

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: St Peter's, Halliwell – Outdoor Carol Services	Assessor's name: Elian	Date completed: 16 December 2020	Review date:
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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.	Event will be run by volunteers who can elect not to attend if isolating or vulnerable. No key member of team classed as extremely clinically vulnerable	N/A	
	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.	Bolton currently in Tier 3 so social distancing will need to be maintained between households. Service leader to remind people of this. Social distancing to be re-enforced by stewards as required and any issues reported to site control.	Paul H / Stewards	
	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.	Expected audience numbers for each service expected to be well below capacity of site. Limited, socially	Paul G	

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	Consider if the capacity of the site will work with the events you are planning.	distanced seating (pods of 2) will be available.		
	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?	Power will be drawn from church via RCCB protected circuits. Any exposed connectors will be CEE 16A type rated to IP44.	Eliau	
	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).	Flood and stage lighting and sound system will be installed. Slippery surfaces such as gravestones to be treated prior to event. Announcements to be made to warn people to keep clear of potential slippage hazards.	Eliau W and technical team Paul H to warn people / Paul G to co-ordinate treating of slippery surfaces	
	Discuss with nearby venues and businesses to ensure that the timing and practical arrangements for using the church are compatible.	N/A	N/A	
	Consider if a booking and seat-allocation system is needed	Not required as site capacity exceeds expected attendees	N/A	
	Communicate with nearby churches to ensure offered provisions are complementary.	Communication via Heaton and Halliwell Churches group	Paul H	

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<p>Preparation of the site for access by members of the public for outdoor worship</p> <p>Risk: Getting or spreading coronavirus in common use high traffic areas such as corridors, toilet facilities, entry/exit points and other communal areas.</p>	Set up a one-way route around the site to aid distancing measures. Indicate this with notices, keeping emergency exits available at all times.	Driveways filled from front (nearest church) and people asked to remain in place at end of event until released by stewards. Announcements from stage to support this.	Paul H to announce / Paul G to brief stewards and co-ordinate	
	Clearly mark out seating or (if seating is not possible) standing areas, including exclusion zones to maintain distancing.	Seating will be set out in pods of 2 seats, each pod to be occupied by a single household.		
	If ticketing/booking is being used, decide how best to manage that process e.g. specific points of entry, barriers.	N/A	N/A	
	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.	As these events are entirely outdoors, face masks are not mandatory. Signs indicating that facemasks are required are posted at the entrance to the church building should someone need to enter for any reason.	N/A	
	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.	Song words to be placed on our web site and people asked to view them using their smart phone or tablet.		

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		Paper copies to be available for those without smart devices.		
	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 . Track and Trace QR codes to be displayed at entrance. Sign-in sheets controlled by stewards posted at each entrance.	Stewards	
	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.		Comms team	
	Limit access to places where the public does not need go, maybe with a temporary cordon in needed.	N/A	N/A	
	Put up notices to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing etc.	Announcements for stage at beginning of each service. Notices to be placed at entrances to site reminding people to social distance.	Stewards Elian	
	Provide adequate hand cleansing stations. Provide hand sanitiser for the occasions when people can't wash their hands.	Register with Parish Buying for procurement options. Hand sanitiser available at site entrances	Paul G / Amanda to co-ordinate	

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	Check that handwashing facilities have adequate soap provision and paper towels, and a bin for the paper towels.	Register with Parish Buying for procurement options. Toilets only to be used in emergency.	Lewis / Amanda to check supplies	
	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.		
	Ensure all waste receptacles have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.		Lewis / Amanda	
	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.	Masks and latex gloves available in church. Technical team leader to remind crew to maintain safety protocols.	Amanda / Elian	
Service Leaders and contributors	Ensure that people leading the service are properly socially distanced and avoid the use of shared resources such as microphones.	Service leaders to use radio headsets which are not shared. Vocal microphones for singers to be protected via a windshield which is personal to the singer. Vocalists from different households to be side-by-side at a distance of approx. 2m apart. Audience should be kept at least 3m from front of stage. Those using	Elian	

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		lectern microphones to be advised not to touch the microphone and to maintain a distance of 30cm from it. Windshields on lectern microphones to be quarantined after use.		