

UPDATE 14 12 2021

The Church of Scotland, Church Buildings Covid-19 Risk Assessment

This document is based on The Church of Scotland, Church Buildings Covid-19 Risk Assessments, V1 and V2, introduced in 2020 as a guide to churches re-opening after closure. The Risk Assessment pro forma were designed to help congregations identify the appropriate control measures that had to be in place to protect members of the congregation, volunteers and visitors from the risk of Covid-19 infection. The control measures highlighted in those Risk Assessment documents reflected then current best practice and were to be regarded as the minimum standard for the re-opening of church buildings and congregations.

As the Church in Scotland has moved through the various levels to the current situation, the Risk Assessments have been adjusted. It is a decision of the Kirk Session of Sherbrooke Mossspark Church to conduct a full review of the separate Risk Assessments pertaining to the church's Sanctuary and Halls complex, to provide a single document reflecting the use of the building as a whole. It is understood that Glasgow Presbytery may request a copy of this Risk Assessment for its records.

Please note: Further advice may be sought from the Church of Scotland General Trustees OR by emailing covid19guidance@churchofscotland.org.uk.

Congregation	Sherbrooke Mossspark Parish Church	
Presbytery	Glasgow	
Which building(s) does this risk assessment relate to? Update to document dated 06/12/2021	Sanctuary, Offices, including Vestry, Main Hall, Small Hall, Meeting Rooms, Linking Corridors and ancillary facilities Under Infection Prevention – Further actions required: Hygiene Controls - Item 1: Communication in the order of service and church website to highlight to the congregation that consideration should be given to Government advice to take advantage of free daily lateral flow tests.	
Name of assessor(s)	Adam Dillon, Julian Guse, Una Heaney, Kary O'Brien, Clare Williams	
Date	01/11/2021	
Date of review	14/12/2021	
Signature		

Infection prevention, cleaning and members, volunteers and visitors Safety

Hazards associated with the coronavirus pandemic

Churches must ensure that their buildings are safe and do not increase the risk of virus transmission.

Potential risks to members of the congregation, volunteers and visitors to the church caused by hazards

There is a direct threat to anyone who enters a church building due to its public nature that they may be exposed to Covid-19.

People can catch the virus from others who are infected in the following ways:

- virus moves from person-to-person in droplets from the nose or mouth spread when a person with the virus coughs or exhales
- the virus can survive for 72 hours or longer on surfaces which people have touched or coughed on, etc.
- people can pick up the virus by breathing in the droplets or by touching contaminated surfaces and then touching their eyes or mouth

Not all people infected with Covid-19 show symptoms. Therefore, it is vitally important that reasonable precautions are in place and followed at all times.

Control measures

The congregation will comply with its statutory duty to provide a safe environment, with particular reference to the Covid-19 pandemic by:

- ensure that all members, volunteers and visitors are aware of the infection prevention and control precautions that are in place within our buildings and the behaviour expected of them during the pandemic to keep themselves and others safe
- require all members, volunteers and visitors to practice physical distancing when in or around our building, including outside areas

The congregation will communicate and reinforce key Government public health messages to all members, volunteers and visitors who visit their buildings:

- anyone who is unwell or who shows symptoms of Covid-19 (High temperature/fever, cough or loss of smell), who is in the extremely vulnerable group, who is isolating, or who is living with someone who is isolating or is unwell must not attend church
- recommend the use of an appropriate face covering when inside the building.
- if a face covering is not used for medical or other reasons, cover the mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve (not hands) when coughing or sneezing (Catch it — Bin it — Kill it)
- put used tissues in the bin straight away
- wash hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (use alcohol base hand sanitiser/ gel if soap and water are not available)
- avoid close contact with people who become unwell when within your buildings
- clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- do not touch face, eyes, nose or mouth if hands are not clean

Further Actions required

Communication

1. Members, volunteers and visitors shall be made aware of Sherbrooke Mossspark Parish Church control measures prior to entering the building. Information shall be made available via the church website, email, order of services and via telephone communications. Further information will be made available via signage displayed throughout the building and verbal instruction provided at the points of entry.
2. Communications shall detail entries and exits, foot traffic routes, evacuation procedures, the recommendation to wear a face covering, hygiene requirements, eating and drinking guidance, seating arrangements and health requirements i.e. the Church cannot permit entry to those showing symptoms of COVID-19 and those who are currently isolating because of Test and Protect or a positive test.
3. Prior to attending a church service, individuals shall notify the church via telephone or email, alerting the church administrator of their desire to attend and registering contact details. This will allow the Church to limit attendance to manageable levels. Contact details will be kept for individuals who do not preregister.

Infection prevention, cleaning and members, volunteers and visitors Safety (continued)

Hazards associated with the coronavirus pandemic

Potential risks to members of the congregation, volunteers and visitors to the church caused by hazards

Control measures

The congregation will fully implement in all areas of their church buildings Health Protection Scotland (Public Health Scotland), Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and Scottish Government advice and guideline relevant to the Covid-19 Pandemic, including the following safety precautions:

- make any adjustments to the space within our buildings to facilitate effective infection prevention and physical distancing
- follow Government health and travel advice
- provide alcohol based hand sanitiser/ gel as required
- provide infection control and personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, and masks if required
- increase environmental cleaning in the church building including hand-touch areas; and ensure cleaning staff and volunteers have access to suitable detergents, disinfectants and PPE
- provide additional waste removal facilities and more frequent rubbish collection if required
- display appropriate public health posters and notices around the building and on websites informing members, volunteers and visitors of the control measure that are in place and their own role and responsibility to follow them.

Further actions required

Hygiene Controls

1. Communication in the order of service and church website to highlight to the congregation that consideration should be given to Government advice to take advantage of free daily lateral flow tests.
2. Sherbrooke Mossspark Parish Church shall provide hand sanitising facilities at all entry and exit points.
3. Volunteers shall be allocated to these entry/exit points, acting in line with Scottish Government and Church of Scotland guidelines.
4. The seating in the Sanctuary shall be set out in such a way as to ensure that those using the Sanctuary can follow CofS recommendations on safe social distancing. Where the Sanctuary is to be used within 72 hours, chairs will be cleaned after use in an appropriate and effective manner.
5. A similar protocol shall apply to church groups meetings within the Halls or other meeting rooms.
6. At the end of each church led event within the Sanctuary or the Halls, waste bins shall be tied closed prior to disposal. Appropriate gloves and face coverings shall be worn whilst tying bin bags.
7. The Church and halls, where used, shall be cleaned post session using viral disinfectant if they are to be used within 72 hours. Touch points, seating areas, walking routes, handrails and toilet facilities shall be cleaned thoroughly. Appropriate gloves and face coverings shall be worn whilst performing cleaning duties.
8. On occasions where the Main Hall is to be used in conjunction with the Sanctuary, e.g. for hospitality after a service, access to the hall shall be by way of the double doors in the West Transept, the internal staircase by the main front door or the external route via the East Transept.
9. Groups, clubs or organisations utilising the hall facility within the church building shall present and adhere to their own individual risk assessments See Appendix A for guidance. Where differences occur due to risk assessments differing, this document shall take precedence.

Physical distancing

Hazards associated with the coronavirus pandemic

Effective physical distancing is a key element in reducing the transmission of Covid-19

Potential risks to members of the congregation, volunteers and visitors to the church caused by hazards

Physical distancing refers to people maintaining distance from others within the confines of a public place. Physical distancing effectively puts people at a safe range from anyone coughing. The main route of virus transmission is through droplets exhaled or coughed by an infected person

Note: As at 10/09/2021, Church of Scotland guidance is that 1 metre distancing should be maintained as a matter of good practice, rather than as a regulatory matter. Face coverings in public indoor areas continue to be a legal requirement. Similarly, registration of visitors to premises where food and/or drink is to be served, remains.

Control measures

All members, volunteers and visitors are required to practice effective distancing while in and around the building by:

- avoiding non-essential contact with others
- keeping a safe distance from others whenever possible
- avoiding physical contact (e.g. hugs, handshakes, etc)

Adaptations to the building to support physical distancing include:

- a review of the church building to identify suitable adaptations which will support physical distancing, for example layout changes, appropriate signage, stickers and floor markings to denote safe distances, etc

The congregation will display notices throughout the church building reminding members, volunteers and visitors of the key infection prevention requirements, including the need to maintain safe physical distancing

Further actions required

To enable effective physical distancing throughout the building, Sherbrooke Mosspark Parish Church shall:

1. Limit the capacity of the Sanctuary through spacing rows of seating one metre apart.

Registration of attendees shall be continued to ensure adequate spacing in each row.

2. Maintain distancing between choir members but allow the removal of face coverings when singing to assist in leading worship. The choir continues to stand apart from the congregation, in the chancel.

3. With the exception of the choir, retain the use of face coverings within the sanctuary and when moving around the buildings.

4. Stagger entry and exit from the building to ensure no unnecessary accumulation of people.

5. Enable Entry and Exit via separate access points within the Sanctuary.

6. Enable exit from the Church in an orderly manner from the Front Door or by the East and West Transepts.

7. Display clear signage within the Church to assist with clarity and understanding.

8. Set out the Hall for post service hospitality in such a way as to ensure adequate seating. Door duty team to keep the registration of visitors for the hospitality setting using the service attendee list.

9. Observe all Church of Scotland guidance and recommendations on hospitality, with no "shared" items of food or condiments and no home baking unless suitable training has been undertaken. Home bakers will have to complete the REHIS Introduction to Food Hygiene course and a register will be kept of those individuals who have completed the training on behalf of the Kirk Session.

10. Restrict the use of the kitchen to no more than three (3) designated users at any one time.

Higher risk areas of the building

Hazards associated with the coronavirus pandemic

Some areas of the church building may present a higher risk than others; for example toilets and restrooms.

Potential risks to members of the congregation, volunteers and visitors to the church caused by hazards

Heavily used areas of the building are more likely to present an infection transmission risk

Toilets are essential for members, volunteers and visitors to wash their hands regularly but also the toilets must be kept clean and free of coronavirus contamination

A number of people going to the toilet together may compromise their ability to comply with physical distancing

Increased risk of people coughing and touching door handles, taps and toilet flush handles

Control measures

Ensure higher-risk/ high-traffic areas of the building are effectively controlled by applying appropriate safety precautions, including:

- stressing the need for everyone to follow good hygiene practice at all times (i.e. regular handwashing, using tissues and disposing of them appropriately, etc)
- the congregation will ensure that adequate hand-cleaning resources are provided; all toilets to be supplied with adequate supplies of hot water, liquid soap and paper towels
- printing handwashing instructions/ posters and displaying throughout the building, especially in toilets
- limiting numbers of people who can use high traffic areas such as corridors, stairs, toilets and restrooms at any one time to ensure physical distancing
- limiting lift occupancy
- monitor high-traffic area use and regulate access as necessary
- prioritise disabled use where necessary, e.g. disabled toilet use, use of lifts, etc
- establishing safe queuing systems by use of room occupancy limits and floor markings/signage, etc
- placing alcohol hand sanitisers/ gels at convenient places around the building with instructions for use
- increasing environmental cleaning, especially in and around toilets and; special attention to be paid to frequently touched surfaces such as door handles, toilet flush handles, light switches, etc
- increasing toilets/washrooms inspections to check for cleanliness/ adequate stock of soap/toilet paper, etc
- where possible, providing paper towels as an alternative to hand dryers in handwashing facilities

Further actions required

1. Toilet facilities for Hall use are available via the side entrance corridor on the perimeter of both the large and small halls. Toilet facilities are limited to one (1) person at a time.

2. Post event, toilet facilities shall be cleaned thoroughly. Appropriate gloves and face masks shall be worn whilst performing cleaning duties.

3. Handwashing technique signage shall be displayed above each sink within the toilet facilities.

4. Disposable paper towels shall be provided within the toilet facility and reusable hand towels removed.

Vulnerable and Extremely Vulnerable members, volunteers and visitors

Hazards associated with the coronavirus pandemic

Some members, volunteers or visitors may have pre-existing medical conditions which render them more vulnerable to the dangers of coronavirus infection

Potential risks to members of the congregation, volunteers and visitors to the church caused by hazards

Those who are classified by the Scottish Government as being at greater risk from Covid-19 include people in the vulnerable (higher-risk) and extremely vulnerable (extremely high risk) categories

Vulnerable (higher risk) people include those who:

- aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)
- under 70 and instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds
- pregnant

The Scottish Government regularly reviews their classification of those in the Vulnerable and Extremely Vulnerable group and as part of this risk assessment, this will be regularly reviewed by the congregation to ensure that all appropriate hazards are identified and control measures implemented (www.gov.scot/publications/covid-shielding/).

Further actions required

Control measures

The congregation will ensure that those in the extremely vulnerable category will still be able to participate in church life during the Covid-19 pandemic without the need to attend church.

The congregation will ensure that those in the vulnerable category will be appropriately supported in their choice to participate in church life in a way that meets their own individual needs and preferences whilst safeguarding their own health, safety and welfare and those of the wider congregation and community.

Premises access and travel

Hazards associated with the coronavirus pandemic

Members, volunteers and visitors who come to your church building must be able to access your building safely

Potential risks to members of the congregation, volunteers and visitors to the church caused by hazards

Travel to and from your building may lead to a greater risk of virus transmission

Public transport may be restricted in order to achieve physical distancing on trains, buses, etc

Access to church buildings may create a virus transmission risk if people all seek entrance at once or are channeled through single points of entry

Risks may be increased for disabled people who may have reduced options for access

Control measures

The congregation will apply the following arrangements to ensure safe access to their building:

- ensure that sufficient access points to the church building are provided so that people do not congregate at entrances and exits; ensure that all access points have supplies of hand sanitiser/gel available for use
- review disabled access arrangements to ensure safe entrance or exit for disabled people
- use floor markings and signage at entrances and exits and introduce one-way flow systems at entry and exit points where appropriate. Consideration to the historical nature of the building will inform the extent of this provision.
- provide alcohol based hand sanitiser/ gel at entrances and exits

Further actions required

1. Disabled access to the Sanctuary shall be by way of the ramp and double doors on the east face of the building.
2. Disabled access to the Halls shall be provided via the double door entrance at the south face of the building.
3. Exit for those with limited mobility may be made via these openings, in the case of the hall, using the alternative access route through the small hall, taking care to do so at quiet times. All access and exit points shall be manned by a volunteer and hand sanitiser shall be available to use.
3. As before, volunteers ensure that individuals visiting the Church building, whether the Sanctuary of the Halls, understand the hand hygiene requirements prior to entry.
4. Arrows and signage shall be displayed to direct the flow of foot traffic, preventing as far as possible individuals passing in opposite directions.
5. Volunteers shall be on hand to guide and instruct individuals if necessary.

Cases of possible infection in the church building

Hazards associated with the coronavirus pandemic

A members, volunteer or visitor may become unwell whilst attending the church building, or a symptomatic person may attend the building

Potential risks to members of the congregation, volunteers and visitors to the church caused by hazards

High risk of transmission

Control measures

If a member, volunteer or visitor of becomes unwell in the church building with coronavirus symptoms (a new, continuous cough or a high temperature) they should be sent home and advised to follow Government advice to self-isolate

- Health Protection Scotland (HPS) "Covid-19 guidance for non-healthcare settings" guidance will be followed.

The following actions should be taken within the building:

- all surfaces that a symptomatic person has come into contact with must be cleaned and disinfected, especially objects visibly contaminated with body fluids and all potentially contaminated high-contact areas such as toilets
- public areas where a symptomatic individual has passed through and spent minimal time, such as corridors, but which are not visibly contaminated with body fluids, can be cleaned thoroughly as normal
- cleaning staff should use disposable cloths or paper roll and a combined detergent disinfectant solution at a dilution of 1000 parts per million available chlorine
- cleaning staff must wear appropriate PPE
- waste from cleaning of areas where possible cases have been (including disposable cloths and tissues) should be "double-bagged" and tied off; it should be placed in a secure holding area for 72 hours before being disposed of in general waste

Further actions required

1. Individuals displaying COVID-19 symptoms shall not be permitted entry into the Church.
2. If an individual falls ill during the event, then they shall be asked to make their way home and follow both NHS Scotland and Scot Gov guidance.
3. The event shall cease after such an incident and Individuals shall be guided to the exit not used by the symptomatic individual.
4. A thorough clean using a viral disinfectant shall be completed. All touch points, seating areas, toilet facilities, walking routes etc. used by the individual shall be cleaned thoroughly. Appropriate gloves and a face covering shall be worn whilst performing cleaning duties.
5. As before, cleaning waste shall be placed in a waste bin. Bins shall be tied closed and left in position for 72 hrs prior to disposal. Appropriate gloves and face coverings shall be worn whilst tying bin bags.