

## GUIDE FOR FOOD AND DRINK IN WORSHIP AND NON-WORSHIP SETTINGS

Version 1	22/09/2020	Issue of original guidance
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### 1. **Introduction**

This Guide is part of STEP 5: Safety First in the process for reopening and managing your church buildings. It seeks to clarify where it is possible to provide and consume food and drink and the considerations if this is allowed. There are a number of strands of Government and Connexional guidance which this document seeks to draw together to allow Managing Trustees to decide on the right approach for their event and setting.

### 2. **Considerations for a Worship Service Setting**

- i. This specific guide should be read in the wider context of guidance for places of worship –
  - In England - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july>
  - In Scotland - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-phase-3-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship/>
  - In Wales - <https://gov.wales/guidance-reopening-places-worship-coronavirus-html>
- ii. For a worship service, there are Government restrictions on the consumption of food and drink unless part of an act of worship (Outlined in the [Guide for the Act of Holy Communion](#)<sup>1</sup>).
- iii. This includes the distribution and consumption of food or drink before or after a service.

### 3. **Considerations for Formal Cafes or similar within a Place of Worship**

- i. The Government confirms that formal hospitality spaces within a place of worship, such as cafes, are permitted to open as long as they can be managed safely and are [Covid-19 Secure](#) by complying with the [7 Steps for Working Safely Together](#) as outlined in the relevant guidance.
- ii. They should be run on a professional basis which limits operation to table-service, with social distancing observed, and with minimal staff and customer contact.
- iii. Those operating these types of activities should refer and fully adhere to the Government's Hospitality Guidance<sup>2</sup>.
- iv. The Methodist Church also provides a practical [Guide for Cafes](#)<sup>3</sup> which will assist with reopening and running a Cafe or similar in your Church Building.
- v. The running of such an operation is based on the risk assessment for this activity, in the setting in which it is based. This will determine if it can be managed safely for both staff and customers. **If it is clear that this cannot be achieved fully, then it should not be opened.**

<sup>1</sup> Under 'Guide to Using Your Worship Space' tab found on <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/property/coronavirus-guidance-for-property/>

<sup>2</sup> In England - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/restaurants-offering-takeaway-or-delivery>

In Scotland - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-tourism-and-hospitality-sector-guidance/>

In Wales - <https://gov.wales/tourism-and-hospitality-businesses-guidance-phased-reopening-html>

<sup>3</sup> Under the 'Other Property Users' tab found on <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/property/coronavirus-guidance-for-property/>

**4. Considerations for Formal Cafes or similar within ancillary accommodation**

- i. Formal hospitality spaces, such as cafes, can also open in accommodation ancillary to the worship space itself where applicable. For example in an adjoining community hall, as long as this accommodation is Covid-19 Secure and as long as the operation can be managed safely.
- ii. They should be run on a professional basis which limits operation to table-service, with social distancing observed, and with minimal staff and customer contact.
- iii. Those operating these types of activities should refer and fully adhere to the Government's Hospitality Guidance.<sup>4</sup>
- iv. The Methodist Church also provides a practical [Guide for Cafes](#)<sup>5</sup> which will assist with reopening and running a Cafe or similar in your Church Building.
- v. The running of such an operation is based on the risk assessment for this activity, in the setting in which it is based. This will determine if it can be managed safely for both staff and customers. **If it is clear that this cannot be achieved fully, then it should not be opened.**

**5. Considerations for Food and Drink in Non-formal or Social Settings**

- i. All other activities where food and drink are prepared, distributed and consumed in a non-formal or social setting should also adhere to the Government's Hospitality Guidance – <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/restaurants-offering-takeaway-or-delivery>.
- ii. There are greater risks associated with more social settings for food and drink consumption, where they are informal, and can lead to increasing the risk of transmission between households or groups through the sharing of food or drink. Therefore, they should be managed through the same Covid-19 Secure principles as for Places of Worship.
- iii. The same guidance should also be followed where food or drink is brought into the setting or activity by individuals taking part in an event. This is particularly relevant in regards to sharing and the collection of rubbish afterwards.
- iv. If the consumption of food and drink in any non-formal setting and activity is considered, the management of this is based on the risk assessment for this activity, in the setting in which it is based. It should only be considered if it can be managed in a professional way and adhere to the Government's [Hospitality Guidance](#). **If it is clear that this cannot be achieved fully, then no food and drink should be provided within or as part of an activity.**

**6. Considerations for Food and Drink in Other Settings**

- i. Food or drink provided by professional outside sources in a Place of Worship or ancillary accommodation is allowed, e.g. a wedding reception.
- ii. The accommodation still needs to be Covid-19 Secure.
- iii. Those providing the service should be a professional organisation/business and be following the Government's Hospitality Guidance<sup>6</sup>, which highlights these types of arrangements specifically -

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<sup>4</sup> In England - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/restaurants-offering-takeaway-or-delivery>

In Scotland - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-tourism-and-hospitality-sector-guidance/>

In Wales - <https://gov.wales/tourism-and-hospitality-businesses-guidance-phased-reopening-html>

<sup>5</sup> Under the 'Other Property Users' tab found on <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/property/coronavirus-guidance-for-property/>

<sup>6</sup> In England - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/restaurants-offering-takeaway-or-delivery>

*'Mobile catering and contact catering or similar environments where food and drink is purchased and consumed at a venue in their indoor or outdoor areas or offered for takeaway or delivery.'*

**7. Further Guidance**

This is general guidance as it is not possible to address every property situation, so if there are any queries arising from this guide, please contact the Connexional Property Support team on [property@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:property@methodistchurch.org.uk).

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In Scotland - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-tourism-and-hospitality-sector-guidance/>

In Wales - <https://gov.wales/tourism-and-hospitality-businesses-guidance-phased-reopening-html>