

# WATERLOO ROAD CHURCH, UXBRIDGE: COVID-19 RISK ASSESSMENT

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## 1. Relevant documents

The latest government guidance document at the time this risk assessment is written can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-covid-19/events-and-attractions>

[Protective measures for holiday or after-school clubs and other out-of-school settings for children during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/protective-measures-for-holiday-or-after-school-clubs-and-other-out-of-school-settings-for-children-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/equipment-and-machinery/air-conditioning-and-ventilation/identifying-poorly-ventilated-areas.htm>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-covid-19/restaurants-pubs-bars-nightclubs-and-takeaway-services>

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## 2. Introduction

The opportunity to meet in person is critical to WRC to allow the Church to worship and fellowship together in a way that online media do not fully encourage and to provide the opportunity for visitors to hear the Gospel. WRC is therefore committed to facilitating in person-meetings as far as possible to support these objectives, whilst fully respecting the government guidance surrounding Covid-19.

To that end, the following principles have guided the measures to mitigate the risks identified with reintroducing in-person meeting:

- We aim to create an environment that makes it easy for members and visitors to adhere to government guidance.
- We aim to create a culture where members and visitors are encouraged to behave in a way that complies with government guidance. Adherence to the rules will be based on encouragement rather than policing.
- We (Elders and Deacons – the Managing Trustees) will lead by example

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### 3. Risks and Mitigations

#### 3.1. The congregation / Junior Church / Twist

Risks	Control Measures
Close contact on entry, while seated and on exit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Signs at entrances for people not to enter with Covid-19 symptoms or if they are self-isolating as advised by test and trace scheme.</li><li>• Households to be welcomed in by stewards when previous group have used hand sanitisers or washed hands (<b>Note</b> Stewards' Sunday procedures in Section 4).</li><li>• Indoors the Stewards will wear face coverings when interacting with the congregation on entry and exit.</li><li>• The congregation will be asked to wear face coverings when moving around the building (eg entry/exit, collecting children from the back hall). Children under the age of 11 are not required to wear face coverings.</li><li>• A supply of face coverings will be available on entry.</li><li>• Face coverings are mandatory when seated, but not when singing, drinking, or eating.</li></ul>
Incoming people infecting surfaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hand sanitisers available at all entrances.</li><li>• Leave internal doors open wherever possible to avoid touching handles.</li></ul>
Queuing on entry causing social distancing challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rapid seating through clear explanation to people.</li></ul>

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Risks	Control Measures
Transmission from infected surfaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the number of touch points (eg where possible leave doors open).</li> <li>• If an area is heavily used, enhanced cleaning of touch points will be carried out.</li> <li>• Reduce the number of shared items.</li> <li>• Church Bibles and song books may be used but will be isolated for 48 hours after use to prevent sharing.</li> <li>• Notice sheets to be placed on chairs. Any items left in the church by the congregation will be disposed between services or after 48 hours.</li> <li>• Junior Church and Twist equipment/games will be cleaned after each use or isolated for 48 hours.</li> </ul>
Transmission during use of Toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear signage.</li> <li>• Disposable hand towels to be used in all toilets.</li> <li>• Increased frequency of cleaning in line with usage.</li> </ul>
Capacity/ Overcrowding/ Distancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While social distancing is not a requirement, the church will facilitate a chair layout enabling individuals to decide whether to sit only with their group and 1m+ distanced from others, or to choose not to socially distance and sit with others.</li> <li>• Improved ventilation will be provided (see Section 4).</li> <li>• Capacity monitored and entry stopped when capacity reached (although Church Members may offer to go home to allow others to attend).</li> </ul>
Exit clashes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are not implementing a one-way system in the Church as the congregation arrive in one time period and leave in another time period with no cross-over.</li> </ul>
People ignoring rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create culture to encourage good behaviour and compliance.</li> </ul>

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Risks	Control Measures
Infection transmitted through Communion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bread will be cut prior to the service, and the wine will be in individual cups. Standard food hygiene principles (washing hands etc.) to be used during preparation.</li> <li>• The communion stewards will wear a face covering as they distribute the pre-cut bread or the wine in individual cups.</li> <li>• Any items left in the church by the congregation will be disposed between services or after 48 hours.</li> </ul>
Shared items - Offering boxes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The church continues to encourage online gifts.</li> <li>• An offering box will be made available for cash and cheque gifts.</li> <li>• The offering box will be cleaned in line with the same frequency as other touch points in the church. Offering counters will use hand sanitiser after counting, or gifts will be stored in the church safe for at least 48 hours before counting.</li> </ul>

### 3.2.Those leading the service

Risks	Control Measures
Transmission due to Singing and Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Congregational singing is permitted. Following tests on air quality it was confirmed that ventilation in the main hall is sufficient and therefore the congregation will not be asked to wear face coverings.</li> <li>• Any instrument played during worship should be cleaned thoroughly before and after use unless unused for 48 hours before and after use, or only used by the individual musician.</li> <li>• Improved ventilation will be provided (see Section 4).</li> <li>• To mitigate any risk of infection the distance between the leader/singers on stage to the first row of the congregation will exceed 2m.</li> </ul>

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Risks	Control Measures
Transmission via shared microphones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Singers' microphones or worn microphones fitted by users will be stored away for 48 hours before being used by another user.</li> <li>• Handheld microphones should be wiped with a sanitising cloth or stored for 48 hours between uses.</li> </ul>

### 3.3.General

Risks	Control Measures
Emergencies - fire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire safety is the priority over social distancing and existing fire safety procedures apply.</li> </ul>
Transmission via First aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face shields and gloves available at first aid point.</li> </ul>

### 3.4.Small groups

Risks	Control Measures
Transmission during small groups meeting in the church or private premises (eg housegroups, prayer meetings, Trustee/planning meetings)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand washing/sanitising upon entry and exit.</li> <li>• If food is served, such as for a student lunch, there will be no use of shared utensils.</li> <li>• Where possible, it is preferable to undertake these activities outdoors.</li> <li>• When the meeting is on church premises, the area used (including toilets) will be left for 48 hours or cleaned before the next activity.</li> <li>• Where the group meets in a non-domestic setting (eg a coffee shop), they will follow the setting requirements.</li> </ul>
Transmission during transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the church arranges transport, specific mitigations to reduce the risk of infection include the use of facemasks, improved ventilation, and maintaining the same individuals in the car on the way to and from a meeting.</li> </ul>

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### 3.5. Food and Drink

This section covers refreshments, church lunches and any other meals.

Risks	Control Measures
Transmission during social interactions while consuming refreshments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When the weather permits, refreshments will be served and consumed outside.</li><li>• When outdoor is unsuitable (eg rain, cold), refreshments will be served in well ventilated parts of the building (see Section 4).</li><li>• Face coverings are not mandatory during social interactions.</li></ul>
Transmission through shared items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shared items will be minimised.</li><li>• For self-service drinks or church lunches, the attendees will use hand sanitiser before collecting food or using shared items (eg serving spoons).</li><li>• Cups/plates/cutlery will either be disposable or washed in a dishwasher after use.</li></ul>
Transmission between servers and congregation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When indoors, the servers will wear a face covering when serving.</li><li>• Standard food hygiene principles (washing hands etc.) to be used.</li></ul>
Crowding during self service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Organiser will implement appropriate methods to ensure food service or self-service stations do not become overcrowded. These will depend on the size of gathering and number of visitors, but could include:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Announcements from the front to remind people to move away after collecting food and spread out</li><li>- Stewards to gently encourage people to move away from the serving/self-service points</li><li>- Traffic management (corridor / one way or similar arrangements) to naturally move people past the serving points</li></ul></li></ul>

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Risks	Control Measures
Crowding in smaller spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Actively encourage people to spread out throughout the building. For example, announcements from the front, stewards to gently encourage spreading out.</li></ul>

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### 3.6. Mid-week baby, children and young people's groups

Risks	Control Measures
Transmission from infected surfaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reduce the number of touch points (eg where possible leave doors open).</li><li>• If an area is heavily used, enhanced cleaning of touch points will be carried out.</li><li>• Reduce the number of shared items.</li><li>• Games equipment or other equipment will be cleaned after each use or isolated for 48 hours.</li></ul>
Transmission through close contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• While social distancing isn't required, activities or games will be designed to limit close contact.</li><li>• Use of face coverings will comply with the latest government guidance. Note, in line with government guidance there is no expectation children under 11 will wear face coverings.</li><li>• Where there is poor ventilation and many parents/children/young people then the top windows will be opened to enhance ventilation.</li></ul>
Notes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where groups meet off-site, the mitigations under section 3.4 'Small groups' apply.</li><li>• Where food/drinks are served the mitigations under section 3.5 'Refreshments / Church lunches' apply.</li></ul>

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## 4. Improved Ventilation

The HSE recommends a maximum of 800ppm CO<sub>2</sub> to help reduce the risks of transmission for any activity involving singing or continuous talking. Based on measurements, the following measures should be taken.

**These figures are for approximately 1-2 hours of use.**

**Maximum occupancy based on ventilation has not been established. These figures will be updated as part of a continuous monitoring activity.**

### 4.1. Main church

Number of people	Minimum ventilation
<45	50% top windows opened at least 2 full turns
>45 but <80	All top windows opened at least 2 full turns
>80	All top windows opened fully. Some main windows opened.

If the frontage is used as an overflow, the side windows in the frontage should also be opened.

### Lounge

Number of people	Minimum ventilation
<15	Lounge windows and kitchen windows opened
>15	Lounge windows and kitchen windows opened, kitchen door open

### 4.2. Back hall

Number of people	Minimum ventilation
<15	Not required
>15 but <40	All top windows
>40	All windows, store room external door and fire escape doors

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## 5. Sunday Procedures

### 5.1. Main Entrance Steward(s)

The stewarding team will have at least one steward to welcome outside the church. Their role is to:

- Provide a warm welcome to the church
- Provide details on what will happen on arrival in the building for those new to the church (eg. use of hand sanitiser, use of face covering when moving through the building, explain the seating arrangements).

### 5.2. Inside the frontage the steward/stewarding team

- Provide a warm welcome
- Direct arrivals to use the hand sanitiser or the hand washing facilities
- Help the congregation with where to sit in the church depending upon their choices

During the service the stewards will help and support anyone who is unsure of the guidelines (e.g. needs the toilet mid-service)

### 5.3. After the service stewards

- Provide a warm farewell
- Support the congregation to leave
- Direct people to use the hand sanitiser or wash their hands before leaving the building

Once the church is empty the outer door steward will perform ordinary checks (e.g. doors are locked, windows are closed). Finally, they will use hand sanitiser as they exit the building.