

Risk Assessment Template for Opening Church Buildings to the Public

Version Control

Issue Date	Version Number	Issued by
16 th July 2021	10	The House of Bishops COVID-19 Recovery Group

This update has been reviewed to reflect step 4 of the [roadmap to ease restrictions](#) issued by the UK government and is intended for use from 19th July onwards. As step 4 sees the easing of all legal restrictions it is recommended that risk assessments currently in place are re-run to ensure they fit the new circumstances.

It is recommended that you carry out a separate risk assessment for each activity type e.g. public worship, use by community groups, concerts etc. and that these are regularly reviewed with reference to local Covid infection rates and other relevant circumstances. You may decide to have different mitigations or safety measures in place for different events. Where activities run simultaneously or back-to-back, each iteration of the risk assessment should address the shared or consequential risk.

Carrying out a risk assessment

1. Activities you planning for:
 - Public worship with congregational singing
 - Livestreaming or recording services
 - A choir or music group singing indoors as part of a public, livestreamed or recorded service
2. Consider the hazards:
 - Transmission of COVID-19
 - Hazards arising from using the church in a different way to usual
 - Shared or consequential risks of activities running simultaneously or back-to-back (eg crossover of people at entry/exit points)

Read the guidance and think about how it relates specifically to your church. What constraints are there? Consider how people will arrive at the church, including if they will need to wait or queue outside; how people will enter and leave the church; circulation inside: from the entrance to the worship space and out again; circulation within the worship space; also access to other areas including the toilet(s).

3. Consider who might be harmed and how. Read the guidance and think about how the activities you are planning will affect different groups of people. The risks are not different for larger churches as long as they are properly managed, but having any significant numbers of people coming through your building makes the possible impact – in particular someone with COVID-19 coming into contact with others – higher than in smaller churches with fewer people. Consider your particular circumstances and adapt the checklist below as appropriate. Gathered congregations and major services may attract people from far afield, which is likely to add to the risk profile. Consider whether you need to consult your wider membership and users.
4. Using the risk assessment checklist below as a template:
 - add in mitigations for any risks that are particular to your circumstances that may not be on the list;
 - record what you need to do for each activity to go ahead safely;
 - consider any equipment you need and any temporary changes you might need to make to the church;
 - check back against your list of activities to confirm which ones can go ahead and when.

For all of the above read also the [St Edmund's Attending the Church building for worship – Step 4 of the road map out of lockdown – August 2021](#)

Risk assessment template

Church: St Edmund's Roundhay	Assessor's name: Revd. Nigel Wright (NW)	Date completed: 22 nd July 2021	Review date: Mid to late August 2021
Events or services this assessment relates to:		Sunday morning 10 am worship in the church building	

Risk	Controls to consider (delete or detail as appropriate to your location and event)	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
Aerosol or droplet transmission of Covid-19	Increase ventilation in your building: natural ventilation by opening doors, windows and vents or mechanical ventilation if appropriate/necessary.	Ongoing church doors open good practise in place Do not prop open fire doors.	Ongoing	NW 22.7.21
	Use outdoor spaces if appropriate and available.	West Garden to be used for post service fellowship	President in notices	NW 22.7.21
	Request or consider requiring people to wear a face covering, unless exempt, when inside your building. This may particularly apply to activities that increase risk of aerosol spread such as singing.	Done - refer to St Ed's step 4 roadmap guidance Aug 21	Ongoing reminders in services, new sheets and weekly mailing	NW 22.7.21
	Put in place measures to reduce contact between people e.g. retaining social distancing	Done - refer to St Ed's step 4 roadmap guidance Aug 21	Ongoing reminders as above	NW 22.7.21
	If practical in your building, choose one point of entry into the church to manage flow of people and indicate this with notices, keeping emergency exits	North porch door is the one point – it has also worked successfully as the exit point throughout the various stages	As above	NW 22.7.21

Risk	Controls to consider (delete or detail as appropriate to your location and event)	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	available at all times. Where possible use a different door for exit.	of the pandemic and we will continue to do so		
	For events where the building is likely to be especially busy, or the activity is particularly energetic, pay particular regard to the need for additional mitigations such as social distancing and face coverings.	Individual risk assessment reviews for seasonal events and activities will be undertaken	Event lead.	Ongoing
Surface transmission of Covid-19	Provide adequate hand cleansing stations. Provide hand sanitiser for the occasions when people can't wash their hands.	All in place and good stocks	Complete	NW 22.7.21
	Identify where you can reduce the contact of people with surfaces, e.g. by leaving open doors that are not fire doors, using electronic documents rather than paperwork.	All in place – refer to refer to St Ed's step 4 roadmap guidance Aug 21	Complete	NW 22.7.21
	Good hygiene and cleaning of the building.	Contract cleaner in place twice per week and additional managed internal cleaning following best practices. .	ongoing	NW 22.7.21
	Consider hygiene around shared items such as Bibles, prayer and hymn books that are used by multiple people.	All in place – refer to refer to St Ed's step 4 roadmap guidance Aug 21	Ongoing	NW 22.7.21
	If providing single-use service sheets or prayer cards, either place these on sheets or ask people to sanitise hands before picking one up, and request that people take these home with them.	Only for small number of large prints and hand sanitisation and take home in place.	Keep reminding in services	NW 22.7.21
	Cordon off or remove from public access any devotional objects or items (if they are liable to be touched or closely breathed on).	Prayer area resources cordoned off	Complete	NW 22.7.21

Risk	Controls to consider (delete or detail as appropriate to your location and event)	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	Put in place a cleaning rota/system for children’s materials and toys, and consider providing cleaning materials for these if safe to do so (keeping all such materials out of the reach of children).	Lead on this Children’s youth and families worker and in place	Ongoing practices	NW 22.7.21
	Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available.	All well supplied with ample reserves		NW 22.7.21
	Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.	Yes all in place		NW 22.7.21
Visitors are unclear on requirements for attending church or visiting the building for other purposes, or anxious about attending.	Display an NHS Track and Trace QR code, with an alternative option for those who cannot use that system. Encourage visitors to use one or other of these options.	QR Code displayed on entrance plus option to leave name and number .		NW 22.7.21
	Update your website, A Church Near You, and any relevant social media with information for visitors. Communicate details on requirements or requests such as bringing a face covering and options for those who may be anxious.	This document plus St Ed’s step 4 road map guidance available on various formats and guidance sent to all congregants	Ongoing	NW 23.7.21
	Consider specific advice for those who may struggle with continuing restrictions, such as those who are deaf or hard of hearing, or visually impaired.	Large prints available for visually impaired – sound system and loop system working well		NW 22.7.21
	Consider if a booking system is needed, whether for general access or for specific events/services.	Not for Sunday worship – especially in August		NW 22.7.21
	Communicate with nearby churches to ensure offered provisions are complementary.	Ongoing with Churches together in Roundhay		NW 22.7.21
	Provide welcoming notices that outline safety measures.	Verbally and physically		NW 22.7.21

Risk	Controls to consider (delete or detail as appropriate to your location and event)	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms	If possible close the church building for 48 hours with no access permitted.	To action should the situation arise	To monitor for incidents	NW 22.7.21
	If 48-hour closure is not possible then follow Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings.	AS ABOVE		
	If the building has been quarantined for 48 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning.	AS ABOVE		