

Christchurch Hitchin: Risk Assessment for the Sanctuary

Considerations re using or hiring premises during the Covid-19 pandemic. This document covers the sanctuary; there are separate documents for the hall & rooms and for the Silver Birch area

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/hirers¹.

The building can be considered as in three parts:

A sanctuary (where the organ is), external entrance at main door, welcome area, lobby; exit through pink lounge

B hall and rooms 3, 4, 10 and 11, external entrance at main door, 3 toilets on corridor; exit through pink lounge

C Silver Birch, (rooms 5 and 8), external entrance beside small kitchen, 2 toilets; exit by same door as entrance. This also provides 24hr entrance to the Phase office (room 9)

The maximum number of households, with a mix of size of household, that can be accommodated in the Sanctuary is 20 (48 persons) at 2m social distancing and in the Hall is 30 single person households at 2m social

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

distancing and assuming no paraphernalia. About 100 can be accommodated in the Sanctuary if all households are two persons and the social distancing is at 1m. This assumes all are seated.

This risk assessment 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.

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. It will be unusual for there to be more than one event in any one part (A, B or C). Where it is necessary for the hirer of Part A to have access to the nearby 3 toilets, Part B may be closed. Alternatively, if Parts A and B have contemporaneous events but there is no event in Part C, A may use the nearby 3 toilets if those in charge of Part B are willing to use the 2 toilets in Part C. This needs careful management before the event, during the event and after the event, including close liaison with the professional cleaners.

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

Users and hirers are 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. No hot water will be available for making hot drinks. This requirement is the same, whatever the event and whoever the hirer. The hirers risk assessments should indicate acceptance and adoption of this risk 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.

Hirers who have been happy in rooms 3, 4, 5 or 8 may wish to move to the hall or the sanctuary in order to maintain social distancing and accommodate as many as want to come to their event(s).

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 and/or picking up	
3	Touching other people, or getting too close to them, getting out of vehicles	One-way system for vehicles (clockwise) and, as necessary, temporarily stay in vehicle until spaces either side are vacated by people, not vehicles		All Advise attendees, those dropping off and/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>	Trustees to advise hirer: usually main automatic doors	Hirer to advise all	
5	Queuing to enter building (not always necessary for drop off and pick up)	Maintain 2m social distancing		All Hirer to advise attendees	

6	All seats occupied	Prospective attendees may be unable to stay		Hirer to decide how to deal with this	
7	Too much clutter	Encourage attendees not to bring bags unnecessarily. Attendees to pop their bags under their seats		Hirer to advise attendees	
8	Touching other people while walking around	<p>Implement one-way system in building: entry at main doors, thence to lobby, down corridor as far as working toilet.</p> <p>Thence, generally, return route to lobby is further down corridor, through the hall entered at the kitchen end. If hall is occupied, abandon one-way system and queue for toilets from lobby</p> <p>Attendees must not congregate in the welcome area but move straight to the sanctuary and take a seat.</p>	<p>Signage is in place on doors and floors</p> <p>Facilitators to remind attendees to move into the sanctuary promptly</p>		Done
9	Touching door handles	All internal doors to be kept closed, subject to fire precautions, to prevent transmission of air from one area to another	Facilitators	Hirers	
10	Sitting too close to others	Sit together as household or bubble, minimum 2m from nearest others Attendees to take seats soon after arrival	Matrix of chairs with mix of 1,2,3,4,5 in a household laid out	Attendees not to move chairs without permission from trustees	
11	Persons aged over 70 years	Hirers to discourage attendance but not to forbid		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. Wheelchairs to be placed towards back of sanctuary to allow step free exit. Wheelchair to be substituted for static chair which is not to be returned to a stack		Hirers to advise attendees and pushers	
13	Children	Stay with household or bubble		Hirers to advise parents/carers, children	
14	Random parking of children's buggies	Leave buggy in vehicle <i>or</i> , if hall not in use, park buggies along long wall of church hall so that each is accessible without moving another. If walkers bring buggies, these to be parked in welcome area so that each can be moved without the need to move another		Hirers to advise attendees	
15	Sound desk and projection	PETg sheet is in place between desk and sanctuary and between sound desk and projection desk. No seating between desks and organ. Operators to wear gloves and not to attempt to clean the kit. Lapel mikes, if used, to be cleaned after use. No other mikes to be used			
16	Items for other households	No exchanges, deliveries to or receipts from others at Christchurch		Hirers to advise attendees	
17	Kitchen	Out of bounds except for access to cold drinking water to put into attendees' vessels		Hirers to advise attendees	

18	Toilets (some or all).	Deep clean before event. If there is heavy use of any toilet, additional cleaning should be carried out by the user/hirer. Appoint a H&S steward. Sanitising station provided in corridor near entrance to toilet: this to be used on entry to the toilet and, if hands not cleaned in water for 20 seconds, on exit. Someone to marshal one out, one in	Trustees to discuss with professional cleaners. Facilitators	Hirers to provide marshal Hirers to provide additional cleaning, as necessary	
19	Coat pegs on corridor wall	Out of use. For the duration of the event, attendees to pop their coats under their chairs in the sanctuary		Hirers to advise attendees	
20	All to sanitise	Portable sanitising station provided at main entrance and encourage its use. This to be kept out of direct sunlight.	Trustees are providing equipment and consumable gel. Cleaners to top up dispenser tanks, as necessary	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	Trustees. Cleaner to advise need for re-supply	Hirer to bring own consumables	
22	Wearing masks	Masks to be worn as people are in confined space		Hirers to advise attendees	
24	Instrumentalists	Permitted but musicians must observe social distancing, probably without facing conductor (who should be min 2m from nearest musician and audience)			

25	Door handles	All to be sanitised before event	Facilitators	Hirers to consider	
26	Food	None allowed on premises		Hirers to advise attendees	
27	Drinking water	Attendees to bring their own bottled water or vessels to be filled at church		Hirers to advise attendees	
28	Speaker's visual aids, cake stall, book stall <i>etc</i> could harbour the virus	Speaker to sanitise visual aids and not to permit attendees to touch the aids; cake stalls, book stalls and the like are prohibited		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 in car park		All	
31	Singing – audience participation	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	Pigeonholes	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 or similar to be worn		All	
37	Cycles	Not to be chained 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 their sealable plastic	Trustees	All Hirer to remind attendees	

		container and take home. Christchurch may remove all bins			
40	Hirers may not know who is here; NHS Test and Trace; latecomers	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. Event organiser to display his/her mobile number on card (supplied by Christchurch) at main door as soon as main door is locked ² .	Trustees	All, possibly on the internet for those with access to computers. Hirer to supply mobile number of event organiser	
41	First aid kits	To be sanitised after use		User	
42	Soft toys and play area in sanctuary	Closed			
43	Lack of ventilation and inadequate heating	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. During winter, the heating system will be set to come ON about 1hr30 before the start of the scheduled event or activity. For a small group (up to, say, 20 people) at about 15 minutes before the start the leader	Stewards, facilitators	Hirers to adjust ventilation to suit their needs. Whenever occupied the sanctuary must have some ventilation	

² The display area of the card showing the mobile number of someone present and able to open the main door to latecomers is about 200mm x 75mm, long side as base

		<p>should arrange for one or more of the clerestory windows (high in the wall) to be part opened. There is a long wooden pole for this purpose – there is only one such pole in the building – to be found in the sanctuary in the corner by the projection desk. The pole must be sanitised before and after each use and returned to its normal resting place.</p> <p>For a larger group it may be necessary to part-open more than one clerestory window. Users and hirers should not open the windows either side of the fixed raised dais. Users and hirers should not adjust the roomstats in the sanctuary or the hall. At the end of the event/activity, all windows should be closed. Doors, including those to the lobby, should be kept shut before, during and after an event.</p> <p>During summer users and hirers should ensure that the number of clerestory windows opened and the extent of that opening should be appropriate to maintain an equable climate which presupposes adequate ventilation.</p>			
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		<p>The external doors 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>			
44	Rest of building	Out of bounds			
45	Umbrellas	To avoid confusion or transmission of infection when recovering umbrellas, do not bring umbrellas		All Hirers to advise attendees	
46	Extending sanctuary to include hall to accommodate large number of attendees	Not permitted by hirers	Trustees	Hirers to note	
47	Limit on numbers attending	Consider implementing a booking system. If groups of up to 6 are permitted by HMG, use existing 48 chairs before taking extra from the stacks		Hirers	
48	Loss of social distancing in sanctuary	Exclusion areas marked on floor by red/white tape.	Trustees	Hirers to consider forming bubbles	

		Blue tape indicates individual or groups of chairs for households or bubbles with 2m distancing			
49	Cloth covered chairs	Not to be used	Trustees		
50	Where to go, which way to go	Signs are in place to remind attendees to wear masks, entry point and exits, need to sanitise hands and one-way system	Julie Mills		
II	At the event				
51[10]	Sitting too close to others	Sit together as household or bubble, min 2m from nearest others. Once all 20 household seats are occupied (between 20 and 48 persons), take extra chairs from stacks and leave them on the floor for cleaning	Trustees have designated positions for chairs	Hirers not to move chairs	
52[13]	Children	Stay with household or bubble		All	
53[22]	Wearing masks	Masks to be worn as people are in confined space		All	
54	Speaker moving around sanctuary	Red/white floor tape shows area within which speaker must stay. Sound amplification by radio mics	Trustees	Hirer to advise speaker	
55[42]	Soft toys and play area	Fixed dais to be closed			
56[43]	Lack of ventilation	As Clause 43 above. Fans do not ventilate, they circulate. Implications for retaining heat to be considered in winter	Stewards, 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			

III	Post event				
59	Leaving the event	<p>Attendees to remain seated at end of the event. Marshals to indicate to attendees the order of exit (those nearest exits to leave first). This to avoid crowding at pinch points of exits. Leader/chair to remind attendees of need to observe social distancing. Exit by piano for those at front of sanctuary. For those near the lobby, exit doors near sound desk and near vestry, using a route through lobby, corridor, hall and pink lounge. If hall is occupied, all to exit sanctuary at front right, up steps. All attendees to use a sanitiser.</p> <p>Attendees to leave the building and the area outside the building promptly and avoid congregating to chat. Do not stack any chairs.</p>	Marshals	Hirer to appoint marshals	
60[29]	Not keeping to social distancing; Test and Trace	<p>Stewards gently to remind attendees of need to follow stipulation. Event organiser to advise Julie Mills if any attendee tests positive for Covid-19 within 21 days of the event</p>	Stewards	Hirer to be vigilant	
61[16]	Items for other households	No exchanges at Christchurch		All Hirer to advise attendees	
62[17]	Kitchen	No food or drinks to be provided. Access to cold water tap permitted, <i>in</i>		All	

		<i>extremis</i> . Sanitise door handle, light switch etc			
63	Toilets (some or all)	Deep clean after event. Appoint a H&S steward		All	
65	Door handles; mobile number	All to be sanitised after event. Mobile number on card at main door	Facilitators	Event organiser to move mobile number card from main door and return to box	
66[30]	Handshaking and hugging	Neither allowed in church nor on church premises outside, inc car park		All	
67	Items of clothing left	Any left to be removed to designated place (coat pegs opposite disabled toilet)	Trustees	All	Where to?
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	Sound desk and projection	Operators to use disposable gloves and clean lapel mikes	Operators	IH	
73	It won't be right	Revise and update this document in response to changes in regulation from HMG or church governing body and in the light of experience	Consultation with TOG JGC		
74	Ventilation	Close all windows and doors		Hirer	
IV	Other times				
75	Private prayer	To be supervised. Consider designating a few chairs for this purpose, grouping them and labelling			

		them appropriately. Clean before and after each use			
	Updated by JM 04/12/2020 V9HS Saved as: XtCh Cov RA v9HS				

GDPR = General Data Protection Regulation; HMG = Her Majesty's Government; MCH = Methodist Church House;
TOG = Trustees Oversight Group

Contacts:

Initial contact for hirers: rooms@christchurchhitchin.org.uk

Rev Val Reid's email address for Risk Assessments: minister@christchurchhitchin.org.uk