

## 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

**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 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 Assessment Ratings (after this assessment)**

<b>Coronavirus entering the premises and potentially infecting users of the building</b> Ministers, leaders, members, attendees, contractors, cleaners	10
<b>Transmission of Coronavirus to an individual direct from infected person</b> Ministers, leaders, members, attendees, contractors, cleaners	10
<b>Transmission of Coronavirus to an individual via a contaminated surface/item (excluding toilet facilities)</b> Ministers, leaders, members, attendees, contractors, cleaners	10
<b>Transmission of Coronavirus to an individual via toilet facilities</b> Ministers, leaders, members, attendees, contractors, cleaners	10
<b>Transmission of Coronavirus to an individual via contaminated waste</b> Cleaners and anyone else handling waste	6
<b>Transmission of Coronavirus to an individual via working in the church building</b> Ministers, leaders, members, attendees, contractors, cleaners	3

<b>Risk:</b>		<b>Coronavirus entering the premises and potentially infecting users of the building</b>				
<b>Persons at risk</b>		Ministers, leaders, members, attendees, contractors, cleaners				
<b>Risk Rating before control measures</b>	Likelihood	5		<b>Risk Rating after control measures</b>	Likelihood	3
	Severity	5			Severity	2
	Overall Risk	35			Overall Risk	10

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
1. Ask everyone symptomatic not to attend	Y	JAH	Initial letter pre-reopening
2. All attendees asked to follow government guidance on self-isolation after symptoms and/or positive test/contact tracing/returning from foreign travel.	Y	JAH	Initial letter pre-reopening
3. Verbal symptom checks on entry	Y	JAH	Welcomer
4. Ask those who vulnerable to consider whether to attend in person	Y	JAH	Initial letter pre-reopening
5. Everyone to use hand sanitiser on entry to the building	Y	JAH	Provide dispenser/Initial letter pre-reopening/welcomer
6. Action Plan in place in case and communicated to leaders as in event of Coronavirus case known to enter premises	Y	JAH	Initial letter pre-reopening (to notify leaders if an attendee is subsequently found to be infected)
7. Undertake the Ellis Whittam's 'Pre-Event Checkrecord' (Appendix 2 of <a href="#">Guidance on Re-opening churches</a> ).	Y		Done apart from Risk assessment
8. Display suitable posters to ask people with symptoms not to enter the building (see our <a href="#">Coronavirus poster library</a> )	Y	TC	Poster library
9. Social distancing measures to be maintained where possible, including the arrival and departure of the venue.	Y	JAH	Initial letter pre-reopening
10. All contractors to complete the 'Contractor Checklist' (Appendix 6 of <a href="#">Guidance on Re-opening churches</a> ).	N/A		No contractors planned

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
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<b>Risk:</b>		<b>Transmission of Coronavirus to an individual direct from infected person</b>				
<b>Persons at risk</b>		Ministers, leaders, members, attendees, contractors, cleaners				
<b>Risk Rating before control measures</b>	Likelihood	5		<b>Risk Rating after control measures</b>	Likelihood	3
	Severity	5			Severity	2
	Overall Risk	35			Overall Risk	10

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
1. Suitable social distancing policy in place (2m or “1m plus mitigations”)	Y	JAH/TC	Positioning of seats/Initial letter pre-reopening/signs
2. No physical contact between persons from different households/bubbles	Y	JAH	Initial letter pre-reopening/welcomer
3. All attendees required to wear a face covering	Y	JAH/TC	Initial letter pre-reopening/signs/welcomer
4. One-way system of flow through building to avoid pinch points	Y	TC	In front door/out side Initial letter pre-reopening/signs
5. Areas marked out of bounds where appropriate	N/A		Gallery taped off?
6. Seating arrangements adapted for social distancing	Y		Positioning of seats = capacity (Estimated capacity 16-19 depending on bubbles +6 in gallery) Recommend purchase of cushions/felts for gallery benches
7. Capacity monitored and entry stopped when capacity reached	Y		Welcomer/unlikely to be problem with number likely to attend
8. No congregational singing during services	Y	JAH/TC	Initial letter pre-reopening/signs
9. Signage in place to remind people of safe practices	Y	TC	Use of BU signs or adaptations

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
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		Unlikely to apply to those currently who are likely to attend/otherwise schedule arrival/welcomer
11. Visitors instructed not to gather in groups, except with members of their own household, inside or outside the building.	Y	JAH	Initial letter pre-reopening/Reminder in the church notices
12. All individuals who fall into the vulnerable, clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable categories will be assessed and provisions made accordingly.	Y	JAH	To be assessed in light of response(s) to initial letter. The vulnerable should have already notified and appropriate action made accordingly
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<b>Risk:</b>		<b>Transmission of Coronavirus to an individual via a contaminated surface/item (excluding toilet facilities)</b>				
<b>Persons at risk</b>		Ministers, leaders, members, attendees, contractors, cleaners				
<b>Risk Rating before control measures</b>	Likelihood	5		<b>Risk Rating after control measures</b>	Likelihood	3
	Severity	5			Severity	2
	Overall Risk	35			Overall Risk	10

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	JAH(SP)	See Sarah Pratt for routine cleaning but with only 2 external doors there is no other option. Consider it could be winter and cold
2. Regular cleaning of surfaces likely to be touched regularly with appropriate disinfectant.	Y	JAH(SP)	Agreed with Sarah Pratt
3. No passing of collection plate/bag and collection not counted for 72 hours after service.	Y	JAH	No collections in church. Initial letter pre-reopening indicating use of BACS transfer.
4. Building not used again for 72 hours or building thoroughly deep cleaned between uses	Y		72 hours cycle sufficient for current envisaged use.
5. No serving of food and drink items prior to, during or after the service.	Y	JAH/TC	Initial letter pre-reopening/signs
6. No distribution of bibles or other books – attendees asked to bring their own and take them away with them.	Y	JAH	Initial letter pre-reopening/welcomer
7. Microphones and other equipment kept to a single individual	Y	TC	To be managed by TC (sufficient microphones available for single use each service)
8. Undertake the 'Pre-Event Checklist' (Appendix 2 of <a href="#">Guidance on Re-opening churches</a> ) and where appropriate Cleaning Checklist for suspected Coronavirus contamination (Appendix 3 of <a href="#">Guidance on Re-opening churches</a> )	Y	JAH(SP)	Agree Sarah Pratt
9. Keep Register of attendees	Y	TC	Initial letter pre-reopening/welcomer Simple list of regular attenders to be ticked off each time by welcomer/nominated person by entrance



<b>Control Measures</b>	<b>Control in place (Y/N)</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Comments</b>
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<b>Risk:</b>		<b>Transmission of Coronavirus to an individual via toilet facilities</b>				
<b>Persons at risk</b>		Ministers, leaders, members, attendees, contractors, cleaners				
<b>Risk Rating before control measures</b>	Likelihood	5		<b>Risk Rating after control measures</b>	Likelihood	3
	Severity	5			Severity	2
	Overall Risk	35			Overall Risk	10

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
1. Regular cleaning of surfaces likely to be touched regularly with appropriate disinfectant.	Y	JAH(SP)	Agree Sarah Pratt
2. Toilets supplied with disposal hand towels or dryers (not a reusable linen towel), hand sanitiser.	Y	JAH(SP)	Church to be stocked as required/replenished Sarah Pratt as agreed.
3. Undertake the 'Pre-Event Checklist' (Appendix 2 of <a href="#">Guidance on Re-opening churches</a> ) and where appropriate Cleaning Checklist for suspected Coronavirus contamination (Appendix 3 of <a href="#">Guidance on Re-opening churches</a> )	Y	JAH(SP)	To be agreed with Sarah Pratt
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		Both toilets can be used – the layout does not use cubicles but individual door/doorways to rooms.
5. Introducing enhanced cleaning of toilet facilities, provision of more waste facilities, more frequent rubbish collections.	Y	JAH(SP)	To be agreed with Sarah Pratt/pedal bins
6. Ask people to spray clean toilet after use	Y	JAH/TC	Initial letter pre-reopening/signs
7. Children under 11 to be accompanied to the toilet	N/A		
8. Limit to 1 person per toilet unit (even if it has multiple cubicles), posters etc.			As 4
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<b>Control Measures</b>	<b>Control in place (Y/N)</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Comments</b>
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<b>Risk:</b>		<b>Transmission of Coronavirus to an individual via contaminated waste</b>				
<b>Persons at risk</b>		Cleaners and anyone else handling waste				
<b>Risk Rating before control measures</b>	Likelihood	5		<b>Risk Rating after control measures</b>	Likelihood	3
	Severity	5			Severity	2
	Overall Risk	35			Overall Risk	6

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
1. Everyone asked to take waste home with them if possible	Y	JAH/TC	Initial letter pre-reopening/signs
2. All waste to be handled appropriately, observing good hygiene practices.	Y	JAH(SP)	Agree Sarah Pratt
3. Anyone handling waste to be trained in suitable working practices	Y	JAH(SP)	Discuss Sarah Pratt (is fully trained in waste disposal)
4. All waste handled with suitable PPE (see cleaning guidance for details).	Y	JAH(SP)	Discuss Sarah Pratt Note she also cleans the village hall which will have procedures (will adopt same procedures)
5. All bins lined with disposable liners	Y	JAH(SP)	Church to be stocked as required/replenished Sarah Pratt as agreed.
6. Lidded bins operated by foot-pedal to be provided	Y	JAH	Bins in kitchen to be taped/sealed 2x pedal bins for toilets
7. Keep records of who has carried out cleaning and the tasks completed	Y	JAH(SP)	Discuss Sarah Pratt/check she has no helper
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.	Y		Unlikely but will deal with as indicated
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<b>Risk:</b>		<b>Transmission of Coronavirus to an individual via working in the church building</b>				
<b>Persons at risk</b>		Ministers, leaders, members, attendees, contractors, cleaners				
<b>Risk Rating before control measures</b>	Likelihood	5		<b>Risk Rating after control measures</b>	Likelihood	1
	Severity	5			Severity	1
	Overall Risk	35			Overall Risk	3

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
1. Use remote working tools to avoid in-person meetings.	Y		No meetings other than weekly service at restart Affects Sarah Pratt, leaders and TC only
2. Restrict attendance of individuals at meetings to those absolutely necessary and maintain social distancing throughout.	N/A		to be reassessed if P&P and the like resume
3. Avoid transmission during meetings, for example, by avoiding sharing pens and other objects.	N/A		
4. Provide hand sanitiser in rooms used for meetings.	N/A		
5. Hold meetings outdoors or in well-ventilated rooms whenever possible.	N/A		
6. For areas where regular meetings take place, use floor signage to help people maintain social distancing.	N/A		
7. Implement cleaning procedures for goods and items entering the premises.	Y	JAH(SP)	Sarah Pratt
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Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
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<b>Risk:</b>						
<b>Persons at risk</b>						
<b>Risk Rating before control measures</b>	Likelihood			<b>Risk Rating after control measures</b>	Likelihood	
	Severity				Severity	
	Overall Risk				Overall Risk	

Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
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Control Measures	Control in place (Y/N)	Person Responsible	Comments
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## Review/Revision Record

Date of Review	Confirmed by	Comments
		Next Review: when govt. has to change the COVID guidelines move to Tier 2

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