

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: 17 September 2020

05 January 2021 Context: I returned from 2 weeks holiday yesterday and read revised advice for Tier 4 which was introduced for ~~return~~ elsewhere on 19th Dec. I read BU advice on: - Guidance on Church worship; Children's Youth + Families Ministry; Guidance on reopening Baptist Churches.

(also read gov.uk advice on 'Guidance for safe use of places of worship' and protective measures for... out of school settings: At 8pm yesterday, England was placed in Tier 5 (national lockdown). No detailed change in advice or yet available, but I think we can guess the general gist. This RA is prepared with this in mind. JD Lewis 05/01/21

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 formula used deliberately places additional emphasis on risks with the most severe consequences but are not very likely (by adding 2 x severity to the score) 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 pandemic it is likely that the virus risk 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 | + potentially the school staff (parents / kids) | | |
| Risk Rating before control measures | Likelihood | 5 | Likelihood | |
| | Severity | 5 | Severity | |
| | Overall Risk | 35 | Overall Risk | |
| | | | | 5 |
| | | | | 3 |
| | | | | 28 2.5 |

| Control Measures | Control in place (Y/N) | Person Responsible | Comments |
|---|------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| 1. Ask everyone symptomatic not to attend | Y | Staff team | As of 05/01/21, no activities are taking place at BBC |
| 2. All attendees asked to follow government guidance on self-isolation after symptoms and/or positive test/contact tracing/returning from foreign travel. | Y | " | We are discouraging all members from 'popping in'. |
| 3. Verbal symptom checks on entry | N/A | | see above |
| 4. Ask those who vulnerable to consider whether to attend in person | N/A | | - |
| 5. Everyone to use hand sanitiser on entry to the building | Y | Staff team | Sanitising stations are in place, although doors are kept locked. |
| 6. Action Plan in place in case and communicated to leaders as in event of Coronavirus case known to enter premises | Y | JRL | I will remind leadership of this. |
| 7. Undertake the Ellis Whittam's 'Pre-Event Checklist' (Appendix 2 of Guidance on Re-opening churches). | Y | Staff team Activity leads | This is in place but is not being used at the moment because we are updating these. |
| 8. Display suitable posters to ask people with symptoms not to enter the building (see our Coronavirus poster library) | N | JRL | Activities are taking place. |
| 9. Social distancing measures to be maintained where possible, including the arrival and departure of the venue. | Y | Individuals | I am updating these. |
| 10. All contractors to complete the 'Contractor Checklist' (Appendix 6 of Guidance on Re-opening churches). | Y | JRL | |

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

| Control Measures | Control in place (Y/N) | Person Responsible | Comments |
|--|------------------------|--------------------|--|
| 1. Suitable social distancing policy in place (2m or "1m plus mitigations") | Y | Individuals | |
| 2. No physical contact between persons from different households/bubbles | Y | | we are not meeting at the premises in person |
| 3. All attendees required to wear a face covering | Y | JL | Reinforced to all in email of 04/01 |
| 4. One-way system of flow through building to avoid pinch points | N | JL | Not necessary as no activities are going on. |
| 5. Areas marked out of bounds where appropriate | N/A | JL | |
| 6. Seating arrangements adapted for social distancing | N/A | JL | See above |
| 7. Capacity monitored and entry stopped when capacity reached | N/A | JL | - |
| 8. No congregational singing during services | N/A | JL | - |
| 9. Signage in place to remind people of safe practices | Y | JL | |
| 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 | JL | Both entrances are accessible. |

| 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 | JRL | No events happening. |
| 12. All individuals who fall into the vulnerable, clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable categories will be assessed and provisions made accordingly. | N | JRL | Individuals are responsible for their own behaviour. We are discouraging |
| 13. | | | all members from attending to any reason (except those involved in broadcasts). |
| 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 |
| | | | |

| 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 | JH | '... where possible' and where practical |
| 2. Regular cleaning of surfaces likely to be touched regularly with appropriate disinfectant. | Y | JH | Cleaning staff continue to work full hours. |
| 3. No passing of collection plate/bag and collection not counted for 72 hours after service. | N/A | | |
| 4. Building not used again for 72 hours or building thoroughly deep cleaned between uses | N | JH | Only staff team members and those involved in broadcasts are using the premises. Staff team are mainly working remotely. I will ask Broadcast team to wipe down contact surfaces after use on Sunday. |
| 5. No serving of food and drink items prior to, during or after the service. | N/A | | |
| 6. No distribution of bibles or other books – attendees asked to bring their own and take them away with them. | N/A | | |
| 7. Microphones and other equipment kept to a single individual | Y | Tech team | Emma + Ed share mic - same bubble. I will highlight to Tech team. |
| 8. Undertake the 'Pre-Event Checklist' (Appendix 2 of Guidance on Re-opening churches) and where appropriate Cleaning Checklist for suspected Coronavirus contamination (Appendix 3 of Guidance on Re-opening churches) | N/A | | We have systems in place, but this is not necessary given circumstances of lockdown. |
| 9. Keep Register of attendees | N/A Y | Activity leaders | I think the runners are still meeting - I will check. ACTION |

| | | | |
|---|--------------|----|--------------|
| 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 | 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 disinfectant. | Y | JR | Cleaners have been on holiday over Christmas period. I will ask Johnny C to pay particular attention to cleaning all the loos this week. |
| 2. Toilets supplied with disposal hand towels or dryers (not a reusable linen towel), hand sanitiser. | Y | JR | |
| 3. Undertake the 'Pre-Event Checklist' (Appendix 2 of Guidance on Re-opening churches) and where appropriate Cleaning Checklist for suspected Coronavirus contamination (Appendix 3 of Guidance on Re-opening churches) | N/A | JR | Systems are in place, but no events are taking place so checklists not necessary. |
| 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 | JR | |
| 5. Introducing enhanced cleaning of toilet facilities, provision of more waste facilities, more frequent rubbish collections. | N | JR | Impractical. |
| 6. Ask people to spray clean toilet after use | Y | JR | Wipes are provided in all loos. Need to order more. |
| 7. Children under 11 to be accompanied to the toilet | N/A | JR | System in place, but no kids coming in at the moment. |
| 8. Limit to 1 person per toilet unit (even if it has multiple cubicles), posters etc. | Y | JR | Advice + signage in place. |
| 9. | | | |

| | | | |
|--|--------------|--|--------------|
| 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 | Likelihood |
| | Severity | 5 | Severity |
| | Overall Risk | 35 | Overall Risk |
| | | Risk Rating after control measures | 25 |

| Control Measures | Control in place (Y/N) | Person Responsible | Comments |
|---|------------------------|--------------------|--|
| 1. Everyone asked to take waste home with them if possible | N/A | | No one coming in. |
| 2. All waste to be handled appropriately, observing good hygiene practices. | Y | Cleaning staff | |
| 3. Anyone handling waste to be trained in suitable working practices | Y | Cleaning staff | ME is available. |
| 4. All waste handled with suitable PPE (see cleaning guidance for details). | Y | u | u |
| 5. All bins lined with disposable liners | Y | u | u |
| 6. Lidded bins operated by foot-pedal to be provided | N | JOL | unpractical |
| 7. Keep records of who has carried out cleaning and the tasks completed | Y | JOL | My 'records' are the base lists that task cleaners to undertake. |
| 8. Where a known/suspected case of coronavirus has been present all waste to be double bagged prior to disposal and kept for 72 hours prior to disposal in general waste. | N | JOL | Need to update cleaners about this. |
| 9. | | | |
| 10. | | | |

ACTION

| | | | |
|--|--------------|---|--|
| 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 | |
| | Severity | 3 | |
| | Overall Risk | 25 | |
| | | Risk Rating after control measures | |

| Control Measures | Control in place (Y/N) | Person Responsible | Comments |
|--|------------------------|--------------------|---|
| 1. Use remote working tools to avoid in-person meetings. | Y | Staff team | meetings of elders, leadership, trustees and members will all take place online. weekly staff meeting will take place in office, with appropriate measures in place |
| 2. Restrict attendance of individuals at meetings to those absolutely necessary and maintain social distancing throughout. | Y | " | |
| 3. Avoid transmission during meetings, for example, by avoiding sharing pens and other objects. | Y | " | |
| 4. Provide hand sanitiser in rooms used for meetings. | Y | " | |
| 5. Hold meetings outdoors or in well-ventilated rooms whenever possible. | Y | " | |
| 6. For areas where regular meetings take place, use floor signage to help people maintain social distancing. | N | JL | This is not necessary given the small number of people involved. |
| 7. Implement cleaning procedures for goods and items entering the premises. | N/A | JL | Not really applicable to us. |
| 8. | | | |
| 9. | | | |
| 10. | | | |

Review/Revision Record

| Date of Review | Confirmed by | Comments |
|------------------------------|----------------|---|
| 6 th January 2024 | Jearuna Revere | Given high transmissibility of new variant of COVID-19 in this area; given the rapid increase in number of COVID-19 cases in this area; and given the vulnerability of a significant number of our members, I am going to recommend to Trustees that we do not seek to gather for communal worship (even if it is still permissible) during lockdown tiers. JOL |
| | | |
| | | |

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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