

Friarn Chapel Risk Assessment: Planning for Exit from COVID-19 Emergency Period

It is likely that we will move towards re-opening Friarn Chapel in the coming weeks for those who are unable to join via the Zoom meetings. This risk assessment is designed to help address the key aspects that will need to be considered and to guide our next steps. This return will be gradual and staged. We will not be able to do things exactly as we normally would – we have to recognise that these are different times, therefore it is important for us to be practical rather than legalistic and dogmatic. At all times we will seek to be scriptural, whilst taking into account the spiritual, physical and mental well-being of all in fellowship and those who may be visiting us. Please remember that all of this is subject to changing and developing government advice. [The latest advice can be accessed through this link](#). We are grateful for the assistance of other Christian Assemblies in the preparation of this document.

Deuteronomy 33:12 Of Benjamin [Moses] said:

“The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by Him, who shelters him all the day long; and he shall dwell between His shoulders.”

Assessment conducted by:	The elders of Friarn Chapel in consultation with members	Covered by this assessment:	Assembly members, their families and visitors
--------------------------	--	-----------------------------	---

Date of assessment:	18 th August 2020	Review interval:	Monthly	Date of next review:	18 th Sept 2020
---------------------	------------------------------	------------------	---------	----------------------	----------------------------

Risk rating matrix High (H), Medium (M), Low (L)		Likelihood of occurrence		
		Probable	Possible	Remote
Likely impact	Major: Causes major physical injury, harm or ill-health, area of significant concern	H	H	M
	Severe: Causes physical injury or illness requiring first aid, area requiring urgent attention	H	M	L
	Minor: Causes physical or emotional discomfort, area limited overall impact	M	L	L

Risk area / Scenario	Initial risk rating	Control Measures and Mitigation	Residual risk rating
1. Ensuring that the premises are fit for use		Assembly members should avoid entering and using the premises during the closure period and once we begin to re-commence, including not using the premises for toilet stops. Any such visits need to be followed by cleaning surfaces touched before leaving. During the closure period, the building is being checked for defects at least once a week. Prior to re-opening a thorough flush-through of the water system will be carried out to ensure a reduced risk of legionella. All major services will be checked for functionality. A deep clean will be completed at least 72 hours before re-opening. This will focus on the main hall, kitchen and toilets. Sheets will be put together listing out key areas of the building which must be	

Risk area / Scenario	Initial risk rating	Control Measures and Mitigation	Residual risk rating
		<p>properly cleaned/disinfected each time the building is used. Those responsible for cleaning the building will use this sheet as a reference and sign to confirm they have cleaned as per the sheet prior to the next opening of the building whenever this should be.</p> <p>People should avoid using any area other than the main hall where meetings are being held, in order to minimise the need for cleaning.</p> <p>Children should not be moving around the building – see point 13 for further detail.</p>	
2. People bringing the virus onto the premises		<p>Remind all in fellowship not to enter the building if they are displaying any symptoms of coronavirus. Clear notices and regular reminders to all.</p> <p>Following the COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection.</p> <p>Continue with all basic hygiene guidelines association with COVID-19 as pre-closing, facilitating regular hand washing for 20 seconds with running water and soap or use of sanitiser and ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the catch it, bin it, kill it approach.</p>	
3. Risk of virus spreading on the premises		<p>Enable social distancing at all times, in line with prevailing government guidance.</p> <p>We will remind people of the requirement for face masks to be worn and to maintain 2m distancing when entering, waiting outside the building if others are in the entrance area – remember the testimony to others outside who will be watching.</p> <p>Once inside the building we will implement a one way system from front to back to avoid people crossing.</p> <p>No handshakes, hugs or other forms of embrace – no physical contact at all!</p> <p>Hand sanitiser will be available and should be used when entering the building.</p> <p>All those attending will be marked off on a register. Visitors will be asked to complete a slip giving their contact details (including holiday location where appropriate) which will be added to the list, in line with government guidelines and to support contact tracing should this be required. These lists to be retained for 21 days and then disposed of.</p> <p>Once hands are cleansed, move immediately to seats. Regular members will have identified seats. Seats arranged with 2m distancing in mind – family groups will be grouped together more closely and will be designated as being for these families. Face-to-face seating should be avoided at all times, unless it is a family group.</p> <p>Hymn books and Bibles will be allocated to a seat and so to a worshipper, these will be left in place for their use in subsequent weeks. In the case of a visitor the books will be returned to a box, kept for 48 hours and wiped down before their next use.</p> <p>Kitchen to only be used by one individual or family group at a time. All other areas are out of use.</p> <p>Toilets to be used as little as possible and by only one person at a time – the outer door is to be shut while in use and only entered if this door is open.</p>	

Risk area / Scenario	Initial risk rating	Control Measures and Mitigation	Residual risk rating
		<p>Toilet areas to be cleaned after every meeting, using suitable PPE (gloves as a minimum, also apron and face coverings as required).</p> <p>The hall to be used for the minimum possible time for the purposes of the meeting itself, in the first instance. Further conversation and fellowship should be conducted outside but giving due consideration to the neighbourhood as necessary.</p> <p>When <u>leaving</u> the building, members and visitors should use the rear door to the car park, exit in order – those nearest the door first.</p>	
4. The spread of infection through meeting and greeting		<p>Meeting and greeting will be contact free.</p> <p>After first meeting Hymn books and Bibles will be on peoples seats- people will be reminded to only touch the book in their place.</p> <p>Meeting and greeting will be carried out by Friarn Elders – others as requested but not those in vulnerable groups.</p>	
5. Risk of people not being aware of expectations		<p>Ensure that this risk assessment is shared with all in the assembly. An abbreviated version will also be shared with copies available at the hall for visitors.</p> <p>As well as providing a paper copy, take time on a call to outline the main procedures to everyone.</p> <p>Parents to ensure that children are aware of expectations at an age-appropriate level.</p> <p>Elders to walk through procedures in the building prior to commencement and adjust risk assessment as necessary in line with current guidelines.</p> <p>Elders to outline expectations for visitors as and when they arrive.</p>	
6. The risk of visitors bringing the virus into the meetings		<p>All visitors to have shared the main expectations upon arrival and to be asked whether they have had any symptoms in recent days.</p> <p>Any visitors showing symptoms to be asked to leave, to get tested, inform us of the outcome and to return only when well.</p> <p>Visitors will be guided to appropriate seating.</p> <p>Where the building reaches capacity in order to maintain social distancing, visitors or members may have to be turned away. Keeping a 2 meter gap between ‘family groups’ of chairs we can accommodate 3 family groups of three people and four individuals.</p>	
7. Risk of spreading the virus through lack of basic hygiene such as handwashing.		<p>Additional handwashing items will be available – soap, disposable hand towels, hand sanitiser.</p> <p>No-hand-contact waste bins will be used for hand towels – foot pedals or similar. All waste will be double bagged at the current time and securely tied – to be removed after each meeting.</p> <p>Ensuring people are reminded of the catch it, bin it, kill it advice and that bins are provided in suitable places.</p> <p>All towels to be removed, no cups, mugs, glasses or plates etc will be in use during the restrictions.</p>	

Risk area / Scenario	Initial risk rating	Control Measures and Mitigation	Residual risk rating
8. Dealing with any suspected and confirmed cases of disease		<p>Follow government guidance. Anyone showing symptoms will be asked to leave immediately. Where they are unable to leave under their own strength, ensure they are isolated in the back hall until suitable transport or medical attention can be arranged. Anyone needing to be with someone showing symptoms (only in the case of a medical emergency) should wear suitable PPE. If necessary, contact 111 or 999. Advise that they take a test as soon as possible and inform us of the outcome. Advise those who have been in contact to take precautions and to be prepared for a call from contact tracers. Where the person tests positive, the rest of their household will be advised to self-isolate for 14 days, as may others in the fellowship. In the case of a positive test, the elders will consider arrangements for the next two weeks and whether any changes need to be made. Also, whether additional cleaning is required.</p>	
9. Reducing the risk of spreading the virus by ensuring a gradual return to meetings and activities		<p>We will have a clear priority list for the re-commencement of meetings and will move through this on a gradual basis over a number of weeks – the priority list is subject to review:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Breaking of bread (Sunday morning); 2. Gospel meeting (Sunday, 6.30pm) 3. Ladies' meetings (Mondays 2.30pm) 4. Prayer meeting (Monday 7:30pm) 5. Other activities. <p>We will be guided by the success of each occasion, the confidence that people are feeling and prevailing government guidance. As we build towards full functionality, we will take a blended approach of face to face meetings and Zoom, where the technology permits this. Should government indicate a need, we can take a backward step at any time in order to ensure public safety. For any public preaching, the lectern will be situated at least 2 metres from those in the congregation. The lectern will be cleaned after every use by the preacher or one of the elders. Those taking a public part in the gatherings, including during the breaking of bread, need to be alert to the danger of spreading the virus when speaking – either through a mask, by directing their voice away from the congregation, or controlling their speech carefully to avoid the risk of aerosol conveying the virus from one member to another.</p>	

Risk area / Scenario	Initial risk rating	Control Measures and Mitigation	Residual risk rating
10. Transmission of the virus through the taking of the bread and cup and the taking of the offering		<p>We want to take a careful and pragmatic approach to this, recognising this is not our preferred way of breaking bread. We will take a three-staged approach over the coming weeks as confidence grows and advice changes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The emblems will be distributed through single use cups and pre-prepared bread on individual paper plates to begin with, which people will be provided with as they enter the building. 2. The next stage will be to reintroduce the emblems from the front but broken into individual pieces at the front and poured into individual cups. 3. Our desire to allow individual members to take from one loaf and individual cups but we will not implement this until the risks are substantially lower. <p>Encourage giving directly through the bank in liaison with the treasurer/James Mossop. Where cash or cheques are given, this should be through a box provided at the back of the hall. This box will be accessed by only the treasurer or an elder and he will be the only one to handle the money. Gloves must be worn when handling the money.</p>	
11. The heightened risk of spreading the virus through singing		<p>In the initial stages, meetings will take place without singing. It may be desirable to have some music playing at some meetings while people are entering. The piano will be wiped down after any use. Those wishing to share the words of a hymn can do so by reading out the lyrics.</p>	
12. Transmission of the virus through serving food and drink		<p>There is an increased risk of spreading the virus through preparing, passing and consuming food and drink. With this in mind, at the current time, no food or drink will be prepared, distributed or consumed on the premises.</p>	
13. Risk of transmission through excessive mixing		<p>As above, further fellowship after meetings should be kept to a minimum inside the building. Conversations and further fellowship should be conducted outside the building or in parks/gardens as per government guidance. Parents need to ensure that children remain in their family groups and do not move freely around the building before and after meetings, for the time being. People will be asked to leave the hall in order such that those nearest the doors leave first.</p>	
14. Ensuring that safeguarding has a high priority		<p>Be alert to this as ever. Ensure that the Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are known and available as required.</p>	

Risk area / Scenario	Initial risk rating	Control Measures and Mitigation	Residual risk rating
		Extra vigilance will be required as vulnerable families and others emerge from lockdown, and may visit the assembly meetings.	
15. Reduce the risk of transmission by the provision of sufficient PPE		<p>People should wear PPE in accordance with government guidance. We are asking people to wear face masks on entering the building. face masks to be kept on. In order to participate people should remain seated as this is recognised to be more effective in not spreading the virus, than standing. Sufficient PPE needs to be available for dealing with handwashing, cleaning and medical emergencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disposable gloves; • Aprons; • Masks; • Hand sanitisers. 	
16. There is an increased risk of mental, physical and spiritual challenges at the current time: It is possible that members of the fellowship or visitors may have experienced significant grief or anxiety as a result of the current situation.		<p>The elders will seek to be alert to needs in this respect and support where possible. Home visits may not be possible, but we remain available for outdoor meet-ups or online or by phone in order to support. We will advise seeking professional help where this may be needed. Please email, text or call regarding any needs which can be kept in complete confidence if required.</p>	
17. Risk to more vulnerable members of the fellowship, particularly those with prevailing medical conditions, those over 70 years of age and those with shielding letters		<p>Identify early who these people might be and make special contact with them. Consider their needs and those of their wider family as we plan. In the current circumstances, the majority of meetings will not resume until shielding is no longer required. For meetings people are not able to attend, we will consider whether the technology allows for live-streaming or recording. Ensure additional pastoral support for these people as required. Ensure that all pastoral support is within guidelines at any particular time.</p>	
18. Ensuring that the elders are alert to developments and can respond accordingly.		<p>The elders will continue to meet as is necessary. As many gatherings as feasible will continue to be held online being aware of the spiritual needs of members not able to access these meetings.</p>	
19. Special activities that increase the risk of infection.		<p>Weddings and funerals must currently be limited to 30 attendees. Baptisms are advised against at the current time. Each request to be assessed on its merits. Additional protective measures in place, including additional cleaning, as required. The limit of 30 does not apply to all meetings, as long as protective measures are put into place, including suitable distancing.</p>	