

## Covid-19 Risk Assessment for Opening of Church Buildings for Worship



<b>Premises:</b> Tabor Baptist Church, High Street, Llantrisant, CF72 8BR	<b>Assessor's name:</b> Lyn Jones	<b>Date completed:</b> 20th July 2020	<b>Review date:</b> To be reviewed and amended if necessary, after the first service to ensure suitability and effectiveness. Monthly thereafter, or when current legislation / government changes are announced.
---	--------------------------------------	--	---

### Introduction

Public worship within church buildings, subject to social distancing and any other measures deemed by Welsh Government, will be allowed from 13<sup>th</sup> July. Other activities, except for a few still prohibited by law, may also take place in churches, subject to the government guidance in place for the relevant sector.

The Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Wales) Regulations 2020 along with government guidance for the safe use of places of worship during the pandemic requires a COVID-19 risk assessment to be carried out for every building open to the public. More general guidance and advice about behaviour and best practice in relation to coronavirus has also been issued by the Welsh Government and Public Health Wales. This guidance is intended to compliment the legislation but does not (of itself) impose legal requirements. However, failure to follow current guidance and best practice, could be deemed an act of negligence if an adverse event were to occur.

Where social distancing and other necessary restrictions cannot be achieved, the Church Officers must comply with current legal requirements and consider if church activities can resume or continue. This document provides a risk assessment, for the re-opening of Tabor Baptist Church, High Street, Llantrisant, to church ministers, officers and members of the public, entering for any permitted purposes.

This risk assessment will be reviewed and updated in line with any substantive change to legislation and /or the guidance on the safe use of places of worship.

### Version Control

Issue Date	Version Number	Issued by
<b>20<sup>th</sup> July 2020</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>Church Officers</b>

# Covid-19 Risk Assessment for Opening of Church Buildings for Worship



## Risk Assessment

Area of Focus	Controls required	Additional information	Date Completed
<b>Access to church buildings following period of lockdown.</b>	Initial access to the site shall be by nominated individuals / work party who are not displaying Covid-19 symptoms or are deemed to be within the defined Covid-19 vulnerable categories.	Physical distancing and appropriate personal hygiene measures to be implemented.	20 <sup>th</sup> July
	Visual check of internal and external structures paths, walkways and grounds to be carried out.	Any obvious signs of damage or deterioration that may affect the safety of persons using the premises to be rectified before general opening.	20 <sup>th</sup> July
	Buildings to be fully aired before use.	Windows and doors to be opened to allow full flow through of fresh air, to remove stale atmosphere.	20 <sup>th</sup> July
	Check for vermin / animal waste and general cleanliness.	Full general clean of buildings.	20 <sup>th</sup> July
	Legionella controls for water supply system. Ensure water systems are flushed through before use.	Taps shall be allowed to run at low volume without splashing or causing a spray, for at least 20 minutes. All toilets are to be flushed at least 3 times with seat lids down.	N/A
	Switch on and check electrical and heating systems if needed. Commission system checks as necessary.	Ensure annual safety checks and certification is current / in date	N/A
	Ensure safe use of equipment needed for audio/video equipment, possible live streaming or recording: avoid exceeding safe load on sockets, cables/tripod causing trip hazard	Check all cabling for any obvious physical damage or evidence of interference by vermin.	20 <sup>th</sup> July
<b>Deciding whether to open for congregational worship following initial premises checks.</b>	Welsh Government and Public Health Wales Guidance and current legislative requirements shall be adhered to at all times.	Limitations on numbers of persons allowed to attend a meeting / internal gathering may prevent all church congregation attending at one time. Alternative arrangements for additional meetings shall be put in place.	20 <sup>th</sup> July
	Allow sufficient and realistic timescales to ensure all necessary remedial measures, cleaning and provision of Covid-19 controls can be effectively implemented before opening.	If all necessary measures cannot be implemented, the re-opening date will be rescheduled until such time as all controls are in place.	N/A

## Covid-19 Risk Assessment for Opening of Church Buildings for Worship

	Update Tabor Baptist Church website and communicate intentions of opening via any relevant social media.	Ensure potential attendees are reminded to comply with current regulations and must not attend if displaying Covid-19 symptoms or are deemed to be within the defined Covid-19 high risk categories.	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July + ongoing</b>
	Give due notice of the resumption of use of the building to congregation and wider community, ensuring that visitors and worshippers will know what to expect when they come.	Explanation of seating arrangements for individuals and family clusters / bubbles (as defined within the regulations).	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
	Advise worshippers and visitors of the need as part of Test Trace Protect, for the church to record their attendance (name and contact details) which will be securely retained for 21 days and then destroyed as per General Data Protection Regulations.	Where attendance is recorded, this shall be carried out by the door steward / greeter using their own writing instrument. No shared writing instruments shall be permitted. Attendance records shall be securely stored.	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
<b>Preparation of the Church and Vestry for access by members of the congregation and visitors for worship and any other permitted purposes.</b>	Ensure initial pre-opening checks have been undertaken and any necessary actions completed.	As per section 1 of this assessment.	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
	Review of relevant government guidance on cleaning and preparing church buildings. Ensure suitable and sufficient cleaning materials and necessary personal protective equipment is available for the task.	Cleaning materials and disposable gloves to be provided and available within the vestry building.	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
	Review point of entry into the church to manage flow of people and indicate this with notices, keeping emergency exits available at all times.	This may include a marked one-way system where possible/ appropriate.	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
	Identify and put in place required signage, arrangements for people to wait or queue outside the building (taking into account any consequential risks arising from people gathering outside).	Social distancing signage shall be put in place along the entrance pathway (hand railing). Prior communication via church social media to remind congregation of social distancing measures on entering and leaving the church.	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
	External and internal doors and windows shall be opened to improve ventilation and reduce any physical touch points and potential contamination.	All doors with the exception of internal toilet doors and fire doors shall be kept in the open position during habitation of the buildings.	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
	Bibles/literature/hymn books/leaflets shall be not be available for use.	Congregation to be advised to use their own personal bibles or appropriate digital apps. Readings and associated texts, words to hymns to be digitally displayed via the church audio / visual system.	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>

## Covid-19 Risk Assessment for Opening of Church Buildings for Worship

	Any objects or items (if they are liable to be touched or closely breathed on) shall be cordoned off or removed from public access areas.	This aspect to be constantly reviewed and areas checked by church officers.	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
	Removal or isolation of children's resources, toys and play areas.	All play items within the vestry will be cordoned off and parents advised that such items are not to be used.	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
	Reconfiguration of church seating layout. Suitable physical distancing of seats, aisles, pulpit, including safe flow of congregation through the church.	Seating to be laid out at 2 metre distancing. Planning to include both individual seats and cluster seating of family groups or bubbles.	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
	Non-essential seating to be removed or stacked in a cordoned off area to ensure attendees can maintain social distancing.	No seating to be moved from the allocated / marked areas. Following initial services, some reconfiguration may be required. This shall be undertaken by designated church members.	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
	Flow of movement for people entering and leaving the building shall be identified by signs / floor markings to maintain physical distancing requirements.	Congregation to be reminded of the need to ensure flow and distancing through the buildings.	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
	Use of the upper gallery area of the church will be permitted. This will include a one-way system where possible. Seating arrangements will be marked out with, limitations on access to some seating.	Upper gallery seating shall be restricted to a minimum of 2 metres back from the gallery rail. Areas of seating will be temporarily cordoned off to ensure 2 metre distancing.	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
	Hand sanitisers will be available at access and exit points from the upper and lower levels of the church building and vestry for visitors to use.	Hand sanitisers will be a minimum of 60% alcohol. This will be advised to everyone entering the church buildings. Where individual have potential sensitisation to such products, they may use their own hand cleaning products. Soap and water is also available within the Vestry toilet area.	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
	Due to the church and vestry building layout, each building only has one entry and exit point. Signage and verbal reminders to be in place to ensure safe passage and social distancing can be maintained.	One way system will be implemented as far as practical.	<b>N/A</b>
	Notices in place to remind visitors about important safe practices e.g. no physical contact, practice hand washing etc.	Notices to be in place within both church buildings at point of entry and other key points. Parents / guardians of children / young people attending church to be responsible for ensuring social	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>

## Covid-19 Risk Assessment for Opening of Church Buildings for Worship

		distancing and good hygiene practices are maintained.	
	High-risk surfaces and touch points (door handles, switches, taps, toilet flush handles all hard surfaces) to be wiped with appropriate cleaners, sanitiser spray or disposable wipes.	Following main initial clean immediately pre reopening; all touch points shall be cleaned immediately following and prior to next use of the buildings.	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
<b>Preaching, Singing and Use of Instruments</b>	Preaching shall be conducted by the minister who will be suitably located and socially distanced from the immediate close congregation. The minister will use either the lower ground level or upper level pulpit area to conduct the service. Current guidance prohibits any congregational group singing or the use of any instrument that requires the user to blow in to. Singing shall be limited to one singing chorister / leader where appropriate.	The presiding minister shall utilise the fixed microphone sound system to reduce the need to over project and potentially increase any droplet spread. The chosen solo singer shall not over project and must maintain a social distance in excess of 2 metres from any other persons within the building.	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
<b>Audio Visual equipment</b>	Whenever an audio headset may be set up and used/handled by the minister using it. They shall ensure the unit is wiped / cleaned / sanitised before and after use.	Should a different minister use the unit, the headset / microphone unit shall be unused for a minimum of 72 hours.	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
	Laptop /computer system / sound control system shall be cleaned before and after each use by the user. Users of the system shall be limited as far as possible and their use of the equipment documented on the church attendance log.	Anyone using the equipment must declare immediately if they are feeling unwell / displaying any Covid-19 symptoms or have been in contact with someone displaying such symptoms / awaiting a Covid-19 test or has been declared as suffering from Covid-19.	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
<b>Toilet and Welfare facilities</b>	Handwashing facilities must have adequate soap provision and paper towels, and a bin for the paper towels. Provision and replenishment of soap and paper towels shall be carried out as part of the site checks prior to every service / meeting at the church buildings.	Bins to have internal plastic bag liner and be regularly emptied. No decanting of rubbish out of bins. Bin bags are to be securely tied and disposed of within normal refuse bin. <i>Signage will be provided.</i>	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
	Toilet facilities will have an adequate supply of soap, hot water and disposable hand towels, and a bin for towels.	Sanitising wipes shall be available within each toilet. Users shall be requested to self-clean the facilities after use and dispose of used wipes in the bin provided. <i>Signage will be provided.</i>	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>

## Covid-19 Risk Assessment for Opening of Church Buildings for Worship

	All waste bins will have disposable liners (e.g. polythene bin bags) to reduce the risk to those responsible for removing them.	Those emptying bins must wear disposable gloves for the removal and disposal of waste bin contents / bags.	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
	To ensure all hygiene requirements are complied with, children shall be accompanied by a parent or guardian when visiting the toilet facilities.	Hand sanitisers and soap and water / disposable hand towels are available within the toilet facilities.	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
<b>Emergency Response – First Aid and Fire</b>	The primary responsibility is to preserve life and first aid should be administered if required and until the emergency services attend. The provision of adequate first aid resources will be as per pre Covid arrangements. In the event of a person requiring first aid, it is paramount that the first aider takes the necessary measures to protect themselves and the person/s first aid treatment is being administered to. Dealing with incidents will be as per the current HSE guidance for Covid -19. Consideration must also be given to potential delays in emergency services response, due to the current pressure on rescue services resource.		<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
	Fire Evacuation shall be to a muster point away from the main buildings and at a location not to impede emergency service access. Social distancing to be maintained during this time.		<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
<b>Cleaning the church before and after general use (no known exposure to anyone with Coronavirus symptoms)</b>	If the church building has been closed for 72 hours between periods of being open, then there is no need for extra cleaning to remove the virus from surfaces.		<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
	If 72-hour closure is not possible then check all cleaners are not in a vulnerable group or self-isolating.		<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
	Cleaning rota to be implemented and communicated to cover opening arrangements.		<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
	All cleaners to be provided with disposable nitrile or PVC gloves (NOT LATEX). Removing of potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site shall be carried out at the end of each day the church and buildings are in use.	Persons responsible for removing potentially contaminated waste (e.g. hand towels) from the site must not be in the vulnerable category. If cleaners	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>

## Covid-19 Risk Assessment for Opening of Church Buildings for Worship

		wish to use their own disposable gloves this is perfectly acceptable.	
	Suitable cleaning materials shall be provided and suitable for the surfaces are to be cleaned.		<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>
<b>Access to the church after a known exposure or PHW notification of someone with Coronavirus symptoms having attended the church.</b>	To reduce the potential of Covid 19 spread (potential for spread by those not displaying Covid 19 symptoms). The church building shall be closed immediately. The building shall be quarantined for a minimum period of 72 hours.	Where a 72-hour closure is implemented, follow Public Health Wales guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings.	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b>