

Carrying out a risk assessment

The Church has not produced a separate Risk Assessment template for use of the Church Hall. The Guidance governing use of Church Halls is to be found in the Governments Guidance for the Safe Use of Community Facilities; this Risk Assessment is based on changes introduced on 12 April 2021 and will require updating as each stage of lockdown is eased.

In addressing the issues I have attempted to adapt the Church's Risk Assessment Template and consider all who may wish to use the / hire the hall, these include:

- Provision of uniformed youth services – Rainbows, Brownies and Guides
- Hire of hall for adult groups – eg Art Club and Whitton Flower Group
- Hire of hall for private function – eh children's party
- Opening shops/cafes – this will include coffee club after church(may be permitted in Step 2, depending on access arrangements)
- Opening for concerts, plays etc – this will include any music groups/choirs etc (not permitted until Step 3)

Where the guidance varies for different aspects/groups of users I have given separate guidance.

The overarching principles in the opening of the church hall are:

1. No one is obliged to work in an unsafe environment, which includes paid employees and volunteers.
2. The rules on health, hygiene and social distancing are to be followed.
3. The Parish Church Council has a legal responsibility under Health and safety law to make the hall safe; if this is not possible it should not open.
4. People using/hiring the hall are responsible for managing risks arising from their activity.

This risk assessment defines the steps needed to reduce the risk of transmission of Covid 19.

Risk assessment template

Church: St Augustine of Canterbury	Assessor's name: Alwyn Williams	Date completed: 31/5/2021	Review date: 18 May 2021
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Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
Use of the church hall	Consider the specific guidance in place for each of the activities for which the hall might be used 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. Because each group has varying needs, they are listed below:	The government's guidance on the safe use of multi-purpose community facilities for permitted activities (including formal childcare and support groups) can be found here . The government's guidance on the use of hospitality spaces can be found here .	Churchwardens	AW 31/5/21
Identify groups using hall in different ways	1. Church – used on Sunday after the service to serve teas and coffees From 17 May: people can meet indoors in groups of 6 from 2 households..	Decision not to implement at present in view of issues in Hounslow	FrJ and CWs to review	AW 31/5/21

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	<p>2. Church: Art Club From 17 May: people can meet indoors in groups of 6 from 2 households.. The group will have to conduct their own risk assessment if they decide to meet.</p>	<p>This is a small group of church members, usually no more than 6, meetings to be allowed subject to risk assessment</p>	<p>ART Club</p>	<p>???</p>
	<p>3. Hirer: Whitton Flower Club From 17 May: people can meet indoors in groups of 6 from 2 households. In recent contact this group has not yet decided if they will return</p>	<p>Meetings will be subject to the group completing a risk assessment</p>	<p>Churchwardens to follow up on contact</p>	
	<p>4. Hirer: Private Function. Each request to hire the hall will have to be considered in line with current guidance as the rules for meetings with children (eg birthday party) are different to adults/</p>	<p>Meetings will be subject to the group completing a risk assessment</p>	<p>Sue Thornton currently manages these bookings</p>	
	<p>5. Guides: uniformed youth organisation. Request received to use the hall for indoor meetings from Friday 30 April. Meeting from 7.30 to 9.15pm</p>	<p>Guidance for Youth Groups is outlined in the Covid Out of School setting; with additional help from YHA. From 12 April Groups can meet indoors, but with the recommendation that</p>	<p>RA's provided by Rainbows, Guides and a Brownie Group; awaiting RA for GGs group.</p>	

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	6. Brownies: uniformed youth organisation. Request received from 4th Whitton Brownies to commence outdoor meetings from 30 April; will only access the hall to use toilets if needed. Meeting on Thursday and Friday from 6pm to 7.30pm	activities are undertaken outdoors wherever possible. Each organisation must provide a copy of their RA, and agree to follow the RA drawn up by the Church.		
	7. Rainbows: uniformed youth organisation. Request received to commence outdoor meetings from 30 April; will only access the hall to use toilets if needed. Meeting from 5 – 6pm		RA rec'd and discussed use of toilets; AW to cc church RA to G Gooding	
	8. Sunday School	The Sunday School team have yet to meet, and until they have some plans developed it is not possible to do a risk assessment.		
Preparing the hall for opening				
Heating system	If heating is required check your system is safe to use and test it before people are allowed in.	Annual service of system not done because hall closed; arrange to have this done	Churchwardens to Contact AC Breeze	

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Cleaning hall	Clean hall and toilets – ensure space is clean and meets Covid standards. Appropriate materials for cleaning are available.	Hall was cleaned prior to closure; regular checks have been made to ensure it is clean and tidy; toilets have been checked to maintain standards.	Kitchen cleaned by Cathy bale and Sue Thornton; facilities GB and windows (internal) AW.	Ready for use AW 31/5
Cleaning kitchen	A deep clean of the kitchen and all equipment will be needed prior to use; paying particular attention to fridges, freezers and ovens.	Kitchen cleaned by Cathy Bale and Sue Thornton; Ovens yet to be cleaned	Need to decide re Ovens	Ready for use 31/5
Waste receptacles.	Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.	Check bins in hall and toilets are included and that we have supplies.	Check completed	Ready for use 31/5
Ventilation	Groups using the hall are encouraged wherever possible to use outside space for their activities; where this is not possible the hall must be kept ventilated.	Doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation.	Inform groups	
Capacity of hall	Main room: Allow 2 metres for social distancing; if there is mitigation this number could be increased but we would need to agree this with the user. For example, if people are seated and not moving around mitigation might be appropriate; however, where groups are actively moving around then mitigation is unlikely to be appropriate.	Space available for use: 8.5m x 11.5m; maximum capacity is 24 people. Additional numbers are possible, with mitigation bit this would need to e agreed with the Hirer.	Churtchwardens - Inform all users of the max numbers and discuss requests for added numbers with PcC	Ready for use 31/5

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	Kitchen: The space is narrow and users should maintain distancing managing the activity by not crossing over.	Space available 1.5m x 5m – recommended no more than 2 people	Ovens???	
	Small room: storage area	Recommended – 2 people; unless the items to be moved cannot be carried by 2 people.	Inform all users of the max numbers	Ready for use 31/5
	Small room: church office space	Recommended – maximum of 3 people.	Inform all users of the max numbers	Ready for use 31/5
	Storage areas (kitchen and off main room)	These are small areas and only 1 person should access the space.	Inform all users of the max numbers	Ready for use 31/5
Covid guidance for people using the hall	If possible use one point of entry to the hall, and a separate exit if possible. This would apply particularly to larger groups or where a group arrives as one leaves.	Where possible it is recommended that entry is via the main access point at the front of the building; the fire door at the side of the hall could be used to exit for everybody but the person locking up the building	Note: the hirer must lock the fire door from the inside; alarm to be set once repairs undertaken.	Ready for use 31/5

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Hygiene	Washing hands on arrival and departure for 20 seconds is key to reducing transmission of Covid 19 and suitable facilities will be provided. It will be the responsibility of the hirer to provide hand sanitiser for the occasions when people can't wash their hands.			Ready for use 31/5
	Check that handwashing facilities have adequate soap provision and that automatic hand dryers are in working order.	If hand dryers are faulty then paper towels will be made available, alongside a bin for the used paper towels.	Check – are there hand dryers in the kitchen – if not will have to supply paper towels – when it opens	Ready for use 31/5
	Where there are toilet facilities, ensure an adequate supply of soap and that automatic hand dryers are in working order.	If hand dryers are faulty then paper towels will be made available, alongside a bin for the used paper towels.	CWs to check	Ready for use 31/5
	Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.	Supply of plastic bin liners left in kitchen after cleaning.		Ready for use 31/5
	Where possible, doors and windows should be opened temporarily to improve ventilation.	This is a MUST if the hirer is using mitigation and the church is allowing more users.		Ready for use 31/5

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
	Face Masks: must be worn by people over the age of 11, unless there is a reason for exemption or the wearing of a mask would negatively impact on ability to undertake specific exercise.			Ready for use 31/5
	Track and Trace: Groups must utilise the Track and Trace QR code wherever possible; if this method cannot be used the hirer must keep a list of people attending, and how they can be contacted, for a period of 3 weeks after the event. If the Church is contacted by Track and Trace the information MUST be shared so that everybody can be alerted.			Ready for use 31/5
	Using toilets: cleaning of these spaces is important and guidance on cleaning is included below. It is the responsibility of the hirer to leave the hall (including toilets) clean and ready for the next user.			Ready for use 31/5
Cleaning the church hall before and after general use (no known exposure to anyone with Coronavirus symptoms)	If the hall 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. However, the hall should be left clean and tidy of all debris .			

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Action by whom?	Completed – date and name
<p>Advice on cleaning church buildings can be found here.</p> <p>Risk: Getting or spreading coronavirus by not cleaning surfaces, equipment and shared facilities.</p>	<p>If 48-hour closure is not possible then check all cleaners are not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating.</p>	<p>NOTE: It will be the responsibility of the people using the hall to ensure the premises are clean – and</p>	<p>How is this going to be managed by youth groups where there is no time lag between meetings? Check their RA</p>	
	<p>Identify surfaces that are frequently touched and by many people (often common areas), e.g. handrails, door handles, shared equipment, toilets, and specify the frequency and level of cleaning and by whom.</p>	<p>Toilets: cubicles must be wiped down after each use, along with taps and door handles. Cleaning must be completed by the hirer prior to the next user of the hall.</p>	<p>How are youth groups managing the time lag/cleaning between meetings?</p>	
	<p>Keep surfaces clear to make it easier to clean and reduce the likelihood of contaminating objects.</p>	<p>Users must ensure any equipment etc that they bring/use is cleared away and all surfaces wiped down for the next user.</p>		<p>Ready for use 31/5</p>
	<p>All cleaners provided with gloves (ideally disposable).</p>	<p>All users of the hall to supply their own products.</p>		<p>Ready for use 31/5</p>
	<p>Suitable cleaning materials provided, depending on materials and if historic surfaces are to be cleaned.</p>	<p>All users of the hall to supply their own products.</p>		

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	Confirm person responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site.	It is the hirers responsibility to ensure that all waste is removed after their event finishes. Failure to do this or clean properly will lead to forfeit of deposits	Check casual hire agreement – should we increase the deposit and does it cover cleaning? Check – hirer should pay for the use and the deposit kept as a separate transaction	
Cleaning the church after known exposure to someone with Coronavirus symptoms	If possible close the church building for 48 hours with no access permitted.		How can this be managed? Most times the 48 hours would not be a problem – but if it occurs Thur/Fri we could have some difficulties.	
	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.		

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	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 .		
Responsibility of the Hirer/User	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide the church with a copy of their RA if one is needed; as a minimum we must be advised on the numbers using the hall, age groups and activities to ensure that it complies with guidance on lockdown. 2. Agree to follow the church RA in relation to use and cleaning of the hall. 3. Agree to Safeguarding rules, as outlined in hire agreement. 			