

# Christchurch Hitchin: Risk Assessment (RA) for Rooms 5 and 8 in the Silver Birch Centre (SBC)

**Considerations re hiring premises after Covid-19 lock down. This document covers the Silver Birch area and rooms 5 and 8; there are separate documents for the sanctuary and for the hall with rooms 3, 4, 10 and 11.**

There is just one principal risk at Christchurch: the transmission of the Covid-19 infection from one person to another. There are many circumstances in which this could happen. The trustees seek to mitigate the prospect of any transmission by recognising the risks or circumstances where transmission is possible and introducing mitigating action by the trustees, facilitators, and users and hirers<sup>1</sup> (referred to as 'hirers' in the rest of this RA).

The building can be considered as in three parts:

- A sanctuary** (where the organ is), external entrance at main door, lobby
- B hall** and rooms 3, 4, 10 and 11, external entrance at pink lounge, kitchen, 3 toilets on corridor
- C Silver Birch Centre**, rooms 5 and 8 (with access to the rear garden), external entrance by small kitchen, small kitchen, 2 toilets [This also provides 24hr entrance to the Phase office (room 9)]

This risk assessment (RA) will form part of the hiring agreement. It is a condition of the licence to occupy that hirers will prepare their own risk assessments and will discuss them with either the nominated trustee or the minister before their first event after the church re-opens. Risk assessments should be sent to [minister@christchurchhitchin.org.uk](mailto:minister@christchurchhitchin.org.uk). This requirement is the same, whatever the event and whoever the hirer. The hirers risk assessment should indicate acceptance and adoption of this risk

---

<sup>1</sup> 'users' are those attending in-house events organised by or for the church members; 'hirers' are those external organisations that hire church accommodation

assessment. The RA should be made available to those entitled to come to the events eg by email or on the organisation's website. The Christchurch RA can be viewed on the Christchurch website. There is also a 10-point Appendix (dated 20200816) to the licence, a copy of which must be signed by every hirer.

In no case may attendees at events prepare or cook food on the premises. This applies to both users and hirers.

From 01 October 2020, users and hirers will be able to drink water obtained from taps in the building but they must provide their own drinking vessels, bring the vessels with them and take them home after the event. The vessels should not be shared with others outside their household and any excess water should be taken home rather than thrown away at Christchurch. No hot water will be available for making hot drinks.

Christchurch has appointed contract cleaners to ensure that the premises are as clean as possible and suitable to meet the hirers' needs within the church's overall safeguarding restrictions. Christchurch will work with users and hirers to ensure that the premises are as clean as possible and suitable to meet the hirers' needs within the church's overall safeguarding restrictions. The trustees are seeking to ensure that any and every room that has been occupied will be cleaned before the next user or hirer. The trustees undertake to advise users and hirers where this has not been achieved.

Users and hirers will be able to take their groups into the rear garden on the following conditions:

- that entrance is obtained through room 8 providing that room 8 is not occupied nor will be during the period of the hire
- that no other group is there
- that social distancing is observed
- that the gardener is not there already or comes during the duration of the hire (so far as we know he is not DBS accredited)
- that both gates and the doors to the stores (north and south) are kept closed
- that the hirer adequately supervises any activity in the garden
- that no use is made of the hose pipe
- that the blue soft play area is respected (no stilettos) and that care is taken over the all weather green area (no stilettos)

The maximum number of single person households that can be accommodated in room 5 is 12 and in room 8 is 16 in both cases at 2m social distancing. The maximum of single person households for the rooms on a 1m social distancing are: Room 5: 18, Room 8: 24; and, for 2 person households, sitting together, at 1m spacing, are 24 and 32 respectively.

Numbers in brackets in first column below refer to an earlier mention of the risk in this document

No	Risk/Circumstance	Mitigation	Trustees' responsibility	Hirers' responsibility	Done
<i>1</i>	<i>Before leaving home and before event starts</i>				
1	Christchurch car park is full	Use NHDC car park opposite Christchurch and accessible from Paynes Park		Hirer to advise attendees No parking outside marked areas in Church car park	
2	Queuing to enter car park	Encourage early arrival		All Hirer to advise those attending event, dropping off or picking up	
3	Touching other people, or getting too close to them, getting out of vehicles	One way system for vehicles (clockwise) and temporarily stay in vehicle until adjacent spaces are vacated by people but not necessarily by vehicles		All Advise attendees, those dropping off or picking up	

4	Not knowing by which door to enter the building	Hirer to notify their attendees which door to use to gain entry or deliver offspring/spouses <i>etc</i> Usually the same door will be used for entrance and exit but not if the timing of one event's start is close to the time of another's exit Those attending events in the SBC should gain access through the external doors to the North West. The key for these doors is different from the keys that open and lock other external doors in the property	Trustees to advise hirer (probably separate entrance to Silver Birch)	Hirer to advise all <i>NB</i> Entry door can change if there are other activities on site	
5	Queuing to enter building (not always necessary for drop off and pick up)	Maintain social distancing Once in the building move swiftly to room being used and do not congregate inside the door.		All Hirer to advise attendees	
6	All seats occupied	Attendees unable to stay		Hirer to decide how to deal with this in advance of event	
7	Too much clutter	Encourage attendees not to bring bags unnecessarily		Hirer to advise attendees	
8	Touching other people while walking around	There is a one way system in the rest of the building but the external doors of the SBC act both for entrance and exit. Courtesy by those wishing to enter the SBC is recommended to those wishing to leave			
9	Touching door handles	All internal doors will be closed to stay in keeping with fire precautions and the need for privacy	Facilitators	Hirers	
10	Sitting too close to others	Sit together as household or bubble, minimum 2m from the nearest others		Hirer to place tables and chairs. Attendees not to move furniture	
11	Persons aged over 70 years	Hirers to discourage attendance but not to forbid their attendance		Hirers to advise attendees	
12	Users of wheelchairs that need someone to push them	Each user to have a dedicated pusher and pushers not to be responsible for more than one user		Hirers to advise attendees and pushers	
13	Children	Stay with household or bubble if parents/carers present		Hirers to advise parents/carers, children	

14	Random parking of children's buggies	Leave buggy in vehicle <i>or</i> park buggies in the entrance area so that each is accessible without moving another		Hirers to advise attendees	
15	[Removed]				
16	Items for other households	No exchanges at Christchurch		Hirers to advise attendees	
17	Kitchen	Both kitchens are out of use except for obtaining cold drinking water		Hirers to advise attendees	
18	Toilets (some or all)	These will be thoroughly cleaned before the event. If the event is for more than 60 minutes and the facilities have been heavily used, the hirer should clean after the first hour. Appoint a H&S steward. When entering the toilet, use the sanitising dispenser in the entrance area and, if hands not cleaned in soap and water for 20 seconds, on exit. Someone to monitor one out, one in.	Trustees Facilitators		Hirers to provide monitors
19	Coat pegs on corridor wall	Out of use. For the duration of the event, attendees to store their coats under their chairs in rooms 5 and 8		Hirers to advise attendees	
20	All to sanitise	Sanitiser dispenser provided in entrance to SBC. Hirer to encourage its use	Trustees have provided sanitising equipment	Hirers to facilitate	
21	Run out of sanitiser Box of consumables	Appoint someone to oversee supply of sanitiser Hirer to bring own box of consumables: spare masks, paper towel, tissues, wet wipes, pen, small bottle of sanitiser	Cleaner		
22	Wearing masks	Masks to be worn as people are in confined space		Hirers to advise potential attendees	
23	[Removed]				
24	Instrumentalists	Permitted but musicians must observe social distancing and sanitise their instruments before and after playing them. Must not share scores or stands			
25	Door handles	All to be sanitised before event	Facilitators	Hirers to consider	

26	Food	Food prepared at home is allowed on premises. No sharing; take surplus home		Hirers to advise attendees	
27	Drinking water	Attendees to bring their own bottled water or a vessel which they can fill at Christchurch. No sharing. Take vessels home. Do not throw away excess at Church.		Hirers to advise attendees	
28	Speaker's visual aids	Speaker to sanitise visual aids and not to permit attendees to touch the aids		Speaker	
29	Not keeping to social distancing	Hirers gently to remind attendees of need to follow stipulation		Hirers	
30	Handshaking and hugging	Neither allowed in church nor car park		All	
31	Singing	Solos permitted; group singing is prohibited		All	
32	Items of clothing left	Any left to be removed to designated lost property place (coat hooks in corridor opposite disabled WC)		All	
33	Pigeon holes	Out of action			
34	Tea towels	Should be no need to use		All	
35	Personal clothing	No restriction on fabrics		All	
36	Bare feet	Socks/sandals or similar to be worn		All	
37	Cycles	Not to be secured to those of other households. Owners to sanitise cycles before riding away. Observe social distancing when securing and unlocking cycles		Cyclists	
38	Pens	All to bring their own. No borrowing permitted		All	
39	Tissues	Attendees to bring their own; once used keep in your plastic container and take home.		All Hirer to remind attendees	
40	Hirers may not know who is here	Contact details of all who attend to be recorded and retained by hirer for 21 days. Basis of consent form is available to cover HMG requirements and need to follow GDPR. Hirer to have spare pen and to sanitise it after each use by attendees. If hirer is notified that an attendee has tested positive, hirer is to advise Julie Mills	Trustees	All	
41	First aid kits	To be sanitised after use		User	
42	[Removed]				

43	Lack of ventilation	<p>The trustees will seek to maintain an equable climate in any area being used. This includes heating and ventilation, but the trustees will not be bound to any set temperature or any number of air changes per hour.</p> <p>During winter, the heating system will be set to come ON about 1hr30 before the start of the scheduled event or activity. The leader should arrange for one or more of the windows to be part opened.</p> <p>Users and hirers should not adjust the roomstats or TRVs in the rooms. At the end of the event/activity, all windows should be closed. Doors should be kept shut before, during and after an event.</p> <p>Users and hirers should ensure that the number of windows opened and the extent of their opening should be appropriate to maintain an equable climate which presupposes adequate ventilation.</p> <p>The external doors (room 8) should be kept locked during the event and fire doors should not be compromised.</p> <p>These actions will reduce the chance of transmission of Covid-19 as ventilation reduces the spread of the disease and heating mitigates its transmission.</p> <p>Through this action natural convection will provide the all-important ventilation required. Users and hirers must recognise that this is a condition of use or hire</p>	Stewards, facilitators	Hirers to adjust ventilation to suit their needs but to ensure that there is some ventilation from the outside at all times while the room is occupied
----	---------------------	---	------------------------	--

44	Rest of building	Out of bounds			
45	Umbrellas	To avoid confusion or transmission of infection when recovering umbrellas, do not bring umbrellas to church		All Hirers to advise attendees	
46	[Removed]				
47	Limit on numbers attending	Consider implementing a booking system to avoid sending people away before event can begin		Hirers	
48	Loss of social distancing in hall	Because of the multifaceted activities in rooms 5 and 8 no tape will be affixed to the floor to show prohibited areas		Hirers to consider forming bubbles Hirers to reinforce	
49	[Removed]				
50	Where to go, which way to go	There are Covid-19 related notices on entry points, exits, one way routes and in toilets	JGC		
<b>II</b>	<b>At the event</b>				
51[10]	Sitting too close to others	Sit together as household or bubble, min 2m from nearest others		Hirers to be responsible for positioning chairs etc	
52[13]	Children	Stay with household or bubble		All	
53[22]	Wearing masks	Masks to be worn if people are in confined space for over 30 mins		All	
54	Speaker moving around the rooms	Speaker must stay in restricted area		Hirer to advise speaker	
55[42]	[Removed]				
56[43]	Lack of ventilation	Windows to be kept open so far as possible during event. Implications for retaining heat to be considered in winter	Facilitators	Hirers	
57[44]	Rest of building	Out of bounds		All	
58	Items of clothing left	Hirer to remind attendees to take home their personal belongings			
<b>III</b>	<b>Post event</b>				

59	Leaving the event	Attendees to remain seated at end of the event. Leader to indicate to attendees the order of exit (chairs nearest door first). This to avoid crowding at pinch point of exit. Leader to remind attendees of need to observe social distancing. Exit through Silver Birch door, co-operating with incoming attendees	Marshals	Hirer to appoint marshals	
60[29]	Not keeping to social distancing	Hirer gently to remind attendees of need to follow stipulation. Attendees to leave swiftly and avoid congregating outside the building		Hirer to be vigilant	
61[16]	Items for other households	No exchanges at Christchurch		All Hirer to advise attendees	
62[17]	Kitchen	Out of use; no food or drinks provided		All	
63	Toilets (some or all)	Deep clean after event. Appoint a H&S steward.		All	
64	Sanitising dispensers	e-mail <a href="mailto:rooms@christchurch.org.uk">rooms@christchurch.org.uk</a> if dispensers need topping up	Trustees	Hirers	
65	Door handles	All to be sanitised after event	Facilitators		
66[30]	Handshaking and hugging	Neither allowed in church nor on church premises outside		All	
67	Items of clothing left	Any left to be removed to designated place (coat pegs in corridor, opposite disabled toilet)	Trustees	All	
68[33]	Pigeon holes	Out of action		All	
69[34]	Tea towels	Should be no need to use		All	
70[41]	First aid kits	To be sanitised after use		User	
71[44]	Rest of building	Out of bounds		All	
72	[Removed]				
73	It won't be right	Revise and update this document in response to changes in regulation from HMG or MCH and in the light of experience	Consultation with TOG JGC		
74	Ventilation	Close all windows and doors		Hirer	
<b>IV</b>	<b>Other times</b>				
75					

	JM updated 04/12/2020 v9HSB				
--	--------------------------------	--	--	--	--

GDPR = General Data Protection Regulation; H&S = Health and Safety; HMG = Her Majesty's Government; MCH = Methodist Church House; SBC = Silver Birch Centre; TMCP = Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes; TOG = Trustees Oversight Group;  
TRV = Thermostatic radiator valve

Contacts:

Initial contact for hirers: [rooms@christchurchhitchin.org.uk](mailto:rooms@christchurchhitchin.org.uk)

Rev Val Reid's email address for Risk Assessments: [minister@christchurchhitchin.org.uk](mailto:minister@christchurchhitchin.org.uk)