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| **NEC Risk Assessment Template** To be read in conjunction with NEC Risk Assessment Guidance (July 2021) |  |
| **Church:** | **Pastor (Venue Manager):** | **Date completed:** | **Review date:** |
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**Important Note:** This abbreviated risk assessment reflects the government guidance presented from 19 July 2021. The full content of the risk assessment has been maintained to reflect that the despite the lifting of restrictions:

* where there is an increase in transmission of the virus, churches may need to consider returning to restrictions previously put in place; and
* churches may still need to keep restrictions in place (now) until such time as they are satisfied that risks to their congregation are low and / or no longer remain.

With this in mind, we have simply ‘greyed out’ rather than removed those aspects that do not immediately apply under the current government guidelines. Maintaining the entire template in this way will enable churches to add any restrictions they deem necessary given their individual circumstance. .

**Guidance:** Consider your particular circumstances and adapt the checklist of controls and measures below as appropriate. 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. Sections that have been greyed out are indicative of information not needing to be provided. Churches can, however, choose to provide information on any areas of this risk assessment including greyed out areas if required.

**Controls Score:** Provide a score from the range: 1 – Significant controls in place. 2 – Strong controls in place. 3 – Adequate controls in place. 4 – Minimal controls in place. 5 – No controls in place.

**Revised Overall Assessment Rating:** Total the entire controls score to rate: Up to 56 (Low Risk). 57 – 115 (Medium Risk). 116+ (High Risk).

| **Area of Focus**  | **Controls Required**  | **Measure(s) in Place** | **Controls Score** | **Responsible Person** | **Completed Date**  |
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| 1. **Access to church buildings for purposes of recording and/or livestreaming services (with no congregation present)**

**Risk:** contracting or spreading the virus by not social distancing or by touching contaminated services. | 1.1 Consider if anyone required for recording or broadcasting is clinically extremely vulnerable or has household members who are. Can someone else fulfil their role in the recording / livestreaming? Ensure that the people who need to attend the church building to enable the livestreaming or recording to take place are willing to do so and can do so safely. Make sure that only those essential for livestreaming or recording enter the church. Churches have a range of options available to share content on platforms such as Facebook, YouTube and Zoom. |  |  |  |  |
| 1.2 Identify one point of entry to the church building, and a separate exit if possible. |  |  |  |  |
| 1.3 Consideration and necessary action has been taken to ensure no individuals are lone working within the building at any time. |  |  |  |  |
| 1.4 Consider staggered arrival times if multiple people from different households are coming into the building. |  |  |  |  |
| 1.5 Ensure safe use of equipment needed for livestreaming - avoid exceeding safe load on sockets, and cables / tripods causing trip hazard etc. |  |  |  |  |
| 1.6 Provide adequate hand cleansing stations. Provide hand sanitiser for the occasions when people cannot wash their hands. |  |  |  |  |
| 1.7 Review guidance on cleaning church buildings, in particular increasing the frequency of cleaning for toilets and other risk-prone areas and ensuring regular disinfection of high-touch items. Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings)**.** |  |  |  |  |
| 1.8 Ensure individuals involved in any church cleaning activity do not fall into clinically extremely vulnerable categories or have members of their household who fall into such groups. |  |  |  |  |
| 1.9 Read guidance on face coverings and produce or download signage or other relevant materials to indicate compliance with the law for all except those exempt. Consider what arrangements are needed for occasions if individuals attend without face coverings. For example, the provision of masks by the church. Advice on face coverings can be found [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own). |  |  |  |  |
|  | 1.10 Identify where you can reduce the contact of people with surfaces. For example, by leaving open doors that are not fire doors, using electronic documents rather than paperwork etc. |  |  |  |  |
|  | 1.11 Ensure you have arrangements to satisfy NHS an NHS Test requirements, to ensure your church keeps a temporary record of all visitors attending all services (in a way that is manageable for your church), and can assist NHS Test and Trace with requests for that data if needed (i.e. in the event of any local, positive outbreaks).  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. **Deciding whether to open to the public for private prayer, public worship and other permitted activities**
 | 2.1 Consider how the current restrictions apply to the particular circumstances of the church and worship, or other activities envisaged. Consider the implications of where people travel from and the distance involved. |  |  |  |  |
| 2.2 Discuss with nearby venues and businesses to ensure that the timing and practical arrangements for using the church are compatible / do not create unnecessary queues. |  |  |  |  |
| 2.3 Check if any paid staff or members required for opening the church fall into clinically extremely vulnerable categories or have members of their household who do and ensure there are enough people safely able and willing to facilitate opening and cleaning the building. |  |  |  |  |
| 2.4 Consider whether to discourage clinically extremely vulnerable members of the congregation or visitors from attending services altogether or setting aside a time for them to attend with suitable, additional restrictions in place. |  |  |  |  |
| 2.5 Consider if a booking system is needed, whether for general access or for specific events / services. |  |  |  |  |
| 2.6 Identify and implement effective arrangements (and responses by leaders) for occasions when the maximum occupancy for the building is exceeded or attendees refuse to comply with the guidance of their local church. |  |  |  |  |
| 2.7 Identify what changes your church may need to make to its ways of working and worship where attendance at church is not possible or restricted. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. **Deciding on the inclusion of singers / praise team in worship service.**

**Risk:** Aerosol spread of coronavirus may be increased by singing and playing of wind instruments | 3.1 Check current guidance on singing to establish what is permitted. This is included in the government guidance for [places of worship](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-from-2-december). |  |  |  |  |
| 3.2 Ensure that singers from different households can be socially distanced from one another, and from anyone else present (including camera or microphone operators and any congregation). |  |  |  |  |
| 3.3 Put in place measures to create a physical / visible distance (or barrier) between singers and any congregation. |  |  |  |  |
| 3.4 Provide reminders (verbally, visually) to any members of congregation present that they are not allowed to sing indoors. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. **Preparation of the Church for access by members of the public for any permitted purposes**

**Risk:** Getting or spreading coronavirus in common use high traffic areas such as corridors, toilet facilities, entry/exit points and other communal areas. | 4.1 Confirm that all steps (above) for access for livestreaming / broadcasting have been carried out before anyone else accesses the building. |  |  |  |  |
| 4.2 Update your website, and any relevant social media with information for both members and visitors. Communicate details on requirements such as bringing a face covering via all communication methods possible. Clearly state the limits on attendance for weddings, funerals, and any other permitted activities where upper limits apply. |  |  |  |  |
| 4.3 Review guidance on cleaning church buildings, in particular increasing the frequency of cleaning for toilets and other risk-prone areas and ensuring regular disinfection of high-touch items. Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found [here](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/Keeping%20church%20buildings%20clean%20v1.pdf)**.** |  |  |  |  |
| 4.4 Choose one point of entry into the church to manage flow of people and indicate this with notices, keeping emergency exits available at all times. Where possible use a different / separate exit. |  |  |  |  |
| 4.5 Make any temporary arrangements for people to wait or queue outside the building (taking into account any consequential risks arising from people gathering outside). |  |  |  |  |
| 4.6 Make any temporary arrangements for managing the approaches to the entry points and any parking areas to ensure social distancing can be observed (taking into account any consequential risks of this). |  |  |  |  |
| 4.7 Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation. |  |  |  |  |
| 4.8 Consider the extent of preparations needed to the building depending on how long it has been fully or partially closed, and the level of maintenance carried.out while the building was out of operation.  |  |  |  |  |
| 4.9 Ensure practical advice and guidance to control the risks from exposure to Legionella in man-made water systems is followed. Guidance regarding legionella and legionnaires' disease can be found [here](https://www.hse.gov.uk/legionnaires/). |  |  |  |  |
| 4.10 Ensure checks and tests of all fire safety systems before reopening the building including fire pumps, ﬁre alarm systems, emergency exits and escape routes (to ensure they are free from obstructions), the functionality of emergency exit doors, automatic door releases, speakers and any systems for uninterruptible power supply.  |  |  |  |  |
| 4.11 If heating is required check your system is safe to use and test it before people are allowed in.  |  |  |  |  |
| 4.12 Remove items such as Bibles and hymn books that are used by multiple people.  |  |  |  |  |
| 4.13 Cordon off or remove from public access any items that are liable to be touched or closely breathed upon. |  |  |  |  |
| 4.14 Consider if pew / chair cushions need to be removed as per government guidance on soft surfaces. |  |  |  |  |
| 4.15 Remove or isolate children’s resources and play areas. |  |  |  |  |
| 4.16 Walk through the church to plan for physical distancing in seats, aisles, and pulpits, including safe flow of visitors. Remember 2m in all directions from each person (or 1m with risk mitigation if absolutely necessary).   |  |  |  |  |
| 4.17 Clearly mark out seating areas including exclusion zones to maintain distancing. |  |  |  |  |
| 4.18 Clearly mark out flow of movement for people entering and leaving the building to maintain physical distancing requirements. |  |  |  |  |
| 4.19 Limit access to places where the public does not need go, maybe with a temporary cordon if needed. |  |  |  |  |
| 4.20 Determine placement of hand sanitisers available for all church attendees to use. |  |  |  |  |
| 4.21 Determine if temporary changes are needed to the building to facilitate social distancing.  |  |  |  |  |
| 4.22 Put up notices to remind church attendees about important safe practices (for example no physical contact, practice hand washing etc.) |  |  |  |  |
| 4.23 Make necessary arrangements in regard to the collection and handling of physical money. Who will be involved? Is the task appropriate for them? Does the church need to provide PPE for this task to take place?  |  |  |  |  |
| 4.24 Ensure high-risk surfaces and touch points have been wiped with appropriate sanitiser spray or disposable wipes. Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings)**.** |  |  |  |  |
| 4.25 Check that handwashing facilities have adequate soap provision and paper towels, and a bin for the paper towels. |  |  |  |  |
| 4.26 Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available. |  |  |  |  |
| 4.27 Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (for example polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. **Use of the church for baptisms, weddings, funerals etc.**
 | 5.1 Consider the specific guidance in place for those activities and assess the additional controls and limits on attendance in place. Advice on baptisms, weddings and funerals can be found [here](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-from-2-december). |  |  |  |  |
| 1. **Use of the church for permitted activities other than private prayer or worship.**
 | 6.1 Consider the specific guidance in place for those activities and assess the additional controls and limits on attendance in place. Check that any external group using the church has COVID-secure working practices in place, including their own risk assessment where necessary, and will comply with what is required by the church. The government’s guidance on the safe use of multi-purpose community facilities can be found [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-multi-purpose-community-facilities/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-multi-purpose-community-facilities).  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. **Cleaning the church before and after general use (no known exposure to anyone with Coronavirus symptoms)**

Advice on [cleaning church buildings can be found here](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/Keeping%20church%20buildings%20clean%20v1.pdf).**Risk:** Getting or spreading coronavirus by not cleaning surfaces, equipment and shared facilities. | 7.1 Ensure that the church has had a sufficient ‘deep clean’ at least 48 hours before the commencement of a new schedule of face-to-face worship services. |  |  |  |  |
| 7.2 If the church building has been closed for 48 hours between periods of being open then there is no need for extra cleaning to remove the virus from surfaces. |  |  |  |  |
| 7.3 If 48-hour closure is not possible then check all cleaners are not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating. |  |  |  |  |
| 7.4 Identify surfaces that are frequently touched andby many people (often common areas) - for example handrails, doors, handles, shared equipment, toilets, and specify the frequency and level of cleaning and by whom. |  |  |  |  |
| 7.5 Keep surfaces clear to make it easier to clean and reduce the likelihood of contaminating objects. |  |  |  |  |
| 7.6 Bibles / literature / hymn books / leaflets deemed essential for services should be quarantined for 48 hours after use.  |  |  |  |  |
| 7.7 All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable) and other relevant protective items. |  |  |  |  |
| 7.8 Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned. |  |  |  |  |
| 7.9 Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (for example hand towels) from the church. |  |  |  |  |
| 7.10 Confirm the frequency for removing potentially contaminated waste (for example hand towels) from the church – suggested daily removal. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. **Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms.**
 | 8.1 If possible close the church building for 48 hours with no access permitted. |  |  |  |  |
| 8.2 If 48-hour closure is not possible then follow Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings. [Public Health England guidance available here.](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings) |  |  |  |  |
| 8.3 If the building has been quarantined for 48 hours, then carry out cleaning as per the normal advice on cleaning. Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings)**.** |  |  |  |  |
| 1. **Sign off of completed risk assessment.**
 | 9.1 Confirm completed risk assessment has sign off from church Health and Safety representative. |  |  |  |  |
| 9.2 Confirm completed risk assessment has sign off from local church board / administration. |  |  |  |  |

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|  |  | **Controls Score:**  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Overall Assessment Rating:**  |  |  |  |