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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: 16 July 2020

I have read:

- BU - Guidance on church working
- Guidance on re-opening Baptist churches
- LIS: Covid-19 Coronavirus legal issues
- Coronavirus advice: Children's work + families ministry (and copied to Tim + Caroline)
- A guide for churches on employers
- Gov.co.uk advice on: out-of-school-settings used premises by community groups
- Plan of working

I have accessed / am using:
BU - Risk Assessment templates
- Coronavirus poster

= new

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.

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 |

| | | 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. Inconvenience to ongoing operations

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 | Likelihood |
| | Severity | 5 | Severity |
| | Overall Risk | 35 | Overall Risk |

MEDIUM

| Control Measures | Control in place (Y/N) | Person Responsible | Comments |
|---|------------------------|--------------------|--|
| 1. Ask everyone symptomatic not to attend | Y | Activity leader | |
| 2. All attendees asked to follow government guidance on self-isolation after symptoms and/or positive test/contact tracing/returning from foreign travel. | Y | " | |
| 3. Verbal symptom checks on entry | Y | " | |
| 4. Ask vulnerable not to attend in person | N | | Government advice is that this is the individuals' choice |
| 5. Everyone to use hand sanitiser on entry to the building | Y | " | |
| 6. Action Plan in place in case and communicated to leaders as in event of Coronavirus case known to enter premises | Y | JR | Plan circulated to Trustees + Elders 28/07 copy placed in folders |
| 7. Undertake the Ellis Whittam's 'Pre-Event Checklist' (Appendix 2 of Guidance on Re-opening churches). | Y | Activity leader | Plan is part of our 'opening for small groups' pack. |
| 8. Display suitable posters to ask people with symptoms not to enter the building (see our Coronavirus poster library) | Y | JR | |
| 9. Social distancing measures to be maintained where possible, including the arrival and departure of the venue. | Y | Activity leader | activity individuals. |
| 10. All contractors to complete the 'Contractor Checklist' (Appendix 6 of Guidance on Re-opening churches). | Y | JR | |

Small groups.
03/08

| | | | |
|---|---|----|-----------------------------------|
| 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 | Likelihood |
| | Severity | 5 | Severity |
| | Overall Risk | 35 | Overall Risk |
| | | | 53 33 15 (Medium) |

| Control Measures | Control in place (Y/N) | Person Responsible | Comments |
|--|------------------------|--------------------|--|
| 1. Suitable social distancing policy in place (2m or "1m plus mitigations") | Y | Staff team | |
| 2. No physical contact between persons from different households/bubbles | Y | JR | From 08/08 Face coverings compulsory in service. * |
| 3. All attendees required to wear a face covering | N | JR | Govt advice is that this is not essential. If we were open for worship, we would require this. |
| 4. One-way system of flow through building to avoid pinch points | N | JR | NOT necessary at the moment |
| 5. Areas marked out of bounds where appropriate | N/A | M | |
| 6. Seating arrangements adapted for social distancing | N/A | JR | |
| 7. Capacity monitored and entry stopped when capacity reached | N/A | JR | We are not opening for groups of up to 30. Only small groups, socially distanced. |
| 8. No singing during services | Y | JR | No singing allowed in small group |
| 9. Signage in place to remind people of safe practices | Y | JR | |
| 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 | JR | Both entrances are fully accessible. |

* From 14/08, face coverings are mandatory for all attending premises for meetings (except staff). Staff can wear face masks if they wish to.

| Control Measures | Control in place (Y/N) | Person Responsible | Comments |
|--|------------------------|--------------------|--|
| 11. Visitors instructed not to gather in groups, except with members of their own household, inside or outside the building. | N/A ⁴ | Activity Leader | Not applicable at present Activity leader manages access / egress |
| 12. All individuals who fall into the vulnerable, clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable categories will be assessed and provisions made accordingly. | N | Jill | We would communicate with all to reiterate good practice, but individuals make their own choice. |
| 13. | | | |
| 14. | | | |
| 15. | | | |
| 16. | | | |
| 17. | | | |
| 18. | | | |
| 19. | | | |
| 20. | | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|----|--------------|
| 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 | Likelihood |
| | Severity | 5 | Severity |
| | Overall Risk | 35 | Overall Risk |
| | | | Medium |

| 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 | JL | Where possible: wouldn't be appropriate for pre-school. |
| 2. Regular cleaning of surfaces likely to be touched regularly with appropriate sanitiser spray. | Y | JL | This isn't happening |
| 3. No passing of collection plate/bag and collection not counted for 72 hours after service. | Y | JL | So far, not hand sanitizer - soap is best. Posters ready. |
| 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. | N | JL / Activity leaders | Leaders will wipe down surfaces at end of meetings |
| 5. Building not used again for 72 hours or building thoroughly deep cleaned between uses | Y | JL | |
| 6. No serving of food and drink items prior to, during or after the service. | Y | JL | Leaders will ask members to bring own bottles etc. |
| 7. No distribution of bibles or other books – attendees asked to bring their own and take them away with them. | N/A | JL | Mics not being used at the moment. |
| 8. Microphones and other equipment kept to a single individual | Y | JL / Activity leaders | Paperwork is in place |
| 9. Undertake the 'Pre-Event Checklist' (Appendix 2 of <u>Guidance on Re-opening churches</u>) and <u>Cleaning Checklist</u> (Appendix 3 of <u>Guidance on Re-opening churches</u>) | | | |

| Control Measures | Control in place (Y/N) | Person Responsible | Comments |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| 10. Keep Register of attendees | Y | IT Activity Leaders | paperwork in in place. |
| 11. | | | |
| 12. | | | |
| 13. | | | |
| 14. | | | |
| 15. | | | |
| 16. | | | |
| 17. | | | |
| 18. | | | |
| 19. | | | |
| 20. | | | |

| | | | |
|---|--------------|----|----------------------------------|
| Risk: | | | |
| Persons at risk: Transmission of Coronavirus to an individual via toilet facilities Ministers, leaders, members, attendees, contractors, cleaners | | | |
| Risk Rating before control measures | Likelihood | 5 | Likelihood Severity Overall Risk |
| | Severity | 5 | |
| | Overall Risk | 35 | |

33
35
15

medium

| 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 | JL | |
| 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 | JL | |
| 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 | JL | |
| 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 | JL | |
| 5. Introducing enhanced cleaning of toilet facilities, provision of more waste facilities, more frequent rubbish collections. | N | JL | <i>Impractical.</i> |
| 6. Ask people to spray clean toilet after use | Y | JL | <i>Wipes provided in all loos.</i> |
| 7. Children under 11 to be accompanied to the toilet | Y | JL | <i>Advice in ready, and signage.</i> |
| 8. | | | |
| 9. | | | |

| | | | |
|--|--------------|----|---|
| Risk: | | | |
| Persons at risk | | | |
| Transmission of Coronavirus to an individual via contaminated waste | | | |
| Cleaners and anyone else handling waste | | | |
| Risk Rating before control measures | Likelihood | 5 | Risk Rating after control measures |
| | Severity | 5 | |
| | Overall Risk | 35 | |
| | Likelihood | 5 | Overall Risk |
| | Severity | 5 | |
| | Overall Risk | 15 | |

medium

| Control Measures | Control in place (Y/N) | Person Responsible | Comments |
|--|------------------------|--------------------|--|
| 1. Everyone asked to take waste home with them if possible | Y | activity leader | in our protocol. |
| 2. All waste to be assumed contaminated and handled appropriately | Y | JL | |
| 3. Anyone handling waste to be trained in suitable working practices | Y | JL | |
| 4. All waste handled with suitable PPE (see cleaning guidance for details). | Y | JL | As possible apron have been bought for cleaners; gloves supplied. |
| 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. | right | JL | write to cleaners about this asap. we are not removing bins to outside bin |
| 6. Lidded bins operated by foot-pedal to be provided | N | JL | unpractical brought away. |
| 7. Keep records of who has carried out cleaning and the tasks completed | Y | JL | |
| 8. | | | |
| 9. | | | |
| 10. | | | |

| | | | | |
|--|--------------|--|--------------|----|
| 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 | Likelihood | 3 |
| | Severity | 5 | Severity | 5 |
| | Overall Risk | 35 | Overall Risk | 15 |

medium

| Control Measures | Control in place (Y/N) | Person Responsible | Comments |
|--|------------------------|--------------------|---|
| 1. Use remote working tools to avoid in-person meetings. | N | Staff team | We are now working in offices in a COVID-19 secure way. |
| 2. Restrict attendance of individuals at meetings to those absolutely necessary and maintain social distancing throughout. | Y | JL | |
| 3. Avoid transmission during meetings, for example, by avoiding sharing pens and other objects. | Y | JL | |
| 4. Provide hand sanitiser in rooms used for meetings. | Y | JL | |
| 5. Hold meetings outdoors or in well-ventilated rooms whenever possible. | Y | JL | |
| 6. For areas where regular meetings take place, use floor signage to help people maintain social distancing. | N | JL | We can judge the distance outdoors. |
| 7. Implement cleaning procedures for goods and items entering the premises. | N/A | JL | NOT really applicable - we just get posts |
| 8. | | | |
| 9. | | | |
| 10. | | | |

Review/Revision Record

| Date of Review | Confirmed by | Comments |
|-------------------------|--------------|---|
| 29 th July | Joanna Lewis | Lower our risk in 'medium' and believe that on this basis we can allow small group to both use of the premises. Will share this with Trustees, Elders, Staff team. |
| 19 th August | Joanna Lewis | Amended to record that face coverings are mandatory now. Also: latent amendment (14/08) to guidance for community groups in that face coverings should be worn when meeting. I will email Trustees / Elderst body, 2-18 and will update fellowship more widely once Trustees have seen / discussed changes. |

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 |
|---------------------------|-----------|------|
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