

Covid-19 Risk Assessment

Version 4	26 June 2020	Updated links, moved cleaning and Action Plan and added more links under Further Information
Version 5	30 June 2020	Links for Outdoor Play Areas, Face Coverings, Capacity and mandatory to conduct a risk assessment
Version 6	6 July 2020	Added link to TMCP guidance on Test and Trace & link for revised Covid-19 Compliance sign
Version 7	13 July 2020	Updated link for CPO
Version 8	3 August 2020	Updates for hand dryers, face coverings, managing an outbreak and addition of blank pages
Version 9	8 October 2020	Added links for a sample risk assessment, Places of Worship Action Cards and Scotland & Wales Updated the risk assessment, links for signage, Test & Trace information and planning cycle Included information about Covid-19 Secure & 7 Priority actions, ventilation and First Aiders

It is a legal requirement for managing trustees to conduct a risk assessment on Covid-19 before and during use of church building¹. This includes taking reasonable steps to reduce the risk of spreading Covid-19 to those who use the building. This is called a risk assessment and it will help you manage the risk. It might help to look at a [sample risk assessment from the HSE](#). You will need to consider:

- **What** - identifying what activity or situations might cause transmission of the virus.
- **Who** - think about who could be at risk.
- **How** - decide how likely it is that someone could be exposed.
- **Act** - to remove the activity or situation, or if this is not possible, control the risk.
- **Track** - track incidents in an accident log book in accordance with the Health & Safety policy for the church/circuit

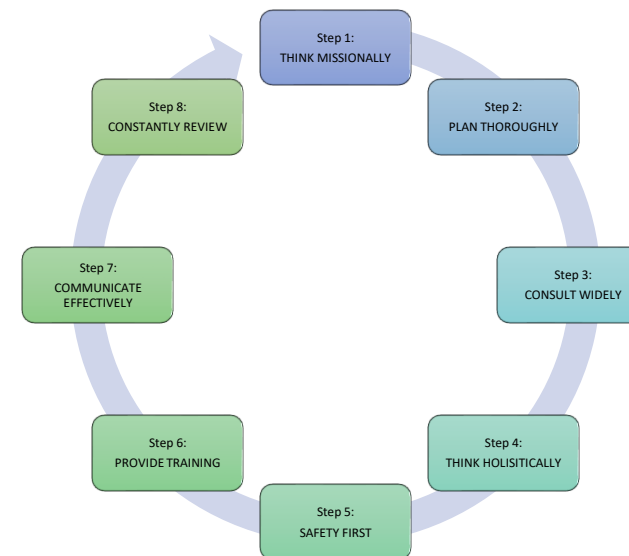
¹In England - <https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/risk-assessment.htm>, In Scotland - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-individual-risk-assessment-for-the-workplace/>, In Wales - <https://gov.wales/covid-19-workforce-risk-assessment-tool>

Full government guidance on Covid-19 can be found [here](#)². This assessment¹ is based on guidance from [HSE's Working Safely during the Covid-19 Outbreak](#). For further guidance on how to carry out a risk assessment, please refer to the [HSE Guidance on Risk Assessments](#).

All spaces that are to be used should be [COVID-19 secure](#)³, which means they meet the [7 Priority Actions for Working Safely Together](#) for opening and running as outlined in the government guidance.

Please refer to the activity specific guidance found on www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/property/coronavirus-guidance-for-property/ which will assist in thinking through the risks for each group who uses the building.

This planning process is essential, as it checks and ensures that the church building accommodates the requirements for opening; or alternatively highlights what other considerations need to be discussed and agreed to make the building safe to open. This is a shared responsibility that should be 'circular' in process, not linear, i.e., each risk and action needs to be reviewed over time, so that processes can be monitored and changes made, if needed. This is summarised in the diagram, with each heading forming an important step towards reopening your church building and using it safely. Please refer to the [Re-Opening Your Church Building](#) more detailed information.



² In Scotland - <https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>, In Wales - <https://gov.wales/coronavirus>

³ England - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/903464/staying-covid-19-secure-2020-230720.pdf

Wales - <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-08/keep-wales-safe-at-work-five-key-steps.pdf>

Scotland - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-general-guidance-for-safer-workplaces/>

Social Distancing

Questions to Consider

1. In our building, where will social distancing be more difficult? You may need to review the government guidance on [restrictions on capacity](#)⁴.
2. What areas are more likely to increase the risk? How can we change these areas so people adhere to safe distancing guidelines? Can we re-organise our building to reduce the likelihood of spreading the virus?
3. Do we need to add or change things in our building to reduce the likelihood of spreading coronavirus?
4. If the building is listed, any changes need to be sensitive and reversible. Please consult the [Conservation Officer](#) about these changes.

Think about how to organise the building so that users and visitors can adhere to [social distancing guidelines](#)⁵, where possible:

1. Look over the [sample risk assessment from the HSE](#) to guide you through this process.
2. Physically arrange communal areas to keep adhere to social distancing guidelines.
3. Mark areas using tape or floor paint to help adhere to social distancing guidelines.
4. Provide signage to remind people to keep adhere to social distancing guidelines.
5. Using screens to create a physical barrier between people.
6. Use more than one exit or entry to reduce numbers in high traffic areas.
7. Maintaining social distancing in communal areas, including stairs and lifts.
8. Leave doors and windows open that can be left open (taking fire safety and security issues into consideration) to reduce the need for people to touch door handles and to assist with the circulation of fresh air. As colder weather draws nearer, the benefit of open windows and doors will need to be weighed up with the extra costs of heating.

⁴ 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>

⁵ In Scotland - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-what-you-can-and-cannot-do/>, In Wales - <https://gov.wales/coronavirus-regulations-guidance>

9. If there are ceiling fans, air conditioning systems or heating systems which blow air, the current advice states that the need for an adequate supply of fresh air through natural or mechanical ventilation has not changed and that improving ventilation may help reduce the risk. Please refer to please refer to HSE's [Guidance on Ventilation](#) or the [CIBSE Covid-19 Ventilation Guidance](#).
10. If there is a playground, please refer to the [guidance](#)⁶ on outdoor playgrounds and gyms.

Where you cannot adhere to social distancing guidelines, you should think about:

1. Put in place systems such as 'one in, one out' in communal areas, such as toilets, if it is not possible to maintain social distancing.
2. Assigning one person per area or staggering use times to reduce the number of people in an area.
3. Limit access to kitchens and limit contact between those using the kitchen. The government's guidance on [Food Preparation during Covid-19](#) should be followed.

⁶In Scotland - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-phase-3-staying-safe-and-protecting-others/pages/sports-culture-and-leisure-activities/>
In Wales - <https://gov.wales/reopening-childrens-playgrounds-and-outdoor-play-areas-coronavirus-html>

Good Hygiene

Questions to Consider:

1. Look over the [sample risk assessment from the HSE](#) to guide you through this process.
2. Ensuring there is handwashing facilities that provide running water, soap and paper towels and reminding to wash regularly for 20 seconds.
3. Providing handwashing facilities or hand sanitiser at entry and exit points. The government states that people should be able to wash their hands as they arrive and leave.
4. Frequently wipe down hand dryers. When using paper towels, bins should have liners and should be emptied frequently to safely dispose of waste. Providing hand sanitiser in multiple areas in addition to washing facilities.
5. Providing tissues throughout the building.
6. Setting clear guidance for the cleaning of toilets and kitchen facilities to make sure they are kept clean.
7. Using signs and posters to increase awareness of good handwashing technique – reminding those in the building to catch coughs and sneezes in tissues and to avoid touching face, eyes, nose or mouth with unclean hands. Signs can be ordered from [CPO](#) or downloaded from the [Methodist website](#). Other recommendations include:
 - a. [Best Practice Handwashing Technique](#)
 - b. [Best Practise Hand Rub Technique](#)
 - c. [Hand-Washing Technique \(child version\)](#)
 - d. [DoH Wash Your Hands](#)
 - e. [Follow Catch it, Bin it, Kill it](#)
 - f. [Cover Coughs and Sneezes \(child version\)](#)
 - g. [Compliance with Covid-19 Guidance \(revised\)](#)

Cleaning

Questions to Consider:

- Please refer to the [Cleaning Churches during Covid-19 guidance](#) (found under 'Guide to Re-Opening & Managing Church Buildings' tab) for specific guidance on cleaning regimes.
- Look over the [sample risk assessment from the HSE](#) to guide you through this process.

Personal Protective Equipment

- It is now mandatory to wear a face covering in indoor public spaces. However, they are not a replacement safe distancing and regular handwashing. Please refer to the [Guide on Face Coverings](#)⁷ for more information and a list of those who are exempt.
- Public urged not to buy medical grade masks so they can be saved for frontline health and care workers, and instead make their own face coverings at home. Click [here](#) to read more.
- CPO have offered Methodist Churches a 15% discount on PPE, click [here](#) for more information.
- First Aiders should be contacted about factors to consider during the risk assessment. Read more on [Guidance for First Aiders during the Pandemic](#).
- Look over the [sample risk assessment from the HSE](#) to guide you through this process.

⁷ In Scotland - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-phase-3-staying-safe-and-protecting-others/pages/face-coverings/>
In Wales - <https://gov.wales/face-coverings-guidance-public>

Information and Guidance

Questions to consider:

1. What information do those who use the building need to make sure they understand how to keep safe during the outbreak?
2. Who else do we need to share information and guidance with and what is the best way to do it?
3. How will people know when information and guidance is updated?

Making sure you pass on the correct information and guidance to those using the building is an important part of reducing risk.

1. Look over the [sample risk assessment from the HSE](#) to guide you through this process.
2. Decide the action steps and how to support [Test and Trace](#)⁸ should there be a confirmed case of Covid-19 in the building. The Government has requested that churches in England assist the NHS Test and Trace service by keeping an accurate temporary record of visitors to church premises for 21 days. Please refer to TMCP's [Guidance on Test and Trace](#) for further information and templates.
3. Be familiar with the government guidance on [Covid-19 Early Outbreak Management](#) and the [Places of Worship Action Card](#), both of which includes instructions on what to do in the event of a confirmed case of Covid-19.
4. Decide if a QR Code needs to be set up for the building. More information can be found on TMCP's [Test and Trace FAQ's](#).
5. Decide what people need to know so they can use the building safely.
6. Decide the best way to pass on information and guidance to those using the building.
7. Setting clear guidance and line of responsibility for the use of kitchen and toilet facilities to make sure they are kept clean.
8. People often need to hear messages more than once and in different ways to remember. Think about ways to reinforce the message.
9. Think about how to interact with those who do not regularly use the building such as visitors or delivery drivers. Plan how to share relevant information on how to socially distance, where they wash their hands and the arrangements for using communal areas.

Updating information and guidance

1. Be prepared by thinking about what measures can be put in place to update people in the event of adapting the current guidance.

⁸ In Scotland – <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-test-and-protect/>
In Wales - <https://gov.wales/test-trace-protect-html>

2. Decide if the current ways of sharing information and guidance are enough to update people or if you need to do more.
3. As information is key to reducing risk, decide how you are going to make sure that everyone who needs the information gets it.

Ensure that all those who use the building know what the [current guidelines about self-isolation](#)⁹ are about self-isolation if they or someone in their home has symptoms. Be familiar current [guidance on testing](#),¹⁰ including on how to apply for a test.

1. Agree steps to take and how to inform the Test and Trace service should someone test positive for Covid-19 when in the building. It is recommended to print out the [Places of Worship Action Card](#).
2. Agree how you will look after someone who falls ill in the building. Do you need to isolate them until they can go home? Where will that be? What do you need to do to clean afterwards?
3. Decide what support needs to be in place for the person who is self-isolating.

Further resources

- HSE guidance on Covid-19 Risk Assessments - https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/index.htm#risk_assessment
- Historic England's Guide to Cleaning Historic Surfaces - <https://historicengland.org.uk/coronavirus/historic-places/cleaning-historic-surfaces/>
- Special religious services and gatherings Covid-19 Checklist - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july/special-religious-services-and-gatherings-covid-19-checklist>

⁹ In Scotland - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-public-health-checks-at-borders/pages/self-isolation/>

In Wales - <https://gov.wales/self-isolation-stay-home-guidance-households-possible-coronavirus>

¹⁰ In Scotland - <https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19/test-and-protect/coronavirus-covid-19-testing>

In Wales - <https://gov.wales/apply-coronavirus-covid-19-test>

- Safe Use of 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/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic>
- Scottish Government guidance - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-phase-3-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship/>
- Welsh Government guidance - <https://gov.wales/guidance-reopening-places-worship-coronavirus>
- Working Safely during Covid-19 - www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19
- Government guidance for the public on mental health and wellbeing www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing

Covid-19 Risk Assessment

Name & Address of Church		Assessment under taken by
Area or Activity Assessed		Date of Initial Assessment Date to be Review

Hazards/Risks <i>Think about the areas where contact takes place</i>	Persons Affected <i>Think of anyone who comes in contact</i>	Current Controls <i>What controls are currently in place to prevent the spread of the virus?</i>	Additional Covid-19 Controls – Reducing Risk <i>What further action in each scenario would help reduce the spread of the virus?</i> <i>*Any changes to listed buildings must be sensitive & reversible, please contact the Conservation for guidance.</i>	Action Plan <i>What needs to be done?</i> <i>Who will do it?</i>

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The **Methodist** Church 