



RISK ASSESSMENT FOR REOPENING HADLEIGH URC MAIN CHURCH BUILDING FOR PRIVATE PRAYER (AND, LATER, FOR PAUSE FOR PRAYER & PUBLIC WORSHIP)

VERSION 2 – 6 JULY 2020

The following document identifies and assesses the risks involved in reopening the main church building and provides a course of action for eliminating or mitigating the risks.

The re-opening will take place in 3 phases:

1. For **private prayer** (2 hours every Wednesday);
2. (When public gatherings are permitted) for **Pause for Prayer** (located within the two hours that the church is open for private prayer)
3. For **public worship** on a Sunday

For each area of risk identified, the likelihood of the risk occurring and its potential impact are assessed. Likelihood and impact are scored on a scale from 1 to 5 (5 being highest) and the two are multiplied together to calculate a Risk Score (see table and key below).

The steps are identified that can be taken to reduce or remove the risk. Assuming that these steps have been actioned, a new Risk Score is then calculated.

			RISK SCORE				
IMPACT	Severe	5	5	10	15	20	25
	Major	4	4	8	12	16	20
	Moderate	3	3	6	9	12	15
	Minor	2	2	4	6	8	10
	Insignificant	1	1	2	3	4	5
			1	2	3	4	5
			Remote	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Highly Likely
			LIKELIHOOD				

KEY TO RISK LEVEL

	Catastrophic
	Unacceptable
	Undesirable
	Acceptable

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Risk No	Risk	Type*	INHERENT RISK			Mitigation	RESIDUAL RISK			Notes
			Likelihood	Impact	Risk Score		Likelihood	Impact	Risk Score	
Preparing the buildings for reopening										
1	Build-up of dust and possibly mould whilst building closed	Prop	Low 1	Low 1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Open doors and windows to allow airflow. ➤ Restrict access into building until building aired ➤ Minimise access to building and close off until task complete 	Low	Low		No one allowed into building until task completed
2	General cleanliness of building	Prop	Low 1	Low 2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cleaning of inside of building and review if additional action such as a deep clean required ➤ All fitting and fixtures (including door handles, hand rails and light switches) MUST be wiped down with anti-bacterial wipes and sanitisers 	Low	Low		Restricted access into building until task completed
3	Potential contamination of water system (legionella)	Prop	Possible 3	Major 4	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Water system flushed through: all taps to be run for at least ?? mins after 	Low	Low	4	If weekly checklist has not been carried out, the

*Indicates: Data, Financial, Legal/regulatory, People, Property, Reputational and Service Delivery

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							lockdown then at least mins weekly thereafter; all toilets to be flushed at least twice weekly				water system should be checked
4	Safety measures against fire are not securely in place	Prop	Medium	Major	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fire Risk Assessment must be in place and up to date ➤ All fire extinguishers to be checked and ensure functioning and in date All fire signage and exit are clear 	Check extinguishers, fire exits etc 1	3 – some members of congregation move slowly – always some risk.	3	Fire Risk Assessment must be in place before opening	
5	Alterations to layout in order to maintain current Government social distancing measures mean a clear evacuation route is not obvious or needs to be changed	People	Low –	Low	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Display clear signage and ensure the identified route is free of obstruction and accessible to all 	Good systems to steward to/from separate seating			Building must not open until measures in place	
6	Seating in areas to be used for private	Prop	Low	Low	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Close off seats (ROWS AND SINGLE) and 	Low	Low	1	Building must not open until	

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		prayer, and public worship once permitted, is too close together.					specify which can be used so that m distancing can be strictly followed. Remove excess chairs and stack safely				measures in place
7		Electrical and heating systems (including emergency lighting) fully functional	Prop	Low	Medium	3	➤ All systems to be checked and signed off				Systems to be repaired as required prior to opening
8		Items stored and displayed on surfaces makes cleaning regime difficult	Prop	Low	Low	1	➤ Clear surfaces as much as possible and move items to safe storage				Ensure all items removed as appropriate prior to opening
9		High value items at risk of theft	Prop	Low	Low		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Secure items that are not needed (such as audio-visual equipment). ➤ Ensure the premises are staffed and supervised whilst open to the public. 				Ensure all items removed as appropriate prior to opening
10		Insufficient staff/volunteers available to supervise the	Service delivery	Low initially for 2 hour window –	Major		➤ Daily Rotas of volunteers in place with reserve indicated	Rota of minimum of two on duty – one with eyes on praying members/adherents, one in vestibule.			Close the building until sufficient people are available.

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		premises whilst open		may increase?			➤ Building only opens if minimum of 2 people in place with NO LONE WORKING			
11		Items may be handled by more than one person, increasing the risk of cross contamination	People	more people	Major		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Remove/secure hymnbooks, Bibles, pens, prayer request books, etc. Produce single-use/disposable printed ➤ Consider providing prayer guides, posters/displays, non-contact prayer stations etc., to aid private devotion. ➤ Hand sanitisers in place at exit and entrance for mandatory use when entering and leaving the building 	<p>No items to be handled by two or more people</p> <p>Before church reopens no problem.</p> <p>Prayer aids will be on screen and posted on boards to avoid any touch.</p> <p>Remove unnecessary items and clutter</p> <p>Remove children's toys and books</p> <p>20 chairs to be set out – once used, the steward will place a paper on the seat to indicate that it can't be used again</p>		Building must not open until measures in place
12		Issues with outside of building	Prop	Low	Low		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Check guttering/downpipes/gullies ➤ Check overgrown shrubs or trees across walkways ➤ Check for any loose fence 			Any issues must be put onto an action plan and addressed

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							panels as appropriate ➤ Check for any loose headstones in grave yard if appropriate NOTE: unless these are a danger to individuals entering the church building they will not stop it re-opening BUT must be actioned				
13	Flow of people within the church causes congestion or makes social distancing impossible	People	Low Numbers likely to be low	Medium Potential for contact			➤ Investigate and implement processes to ensure flow of people in church adheres to government guidelines (i.e. one way system signage)	Low	Low		Must be in place before church opens
14	Excess rubbish builds up at the premises	People	Low	Medium			➤ All rubbish to be taken away by church attendees where appropriate ➤ Replace all bins with automatic open and close	Replace bins? If no touch then contamination risk reduced Buy one pedal bin for potentially contaminated waste –			Cleaning regime must be in place prior to opening

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							<p>lids to minimise touch point</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bins regularly emptied by nominated person 	<p>secured for 72 then into dustbin. All bins use liners – (not very green but vital!)</p>			
15		Safeguarding information missing or out of date	Legal	Low	Major		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure safeguarding poster and statement of policy, including contact details for local safeguarding co-ordinator are displayed prominently ➤ Ensure stewards are briefed on the safeguarding policy and know who to contact if a concern is raised 	<p>Need to be aware of vulnerable adults – children are less likely to visit to pray alone</p>			

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Social Distancing											
16		Too many people gather in the building.	People	Low – low uptake likely	Med		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Control numbers entering the church which will be agreed by the Elders prior to church opening and all stewards fully aware trained and briefed in the protocol (initially – no more than 20) 	Low	Low		Stewards MUST adhere to agreed numbers
17		Those using the building don't respect distancing guidance.	People	Low from cong. Possible issue with visitors? 3	Major		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Place m distancing marks outside the building where possible and inside the building. Display clear signage at the entrance and throughout the space about maintaining distancing during their visit, including when greeting others. ➤ Ensure stewards are properly briefed to reinforce the message. 	Set of rules displayed for Elders and visitors			Stewards MUST adhere to agreed people
18		People attend who have symptoms of coronavirus	Legal	Low	Major		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Stewards to be briefed to ask people if they believe they have symptoms and if so, respectfully decline entry to them. ➤ Clear signage reminding people of the symptoms of Covid-19 and of the importance of self-isolation. ➤ Door stewards to wear masks 	Door steward to wear mask			<p>This MUST be adhered to and if suspected people will not leave church to be closed immediately</p> <p>NOTE if required support will be requested (police)</p>

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19		Congestion at choke points prevent distancing being respected	People	Low	Medium		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Re-laying out of church to reduce pinch points ➤ Investigate options such as one way systems ➤ Ensure all relevant signage and floor marking in place ➤ All stewards to be briefed in flow of building <p>NOTE: if pinch point cannot be removed time and flow through at that point MUST be minimised (a “one in, one out” system) to maintain infection protocols</p>	<p>Implement one door in and one out. Slightly partition vestibule to prevent gathering point.</p>			Stewards must be fully briefed to enable smooth flow
20		A person known to be on the sex offenders' register attends	People	Low - unlikely	Medium		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Brief stewards that known offenders are not to be admitted as they cannot be supervised during private prayer 				

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Cleaning											
21		Nominated company or rota of volunteers not in place to ensure regular cleaning	Service delivery	Medium	Major		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Delay opening until employed cleaners or volunteers are in place. Follow current Government guidance on cleaning in a non-healthcare setting <p>NOTE: if building is listed refer to Historic England's Guide to cleaning Historical surfaces.</p>	Rota of cleaning by steward team on duty?			Cleaning regime must be in place prior to and maintained throughout opening
22		Cleaning staff/volunteers unable to comply with safe working practice for cleaning	People	Medium	Major		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure that cleaners are properly briefed on a safe method of cleaning. ➤ Provide gloves and aprons for those using cleaning materials. And masks? ➤ Use warm soapy water for wiping surfaces but be aware that if might conflict with preserving historic artefacts or listed buildings specialist advice must be sought. ➤ Hands must be washed thoroughly after removing and disposing of PPE ➤ PPE MUST be disposed of in designated receptacle. ➤ Waste must be double-bagged and securely stored for 72 hours before being placed in bins. 	We need to review our cleaning plans. If open Wednesday all touched surfaces – door handles, chair backs and similar need cleaning after opening – then clear by following week.			Cleaning regime must be in place prior to opening

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23		Materials not available to properly clean surfaces	Service delivery	Low But PPE for cleaners might be a problem?	Medium		➤ Delay opening until materials are available.	Once fully equipped			Cleaning regime must be in place prior to opening
24		Contamination from high-touch areas such as door handles and switches	Property	Medium	Medium		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Implement a practice of cleaning high-touch areas before the building is opened ➤ Clean at regular intervals during the period of opening and when the building is closed for the day. ➤ Where consistent with fire safety and security, use wedges/hooks to hold doors open and ensure doors are closed when the building closes to maintain fire safety. 	Once implemented No touch required by participants			Cleaning regime must be in place prior to opening
25		Someone with Coronavirus is found to have visited the building	People	Low	Medium		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Close the building immediately for min.7 hrs. ➤ After that period ensure as a minimum that all surfaces are washed with warm soapy water or household disinfectant unless damage to historic artefacts or listed buildings might be incurred, in which case seek specialist advice (it may be decided to deep clean area of contamination) 	Once cleaned			This process MUST be followed and all relevant individuals briefed

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							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Double bag waste and store it securely for 72 hours before placing it in bins. ➤ Wash hands thoroughly after PPE kit has been removed and disposed of in designated bin 				
26		People may carry Coronavirus into the building on their hands	People	Medium	Medium		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Require everyone to sanitise their hands upon entry. ➤ Display clear signage on the importance of washing hands regularly and avoiding face touching. 				This process MUST be followed and all relevant individuals briefed
27		Toilet facilities cannot be cleaned adequately between users	Property	Low	Medium		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cleaning regime to be in place to ensure toilet facilities safe to use. 	Low	Low	Initially, no toilets available	Close off toilet facilities until arrangements can be made. Display signage by the entrance making it clear that no toilet facilities are available in the building
28		Increased risk of airborne transmission of disease	People	Low	Low		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Limit the duration of opening times and ventilate the building during and between opening times where possible 				
29		Someone starts to feel unwell/develops coronavirus	People	Low (short opening time)	Low		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Isolate the person in a separate room whilst arrangements are made for them to be taken home or into medical care. 	Low	Low	In the case of this happening,	

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		symptoms whilst on the premises					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Anyone sitting with the person must wear a face mask, disposable gloves and apron (either disposable or washable at °C) throughout the period of supervision/support ➤ Church and isolation room must be closed for 72 hours before deep cleaning with soapy water and/or household disinfectant ➤ Cleaning cloths and PPE to be double-bagged and stored securely for 7 hours before placing in outside bins. ➤ Hands must be washed thoroughly immediately after removing & disposing of PPE ➤ Anyone supervising/caring for the person who is unwell should return home, shower and change clothes ASAP. 	<p>initially, the Community Room will be the isolation zone</p>		
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Additional risks associated with opening for public worship									
31	<p>Premises are not Covid-Secure prior to opening</p> <p>We already have a clear plan for Wednesdays which would be repeated and extended.</p>	Prop	Unlikely with good protocols in place			Ensure the space is properly prepared for re-opening, the cleaning regime is in place and preparations for hand-washing, hygiene, distancing and signage are all in place			Re-opening must NOT take place until the Covid-Secure measures are in place (see the risks for building preparation, cleaning and social distancing above for greater detail)
32	<p>Increased risk of coronavirus spread through communal singing (once this is permitted by local legislation: whilst prohibited in law, churches must NOT include singing in worship)</p> <p>No singing for now – facing walls when socially distanced once allowed?</p>	People				<p>Consider worship without communal singing</p> <p>Issue instructions on singing quietly in worship</p> <p>Require facemasks to be worn during worship to reduce risk of transmission</p>			There is divided scientific evidence and opinion on whether singing increases the risk of virus transmission
33	<p>Risk of virus transmission from shared resources (Bibles & other books, offertory plate, etc.)</p> <p>Remove books – bring own bible etc</p> <p>Remove children’s resources – agree some things out (e.g. individual bundles of pens and paper sealed away?)</p>	People	Unlikely with good protocols in place			<p>Remove all items that may be handled by more than one person</p> <p>Place offertory baskets/plates at the back of church, being mindful of security, or move to contactless or online giving</p> <p>Where cash handling cannot be avoided, wear gloves when handling it and wash hands thoroughly afterwards</p>			

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34	<p>Children’s group leaders not willing to resume activities immediately</p> <p>It may be that shorter sessions become the norm?</p>	People	Unlikely with good protocols in place			<p>Ensure the space for children is properly prepared for social distancing, etc., and remind parents/carers that the government expects them to ensure that their children maintain social distancing</p> <p>Remove soft toys and soft furnishings and any toys that would be hard to clean, storing them securely</p> <p>Provide single-use resources & equipment or ensure that items are not handled by many people and are sanitised before and after use</p> <p>Consult with group leaders to see whether mitigation resolves their concerns and if not investigate alternative provision/format for the activities, or resolve not to resume at this point.</p>			<p>KH prepared to lead one and others may too – using fewer resources – or disposable ones is a challenge but possible. Sharing of resources is more complex.</p>
35	<p>No Covid-safe space available for children’s groups to meet during worship</p> <p>Plan sessions carefully but our usual procedures, with individual bundles of pens, worksheets, etc should be fine. Games etc more tricky and team/group work needs careful planning. Increased use of technology.</p>	People	Unlikely with good protocols in place			<p>Provide space and activities within the sanctuary where the children can be safely supervised without leaving the main act of worship</p> <p>Remove soft toys and soft furnishings and any toys that cannot easily be cleaned, storing them away securely</p>			

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						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide single-use resources & equipment or ensure that items are not handled by many people and are sanitised before and after use. Co-ordinate with worship leaders to provide all-age/intergenerational worship 			
36	<p>Risk of virus transmission through serving/receiving Holy Communion</p> <p>If proximity is a concern can people come to the plate? Only those who cannot do that being served.</p> <p>Consider not offering wine if moving close to people is a worry?</p> <p>Communion servers to wear masks?</p>	People	Unlikely with good protocols in place			<p>Consider refraining from sharing Communion</p> <p>Ø If Communion is offered, it must be done without physical contact with the elements placed into the communicant's hand only, the President must not speak or sing over uncovered elements, hands must be washed/sanitised before serving, the Common Cup must not be used, and appropriate care taken by those cleaning the Communion vessels and cloths after use.</p>			<p>Wafers would avoid human contact with bread. Or it is prepared and sealed prior to worship.</p>

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37	<p>Risk of transmission through administering Baptism</p> <p>Worry about it when it happens!</p>	People				<p>Ensure that relevant Government guidance is followed</p> <p>Until further notice baptism by full immersion should be avoided</p> <p>For infant baptism use the minimum amount of water possible and ensure that the parent/carer holds the infant</p> <p>If there are baptismal candidates from more than one household, change the water between candidates and ensure appropriate distancing is maintained between the households and others involved in the baptism</p> <p>Consider offering an alternative rite (e.g. dedication or thanksgiving) until the pandemic has passed.</p>				
38	<p>Visiting worship leaders are not aware of COVID-19 secure arrangements</p>	People	<p>Unlikely with good protocols in place</p>			<p>Send out information about precautions with the usual information about leading worship for your church</p> <p>Ensure details on the order of service/format for worship is updated</p>				<p>A set of instructions is needed to share with visitors.</p>

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39	Equipment may be touched by more than one person before and during worship (e.g. photocopier, computer, audio-visual equipment, etc.)	Prop			<p>Emphasise the importance of good hand hygiene for everyone throughout their time in the building.</p> <p>Provide cleaning materials to wipe down equipment surfaces between use and instruct those involved on how to use it safely</p>			<p>We need a quantity of cleaning resources available all the time for equipment use – it must become normal practice for this to be used either before or after each use as agreed.</p>
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Additional risks associated with opening for other church activities and external lettings									
40A	<p>Space for mid-week adult groups is not Covid-Secure</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can we make the spaces secure? 2. Can this group socially distance effectively in this space? 3. Have we good cleaning protocols in place? 4. Has group done its own RA? 5. Are we happy that the group will steward itself effectively? 6. Has the group signed our new Covid 19 user agreement? (commits to referring positive cases, cleaning etc) <p>If we can answer the above questions then maybe we can allow the space to be used?</p>	Prop							<p>Activity leaders must know the risks and mitigations, adhere to restrictions and enforce them appropriately</p>

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						regimes before, during and after use Provide guidance about soft furnishings and upholstery that may become contaminated and transmit through touch (chairs, curtains, etc.)			
40B	Space for mid-week adult groups is not Covid-Secure See above	People				Consider whether you need to move to a larger space than usual, restrict numbers and/or add sessions to keep within your safe capacity			Capacity that lets the group maintain current social distancing standards must not be exceeded
41A	Space for mid-week children's groups is not Covid-secure <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can we make the spaces secure? 2. Can this group socially distance effectively in this space? 3. Have we good cleaning protocols in place? 4. Has group done its own RA? 5. Are we happy that the group will steward itself effectively? 6. Has the group signed our new Covid 19 user agreement? (commits to referring positive cases, cleaning etc) If we can answer the above questions then maybe we can allow the space to be used?	Prop				In addition to the mitigations for adult groups, consider the following: - Assess how many children and leaders can safely meet in the room(s) and plan activities appropriately - Provide, where appropriate, places where prams and pushchairs can safely be left without causing obstruction or requiring anyone other than the owner to move them - Provide clear signage for entry and exit points, reminders about distancing and hand hygiene and remind parents/carers			Activity leaders must know the risks and mitigations, adhere to restrictions and enforce them appropriately

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						(where appropriate) to be responsible for the supervision of their children Ensure that food and drink is not shared Consider the use of outdoor space, where regulations permit, for more active games, prayer activities, etc., ensuring that cleaning, hygiene and distancing measures are still applied			
42B	Space for mid-week children's groups is not Covid-secure See above	People				Consider whether you need to move to a larger space than usual, restrict numbers and/or add sessions to keep within your safe capacity			Capacity that lets the group maintain current social distancing standards must not be exceeded
42C	Space for mid-week children's groups is not Covid-secure We demand they have their own safeguarding policy or follow ours.	Leg/reg				Ensure that all group leaders and other arrangements for the group are operating to Good Practice 5 standards (or the appropriate denominational safeguarding policy in place for LEPs.)			Safeguarding remains paramount even when adapting procedures in light of the pandemic
43A	Pressure to resume external lettings so that income can be generated See above	Prop				Ensure that all Covid-Secure measures are in place			This first step is essential before considering re-

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										opening to external groups
43B	<p>Pressure to resume external lettings so that income can be Generated</p> <p>Follow legislation and URC/government guidance at all times.</p> <p>Answer questions above to be confident in recommencing hiring.</p> <p>Discuss with each hirer and be very clear on expectations.</p> <p>Revise letting agreement to incorporate vital Covid 19 protocols.</p>	Legal/reg				<p>Ensure that the proposed use is compatible with Covid restrictions in place (e.g. choirs cannot resume rehearsal whilst singing is prohibited by law, indoor exercise groups may not be permitted at the time of asesement)</p> <p>Ensure a current letting agreement is in place</p> <p>Liaise with group leaders on how they will be ensure distancing and hygiene measures are in place, and that they will be responsible for operating those measures</p> <p>Agree whether the group can safely meet in rooms that they had previously used or whether they need to meet in a larger space or in more than one session</p> <p>Agree and document who is responsible for cleaning the rooms they use before and after their session</p> <p>Obtain a copy of their written Risk Assessment</p>				<p>Each group accommodated must be able to meet in accordance with regulations and procedures in force, otherwise their actions will jeopardise the safety for everyone else using the premises</p>