

Covid-19 Risk Assessment

LETTINGS / HIRING OF CHURCH ROOMS

| | |
|--|--|
| Name of Church | Assessment undertaken by |
| WOODBIDGE METHODIST CHURCH ST JOHN'S STREET WOODBIDGE SUFFOLK IP12 1ED | M.J. PORTER - SAFETY OFFICER WMC Contact at:- WMCroombooking@gmail.com |
| Initial Assessment 7/7/2020 This Update 31/10/2022 | Area of the building assessed SANCTUARY; OCTAGON; KITCHEN; WESLEY ROOM; TOILETS; VESTRY; STEWARDS' OFFICE; ENTRANCE FOYER; UPPER ROOM(S); STAIRS, LIFT AND CORRIDORS. |
| Next Assessment Review Date: 30 APRIL 2023 | |

CONTENTS:

PAGE

| | |
|--------|--|
| 1 | Safeguarding Policy |
| 2 - 6 | Symptoms, Areas of Covid Risk Identified, Actions and Controls |
| 7 - 10 | General and Special Covid Conditions of Hire and Information |
| 11 | Hirer's agreement form |
| 12-13 | Fire Safety Information |
| 14 | Emergency Contact Telephone Numbers |

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

THIS SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT WHEN HIRING OR USING CHURCH PREMISES MORE DETAILS ARE AVAILABLE ON THE CHURCH WEBSITE:-

<https://woodbridge.methodistic.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Woodbridge-safeguarding-policy-2018.pdf>

The official list of **Covid symptoms was expanded** from the original three to better reflect patients' experience of the disease:

- continuous cough
- high temperature, fever or chills
- loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell
- shortness of breath
- feeling tired or exhausted
- aching body
- headache
- sore throat
- blocked or runny nose
- loss of appetite
- diarrhoea
- Nausea (feeling sick) or vomiting

Many of these symptoms are very similar to numerous other diseases and infections. Seek medical advice if you are concerned from the NHS Website, telephone 111 or contact your GP Surgery

People with Covid are no longer legally required to self-isolate, but the detailed guidance about what to do depends on your age and your individual circumstances.

COVID-19 The areas of risk we identify are as follows: -

NEW VARIANTS

From the original virus, the Alpha, Delta and Omicron variants caused new waves of Covid all across the world. It is inevitable that in future, the virus will continue to mutate, creating new “variants” or “lineages.” Whatever name tag we give them, they are all capable of causing new waves of infection.

Whilst some of these new variants may also be less dangerous and most of us now have some immunity (acquired from actual infection by the virus and/or the available vaccines that will help provide us with some protection even against new variants) a new variant could also make the virus more deadly, spread quicker/easier, or bypass the existing protection. This could make Covid an even greater threat than it is today.

What can we do? The risk of mutation happens every time the virus reproduces, so the best way of reducing this risk is to minimise infections preferably at a global level, but we can only act locally! We can help minimise the number of mutations occurring by reducing the number of times an infection is transmitted – that is by taking precautions to prevent or reduce those occasions. Remember that simple precautions like washing and sanitising hands, not getting too close to people we are not in regular contact with and wearing appropriate face coverings, really

helped not only reduce Covid infections but also many other common infections we suffered from. Alternatively, we will have to react to a new variant when it arrives.

WANING IMMUNITY

It is clear that immunity from infection decreases with time. Re-infection by different variants can easily occur. People are still catching Covid when fully vaccinated and “boosted” and/or if they have caught Covid previously. The good news is that protection against becoming seriously ill or dying of Covid, is improving as vaccines are continually developed and improved.

What can we do?

The protection we have against the virus will need to be “boosted” or issued regularly. Another “booster campaign” has recently begun and the vaccines are improving as we become more familiar with the nature of the virus and how it causes illness. We also have to accept that there may be complications associated with long-term vaccination programmes. These may be similar to reactions experienced with the “Flu vaccine” or they could develop into more serious situations – Nationally, we have to assess any trade-off with the benefits accrued and act accordingly

“Long-term”, the body’s natural resistance will only build up to an effective level over several generations (if it ever can – think of how resistant we were to the common cold!) and we tend to be rather impatient in these matters!

DRUG / VACCINE RESISTANCE

Current Drugs that kill the virus are being used to keep people out of hospital, but there is a danger that if we use them badly (as we have used antibiotics over the last 80+ years) the virus will continue to evolve even quicker to render the drugs ineffective. The more pressure put on the virus, the more likely it is to come up with variants and these may be more virulent! This will be the most important problem to face in the months and years ahead. We are already familiar with “superbugs”- MRSA, TB even super-gonorrhoea, created by misusing antibiotics. The same thing can happen with antivirals. Currently they play a vital role in saving lives and have helped in removing “restrictions”. More importantly, they are our safety net for the future. If a new variant emerges that significantly bypasses our immunity, we will need these antivirals to buy us time until an updated vaccine can be developed and rolled out.

What can we do?

The more we use antivirals the greater the risk of resistance, so we come back, yet again, to trying to reduce the level of transmitting the disease. WE need to continue to take sensible precautions to protect ourselves and others.

TESTING FOR INFECTION BY VIRUS

The removal of free testing for suspected cases of Covid infection has resulted in a reduction of numbers of cases discovered and reported, and there will be more temptation for anyone with minor or no symptoms to go out in public and risk

spreading the infection to others who may not be as resilient as they are. The deteriorating, serious financial situation will also drive more people to behave in less responsible ways. We have also seen vociferous responses to any control measures being imposed and this will also make it more likely that political parties will not go down that route again, so we need to make our own conditions to protect ourselves and others whilst on our premises.

What can we do? We see the following matters as still needing to be taken into account, even as numbers of infections seem to fall and accept that the risk of infection will be with us for the foreseeable future:-

1. Church feels that we **ALL** have a moral **DUTY OF CARE** for others. **Church Leaders, Congregations, Hirers and Visitors need to be aware of current requirements and guidance that may be suddenly updated or changed and to comply with any requirements imposed and consider any recommendations made.**
2. **Whilst most people suffer mild or no symptoms of the disease, some people are still seriously affected by Covid-19 and we will try to reduce the likelihood of transmitting the infection on or within these premises.**
3. Meeting indoors, especially in crowded situations, where there is poor ventilation, or people are there for long periods of time, where physical exercise, singing or loud-speaking is undertaken – or anything that can lead to “strenuous” breathing, there is still a serious risk of aerosol, or droplet transmission of the disease. We will encourage all users of the premises to maintain good ventilation by opening windows and doors as appropriate and not to overcrowd any room, if necessary, by moving to a larger or more airy room.
4. Social Distancing, wearing face coverings or other similar precautions should still be considered whilst on these premises. **Organizations hiring or using the Church premises need to assess the suitability of the room(s) hired for their proposed activity and take whatever extra precautions are needed because of their unique situation.**
5. There is still a risk of transmission of the virus from contaminated surfaces that are handled by multiple users. Handwashing and sanitizing facilities will continue to be available in several, appropriate places as will disinfectant spray/wipes.
6. Anyone showing symptoms of Covid-19 should be encouraged to go home and follow the NHS Website guidance.

| CONTACT Hazards/Risks | Additional Covid-19 Controls – Reducing Risk | Action Plan |
|---|--|---|
| <p>NUMBERS USING ROOMS</p> <p>VENTILATION AND HEATING</p> | <p>There shall be a maximum number of people permitted in the following rooms :-</p> <p>Sanctuary 150 Octagon 150 Upstairs Rooms 40 Vestry 5 The Wesley Room 15 Kitchen 4</p> <p><u>The above-mentioned, maximum numbers take no account of any precautions needed to reduce the risk of spread of covid infection.</u> Such additional precautions will need to be assessed by each individual Hirer / User and it may be necessary to reduce the maximum numbers present in any room appropriate to the activity undertaken or any other relevant factor.</p> <p>With the exception of The Sanctuary, all rooms are able to be well ventilated using opening windows and doors. Most, rooms are adequately ventilated without opening windows or doors, however, if the numbers present, or the use to which the room is put, are likely to increase the transmission risk, additional ventilation will need to be considered and if necessary, implemented.</p> <p>Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) levels give a good guide to how well ventilated a room is. Levels below 800ppm of CO₂ in a room are ideal and need no further action to be taken. Levels in excess of 1500ppm of CO₂ indicate that there is a problem with ventilation and that action to remedy the situation is needed. Levels between 800 and 1500ppm CO₂ indicate that the situation needs close monitoring and if practicable, remedial action be taken to increase the ventilation levels.</p> <p>A CO₂ monitor is available; whilst the readings taken from the monitor are a guideline only, they are reasonably accurate (within 5%). The monitor should be placed at least 50cm (20”) away from any person, preferably approximating to “head height” and away from draughts or any fans/blowers. The monitor’s readings should be observed over at least a few minutes period and a “Trend Level” be determined – assess if the readings are steady within a small range (100ppm) or are gradually increasing or decreasing.</p> | <p>Hirers and users are asked to ventilate the room(s) they occupy using doors and windows as appropriate, either continuously or, if that compromises other needs (e.g. temperature) a period of thorough ventilation should be done before and after the session and on an intermittent, regular basis during the session as appropriate.</p> |

| | | |
|-------------------------|--|--|
| <p>CLEANSING</p> | <p>Action depends on the results of observations being monitored whilst the room is in use. If monitoring, or other observations indicate that additional ventilation is needed in the Sanctuary, it is recommended that some or all of the following actions will help to increase ventilation, sufficient for many purposes :-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The door between the Sanctuary Balcony and the First Floor Rooms be opened in conjunction with windows in those Rooms. 2. The door from the Sanctuary to the Wesley Room and also the door from the Wesley Room to the rear corridor should be left open. 3. the external double sliding doors at the front of the Church are opened in conjunction with the door under the screen communicating with the Sanctuary 4. In all rooms, during cold weather, windows and/or doors may be opened for short, regular periods to increase ventilation commensurate with heating needs and numbers of people present: this may be done before, during and/or after use of the room as appropriate. <p>The Church is unable to clean and disinfect between every letting. The Church will undertake cleaning of common parts of the building and rooms on at least 3 days a week. Hirers will need to consider cleansing all surfaces they expect to come into contact with, before and after their hiring period.</p> <p>The Hirer must comply with the “General” and “Special Conditions of Hire” set out below:-</p> | |
|-------------------------|--|--|

GENERAL CONDITIONS OF HIRE

Woodbridge Methodist Church St Johns Street Woodbridge Suffolk IP12 1ED

**Information and Agreement for Groups and Organisations using the Premises
from May 2022.**

1. **Welcome to Woodbridge Methodist Church. We hope that your time spent on the premises is successful. Please ensure you read and agree to the following before making a booking.**
2. **The Church Council of Woodbridge Methodist Church (WMC) is responsible for the provision and maintenance of the church buildings. Contact is by the website - <https://woodbridge.methodistic.org.uk> or e-mail WMCroombooking@gmail.com**
3. **Organisations hiring or using rooms at the church on a regular basis (more than 3 times per year) must have their activities covered by their own Public Liability**
4. **Insurance with a minimum Limit of Indemnity of £1,000,000 (one million pounds). Evidence for this cover must be provided.**
5. **Fire Safety and Health & Safety – The Hirer will need to Risk Assess the rooms they are hiring for Fire Safety and Health & Safety matters, according to the use they intend putting the facilities to. The Church will co-operate as much as they can with assisting the Hirer to do this.**
6. **The Church Council has a Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy to seek to safeguard people of all ages, in particular to prevent any physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children, young people or vulnerable adults. Please take a look at this policy and sign below to indicate that you will comply with it fully when on church premises.**
7. **Smoking is not permitted anywhere within the premises.**
8. **Alcohol, in any form, is not permitted on the premises at any time.**
9. **Gambling is not permitted on the premises; except for lotteries with low value, non-cash prizes, raffles or games of chance held at bazaars, sales of work, fetes and similar events.**
10. **A Public Entertainment Licence is not usually required for the Church premises, but it is the hirer's responsibility to ensure that all necessary licences and consents are obtained if such licences are required for their activity.**
11. **Toilet facilities are shared by all Hirers / Users**
12. **Use of the Main Kitchen facilities need to be booked as a separate item.**
13. **The hirer shall at all times comply with all conditions and reminders shown in this document. This AGREEMENT is between the hirer and WMC only. Sub-letting to any other party is not permitted (hirers may confirm their agreement electronically provided the following information is provided)**

CONDITIONS AND REMINDERS WHEN HIRING

a. A door key is available for all group leaders provided they pay the required £15 cash deposit in advance. The deposit will be returned to the group leader when the key is returned.

b. We do not charge hirers for heating. It is available throughout the building. In The Octagon and The Sanctuary, it is worked by a push button control beside each heater and users may request up to 2 hours heating at a time. For the upstairs rooms and the Wesley Room the push button control is located in the ground floor corridor. Users should ensure they are familiar with the controls that they need.

c. Please leave the rooms used and the tables, chairs etc in a clean and tidy condition. If using the sanctuary, before you leave, please ensure all the chairs are restored to their original layout to comply with fire regulations. Users may use the vacuum cleaners that are available in the ground floor foyer cupboard or on 1st floor by the lift. Please return cleaning equipment to the correct storage point. If either kitchen has been used, please ensure that sinks and working surfaces are wiped clean and appliances are turned off.

d. At the end of your session please ensure heaters & lights are **TURNT OFF** and that windows and doors are securely closed. The Octagon main light switches are situated on a switch-panel in the Foyer and additional lights are operated by a pull cord inside The Octagon, by the double-doors.

e. The front main entrance door to the building has two locks. In normal use when there are people on the premises, these should be left unlocked. In cases of “Lone Working” at the premises they may be kept locked when a person is inside. Please be aware of this when entering – someone may be surprised by, or surprise you, by a sudden appearance!

f. If you are the last to vacate the building, please make sure there is nobody left in the toilets or the lift; ensure that all lights in the whole building are off, taps in all toilets and kitchens are fully off. When locking the double main foyer entrance doors, please ensure the two securing bolts on the second door (the one without the keyholes!) are locked shut. Please check with other users before locking the doors. (checking by gentle pushing on the double doors which will part if not securely bolted).

g. Hirers may enter the building and set up their room no earlier than 30 minutes before their booked time and must complete all activities and leave the building no later than 30 minutes after their booked time. The church does not charge for the setup and clear down time.

h. The Church car park is available to church members and those hiring rooms on a first come first served basis. Please park sensibly with due regard to other users of the premises. Parking is offered only for the period of your hire time. (ie don't go off shopping and deny

other legitimate users). All responsibility for any loss or damage when parked on the premises rests fully and solely with car owner & none with the church.

i. Any accidents or dangerous occurrences, that happen on the premises are to be reported in the accident reporting book located in the hallway/kitchen area. Any incidents requiring immediate attention please use the Emergency contact list shown by the entry doors. All other incidents should be reported by e-mail to:- WMCroombooking@gmail.com.

j. From time to time the church and /or Octagon will be required for weddings, funerals and similar important church events. These will take priority over normal hiring. We shall endeavour to give as much notice as possible to those hiring the premises of these events.

k. Our charges are reviewed each year (usually in September/October) and if appropriate, any increase is applied from 1 January the following year. A notice period of at least one month will be provided to all hirers.

l. Users may not leave any items relating to their activity in the hired rooms. A limited number of storage boxes have been organised for those groups using the premises on a regular basis. The church does not accept any responsibility for loss or damage to user items left in storage.

m. Notices advertising the hirer's activity may only be displayed on or around the premises prior to an event with prior consent of the Senior Steward. This is obtained by placing a sheet of up to A5 size in the folder, clearly marked for this purpose and situated on the top of the storage box area in the main entrance foyer. Stand-alone notices may only be used during the time when the hirer is using the premises and only after full permission has been requested and obtained. Requests may be left in the folder mentioned above or, send via e-mail to WMCroombooking@gmail.com

n. WiFi is usually available at the Church – to log on as “Guest” please use the password w3Lcome2u

o. Where a Hirer need to comply with any Enforcement Authority's requirements, for example Food Hygiene Regulations, they shall discuss all matters fully and openly with the Church Representative to determine what action the Hirer is to take and what the Church is to take at the earliest possible opportunity.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS OF HIRE FOR COVID-19

Note: These conditions are supplemental to, not a replacement for, the Church's ordinary conditions of hire.

These conditions will be reviewed regularly and may change at short notice.

Contact via WMCroombooking@gmail.com for any questions or further information.

1: You, the hirer, will be responsible for ensuring all those attending your activity or event comply with any Government Regulations, requirements or guidelines, or similar guidance issued by governing bodies for your organisation and with the actions identified in the Church's Risk Assessment, of which you will be provided with a copy.

2: You, the hirer, will be responsible for disinfecting those parts of the premises, fixtures, fittings or equipment that you are likely to come into frequent contact with before, during and at the end of the course of your hire period as appropriate to your use. This is likely to include:- door handles, light switches, window catches, toilet handles and seats, wash basins and any equipment likely to be used. Particular attention needs to be paid to kitchen equipment and surfaces, using either the products supplied (which will be in a clearly accessible location) or your own ordinary domestic cleaning/disinfecting products. Please take care cleaning electrical equipment, including any switches and sockets that have been used. Use wipes - do not wipe with, or spray liquids!

3: You will need to take precautions to make sure that anyone who has recently tested positive for covid-19 infection only attends your event if it is safe to do so, and that they comply with any Government or Medical advice or requirements.

4: You will keep the premises well ventilated throughout your hire: windows and doors should be left open as far as convenient. You will be responsible for ensuring windows and doors are all securely closed before leaving.

5: We will have the right to close the premises. This may be done if there are any safety concerns, but particularly if related to COVID-19; for example: -

- a. if someone who has attended the hall develops symptoms and thorough cleansing and/or sanitising is required**
- b. if the Hiring Conditions are not being complied with, whether by you or by other hirers**
- c. in the event that our buildings are asked or required to be closed again.**

If this is necessary, we will do our best to inform you promptly.

6: In the event of someone becoming unwell with suspected Covid-19 symptoms while at the premises, you should remove them to the designated isolation area which, unless you have designated another room, will be The Wesley Room. In that Room, you should provide the ill person and any attendants with tissues and a lined bin (or plastic bag) and a bowl of warm soapy water for handwashing. As soon as is practicable, the ill person should either go to their home or to where they can receive further medical assistance, preferably using the nearby alternative exit door. Others who have been in contact with the ill person should also leave the premises, observing the usual hand sanitising and social distancing precautions. Please inform as soon as possible, the Church cleaner at WMCroombooking@gmail.com to enable thorough cleansing of affected areas.

I agree to abide by the above-mentioned conditions.

.....(Signature)..... (Date)

(PrintName).....

(Address & phone).....

Nature of proposed use of premises.....

..... (If this involves children, young people or vulnerable adults, please give age range and number of adult helpers)

Email Address for invoices (Invoices will usually be sent by e-mail monthly in arrears to the address given. Each invoice must be paid within 10 days of the issue date.

Name of church representative agreeing to this use of premises

.....Date..... (Electronic applications the hirer must state in their e-mail that they have read and will comply with all of this document) All bookings and cancellations should be requested by e-mail to WMCroombooking@gmail.com indicating hirer or organisation name, dates, times and rooms required. Confirmation by e-mail will be provided to the requester. Cancelled bookings with less than 48 hours of advance notice may incur the normal charge. WMC retains the right to update these general terms & conditions to improve clarity, at any time. Hirers are invited to view and check the most recent version via the church website (<http://www.wmclight.org.uk/>)

FIRE SAFETY INFORMATION

| Position | Type | Restrictions; For use on:- |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Ground Floor | | |
| Front of Church: Storage Area (electric cupboard) | Carbon dioxide CO ₂ | Electrical |
| Corridor outside Wesley Room | Water | Wood, paper, textiles |
| Corridor outside Vestry | Carbon dioxide CO ₂ | Electrical |
| Kitchen | Carbon dioxide CO ₂ | Electrical |
| | Wet Chemical | Oil/fat fires |
| | Fire Blanket | Flammable liquids |
| Main entrance foyer | Water | Wood, paper, textiles |
| Octagon | Water | Wood, paper, textiles |
| First Floor | | |
| Corridor top of stairs | Water | Wood, paper, textiles |
| <u>Upper Room</u> | Carbon dioxide CO ₂ | Electrical |
| | Fire Blanket | Flammable liquids |
| Sanctuary Sound Desk, Balcony | Carbon dioxide CO ₂ | Electrical |

SMOKE/HEAT DETECTORS

There are 7 smoke/heat detectors in the premises

FIRE ALARM BELLS/LIGHTS

There are 5 Fire Alarm bells / Lights in the premises

EMERGENCY LIGHTS

There are 13 Emergency Lights on Fire Escape Routes that automatically switch on in a power failure

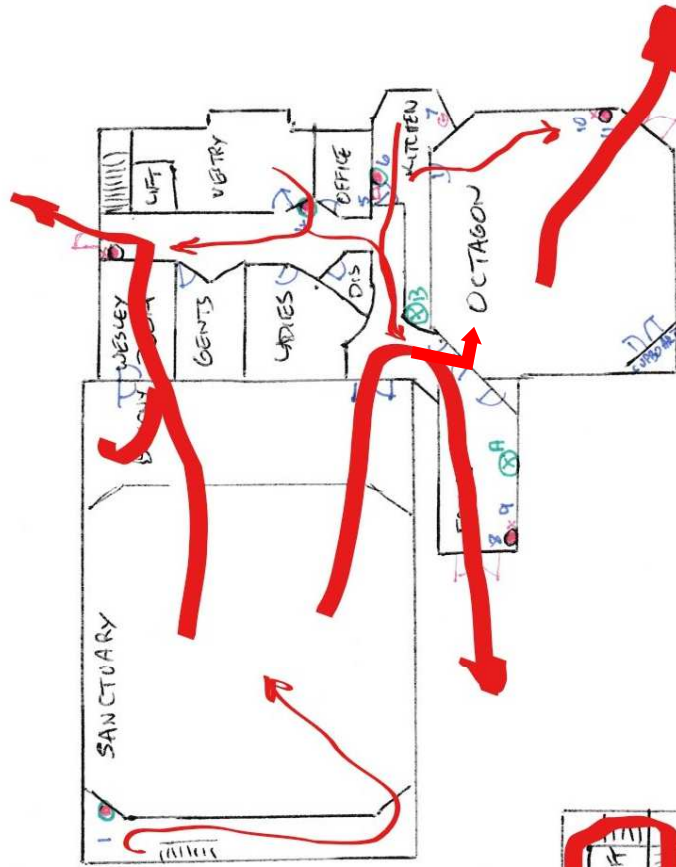
FIRE ALARM SYSTEM

The fire Alarm and Emergency Lights systems are tested regularly and results are displayed in the foyer.

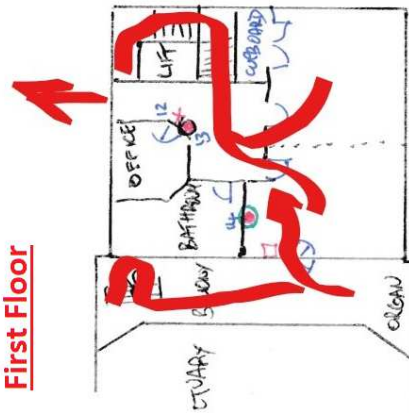
FIRE ESCAPE ROUTES

Fire Escape Routes

Ground Floor



First Floor



EMERGENCY CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

FOR ALL POLICE / FIRE / AMBULANCE EMERGENCIES 999

SUFFOLK POLICE 101

NHS NON-EMERGENCY OR ADVICE 111

FIRE SERVICES NON-EMERGENCY:-

Monday to Thursday from 9am - 5pm AND
Fridays from 9am - 4pm.
out of office hours

01473 260588
01480 444500

GAS LEAK – URGENT 0800 111 999

DANGEROUS ELECTRICAL SITUATION 0800 783 8838

SERIOUS MAINS WATER LEAK - ANGLIAN WATER 0800 145 145

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE FOLLOWING ARE VOLUNTEERS AND ARE NOT ALWAYS AVAILABLE

URGENT BUILDING MATTERS: Munro Property Services 01394 448267
(e.g. Internal water leaks) Mobile 07999 593950

PROPERTY / LETTING MICHAEL 01394 411886 or
e-mail contact at :- WMCroombooking@gmail.com
MINISTER Not yet in place

SENIOR STEWARD

STANNAH LIFTS (LIFT CURRENTLY NOT IN USE)