

# Covid-19 Risk Assessment

## Introduction and Purpose

This document has been prepared in response to the requirement for the Woodbridge Quay Church to carry out a Risk Assessment for COVID-19. It makes recommendations and describes the measures to be followed to ensure that any activities within the church premises are in accordance with current national requirements and guidelines.

This risk assessment cannot cover every eventuality and it will be supplemented by dynamic risk assessments that will be done on a case by case basis. These will be more like judgement calls and they don't need to be written down, although noting them may help shape and evolve the risk assessments during the review process.

The government has implemented 3 local Covid alert levels and our area is at alert level medium. Any change to this alert level, or if the restrictions within this level are substantially altered will require a re-evaluation of this Risk Assessment.

The government guidance for places of worship can be accessed [here](#). The reference guidance publication date is the update of the 14-Aug-20 and this and the Baptist Union guidance form the basis of this risk assessment. The Baptist union guidance referred to is the version 12 dated 24-Aug-20 and can be referenced [here](#).

Specific restrictions apply to Youth groups such as Origin and these are covered by the National Youth Agency guidelines rather than within this risk Assessment. The National Youth Agency guidelines for under 18's can be referenced [here](#).

Key points outside of the Youth groups are:

- Gatherings of more than 30 people are now allowed for acts of communal worship in churches and meeting rooms.
- No more than 30 people will be allowed to attend weddings, funerals and other "life cycle events" such as baptisms.

- Everyone attending the service should stick to social distancing guidelines. In other words, they should keep at least 1m (3ft) with the use of mitigating factors and ideally 2m (6ft) if possible. This does not apply to people from within their own household or support bubble.
- Face coverings MUST be worn consistent with the government guidance.
- There should be no shared items such as Quay Notes or bibles.
- If people cannot bring their own bibles, places of worship can offer a selection for individuals to use - these should be quarantined for 48 hours before and after use.
- Spoken responses from worshippers should be uttered softly and communal singing avoided to reduce the risk of transmission.
- If singing is an essential part of the service, and a recording cannot be played, only one person should sing - preferably behind a plexi-glass screen, or facing away from the congregation.

**Note that any singing or wind instrument restrictions do not apply to rehearsals where there is no congregation present.**

The Leadership Team (LT) within the church indicated that they wished to consider opening the church in a phased manner, with the initial priority being:

- Funerals (if necessary)
- Small group meetings
- Small assemblies for worship
- Footsteps counselling sessions
- Youth group programmes such as Origin
- The Ipswich based Teapot Project – use of kitchen facilities. Click [here](#) for the Teapot Project website

## Scope

### In scope for this assessment

The Risk Assessment considers the following physical areas:

- Gate and Path from Quay Street and the church car park
- The church grounds
- Entrance Hall/lobby
- Rear Hall and sanctuary
- Prayer room
- Toilet facilities – Ladies, Gents and Disabled
- The Hands sculpture
- Restricted use of the Kitchen

The use of the church buildings and church grounds for worship and gatherings are considered. Additionally, the use of public or other rented facilities or spaces for activities by the church are included.

The following classifications of people are considered: Ministers, leaders, attendees, contractors, external users of premises, cleaners. Generically they are referred to as attendees. The church has a staff team and in this document church staff refers to that team plus any attendee who has a designated category for the activity, e.g. door warden.

### Out of scope for this assessment

The following areas are out of scope of this document:

- Rear Kitchen/Tea Point
- Creche

- Office
- Glazed Foyer
- Upstairs rooms.

The room layout and descriptions used within the Scope and Out of Scope sections are as shown in the floor plans in [Appendix D - Floor plans](#).

A draft action plan for if use in the event of someone becoming unwell with suspected COVID-19 symptoms is included in [Appendix B – COVID Incident Action Plan](#). A suggested first aid kit and first aid area is detailed in [Appendix C – COVID First Aid Kit/Area..](#) These are based on the Community Action Suffolk Covid guidance for [Village Halls and Community Buildings](#).

## Review period

This document is a living document subject to regular review to ensure that the assessment of risks remains appropriate and the control measures are appropriate and are functioning as intended. In any case, review will be initiated:

- If any additional areas or users of the church are drawn into the scope
- Before the church building is first used with a small group to ensure the guidance, restrictions and expectations are clear
- After the first few times the church buildings are used
- If there is any Covid incident which might have involved the church buildings or attendees
- There is any change in government regulations or Baptist Union guidance.

## Risks

Normally in a risk assessment,  $\{risk\} = \{likelihood\} \times \{severity\}$ . We cannot do anything to change the severity once infection or cross contamination occurs as the severity to the individual is dependent on many factors beyond the control of the church. Hence in our case,  $\{risk\} = \{likelihood\}$ , so we are taking control measures which reduce the likelihood. The lower the number the lower the risk.

Note that although the measures reduce the likelihood, the likelihood will not be eliminated and there will be an inherent risk remaining.

## Recommendations

Reference	Recommendation	Adopted
1.	Communion services continue to be streamed rather than being held within the church premises	Yes
2.	Singing and use of wind instruments is not permitted within the church premises unless for rehearsals	Yes
3.	Use of a registration mechanism for ALL attendees at the church building will be used. The government guidance indicates that this is optional, and consent must be obtained. However, we cannot comply with the test and trace obligation without completion of the registration process. The church is registered as an NHS Track and Trace venue and any paper registration is a “due diligence” precaution in cases where people are not using the NHS app. In those cases, one person per social group MUST sign in and this information will be used if track and tracing become necessary. The national track and trace system will be used although the church may contact some people directly where this is perceived to add value. External groups or services such as counselling should be encouraged to maintain their own registration if they agree to co-ordinate the track and trace activities if it becomes necessary. In that case, the key contact MUST sign the Quay registration and they become the link if track and trace become necessary. If the key contact becomes aware of any issue within their group, they should contact the Quay church office. People should be encouraged to register using their own pen; however, some people will forget so some pens must be provided. These pens will need sanitising after single use. Retention of the registration information will be for 21 days and will be in accordance with the GDPR legislation.	Yes
4.	Hand sanitisers will be available within the entrance hall and they MUST be used by all people entering the church premises. Signs will indicate this.	Yes

Reference	Recommendation	Adopted
5.	The Government advise that face coverings are used by all those attending church regardless of the distancing. They are mandatory in places of worship. There are some exceptions to this requirement on age, health or communication grounds, e.g. young children, those with respiratory conditions and those who are speaking to or providing assistance to someone who relies on lip reading. Our signs will indicate some of this. Church staff delivering a sermon, reading or prayer and persons getting married need not wear masks whilst speaking.	Yes
6.	Church activities held within the grounds of the church will follow the guidance as if they were held within the church buildings. The National Youth Agency guidelines for under 18's can be referenced <a href="#">here</a> .	Yes
7.	Church activities in outdoor spaces which are not the church grounds do allow gatherings of more than 30 people with restrictions. Even if the 30 people limit for public spaces is applied the same restrictions apply - interaction between those outside of each small group of two households or six individuals is still not permitted. Realistically it will be impossible to ensure this and so gathering size should be further limited to minimise the Covid transmission risk. We should also consider also how our community will would view a larger gathering where when they may be prohibited from doing so. The National Youth Agency guidelines for under 18's can be referenced <a href="#">here</a> .	Yes
8.	Church activities in other buildings must follow the guidelines and restrictions placed by their Risk Assessment in addition to our Risk Assessment. Their Risk Assessment takes precedence over ours where they place more severe restrictions. The National Youth Agency guidelines for under 18's can be referenced <a href="#">here</a> .	Yes
9.	The entrance lobby will be used for registration, hand sanitising, access to the toilet facilities and funnelling people through to seating areas. Socialising within this area will be discouraged.	Yes
10.	A video of "what to expect" when attending the church premises will be produced and shown as required.	
11.	Floor markings/lanes will be created within the flow areas to assist with social distancing.	Yes

Reference	Recommendation	Adopted
12.	Both the Rear hall and the sanctuary may be used with a socially distanced seating arrangement. Folding hard chairs minimises the impact on the cleaning teams (we have about 80) and so these will be used in the rear hall. The sanctuary will continue to use the existing soft furnished seating. Provided that we maintain 72 hours between uses, there are no enhanced cleaning requirements. In the rear hall, a 1m seat separation allows about 28 seats; 1,5m about 18; and 2m about 13 seats.	Yes
13.	Seating within the building will have RED and GREEN labels. People are only allowed to sit on seats displaying a GREEN label. After use, the label MUST be changed to RED. Any seats without a label must be considered RED label seats. Churchsuite will be used to track room usage and this along with the cleaning rotas will enable seat labels to be returned to GREEN	Yes
14.	All seating for services will be arranged with social distancing assuming individuals that are not within a social group. This is the fail-safe method but will restrict the number of seats available. People within a social unit may group their chairs together.	Yes
15.	Sofas and soft furnishings within the entrance hall/lobby MUST NOT be used. Signage and RED seat labels will indicate this. Hard folding chairs will be provided if required for counselling services along with spray cleaner/tissue/rubbish bin.	Yes
16.	For any group activity within the church premises where we are concerned about the social distancing measures, entry to the church will be via the sanctuary with exit via the rear door from the hall or the via entrance lobby. Some activities can be arranged so that social distancing can be maintained with a single entrance/exit. This will be determined on a case by case basis	Yes
17.	Church bibles will be removed from the seating areas. Any bible reading verses will be projected overhead	Yes

Reference	Recommendation	Adopted
18.	People attending the church should bring their own filled water bottles rather than using water jugs and glasses from the kitchen areas.	Yes
19.	The duration of any service type activity should be limited where possible to minimise the cross-infection risk and to reduce the use of the toilet facilities.	Yes
20.	Social distancing is not possible within the toilet facilities due to the narrow access. Users of the toilets MUST adopt a 1 in 1 out principle and regulate this themselves with exceptions for people who need to be accompanied – for example young children or people with mobility problems. Use of hand sanitisers before use and normal hand washing/drying is expected. The policy of “go before you come” should be encouraged.	Yes
21.	Hand dryers within the toilet facilities are non-contact operated so no additional precautions are necessary for users. However, they have a drip tray that poses a potential hazard for the cleaning staff. The cleaning staff must be made aware and these must be cleaned as part of the normal cleaning cycle.	Yes
22.	Produce an action plan detailing what steps will be taken if anyone using the church building becomes or suspects that they have been infected, either whilst at the church premises or subsequently. A First Aider attending anyone who becomes ill will need adequate training. People should not be closely involved in helping another person who becomes symptomatic if they are in a high risk/vulnerable group. If it is suspected to be a Covid incident then they should follow the guidance in <a href="#">Appendix B – COVID Incident Action Plan</a> . A suggested first aid kit and first aid area is detailed in <a href="#">Appendix C – COVID First Aid Kit/Area</a> . A First Aid incident should be recorded in the first aid or accident log and the attendance sheet of those in the building shared with the church office to coordinate any notification if required. Contact details for the church office are in <a href="#">Appendix A - Church Details</a>	Yes



Reference	Recommendation	Adopted
23.	External groups or organisations should follow the Covid Incident Action Plan, but they are responsible for their own First Aider training. For Quay church activities, First Aider training or update will be required to adequately deal with suspected Covid incidents.	Yes
24.	Signage warning that the Hands sculpture is not regularly cleaned except by natural elements alone and we recommend the use of sanitiser after touching it. The use of the Hands sculpture is at the user's own risk. During the hot weather, any virus contamination on the surface will have a limited lifetime. Government social distancing guidelines MUST be maintained.	Yes
25.	The use of the kitchen is restricted to the Teapot project and it is likely to be on an ad hoc basis, probably once a week. This is not expected to start before September. They have their own Food Hygiene certificates and professional chefs and will bear all the responsibility for the standard of the food that produced using our facilities. They will use their own cleaning materials, cloths etc and will maintain the kitchen to the standard required for food preparation whilst they have sole use.	Yes
26.	The creche and outside play area remain closed as young children are cannot be expected to maintain social distancing.	Yes
27.	Pastoral visiting of people outside of the church buildings should follow the Baptist Union guidance	Yes

## Risks Considered

Item#	Area	Potential Hazard	Pre-control likelihood	Control Measures to reduce Likelihood	Post control likelihood
1.	Attendee has symptoms of Covid-19 or other infectious disease	Infection of other people	3	Attendee and household MUST refrain from coming to the Church.  Current Government guidelines MUST be adhered to.  It is expected that people will comply with self-isolation and will not consciously risk spreading infection to others	1
2.	Attendee becoming ill whilst at the Church	Infection may be passed to others within the church building	2	Where possible, the affected person will inform any official in the vicinity of the circumstances and immediately leave the Church and go home if sufficiently well. Otherwise medical assistance will be sought. The remaining members may be asked to leave at a convenient point.	2
3.	Vehicles and parking	Infection to or from other people	1	Members should comply with current guidelines on vehicle occupancy during travel to and from the Church.  When parking vehicles at the Church, drivers should give consideration to the current social	1

Item#	Area	Potential Hazard	Pre-control likelihood	Control Measures to reduce Likelihood	Post control likelihood
				distancing requirements and ensure they do not create any problem for themselves or others.	
4.	Door handles	Cross contamination	2	Entrance lobby doors can be monitored by door wardens. Toilet doors, both entrance and internal cannot. Any other doors can be opened and left open whilst the building is occupied. It may be necessary to leave the fire doors between the lobby and hall open at this time. Hand sanitisers should be used before and after touching handles. Self-provided gloves may be considered for use in addition to cleaning of hands.	1
5.	Entrance hall	Loss of social distancing or permitted grouping	3	Provide access control on numbers and provide guidance on separation policy. Door Wardens can be separated from the attendees by a desk. Masks and gloves can be considered although this is perhaps not within the ethos of the church. Signage will indicate separation expected.	2
6.	Toilet areas	All	3	Due to the design of the toilet areas, separation distances are not possible without applying	2

Item#	Area	Potential Hazard	Pre-control likelihood	Control Measures to reduce Likelihood	Post control likelihood
				access controls. Door handles and toilet seats need special consideration. The areas are cleaned twice a week	
7.	Entrance lobby	All	3	Sofas in this area are soft furnished. The use of these must be restricted or banned. Hard seating may be provided instead from the folding chairs	1
8.	Communion		3	Communion services will be via streaming only and will not be held at the church.	0
9.	The Hands sculpture	Public	3	Signage warning that the sculpture is cleaned by nature and that normal social distancing and hand cleansing is essential. During the hot weather, any virus contamination on the surface will have a limited lifetime	2
10.	Hall/Sanctuary	All	3	Separation marking must be introduced to avoid people grouping outside their social bubble. Seating can be rearranged for multiple people within a bubble, otherwise seating must be arranged to comply with distancing rules	1

Item#	Area	Potential Hazard	Pre-control likelihood	Control Measures to reduce Likelihood	Post control likelihood
11.	Front Path and Path from the rear car park	All	2	Gates and paths do not permit social distancing by default as they are too narrow. However, due to the nature of church, people tend to arrive within a time window and leave in a later time window. Hence separation of those entering and leaving is not considered necessary.	2

### Summary of Action plans

Action – List out what needs to done	Ownership – List out who complete	Date to be Completed by	Date of Completion
1. Create/locate accident logbook in accordance with the Health & Safety policy	Alan Rider said one exists in the church office. Locate it		
2. Create signing in register for people attending the church building for whatever reason	Richard Knowles	09-Jul-20	09-Jul-20

Action – List out what needs to done	Ownership – List out who complete	Date to be Completed by	Date of Completion
3. Create Legionella checklist	Richard Knowles	01-May-20	01-May-20
4. Purchase sufficient sanitiser			
5. Purchase sufficient sanitiser dispensers	Kevin Bitter	20-Aug-20	20-Aug-20
6. Produce signage regarding using sanitiser and maintain social distance when outside of social bubble			
7. Produce and publish “What to expect” video to show the steps people should expect to have to take when attending the church premises			

### Document History

Version	Date	Author	Change
Draft 0.d	09-Jul-20	Richard Knowles	Initial version for discussion within Leadership and Staff teams
Draft 0.e	27-Jul-20	Richard Knowles	Incorporated many comments from Leadership Team meeting. Changes tracked.

Version	Date	Author	Change
Draft 0.f	03-Aug-20	Richard Knowles	Updated guidance on 8-Aug requirement for facemasks; updated BU guidance from Version 7: 31 July 2020 (5:00pm); Added Teapot project use of kitchen; Added meetings in the church grounds and outside grounds where they are under the banner of church activities; Clarified that we are using hard plastic seating; Updated first aider advice; included 2 new appendices – Covid action plan and first aid kit; pastoral visits and creche mentioned explicitly; registration for external organisations pointed towards them maintaining register and their own first aiders; Changes are still tracked though note some items in the recommendations table have been regrouped.
Draft 0.g	03-Sep-20	Richard Knowles	Referred to updated government guidance released 14-Aug-20 and the BU guidance 12 of the 24-Aug-20. Clarified facemasks for church staff. Added activities in church grounds, public spaces and other premises. Some re-wording to stress some points. Added the comments from Jonathan and Sally on the Covid Action plan
Draft 0.h	15-Oct-20	Richard Knowles	Adjusted to reference new government local risk level strategy.  Added Origin Youth groups to LT priorities – reference to the National Youth Agency guidelines  Added singing and wind instrument restrictions do not apply to rehearsals  Added church staff must now wear masks with a few exceptions.

Version	Date	Author	Change
			<p>Added single entry/exit on a case by case basis – otherwise in via sanctuary, out via lobby.</p> <p>Use of soft furnishing in the sanctuary</p>

## Appendix A - Church Details

**Name of Church:** Woodbridge Quay Church

**Address:** Quay Street, Woodbridge IP12 1BX

**Contact:** Church office on 01394 382360



## Appendix B – COVID Incident Action Plan

**Note that people should not be closely involved in helping another person who becomes symptomatic if they are in a high risk/vulnerable group.**

In the event of someone becoming unwell with suspected COVID-19 symptoms while at the church you should:

- a) Send them home immediately
- b) Ask the rest of your group to leave the premises, observing the usual hand sanitising and social distancing precautions
- c) Advise them to launder their clothes when they arrive home
- d) Inform the church office on 01394 382360
- e) If the unwell person needs to wait for a lift: -
  1. Remove them to the safe waiting area, which is {insert details} – a chair and washing bowl should already be there
  2. Put on a mask, face shield, gloves & apron to protect yourself
  3. Provide them with tissues, a plastic rubbish bag, a bowl of warm water & soap for handwashing & paper towels
  4. Once they have been collected: -

Then:

1. Remove gloves, apron, and face mask to the rubbish bag\*
2. Leave face shield on top for disinfection
3. Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with warm soapy water
4. Ensure the church office on 01394 382360 has been notified and they are informed of the location of the attendance sheet
5. Once home - launder all your clothes and wipe down/disinfect your transport

\*Note that the waste should be double bagged and kept for 72 hours before being collected.

The church office will nominate someone from the church to coordinate any required notification actions and update the first aid or accident log with the incident details

## Appendix C – COVID First Aid Kit/Area

1. Face mask (covering) & pair of plastic gloves x 2 – each set in a plastic bag (for responder and patient)
2. Plastic face shield – for the responder
3. Pocket pack of tissues
4. Hand soap in pump dispenser
5. Small hand sanitiser gel
6. Disposable apron e.g. plastic sleeveless or cheap overalls
7. Small packet anti-bacterial wipes
8. Rubbish bags x 2 (so disposables can be double-bagged). The outer one marked e.g. “Covid waste”.

A plastic chair should be placed in the isolation space with a notice above.

Laminated instructions for how to respond should be either attached to the box or inside in the box.

## Appendix D - Floor plans



FirstFloorPlan.pdf



GroundFloorPlan.p  
df