

Risk Assessment Template for Outdoor Worship

Version Control

Issue Date	Version Number	Issued by
2 nd December 2020	1	The House of Bishops COVID-19 Recovery Group

This template has been created based on guidance from the [Health and Safety Executive](#) and is intended for use from 3rd December onwards for worship and church-led gatherings taking place outside. A separate risk assessment template is available for all indoor activities.

From 3rd December, regardless of tier, churches are permitted to open for all purposes that can be carried out in a Covid-safe way. Outdoor worship is permitted and outdoor settings are the only places where congregational/group singing can take place. The government [guidance on singing](#) lays out the rules around this and should be read in conjunction with the [performing arts guidance](#). There may be specific local regulations, especially in tier 3 areas, that place additional restrictions on certain activities, whether indoors or outdoors. There are varying limits on mixing of households that apply in different tiers. Before completing this risk assessment you can see what is permitted in your tier by checking [this document](#).

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. As well as offering guidance on best-practice, the template is also intended to help parishes make a decision on whether to hold outdoor events, based on their local circumstances, resources and context. Specific guidance linking to advice on the lockdown period is available on the [Church of England Coronavirus pages](#).

Future versions of this document will be produced when there is any substantive change to the guidance on the safe use of places of worship.

Separate risk assessments for opening up church buildings to the public, and for access by contractors and construction workers are available on the [Church of England Coronavirus pages](#).

Carrying out a risk assessment

1. Agree what activities you are planning for:
 - Public worship
 - Carol concert
2. Consider the hazards:
 - Transmission of COVID-19
 - Hazards arising from using the church in a different way to usual, especially uneven outdoor areas and use when it is dark

Read the guidance and think about how it relates specifically to your church and/or the outdoor setting you will be using. What constraints are there? Consider how people will arrive and move across the site; circulation around the 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 real but they are in many ways less than those for indoor worship as long as they are properly managed, but having more people coming to an event 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 church;
 - check back against your list of activities to confirm which ones can go ahead and when.

Risk assessment template

Church:	Assessor's name:	Date completed:	Review date:
St Mary's Knighton	Rev. Matthew Gough	14/12/2020	18/12/20

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
Deciding whether it is safe to hold an outdoor event Risk: contracting or spreading the virus by not social distancing or by touching contaminated services	Consider if anyone required for the running of the service or event is clinically extremely vulnerable or has household members who are. Ensure that the people who need to attend the site to enable the service to take place are willing to do so and can do so safely.	We are working in collaboration with younger congregation members from Holy Trinity to ensure contributors and stewards are from lower risk demographic	Catherine Shilling recruited Holy Trinity assistance	Has begun and needs completing before 18/12
	Consider how the tier system applies to the site and the worship envisaged. For gathered congregations or one-off services drawing people from a wide area, consider whether anybody attending would be likely to be traveling from a higher or lower tier.	Only the immediate streets and both churches will be targeted. Invitations will be managed and restricted online via Eventbrite/ Parish Office	Matthew Gough and James Gutteridge to establish booking system	Matthew Gough and administrator 15/12/2020
	Assess the site, taking into account the need for people from different households to remain 2m apart from each other, and the recommendation that outdoor events have seats for audiences. Consider if the capacity of the site will work with the events you are planning.	Open space clear Site has been visited twice and measured in situ and google earth (700m Sq). Single seats will be spaced to allow 4 metre radius from each seat for each family group or	Matthew Gough plus volunteers to space chairs 4metres apart. Andy Bayford	18/2/20 Matthew Gough Andy Bayford

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		individual remain within 2 metres of each seat. No more than 3 adults or 2 adults plus 3 under 12s per seat.	to ensure site clear.	
	Assess the availability of utilities such as electricity that might be needed, especially for events taking place in the hours of darkness e.g. for lights, microphones. Do you have the correct safety equipment for outdoor use?	Sound systems for microphone provided by Kenwood Rd residents. Power from tennis club. Organist providing own keyboard and PA.	Bernie Dishman James Gutteridge Andy Bayford	In progress to be completed on night.
	Consider accessibility issues such as access to the site for those who use wheelchairs or have difficulty walking, and also how people who are deaf or hearing impaired will be able to participate (make use of microphones and good lighting).	Microphone and PA system to be provided. Access is level access throughout. There are to be no more toileting facilities made available. The length of the event is less than an hour.	Assessment completed	Matthew Gough
	Discuss with nearby venues and businesses to ensure that the timing and practical arrangements for using the church are compatible.	Agreed with tennis club to close upper car park and timings when club is quiet	Complete	Matthew Gough and Andy Bayford 7/12/20
	Consider if a booking and seat-allocation system is needed	Eventbrite and via parish office	MG/ Administrator	15/12/20
	Communicate with nearby churches to ensure offered provisions are complementary.	Working with local based missional community from Holy Trinity. Knighton	Completed. Matthew Gough. Andy Upton. Bernie	12/12/20

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		Evangelical have separate plans to not clash.	Dishman. Tim Dyke	
Preparation of the site for access by members of the public for outdoor worship Risk: Getting or spreading coronavirus in common use high traffic areas such as corridors, toilet facilities, entry/exit points and other communal areas.	Set up a one-way route around the site to aid distancing measures. Indicate this with notices, keeping emergency exits available at all times.	Prior to event. Taped areas to be erected	Matthew Gough and team	22/12/20
	Clearly mark out seating or (if seating is not possible) standing areas, including exclusion zones to maintain distancing.	Seating to be placed 4 metre radius prior to evening event	Matthew Gough and team	22/12/20
	If ticketing/booking is being used, decide how best to manage that process e.g. specific points of entry, barriers.	Stewards on entry to manage flow.		
	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.	Publicity will request people to bring face coverings though not mandatory to wear. If the majority allocated seating is full with small groups, then face-coverings will be required to be worn. Otherwise the distance does not mandate it.	To be advertised in advance and determined by announcement at start of event.	
	Identify where you can reduce the contact of people with surfaces, e.g. by using electronic documents rather than paperwork. If paper service sheets are to be used agree a process for handing them out safely and encourage people to take them home with them.	Service sheets to remain on seats beforehand and afterwards to be handled by stewards who are gloved.	Steward team. Tim Dyke on evening.	22/12/20

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	Ensure you have an NHS Track and Trace QR code available, with an alternative option for those who cannot use that system.	Consult advice on complying with Track and Trace . Will we have a register of contacts in advance. In the event there is capacity and further guests turn up, stewards will take details and offer QR code.	James Gutteridge Admin	By 22/12/20
	Update your website, A Church Near You, and any relevant social media with information for visitors. Communicate details on requirements such as bringing a face covering.	To be in newsletter and local neighbourhood leaflets.	James Gutteridge Admin. Matthew Gough	18/12/20
	Limit access to places where the public does not need go, maybe with a temporary cordon in needed.	Areas beyond worship space will be cordoned off with tape.	Matthew Gough/ stewards	22/12/20
	Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing etc.	Already have in stock, need adapting. Plus add please do not come in with symptoms check.	Vicar Rev Jones/ Administratory	18/12/20
	Provide adequate hand cleansing stations. Provide hand sanitiser for the occasions when people can't wash their hands.	Have purchased these and will make available by stewards on entry.	Matthew Gough Stewards	22/12/20
	Check that handwashing facilities have adequate soap provision and paper towels, and a bin for the paper towels.	To minimise clutter and flow, there will be no additional handwashing or bins.	NA	NA

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels, are available.	Register with Parish Buying for procurement options.	NA	NA
	Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.	No waste generated will be generated. All containers will come in boxes which will be returned to church empty (to be disposed of) or full.	Stewards/ Matthew Gough	22/12/20
	Ensure that safety procedures are in place for closing the site down – e.g. providing gloves and masks to those stacking chairs or moving electrical/staging equipment.	Stewards will be provided with gloves and masks to handle chairs, greet people and sanitise.	Matthew Gough	22/12/20