaning in a non-healthcare setting Veconifier responsibilities for cleaning, ordering supplies, etc. Consider removing and storiing upholstered chairs and pew cushions which would require steam cleaning and use hard-surfaced chairs that can be wiped clean NOTE: if building is listed refer to Historic England's Guide to cleaning Historical surfaces.	0	0	0	Cleaning regime must be in place prior to and maintained throughout opening
	Cleaning staff/volunteers unable to comply with safe working practice for cleaning	People	5	5	25	➤ Update risk assessment and method statements, including COSHH assessments to rreflect change in practices ➤ Ensure that cleaners are properly briefed on a safe method of cleaning. ➤ Provide gloves and aprons for those using cleaning materials. ➤ Use warm soapy water for wiping surfaces but be aware that if might conflict with preserving historic artefacts or listed buildings specialist advice must be sought. ➤ Hands must be washed thoroughly after removing and disposing of PPE ➤ PPE MUST be disposed of in designated receptacle. ➤ Waste must be double-bagged and securely stored for 72 hours before being placed in bins.	1	5	5	Cleaning regime must be in place prior to opening
23 A	Materials not available to properly clean surfaces	Service delivery	1	5	5	> Delay opening until materials are available.	0	0	0	Cleaning regime must be in place prior to opening

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Risk No	Risk	Туре*	Likelihood	I	Risk Score	Mitigation	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Score	Notes
24 A	Contamination from high-touch areas such as door handles and switches	Property	5	5	25	Implement a practice of cleaning high-touch areas on Wednesdays Where consistent with fire safety and security, use wedges/hooks to hold doors open and ensure doors are closed when the building closes to maintain fire safety.	1	5	5	Cleaning regime must be in place prior to opening
25 A	Contamination from surfaces in toilets	Property	5	5	25	Clean on Wednesdays Provide anti-bacterial wipes to allow sufaces to be sanitised after use and a bin for disposal along with signage instructing wipes not to be flushed away	1	5	5	
26 A	Someone with Coronavirus is found to have visited the building	People	4	5	20	➤ Display signage asking those with the known symptoms to return home immediately ➤ Ask those coming into the building for any purpose to leave name and contact details in order to comply with NHS Test and Trace procedures, retaining those details securely for 21 days before destroying them. ➤ Close the building immediately for min.72 hrs. ➤ After that period ensure as a minimum that all surfaces are washed with warm soapy water or household disinfectant unless damage to historic artefacts or listed buildings might be incurred, in which case seek specialist advice (it may be decided to deep clean area of contamination) ➤ Double bag waste and store it securely for 72 hours before placing it in bins. ➤ Wash hands thoroughly after PPE kit has been removed and disposed of in designated bin	1	5	5	This process MUST be followed and all relevant individuals briefed
27 A	People may carry Coronavirus into the building on their hands	People	4	5	20	Require everyone to sanitise their hands upon entry. Where possible and for preference provide liquid soap and running water for handwashing on arrival and either disposable paper towels which must be double-bagged and stored securely for 72 hours before putting them into outside bins or automatic hot air hand dryers. If running water is not available, provide hand sanitiser. Display clear signage on the importance of washing hands regularly and avoiding face touching.	1	5	5	This process MUST be followed and all relevant individuals briefed
28 A	Toilet facilities cannot be cleaned adequately between users	Property	4	5	20	> Cleaning regime to be in place to ensure toilet facilities safe to use.	2	5	10	Toilets in church buildings cleaned daily but access only permitted by prior arrangement with Caretake or Property Manager. Toilets in schoolrooms cleaned between users which are Guides every two weeks
29 A	Increased risk of airborne transmission	People	2	5	10	> Limit the duration of opening times and ventilate the building during and between opening times where possible	1	5	5	There is no recirculating mechnical Ventilation
30 A	Someone starts to feel unwell/develops coronavirus symptoms whilst on the premises	People	2	5	10	Isolate the person in a separate room whilst arrangements are made for them to be taken home or into medical care. Anyone sitting with the person must wear a face mask, disposable gloves and apron (either disposable or washable at 60oC) throughout the period of supervision/support Church and isolation room must be closed for 72 hours before deep cleaning with soapy water and/or household disinfectant Cleaning cloths and PPE to be double-bagged and stored securely for 72 hours before placing in outside bins. Hands must be washed thoroughly immediately after removing & disposing of PPE Anyone supervising/caring for the person who is unwell should return home, shower and change clothes ASAP.	1	5	5	Use vestry as isolating room
\ddition:	al risks associated with opening t	for nublicas	orshin							
	Premises are not Covid-Secure prior to opening		4	5	20	> Ensure the space is properly prepared for re-opening, the cleaning regime is in place and preparations for hand-washing, hygiene, distancing and signage are all in place	1	5	5	Re-opening must NOT take place until the Covid-Secure measures are in place (see the risks for building preparation, cleaning and social distancing above for greater detail)

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Risk No	Risk	Type*	Likelihood		Risk Score	Mitigation	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Score	Notes
32 A	Increased risk of coronavirus spread through communal singing (once this is permitted by local legislation: whilst prohibited in law, churches must NOT include singing in worship)	People	3	5	15	➤ Follow Government rules that singing is not permitted except by small numbers who are leading worship ➤ Require facemasks to be worn during worship to reduce risk of transmission	1	5	5	A snall group of singers no more than six in number will sing in services. They will be located at the back of the gallery a minimum of 3.5 m back from the front of the gallery, and spaced 2m apart. No-one else will be present in this area. Their role will be to assist the minister in leading worship. With these mitigating measures they will be permitted to remove their face masks but only while singing. This approach was agreed with Mike Lowe at Baptist House.
33 /	Risk of virus transmission from shared resources (Bibles & other books, offertory plate, etc.)	People	3	5	15	Remove all items that may be handled by more than one person Place offertory baskets/plates at the back of church, being mindful of security, or move to contactless or online giving Where cash handling cannot be avoided, wear gloves when handling it and wash hands thoroughly afterwards	1	5	5	There will be no need for hymn books or bibles to be handled by more than one person
34	Children's group leaders not willing to resume activities immediately	People				Ensure the space for children is properly prepared for social distancing, etc., and remind parents/carers that the government expects them to ensure that their children maintain social distancing **Remove softs toys and soft furnishings and and any toys that would be hard to clean, storing them securely **Provide single-use resources & equipment or ensure that items are not handled by many people and are sanitised before and after use **Consult with group leaders to see whether mitigation resolves their concerns and if not investigate alternative provision/format for the activities, or resolve not to resume at this point.	0	5	0	Only proposed activity at present is Guides (Brownies not meeting face to face yet). The guides have produced a risk assessment. They will not use equipment provided by the church.
35 E	Children's group leaders not willing to resume activities immediately	Legal/ Reg				> Ensure that any new group leaders have been safely recruited under Good Practice S and are available in sufficient number for safeguarding	0	5	0	If adult/child ratios cannot be upheld, activities must not take place. Only Guides to use buidings for now - see their risk assessment.
36 A	No Covid-safe space available for children's groups to meet during worship	People				 ➤ Provide space and activities within the sanctuary where the children can be safely supervised without leaving the main act of worship ➤ Remove soft toys and soft furnishings and any toys that cannot easily be cleaned, storing them away securely ➤ Provide single-use resources & equipment or ensure that items are not handled by many people and are sanitised before and after use. ➤ Co-ordinate with worship leaders to provide all-age/intergenerational worship 				Not applicable at this time. Will review when children's activities start
37	Risk of virus transmission through serving/receiving Holy Communion	People	3	5	15	> Consider refraining from sharing Communion Ø If Communion is offered, it must be done without physical contact with the elements placed into the communicant's hand only, the President must not speak or sing over uncovered elements, hands must be washed/sanitised before serving, the Common Cup must not be used, and appropriate care taken by those cleaning the Communion vessels and cloths after use.	1	5	5	Minister will have bread and wine on the communion table which will not be passed to congregation. Trays and plate for servers will be on tables either side of the podium and in the gallery. Servers will sanitise hands then serve by placing the cups on the hymn book shelf and dropping the bread into the recipient's hands. If contact accidentally occurs servers will re-sanitise. Glasses will not be collected until most of the congregation have left the building.
38	Risk of transmission through administering Baptism	People				Ensure that relevant Government guidance is followed > Until further notice baptism by full immersion should be avoided > For infant baptism use the minimum amount of water possible and ensure that the parent/carer holds the infant > if there are baptismal canddiates from more than one household, change the water between candidates and ensure appropriate distancing is maintained between the households and others involvedc in the baptism > Consider offering an alternative rite (e.g. dedication or thanksgiving) until the pandemic has passed.				Baptisms will not take place at this time
39	Visiting worship leaders are not aware of COVID-19 secure arrangements	People	3	5	15	> Send out information about precautions with the usual information about leading worship for your church > Ensure details on the order of service/format for worship is updated	1	5	5	

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Risk No	Risk	Type*			Risk	Mitigation			Risk	Notes
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40 A	Equipment may be touched by more than one person before and during worship (e.g. photocopier, computer, audio-visual equipment, etc.)	Property	4	5	20	➤ Emphasise the importance of good hand hygiene for everyone throughout their time in the building. ➤ Provide cleaning materials to wipe down equipment surfaces between use and instruct those involved on how to use it safely	2	5	10	
Additiona	al risks associated with opening	for other ch	urch activ	ities and	externa	lettings				
	Space for mid-week adult groups is not Covid-Secure					➤ Assess whether it is appropriate to resume activity, weighing prevalence of the virus in the population, vulnerability of the group and the nature of the activity against the impact on well-being of attendees if they cannot meet together ➤ Make the room(s) ready with all hygiene and social-distancing measures in place including cleaning regimes before, during and after use ➤ Ensure the meeting space has an up-to-date general risk assessment for health & safety, and appropriate actions have been taken to reduce risk ➤ Remove books, etc. that might be handled by several people; ensure that other resources and equipment is sanitised before and after use or is single-person use only ➤ Make the room(s) ready with all hygiene and social-distancing measures in place including cleaning regimes before, during and after use ➤ Provide guidance about soft furnishings and upholstery that may become contaminated and transmit through touch (chairs, curtains, etc.)				Activity leaders must know the risks and mitigations, adhere to restrictions and enforce them appropriately. Guides might resume after half term meeting on alternate weeks in two groups using the two halls on the ground floor. They will not use the kitchen. See their risk assessment.
42 B	Space for mid-week adult groups is not	People				➤ Consider whether you need to move to a larger space than usual, restrict numbers and/or add sessions to keep within your safe capacity				
43 A	Space for mid-week children's groups Is not Covid-secure	Property				In addition to the mitigations for adult groups, consider the following: > Assess how many children and leaders can safely meet in the room(s) and plan activities appropriately > Provide, where appropriate, places where prams and pushchairs can safely be left without causing obstruction or requiring anyone other than the owner to move them > Provide clear signage for entry and exit points, reminders about distancing and hand hygiene and remind parents/carers (where appropriate) to be responsible for the supervision of their children > Ensure that food and drink is not shared > Consider the use of outdoor space, where regulations permit, for more active games, prayer activities, etc., ensuring that cleaning, hygiene and distancing measures are still applied				Activity leaders must know the risks and mitigations, adhere to restrictions and enforce them appropriately. See Guides risk assessment. Guide leader has seen the church risk assessment.
44 B	Space for mid-week children's groups is not Covid-secure	People				> Consider whether you need to move to a larger space than usual, restrict numbers and/or add sessions to keep within your safe capacity				Capacity that lets the group maintain current social distancing standards must not be exceeded
45 C	Space for mid-week children's groups is not Covid-secure	Legal/ reg				Ensure that all group leaders and other arrangements for the group are operating to Good Practice 5 standards (or the appropriate denominational safeguarding policy in place for LEPs.)				Safeguarding remains paramount even when adapting procedures in light of the pandemic
46 A	Pressure to resume external lettings so that income can be generated	Property				> Ensure that all Covid-Secure measures are in place				This first step is essential before considering re-opening to external groups

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Risk No	Risk	Type*	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Score	Mitigation Li		Impact	Risk Score	Notes
47	B Pressure to resume external lettings so that income can be generated	Legal/ reg				Ensure that the proposed use is compatible with Covid restrictions in place (e.g. choirs cannot resume rehearsal whilst singing is prohibited by law, indoor exercise groups may not be permitted at the time of asessement) Ensure a current letting agreement is in place Liaise with group leaders on how they will be ensure distancing and hyigiene measures are in place, and that they will be responsible for operating those measures Agree whether the group can safely meet in rooms that they had previously used or whether they need to meet in a larger space or in more than one session Agree and document who is responsible for cleaning the rooms they use before and after their session Obtain a copy of their written Risk Assessment				Each group accommodated must be able to meet in accordance with regulations and procedures in force, otherwise their actions will jeopardise the safety for everyone else using the premises
Other ris										
48	Preparation of Christingles	People	4	5	20	Junior Church would like to enable children & young people to make Christingles in their own homes. Materials will be prepared by leaders and packed for delivery. This must be done with face masks on and hands washed or sanitised. Package will be delivered to children's homes, placed on doorstep keeping at least 2 metres back while they are picked up. Package will be put aside for at least three days before opening. Completed Christingles are for home use only and cannot be given to other households. This is because making deliveries to a number of people in vulnerable groups increases the risk of transmission of the virus.	1	5	5	
49	Recording Services in Sanctuary		3	5	15	The service will be as short as possible, and participants will only remain at the church premises for as long as necessary to complete the recording. Social distancing will be maintained at all times, including when arriving at or leaving the church. Hands to be sanitised on entry and exit. The recording will be carried out with the minimum number of people required — minister, organist, caretaker, church secretary and four singers. Face masks and/or visors will be worn except when speaking or singing as part of the service or pre-service sound check. The caretaker & church secretary will operate the audio-visual equipment from the control desk at the rear of the sanctuary and will have face masks & visors. The other participants will be on, or adjacent to, the podium and will socially distance from each other by a minimum of 2 metres. The singers and minister will be arranged to have at least 3 metres in front of them and 2 metres each side. One of the singers will read the lessons from the lectern. There will be no congregation.	1	5	5	