

Re-opening of Parr Street Church to public meetings: risk assessment

Assessment carried out by: Edwin Addison and John Edmondson

Date of next review: 15th August 2021 Date assessment was carried out: 19th July 2021

We hope everyone can feel safe and enjoy seeing one another and meeting together again on Sunday mornings.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” Philipians 4:6
Before considering and carrying out this risk assessment, please pray and rest in the Lord’s good rule.

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Done
Sharing office space	Staff and volunteers: transmission of COVID-19 virus	Staff (Paul Baxendale, Joel Higson, Simon Gregory and Hannah Boadle) working from home but also using office / meeting space at Parr St. with staff meetings socially distancing in available space.	Continue to check & assess new information and guidance from government Communicate significant changes for guidance of staff and volunteers	Trustees to monitor guidance	Rolling action	Done

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<p>Administration of Communion and food preparation</p> <p>That Covid virus could be spread by surface transmission through food handling or airborne contraction during preparation and when the bread and wine are distributed if social distancing is not observed by everyone and if an attendee has the virus and is not aware that they have it.</p>	<p>People in the congregation</p>	<p>– limit the preparation to a max of two people</p> <p>good food hygiene</p> <p>not allowing any other person to enter the kitchen during preparation until the prepared trays bread & wine are locked in upstairs office ready for the Sunday meetings</p> <p>keep mingling to the minimum during distribution of bread & wine,</p> <p>social distancing encouraged greater than 1m+ between family bubbles and optional in zones where people chose to be closer together or chose to meet without masks</p> <p>face coverings may be removed when eating the bread and drinking the wine</p>	<p>brief everyone preparing the bread and wine on hygiene rules and safe food handling</p> <p>and brief the welcome team, and meeting leader beforehand</p>	<p>The food handlers, the members of the welcome team for that meeting, and meeting leader.</p>	<p>Sunday 1st August 21</p> <p>Elders agreed that it is important that the whole church celebrates ‘the Lord’s Supper’ in person again now that it is possible for the whole church to gather in two congregations of around 100 people in each to ‘remember the Lord...’ and celebrate Christ’s saving death for us in communion.</p>	

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<p>Live Sunday Gatherings with Tier 4 rules</p> <p>Personal responsibility rather than legal requirements. More of us trying to create a safe place for everyone to return to church. The main hazard is catching or spreading Coronavirus around our congregation. We aim to avoid this by prayer, watchfulness when entering, meeting together, and leaving the Parr Street Church building</p>	<p>Any users of the building: transmission of COVID-19 virus</p>	<p>Seating plan to maintain 1m plus distancing, for all who appreciate this Close fitting masks are no longer mandatory but wearing masks will be encouraged for everyone who feels they are needed. Health and Safety briefings to monitor 'COVID Secure' plan with stewards as more freedom is allowed. Track & Trace Records will no longer be made and kept for 21 days. Bibles available on request then quarantined for 48 hours. Congregational singing is now possible – singers facing the congregation should be no closer than 2m from congregation, singing indoors can be with or without a mask.</p>	<p>Stewards assigned to entrance and hall with larger crowds. Arrival/ departure carefully monitored by stewards for people displaying symptoms 1m+ social distancing to be maintained for all who request this. Face masks will be encouraged because of the large numbers indoors however, they will now optional in some designated seating zones and requested in other seating zones to protect vulnerable attendees. Preacher, singers and readers to be positioned 2m away from closest person.</p>	<p>Trustees to assign & insist on everyone following the guidance of stewards Designated people to sanitise between meetings. Spare close-fitting masks along with the antiviral gel will be provided for anyone who needs them. There will be a quick tidy & clean with sanitising spray taking about 10 mins between multiple meetings and when setting up for communion. Instruction to everyone in the church family will emphasise a Philippians 2 mindset as we gather with each other's interests at the heart of all our actions and attitudes.</p>	<p>Sunday 25th July 21</p>	

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<p>Other meetings for example Hoise Groups and small group Bible studies</p> <p>Personal responsibility rather than legal requirements. More of us trying to create a safe place for everyone to return to church.</p>	<p>Any users of the building: transmission of COVID-19 virus</p>	<p>Seating plan to maintain 1m plus distancing, for all who appreciate this</p> <p>Close fitting masks are no longer mandatory but wearing masks will be encouraged for everyone who feels they are needed.</p> <p>Track & Trace Records will no longer be made and kept for 21 days.</p> <p>Bibles available on request then quarantined for 48 hours. Place in a box or separate pile and clearly mark the date they can be reused.</p> <p>Congregational singing is now possible – singers facing the congregation should be no closer than 2m from congregation, singing indoors can be with or without a mask.</p>	<p>A designated person to ensure the safety of each meeting.</p> <p>1m+ social distancing to be maintained for all who request this.</p> <p>Face masks will be encouraged with large numbers indoors however, they are now optional in some designated seating zones and requested in other seating zones to protect vulnerable attendees.</p> <p>Leader, singers and readers to be positioned 2m away from closest person.</p>	<p>Trustees to assign & insist on everyone following the guidance of stewards</p> <p>Designated people to sanitise between multiple meetings.</p> <p>Spare close-fitting masks along with the antiviral gel will be provided for anyone who needs them.</p> <p>Instruction to everyone in the church family will emphasise a Philippians 2 mindset as we gather with each other's interests at the heart of all our actions and attitudes.</p>	<p>Monday 19th July 21</p>	

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Food distribution Neighbourly – “Parr Street Feeds People”	Food deliverers, Food collectors: transmission of COVID-19 virus either airborne or by physical contact	Social distancing at 1m+ recommended if more than one person in the building Communicate with the church family that care must be taken when entering the building Regular checks on food in the kitchen and fridge Old food removed and taken out of use	Monitor daily and clean all food surfaces provide hand washing and distancing signage. Masks may need to be worn if collecting food if others are in the same room or space and request this.	Elaine Addison for the trustees	ongoing	Done

Latest Gov.Guidelines

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship?fbclid=IwAR06EQU6QV7qLGOFQ7hd_I0Hnh_SQJA-D35FoisivzV1UtrVeoruUGICY#summary-of-changes-from-19-july

Gov Roadmap ...

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/965011/COVID-19_Response_-_Spring_2021___Summary_-_Easy_Read_.pdf

BT Document re-written to reflect removal of legal requirement in England from 19 July

2. Guidance for England

On 12 July, the UK Government confirmed the move to step 4 of their Covid-19 recovery roadmap from 19 July. This removes all legal requirements. Church worship is affected in the following ways:

- All remaining limits on social contact are removed. People may meet with whom and with as many as they wish, both indoors and outdoors.
- Social distancing is no longer demanded in any setting.
- All restrictions on the numbers at and activities within weddings, funerals and other life events are removed.
- Face coverings are no longer mandatory in any setting.

- There are no restrictions on singing.

Nevertheless, as infections continue to rise, the Government recommends continuing caution. Good ventilation, diligence in hygiene, wearing a face covering in enclosed and crowded spaces, and limiting contact with those we do not live with, are all noted as beneficial behaviours.

In the light of this, we recommend that it is both sensible and appropriate for churches to continue to take some measures to limit the spread of Covid-19. Churches have a responsibility to protect their staff, congregations, communities, and other users of their buildings. However, it is now down to each church to determine for itself what these measures should be.

Above all, we recommend that churches continue to review their risk assessments. This is good health and safety practice in any case. Please see above for a link to a template for risk assessment.

As you undertake a risk assessment, you might consider the following general questions:

- What measures will continue to demonstrate care towards and love for your community?
- Are there measures can you easily take that will protect people, but which incur little inconvenience?
- How can you consult and communicate well with a wide range of those affected by your decisions, recognising that there will be different views on what is an acceptable risk?
- Is anyone likely to be especially disadvantaged or put at risk by the arrangements you make?
- Is what you are proposing sustainable or does it place an excessive burden on a few people?

More specifically, you can consider whether it will remain beneficial to:

- Maintain a careful hygiene routine for your buildings, especially for those areas commonly touched such as handles and switches.
- Ask those entering the building to wash or sanitise their hands.
- Seat people from different households apart if your building has space for this.
- Avoid the use of shared objects such as hymnbooks or offering plates.
- Use stewards to serve communion rather than passing round a common loaf or cup.

We also recommend you consider a gradual, phased re-engagement with your usual worship pattern, so that those who are nervous about returning may over a period of time grow in confidence about attending.

In writing this guidance we are not suggesting that churches ought to meet. The outcome of your risk assessment might suggest to you that it would be wise not to meet in person at all for a further time.

When you complete your risk assessment, you should agree a date when it will be reviewed. The rapidly changing nature of the situation and of Government guidance may mean the intervals between reviews should be short for the time being.

We encourage you to be creative in your planning. For example, to account for differing levels of confidence in the congregation, some churches intend to offer an area within their church sanctuary for those that wish to continue with social distancing. Or, to account for the greater burden placed on the technical team by live-streaming services in the building, some churches intend to alternate between online and in-person Sunday worship.

We are acutely aware that the process for making these decisions has the potential to be divisive. In some respects it was easier when rules were more restrictive but at least definite. How we make decisions may prove to be as important to churches as the decisions themselves. We appeal to everyone involved to be kind to each other, to listen well, to appreciate the pressure leaders are under, and to compromise accordingly. This is a very vulnerable time for churches and we ask you to recall the exhortation in Ephesians 4 to "be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace."