

## Stonedge Chapel      C-19 Risk Assessment - last updated 03 Aug 2020

Shared with trustees & members and made available on our website.

The following documents have been used to inform this risk assessment:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july> - updated 17 July 2020

<https://ico.org.uk/global/data-protection-and-coronavirus-information-hub/coronavirus-recovery-data-protection-advice-for-organisations/collecting-customer-and-visitor-details-for-contact-tracing/>

It also takes into account the following published information on the transmission of COVID-19:

COVID-19 is transmitted in three ways

1. Direct person-to-person contact - if an infectious person breathes droplets on you or you pick them up through physical contact with an infectious person.
  2. Contact with a contaminated surface - if you touch a surface contaminated with the virus and then touch your nose, eyes or mouth, you may be infected.
  3. Aerosol transmission - fine droplets of liquid containing virus are breathed out, form an aerosol and are carried through the air. You may become infected if you breathe these in.
- Duration - the longer you are close to an infectious person, the higher the risk.
  - Fresh air - the risk is lower if you are outdoors, or in a well ventilated area,
  - Direction - the risk is lower if you are not face-on with the infectious person

The communal nature of Places of Worship makes them places that are particularly vulnerable to the spread of coronavirus

**ALL ACTIONS IDENTIFIED IN THE ASSESSMENT MUST BE IN PLACE BEFORE USE OF THE BUILDING IS RESUMED.**

This risk assessment will be reviewed and amended as appropriate following every Church Service and on the change of official guidance.



<p><b>Access to and from the building</b>  The first people to arrive unlock the door.  Attendees usually enter through the main door into a small porch and then through a second door into the aisle.  Occasional use of kitchen door to support access.</p> <p>All arrivals and departures are for a single timed event, i.e. do not have people coming and going at the same time.</p> <p>Funeral – use of schoolroom door for coffins.</p>	<p>Frequently used surfaces: door handles, handrail on slope, handrail by main door. Risk of contact transmission</p> <p>The entrance door into the porch is a pinch point where social distancing is not possible. Risk of droplet and aerosol transmission</p>	<p>Respect social distancing at all points. Reminder notice displayed.  All attendees to use hand sanitiser (of appropriate % alcohol) as enter through open gateways.</p> <p>Queue to enter building. There is sufficient space within the yard to queue 2m apart without over spilling onto public footpath.  Queue to be overseen by a ‘queue manager’ for events attracting those not regularly in attendance at this place of worship, e.g. funerals.  Doors to remain open throughout arrival time.  Use hand sanitiser on leaving before touching door handles or rails.  Leave one row at a time, no gathering in the aisle or by door.  In unlikely event of someone wishing to leave whilst worshippers are arriving they must use the kitchen door instead and use hand sanitiser before touching door.  Anyone wishing to re-enter the building whilst worshippers are leaving must wait until the building has been fully vacated.  Door handles and rails to be regularly cleaned as part of usual cleaning practices. All will be quarantined for at least 3 days.</p>	
<p><b>Attendees; Seating; Ventilation.</b>  Attendance is usually below 30.  Seating is rows of chairs all facing the same direction so people in one row face the backs of the heads of those sat in the row in front.</p>	<p>Overcrowding raises droplet / aerosol transmission risk.</p>	<p>Attendees must wear a face covering from 8 Aug 2020 &amp; a notice to that effect will be displayed (<u>in line with current Government guidance.</u>)  Remove one chair from end of rows of 5 and re-space between rows of chairs so that there is 1+m between them. This gives 8 rows of 4 chairs in the main worship area with additional 4 rows of seating in the schoolroom.</p>	<p>P. &amp; J. W.</p>

		<p>One household/'support bubble' per row or there must be 2 empty chairs between people of different households. Worshippers to remain seated throughout the service. Keep open the kitchen door &amp; sliding doors to the Schoolroom area: to allow more spaced seating and increase the ventilated area.</p> <p>Ventilate – open windows; whoever opens them should also close them. Handles then quarantine for at least 3 days.</p> <p>Funerals, marriages limited to 30 attendees – <u>in line with Government Guidance</u></p>	
<p><b>Frequency of meetings</b> Two services each Sunday and meetings during the week. Services last between 1 – 1.5 hours plus arrival period beforehand and socialising period afterwards.</p> <p>Occasional funerals and festivals.</p>	<p>Increased frequency increases risk of all types of transmission.</p>	<p>Only one service on a Sunday and no meetings on any other day of the week in the building. This effectively quarantines the building and contents for at least 3 days. Service to last no more than 50 mins and worshippers to leave promptly.</p> <p>Unforeseen events, e.g. funerals will, of necessity happen on a day other than Sunday. In these instances a deep clean and significant ventilation must happen both before and after the event.</p>	
<p><b>Music</b> Piano played as worshippers arrive. Positioned so pianist faces away from congregation. Songs and hymns sung by congregation. Song books in use.</p>	<p>Contact transmission – piano keys</p> <p>Aerosol &amp; droplet transmission risk is raised by singing.</p> <p>Contact transmission - books</p>	<p>Only one person to play the piano which is then quarantined for at least 3 days.</p> <p>No group singing to take place – <u>in line with Government Guidance</u>.</p> <p>Remove books from worship area.</p>	GG
<p><b>Prayer – can take many forms:</b> Open times of prayer – congregation all invited to contribute. Leader from pulpit. Invited person(s) from within</p>	<p>Raised voices increases aerosol transmission</p>	<p>Prayer will be led by the lay minister for the day. (see below)</p> <p>No-one else to pray out loud when it is intended that the whole congregation should hear what is said.</p>	

<p>congregation. Communal, spoken Lord's Prayer.</p>		<p>Congregation may join in using soft talking voices.</p>	
<p><b>Lay Ministers</b> Leading, Preaching, Bible reading take place from the front – usually by one or more people using the pulpit and using microphone. Preachers are from within own fellowship or an invited visiting speaker. Congregation follow Bible reading using Bibles provided.</p>	<p>Use of raised voice to enable all to hear increases distance of aerosol/droplet transmission.</p> <p>Shared use of resources in the pulpit brings risks of transmission by contact.</p>	<p>Only one person to be at the front in any one service. This person should both lead and preach and will be one of our own members and not a visiting speaker.</p> <p>Leave 3m between preacher in pulpit and front row of seats.</p> <p>Preacher to wear a face visor.</p> <p>Use microphone on stand and do not raise voice.</p> <p>Clear pulpit of all resources.</p> <p>Remove communal Bibles &amp; ask worshippers to bring their own if they so wish.</p>	
<p><b>Notices</b> Verbally delivered by an elder or deacon, stood at the front.</p>	<p>Raised voice &amp; facing congregation increases aerosol transmission.</p>	<p>Communication of information will be done digitally or by 'phone.</p> <p>Leader of Service to remind attendees of the importance of social distancing and hygiene – <u>in line with Government Guidance</u>.</p>	
<p><b>Baptism</b> By immersion in water tank. 2 persons lowering and raising person being baptised</p>	<p>Close contact and shared use of water increase transmission. Potential splashing onto others nearby.</p>	<p>No baptisms – <u>in line with Government Guidance</u></p>	
<p><b>Dedication of infants</b> Parents/carers and others bring infant to the front. Some spoken responses. Minister would hold child and pray over them.</p>	<p>Close proximity of people from different households.</p>	<p>Minister and parents/carers to maintain social distancing.</p> <p>Spoken responses to be made without raising voices.</p> <p>Child to be held only by members of his/her household/'bubble'.</p>	
<p><b>Food &amp; Drink</b> Hot and cold drinks plus biscuits &amp; cakes are served after the evening service.</p>	<p>Contamination of food and drink in preparation and in distribution.</p> <p>Close proximity in cleaning afterwards.</p>	<p>No refreshments to be served</p> <p>Door to kitchen to remain open at all times.</p> <p>Ask speaker to bring own bottle of water. Some small, individual bottles to be available on worktop in case of</p>	

Water for the leader/preacher is made available in a glass beaker.	Door handles in kitchen become points of frequent contact.	need. Individual in need of the water should access their own and use hand sanitiser beforehand.	
<b>Toilet area</b> Two rooms, one for ladies and another for gentlemen. Washbasin available in each toilet room with cloth towels for drying. Hand sanitiser is already available in these rooms.	Frequent, shared use of door handles, light pulls, toilet flushing handles, toilet roll holder...	Display posters to build awareness of good handwashing technique. Hand sanitiser before entry as well as inside toilet rooms. Ventilate by opening windows. Remove cloth towels and replace with paper towels & foot-operated lidded bin with liner which can easily be tied and frequently disposed of. Increased frequency of cleaning in line with usage.	P. & L. W.
<b>General Cleaning</b> Occurs on a regular, rota basis by separate household. Deep cleans twice a year by many households coming together.	Touching contaminated surfaces; breathing in contaminated air.  Close proximity of persons during deep cleans and/or increased likelihood of talking to each other using raised voices.	Clean on a Wednesday or Thursday to allow quarantining time between Sunday Services. Ventilate whilst cleaning. Use normal cleaning products, paying attention to frequently touched surfaces and use of disposable cloths or paper roll to clean all hard surfaces.  Deep cleans to be undertaken by a single household.	
<b>Freewill offerings</b>  An offering plate is taken around the congregation by one or two people. Cash is deposited on to the plates. Cash collected by treasurer.	Transmission through close proximity and also through contact with contaminated surfaces.	Giving online or by standing order to be encouraged.  Cash – individuals to drop onto collection plate which remains on table at front; maintaining social distancing. Collected and removed by treasurer who then sanitises own hands and quarantines cash for at least 3 before counting and banking. Collection plate quarantined for at least 3 days (i.e. remains on table without being touched)	John T
<b>Social interaction</b> Fellowship plays a large part in our gatherings with people choosing to stay after services and chat.	Government Guidance states: 'We advise that you limit your social interaction in these venues to your own household and up to one other, wherever possible. Strict adherence	Comply with Government Guidance re Social Distancing  Attendees will leave the building as soon as the service is over.	

	<p>to social distancing is strongly... advised and a distance of 2 metres (or 1 metre with additional COVID-19 Secure measures in place) should be kept from people you do not live with wherever possible.'</p>	<p>Attendees may choose to chat outdoors in groups of up to 6 people whilst maintaining social distance and not using raised voices. – in line with current Government Guidance</p>	
<p><b>Health of Attendees</b> Please note: No other groups use the building.</p> <p>All regular attendees are known to each other and the ability to contact each other already exists.</p> <p>For some events non-regular attendees may be present.</p> <p>Some regular attendees are aged over 70 years and/or have underlying health issues. (see footnote 1.)</p>	<p>People may be asymptomatic.</p> <p>Contact tracing must be made possible. (In England, the government has requested that organisations collect only the lead party member's name, telephone number, date and time of service.)</p>	<p>Worshippers are asked not to attend if showing symptoms or if a member of their household is symptomatic. Attendees to leave if they develop symptoms during the service.</p> <p>Vulnerable people will be encouraged to follow the most recent official guidance. How their spiritual needs will be met is a consideration/responsibility of the Elders.</p> <p>Record names of attendees plus contact details of non-regulars, once asked for consent. Record to be kept securely for 21 days by the person collecting the data and then disposed of securely, i.e. by burning or shredding of paper records or permanently deleting digital files. The data will not be used for any other purpose than NHS 'Test and Trace'.</p> <p><u>In line with Government Guidance:</u> If we become aware of a case of COVID-19, we will not seek to contact the people who have visited our premises. We would only share the details collected with the contact tracing scheme in a secure way and only if requested.</p> <p>Funerals: Liaise with Funeral Director re who will be responsible for collecting attendance data.</p>	

## Informal Community Behaviour Agreement

We will maintain Social Distancing and wear face coverings at all times inside the Chapel.

We will take all other actions needed to keep others safe, e.g. personal hygiene.

We will speak without raising our voices.

We agree to our contact details being shared solely for the purpose of NHS 'Test and Trace'.

If we or any member of our household are symptomatic we will stay at home.

If anyone becomes symptomatic whilst attending we will follow Government advice: *'If anyone becomes unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 in a place of worship they should go home immediately and be advised to follow the stay at home guidance, which covers NHS Test and Trace. If they need clinical advice, they should go online to NHS 111 (or call 111 if they don't have internet access). In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. They should not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.'*

If we become symptomatic in the days following attendance at Stonedge Chapel we will inform the NHS staff responsible for Test and Trace that we have been there.

### Government Guidance also says:

1. 'Certain groups of people may be at increased risk of severe disease from COVID-19, including people who are aged 70 or older, regardless of medical conditions. Individuals who fall within this group are advised to stay at home as much as possible and, if they do go out, to take particular care to minimise contact with others outside of their household. You should consider informing these groups in particular of the symptoms of COVID-19 and current stay alert and social distancing guidance.'
2. 'Places of worship and faith leaders should consider how guidance can be communicated to visitors, including before they visit, in a way that is accessible and appropriate for the cultures, languages and reading levels of communities served by the place of worship.'
3. 'Consideration should be given to how fair and equal access can safely be provided for all users to be able to undertake faith practices within a place of worship, in line with government guidelines and considering requirements under the Equality Act 2010 where these apply.'