

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: 9 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. Please note that this framework is a generic one for evaluating risks and not specific to Coronavirus.

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 emphasize 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
	Severity	5	
	Overall Risk	35	
	Likelihood	1	
	Severity	5	
	Overall Risk	15	

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
1. Ask everyone symptomatic not to attend	Y	Minister	This will be covered in a briefing document sent to potential attendees before the event
2. All attendees asked to follow government guidance on self-isolation after symptoms and/or positive test/contact tracing/returning from foreign travel.	Y	Minister	This will be covered in a briefing document sent to potential attendees before the event. We also have a QR Venue code in the foyer so that people can check-in using the NHS Test and Trace app.
3. Verbal symptom checks on entry	Y	Stewards	The Stewards have a pre-event checklist which includes this requirement
4. Ask vulnerable not to attend in person	N	Minister	The Government guidance makes clear that it is up to the individual whether to attend and that it is our responsibility to create as safe an environment as possible for them.
5. Everyone to use hand sanitiser on entry to the building	Y	Stewards	We have installed a wall-mounted hand sanitiser in the foyer. Stewards will instruct people to sanitise on arrival and exit.
6. Action Plan in place in case and communicated to leaders as in event of Coronavirus case known to enter premises	Y	Stewards	The briefing for stewards will include an 'Emergency Action Plan' to be implemented as and when needed.
7. Undertake the Ellis Whittam's 'Pre-Event Checklist' (Appendix 2 of Guidance on Re-opening churches).	Y	Stewards	A 'Pre-event checklist' will be circulated to stewards in advance.
8. Display suitable posters to ask people with symptoms not to enter the building (see our Coronavirus poster library)	Y	Administrator	
9. Social distancing measures to be maintained where possible, including the arrival and departure of the venue.	Y	Stewards & Minister	The Stewards will brief people on arrival and the Minister will re-enforce this message in a pre-service briefing.

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	1
	Severity	5			Severity	5
	Overall Risk	35			Overall Risk	15

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
1. Suitable social distancing policy in place (2m or “1m plus mitigations”)	Y	Stewards	We are opting for a 2m social distance and creating a one-way flow of movement both around and up and down the building so as to avoid pinch points
2. No physical contact between persons from different households/bubbles	Y	Stewards	Covered in briefing document ahead of attending + by the steward’s verbal briefing for people on arrival + by the pre-service briefing
3. All attendees required to wear a face covering	N	N/A	We are making face coverings mandatory.
4. One-way system of flow through building to avoid pinch points	Y	Stewards	People will enter and leave by different exits. People will use the stairs to go down to the basement and the lift to return to the ground floor. We will not use the first floor.
5. Areas marked out of bounds where appropriate	Y	Stewards	Signs not to use the First Floor.
6. Seating arrangements adapted for social distancing	Y	Minister & Stewards	Seats will be 2m apart. Family groups will be able to sit more closely.
7. Capacity monitored and entry stopped when capacity reached	Y	Stewards	We will record numbers entering the building and ensure that we do not exceed capacity allowing for social distancing.
8. No singing during services	Y	Minister	This will be communicated in the briefing document ahead of people attending. The Service Leaders have also been advised.

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
9. Signage in place to remind people of safe practices	Y	Administrator	A suite of bespoke signs have been created for our building
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	Minister	
11. Visitors instructed not to gather in groups, except with members of their own household, inside or outside the building.	Y	Stewards & Minister	This will be covered on arrival and in the pre-service briefing. For Sunday mornings: we will ask arrivals to line up at 2m distances along the side of our building. For departures we will ask those without children to depart the building first. Those with children will then collect them (observing our flow of movement through the building) and exit.
12. All individuals who fall into the vulnerable, clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable categories will be assessed and provisions made accordingly.	Y	Stewards & Minister	

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
	Severity 5
	Overall Risk 35
Risk Rating after control measures	Likelihood 1
	Severity 5
	Overall Risk 15

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	Stewards	Stewards will open doors for people where they cannot be left open (such as fire doors)
2. Regular cleaning of surfaces likely to be touched regularly with appropriate sanitiser.	Y	Housekeeper	Our cleaner will clean on Thursdays and Fridays. Surfaces, toilets and chairs will all be cleaned after use by a small group and after Sunday services.
3. No passing of collection plate/bag and collection not counted for 72 hours after service.	Y	Minister	No offerings will be taken
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	Stewards	Dryers in toilets. We will limit use of the male and female toilets to one person at a time.
5. Building not used again for 72 hours or building thoroughly deep cleaned between uses	Y	Housekeeper & Minister	We will be doing thorough cleans (including steam cleaning where needed).
6. No serving of food and drink items prior to, during or after the service.	Y	Stewards	No refreshments will be served.
7. No distribution of bibles or other books – attendees asked to bring their own and take them away with them.	Y	Minister	Attendees will be asked to bring their own Bibles, notebook and pens in the briefing document sent before the service.
8. Microphones and other equipment kept to a single individual	Y	Minister	
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	Minister, Stewards & Housekeeper	Our housekeeper has received both the Govt and the BUGB guidelines and has purchased all the necessary PPE equipment incl. face visors. She will be briefing the cleaner.

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
10. Keep Register of attendees	Y	Stewards & Church Administrator	We will keep this list in the church office for a period of several months.

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
	Severity 5
	Overall Risk 35
Risk Rating after control measures	Likelihood 1
	Severity 5
	Overall Risk 15

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
1. Regular cleaning of surfaces likely to be touched regularly with appropriate sanitiser.	Y	Housekeeper	
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	Housekeeper	Limit to 1 person per toilet unit.
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	Minister, Stewards & Housekeeper	
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	Stewards & Housekeeper	
5. Introducing enhanced cleaning of toilet facilities, provision of more waste facilities, more frequent rubbish collections.	Y	Housekeeper	
6. Ask people to clean toilet after use	Y	Stewards	Disinfectant wipes will be provided
7. Children under 11 to be accompanied to the toilet	Y	Minister	Will be included in the pre-service briefing

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	1
	Severity	5		Severity	5
	Overall Risk	35		Overall Risk	15

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
1. Everyone asked to take waste home with them if possible	Y	Minister	Part of the pre-service briefing
2. All waste to be assumed contaminated and handled appropriately	Y	Housekeeper	
3. Anyone handling waste to be trained in suitable working practices	Y	Housekeeper	
4. All waste handled with suitable PPE (see cleaning guidance for details).	Y	Housekeeper	
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.	Y	Housekeeper	
6. Lidded bins operated by foot-pedal to be provided	Y	Housekeeper	
7. Keep records of who has carried out cleaning and the tasks completed	Y	Housekeeper	

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
	Severity	5	
	Overall Risk	35	
		Likelihood	1
		Severity	5
		Overall Risk	15

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
1. Use remote working tools to avoid in-person meetings.	Y	Minister & Administrator	We have used video conferencing extensively and will continue to do so where possible.
2. Restrict attendance of individuals at meetings to those absolutely necessary and maintain social distancing throughout.	Y	Minister & Administrator	
3. Avoid transmission during meetings, for example, by avoiding sharing pens and other objects.	Y	Minister & Administrator	
4. Provide hand sanitiser in rooms used for meetings.	Y	Minister, Administrator & Housekeeper	
5. Hold meetings outdoors or in well-ventilated rooms whenever possible.	Y	Minister & Administrator	
6. For areas where regular meetings take place, use floor signage to help people maintain social distancing.	N	Minister & Administrator	We are using wall signage.
7. Implement cleaning procedures for goods and items entering the premises.	N		

Review/Revision Record

Date of Review	Confirmed by	Comments
19 th July 2020	Chris Band	Created in preparation for our Thursday evening recording sessions
5 th October 2020	Chris Band	Revised in preparation for our return to Sunday mornings services (from 11 th October 2020)

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