

Points for consideration as we plan for our church community emerging from coronavirus lockdown. This content will need to be reviewed and developed further as guidelines are issued by the Government and Methodist Church.

Premises (excl. hirers)

| Subject | Concern / Risk | Potential Mitigations | Current Position |
|-------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Maintaining social distancing | How to provide a safe environment for users of the premises | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positioning of/blocking chairs for the required spacing New signage to promote social distancing Manage movement within the Church by stewards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes required in church furniture layout (which is set out each week and cleared after service) Signage to be made available for deployment as necessary depending on nature of meeting |
| | Impact of social distancing on capacity of rooms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit numbers in the hall, vestry, store and vestibule. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Normal congregation is about 15 people, so no difficulty anticipated. |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| Cross infection on frequently touched surfaces | Extra sanitation will be needed for frequently touched surfaces (door handles / light switches, electrical sockets, stacking chairs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of hand sanitiser on entry Sanitation regime before / after events Leave doors open where possible so that touching is not required. Have a steward on door so only one person touches it | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a stock of cleansing materials Procure hand sanitiser and dispensers Procure sanitiser sprays Identify who will perform sanitation before / after events Identify stewards What PPE will they require? |
| | Sharing of bibles, hymn books, leaflets etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use projector where shared text is required | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projector available as required |
| Impact of 'mothballing' the premises | Development of legionella bacteria in water systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flush water systems periodically | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taps (on mains water supply) have been 'run' periodically during lockdown Toilet flushed periodically |
| Cleaning of the premises | Enhanced cleaning regime will be needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variation to cleaning contract | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building and grounds to be spring cleaned before reopening and weekly cleaning arrangements reinstated |

Hiring out church premises

| Subject | Concern / Risk | Potential Mitigations | Current Position |
|---|---|--|---|
| Landlord responsibilities to provide safe premises for hirers | Revised room capacities may impact on viability of hire depending upon the nature of the activity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define room capacity in hiring agreements Note limits on chair spacing etc. in hiring agreements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Church activity will depend on hirer risk assessment, which will need to be seen by the Lettings Officer Their precautions will depend on the nature of the hire; if the activity cannot be pursued in compliance with government regulations, then it may not be possible to recommence meetings until further relaxations are implemented Hirers will be expected to manage 'track and trace' for their meetings; cleanse surfaces before and after meetings; and record they had done so |
| | Are we required to police the behaviour of hirers? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add obligations in hiring agreement Require hirers to submit a risk assessment prior to hire go-ahead (this will also help us understand the nature of their activity and what cleaning may be required) Require a signed document when hirers vacate confirming the cleaning and sanitisation they have carried out after their meeting | |
| | Are we required to sanitise between hires? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hirers will be expected to confirm/conduct sanitisation before their meeting and to sanitise before leaving | |
| Impact of hirers on church users | Are we required to sanitise between hire & church use? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Church stewards will check sanitisation before and after services | |

Serving refreshments & Kitchen use

| Subject | Concern / Risk | Potential Mitigations | Current Position |
|-------------------|--|--|--|
| Infection control | Serving food or drink could spread virus | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infection control training • Wearing face mask | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No food or drink is prepared or served before or after Sunday services • Coffee mornings remain suspended until social distancing requirement relaxed |
| | Kitchen | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit use to only two persons (2m separation + face coverings) | |

Activities List of activities below to be extended as required.

| Subject | Concern / Risk | Potential Mitigations | Current Position |
|---------------------|---|--|---|
| Worship services | Potential spread of virus | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limiting numbers to achieve segregation and enhanced cleaning, hand sanitiser | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face masks should be worn while congregants are within the building • 'Track and trace' will require a register of congregants to be taken |
| Singing as a group | Risk of spreading beyond 2m | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wearing of face masks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government ban on singing |
| Holy Communion | Sharing bread and wine spreads virus | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebration of Communion to be reviewed and situation reviewed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No celebration of Communion for now • Ongoing discussion on possible solutions |
| Counting offertory | Infection from cash handling | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid cash • No offertory | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congregants encouraged to give via bank transfers rather than taking an offertory during services |
| | Procedure requires 2 people (Teller + witness.) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe from a 2m distance (need to check feasibility) • Suggest plate where worshipers can place their gifts. After service transfer to envelope sealed with two signatures. Steward takes home, and returns it following week for counting. | |
| Transport to church | Potential spread of virus within vehicle | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wearing of face masks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face masks should be worn by all vehicle occupants (not just those given a lift) |

Reassurance and confidence

| Subject | Concern / Risk | Potential Mitigations | Current Position |
|---|---|---|--|
| Old / vulnerable may be required to lockdown for longer | Congregation has disproportionate number of old / vulnerable | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue outreach actions even after resumption of meetings Stream Chat/services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circuit services to continue online and via the phone, with recordings of services on CD also available for those staying away for their own safety Continue to provide written notices/ contact for those staying away |
| Confidence of individuals | A proportion of the congregation may be reluctant to return until confident of their own safety | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about what has been done for their safety Continue outreach actions | |

Possible Actions (timing needs careful consideration..... too early = potential abortive work; too late = difficulty sourcing items & delayed restart)

| Action | Who | Timescale |
|--|-----|---|
| 1 Draw up plans for room layout including chair spacing, floor layout, one-way system including entry & egress | | Before first service following re-opening |
| 2 Draw up plans for signage (internal & external) and create + laminate. | | As above |
| 3 Acquire cleaning wipes (Disposable cloths, disinfecting fluid [bleach], rubber gloves) | | As above |
| 4 Acquire supply of hand sanitiser and dispensers by arrangement with Sittingbourne. | | As above |
| 5 Obtain tissues, second paper towel dispenser, waste bins (with lids) | | As above |

Approval

Document approved by Church Council on ...17 August 2020.....

Signature of Chairman