

COVID-19 RISK ASSESSMENT

FOR USE OF WISEWOOD METHODIST CHURCH BY COMMUNITY GROUPS

Revision 01 – 7th September 2021

	28 th July 2021	Previous document withdrawn and replaced by separate Risk Assessments for Corporate Worship and Use of Community Rooms.
Revision 01	7 th September 2021	Document retitled and Worship Area added to list of rooms. General Notes corrected for singing, updated to include use of the Worship Area and renumbered as required. General updates and restrictions on use of toilets eased.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this risk assessment is to ascertain the ongoing impact of Covid-19 on the use of Wisewood Methodist Church premises for use by community groups, and to determine what protocols and regimes should be established and continued to reduce and minimise any dangers to the health and wellbeing of those attending for activities.

Risk ratings for various functions are based on assigning two numerical values to each risk – one for the likelihood of the risk, and one for the severity of the risk.

Likelihood of risk

1. Seldom
2. Frequent
3. Certain or near certain

Severity of risk

1. Low (minor injury)
2. Medium (serious injury)
3. High (fatality)

Based on the numbers above, the overall Risk Rating can be found by multiplying the likelihood of the risk by the severity of the risk:

		Potential consequences of risk		
		1 (Low)	2 (Medium)	3 (High)
Likelihood of risk	1 (Seldom)	1 (Trivial risk)	2 (Tolerable risk)	3 (Moderate risk)
	2 (Frequent)	2 (Tolerable risk)	4 (Moderate risk)	6 (Substantial risk)
	3 (Certain)	3 (Moderate risk)	6 (Substantial risk)	9 (Intolerable risk)

This document reflects the latest [Government guidance for places of worship](#) published on 16th July 2021 and [Methodist Church guidance](#) updated on 22nd July 2021, which includes [Guide to managing your church building](#) (version 1 – 19th July 2021).

In summary, where possible face coverings and social distancing of at least 1 metre are still advised on our premises.

USERS OF COMMUNITY ROOMS AND WORSHIP AREA

- ACCESSING THE BUILDING AND TOILETS
 - Risk - Social and tactile contamination.
 - Precautions - See General Notes.
- ACCESSING THE WORSHIP AREA
 - Risk - Social and tactile contamination.
 - Precautions – See General Notes below. Numbers in the Worship Area to be limited to ensure that appropriate social distancing for the particular activity (minimum 1 metre) can be maintained. Where possible, instructions to be given as to where people should walk and sit to maintain social distancing, and face coverings should be worn when standing or seated. For singing (performance or rehearsal) see General Note 11. See also General Notes regarding antiseptic cleaning of the premises.
- ACCESSING THE HALL, KITCHEN, OWLERTON ROOM AND WADSLEY/WESLEY ROOM
 - Risk - Social and tactile contamination.
 - Precautions – See General Notes below. Numbers in each area to be limited to ensure that the appropriate social distancing for the particular activity (minimum 1 metre) can be maintained. Where possible, instruction to be given as to where people should stand, walk and sit to maintain social distancing, and face coverings should be worn when standing or seated. For singing (performance or rehearsal) see General Note 11. Access to the Owlerton Room and Wadsley/Wesley Room and rear corridor to be carefully managed. See also General Notes regarding antiseptic cleaning of the premises.
- EXITING THE PREMISES
 - Risk - Social and tactile contamination.
 - Precautions - See General Notes regarding the regime for a controlled exiting ensuring social distancing.
- ACCESSING THE TOILETS
 - Risk - Social and tactile contamination.
 - Precautions – Numbers of people allowed into the toilet areas at the same time should be limited to prevent crowding, and therefore users may experience having to wait on occasion. See General Notes on antiseptic cleaning of the premises.

Before precautions			After precautions		
Likelihood	Severity	o/a risk rating	Likelihood	Severity	o/a risk rating
2	3	6	1	2	2

GENERAL NOTES

In our drive to minimize Covid-19 transmission via social and tactile contamination we will be adopting the following protocols and regimes until further notice:

1. The lock on the main entrance has been changed and the keys are in the possession of a limited number of people whose details will be listed and available. This approach is to eliminate unknown access into the premises which may compromise the sterility of the building. Any authorised access will require antiseptic cleaning of any touched surfaces. The side door entry into the premises is not to be used except as a means of fire escape.
2. Controlled access into the building via the main entrance will mean where possible the observance of minimum 1 metre social distancing complete with the wearing of face coverings.
3. Hand sanitizers are available at key points throughout the building with a request that they be used by everyone.
4. On entering the foyer, a copy of the NHS Covid 19 QR code is available for scanning with the NHS Covid 19 mobile phone app. In addition, the names and contact details of people attending should be noted and retained for 21 days for the purpose of NHS Test and Trace.
5. Where any activity will last longer than fifteen minutes, ventilation in the room in which it is taking place should be implemented immediately upon entering the area and allowed to continue for as long as possible after the end of the activity prior to leaving the premises.
6. Where possible, during use of the worship area, the pairs of doors from the foyer and the single door to the corridor should be left open to improve ventilation. Similarly, all windows in the worship area (6 no in total) should be fully opened to improve cross ventilation. Vertical blinds in front of the open windows should be left open to avoid limiting air flow.
7. When the Community Rooms (Hall, Owlerton and Wadsley/Wesley Rooms) are being used, all opening windows should be fully opened to maximise natural ventilation. Blinds and curtains should be left open to avoid limiting air flow through open windows.
8. In order to improve ventilation in the hall, the windows in the snooker area should be fully opened for the duration of the activity. The fire exit door between the foyer and the main corridor should be held open on the magnetic hold-open device.
9. Where possible, no-one should remain in any of the Community Rooms or kitchen for more than 30 minutes without a break.
10. In the event of a particular group of people wanting to use the Community Rooms (Hall, Owlerton and Wadsley/Wesley Rooms) or Worship Area, the number of people in a room at any one time should be limited to ensure minimum 1 metre social distancing. All activities, particularly singing or strenuous activities, e.g., Zumba, dancing, etc. should be strictly in accordance with Covid 19 guidance from their regulating bodies and with Government and Methodist Church guidance, particularly regarding any requirement for increased social distancing and wearing of face coverings.
11. Where singing takes place (rehearsals or performances), where possible it should follow the Government's latest [Covid 19 – guidance for the safe use of places of worship](#). Appropriate social distancing between singers, and singers and audience should be maintained.
12. Users of the Community Rooms and Worship Area (other than for worship) should undertake their own risk assessment, based on the proposed activity, guidance from their governing bodies, and this document. A copy should be made available to the church's Covid 19 Co-ordinators.
13. More than one person may be in the kitchen at a time, provided that minimum 1 metre social distancing is maintained, and face coverings worn. The kitchen extract fan should be switched on. If possible, the kitchen fire exit door should be opened when the kitchen is occupied and closed when not.

14. The difficulties in maintaining social distancing in the narrow corridor outside the Owlerton and Wadsley/Wesley Rooms mean that access, both entry and egress, should be carefully supervised.
15. People should enter the hall via the main double doors from the foyer and exit either directly via the snooker area double fire exit doors or by the single fire exit door and down the corridor back into the main foyer area.
16. Toilets in the foyer and the disabled toilet will be made available for all building users, although access down the corridor may entail giving way to someone already in the corridor in order to maintain social distancing. The foyer and offshoot corridor can be used as waiting areas in this eventuality. Face coverings should be worn in all areas unless particular individuals or groups are exempt. Numbers of people allowed into the toilet areas at the same time should be limited to prevent crowding.
17. Toilets will have hand sanitizers for use on entering and leaving the toilet area along with soap dispensers, paper towels and antiseptic wipes. Open waste bins will be provided. Spray and wipes will be available in the toilet cubicles for use on the sanitary ware both before and after use. The toilet lid should be down before flushing the toilet. It is imperative that this protocol be observed by everyone. Where toilets have mechanical extract, the fan should be left on continually and any window left shut to avoid short circuiting of the air movement. Where toilets only have opening windows, these should be left open.
18. To minimize physical contact with surfaces, all doors, where possible, should be wedged open. This will require extra vigilance where fire procedures and security are compromised.
19. All surfaces that can reasonably be expected to have been touched during occupation of the building should be antiseptically cleaned before and after each use of the building by the users. Where necessary, the 'fogger' should be used to disinfect specific areas and items of furniture, etc. After use of the fogger, the room should not be accessed for a minimum of one hour.
20. When use of any of the rooms has finished, all open windows and external doors must be securely closed and locked by the users.
21. Other than the banner above the pulpit, all banners and non-laminated notices etc. have been removed from walls and stored. Informative and directional signage will be employed to help users to safely negotiate the premises. The building should be checked weekly to ensure that informative and directional signage is still in place.
22. The Church Stewards will act as Covid-19 Co-ordinators.
23. No-one who currently has Covid-19 symptoms or has had a positive Covid-19 test within the last ten days should attend the building. In the event of someone developing Covid-19 symptoms within 48 hours of having visited the building, one of the Church Stewards should be notified immediately.
24. In the event of notification of a positive Covid-19 test, NHS Test and Trace will implement their procedures and we may need to consider closing the building for 72 hours. If 72 hours closure is not possible, then Public Health England guidelines on cleaning in non-healthcare settings should be followed.

Advice on these matters is frequently changing and will, of necessity, require constant monitoring and the making of changes to our protocols. Similarly, changes will have to be made in the light of our own experiences in using the building, and this can only be successful with the complete co-operation of all concerned. This risk assessment is a 'living document' and will be presented to each Church Council as the Managing Trustees to show of any amendments or updates undertaken.