

Risk Assessment for Opening Church HALL Buildings to the Public

Version Control

Issue Date	Version Number	Issued by
6 th August 2020	5	The House of Bishops COVID-19 Recovery Group

The [government guidance for the safe use of places of worship during the pandemic](#) requires a COVID-19 risk assessment to be carried out **for every building and site open to the public**. This document provides a template risk assessment, with links to the relevant advice notes. It relates to opening up church and cathedral buildings to clergy and members of the **public entering for any permitted purposes**. As well as offering guidance on best-practice, it is also intended to help parishes make a decision on whether to open for any or all of these purposes or not, based on their local circumstances, resources and context. You should read the advice on re-opening buildings and the guidance on public worship before completing this assessment. Both are available on the [Church of England Coronavirus pages](#).

Carrying out a risk assessment

1. Agree what activities you are planning for:
 - Opening HALL for hirers
2. Consider the hazards:
 - Transmission of COVID-19
 - Hazards arising from the temporary closure of the HALL
 - Hazards arising from now using the HALL in a different way

Read the guidance and think about how it relates specifically to your church/hall. What constraints are there? Consider how people will arrive at the hall, including if they will need to wait or queue outside; how people will enter and leave the hall; circulation inside: from the entrance to the working space and out again; 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/halls so long as they are properly managed, but having more people coming through your building makes the possible impact – for example of someone with COVID-19 coming into contact with others – higher than in smaller venues with fewer people. Consider your particular circumstances and adapt the checklist below as appropriate.
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 HALL;
 - check back against your list of activities to confirm which ones can go ahead and when.

Note: Red indicates HIRERS RESPONSIBILITY, Blue indicates CHURCH'S RESPONSIBILITY

Risk assessment template Version 5.2 Following Review and Approval by PCC.

THIS IS A LIVE DOCUMENT AND MAY BE UPDATED FREQUENTLY ALWAYS CHECK (phone KC) THAT YOU HAVE THE NEWEST VERSION

Church: St George's Church HALL Worthing	Assessor's name: Keith Calver, Churchwarden Version 5.2	Date completed: 30 August 2020	Review date: 30 September 2020
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Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
Deciding whether to open to the public	Discuss with nearby venues and businesses to ensure that the timing and practical arrangements for using the hall are compatible.	None in vicinity. Residential.		
	Consider if a booking system is needed, whether for general access or for specific events/services	Hirer's responsibility		
	Include details on requirements such as bringing a face covering in communications.	Hirer's responsibility		
Preparation of the HALL for access by members of the public for any permitted purposes.	Confirm that all steps (above) for access by anyone have been carried out before anyone else accesses the building.	Building to be ventilated prior to first use.	Wardens,	Completed on 04 Aug.
	Review CofE guide on cleaning church buildings. Complete the 'cleaning' section of this risk assessment (below).	Building to be professionally cleaned, prior to first use	Cleaner	Completed on 07 Aug
	Read the CofE guide on face coverings and produce signage or other relevant materials to indicate compliance with the law requiring these for all except those exempt.	Not mandatory within hall at time of writing.		

	Choose one point of entry into the HALL to manage flow of people and indicate this with notices, keeping emergency exits available at all times. Where possible use a different exit.	Hirer's responsibility. One size fits all type approach all is not appropriate.		
	Make any temporary arrangements for people to wait or queue outside the building (taking into account any consequential risks arising from people gathering outside).	2-metre marker strips on main approach path.	Wardens to undertake on 19 Aug	
	Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation.	Recently fully aired. This is Hirer's responsibility (weather permitting)		
	Walk through the HALL to plan for physical distancing in seats, aisles, at the altar rail, including safe flow of visitors. Remember 2m in all directions from each person (or 1m with risk mitigation if absolutely necessary).	N/A This is an open planned area.		
	Clearly mark out flow of movement for people entering and leaving the building to maintain physical distancing requirements.	Hirer's responsibility. One size fits all type approach all is not appropriate.		
	Determine placement of hand sanitisers available for visitors to use.	One set at entrance, second set at exit.	Replacements to be available as required	
	Determine if temporary changes are needed to the building to facilitate social distancing	None required		
	Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing etc.	Signs to be made/purchased	Administrator	
	Ensure high-risk surfaces and touch points have been wiped with appropriate sanitiser spray or disposable wipes	1. Prior to first use 2. Weekly clean 3. Hirers responsibility	1. Completed 2. Scheduled	

		BEFORE & AFTER each use.	3. Sign off list to be prepared & Used by hirer.	
	Check that handwashing facilities have adequate soap provision and paper towels, and a bin for the paper towels.	Check twice weekly	Administrator	
	Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available.	Check twice weekly	Administrator	
	Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.	Check twice weekly Gloves to be worn.	Administrator	
	If possible, provide safe means for visitors to record their name and contact details; retain each day's record for 21 days	Hirer's Responsibility, but MUST inform Church office if exposure to virus has occurred.		
	Give due notice of the resumption of use of the building to neighbours, and wider community, ensuring that visitors will know what to expect when they come.	Use outside notice boards		
Cleaning the HALL before and after general use (no known exposure to anyone with Coronavirus symptoms)	If the building has been closed for 72 hours between periods of being open then there is no need for extra cleaning to remove the virus from surfaces.	Generally, assume NOT closed for 72 hours between uses.		
	If 72-hour closure is not possible then check all cleaners/visitors are not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating.	Hirer's Responsibility		
	Set up a cleaning rota to cover your opening arrangements.	Professional 2hour clean once a week in place.		
	All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable).	Hirers to provide their own gloves	Hirers responsibility	

		And Gloves to be available in cleaning cupboard on stage.	Administrator	
	Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials	Cleaning wipes etc to be available in toilets	Administrator	
	Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site.	Cleaner or Administrator		
	Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site – suggested daily removal.	Weekly removal (Monday for bin collection on Thursday) initially considered adequate for only limited uses per week.	Administrator	
Cleaning the HALL after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms	If possible close the church building for 72 hours with no access permitted.	Will be done if notified. Hirers to notify church office.	Administrator/Wardens	
	If 72-hour closure is not possible then follow Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings.	Closure for 72 hours is expected, otherwise higher level of PPE required by cleaner.	Administrator/Wardens	
	If the building has been quarantined for 72 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning.	Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here .		