

Elim Church Romsey COVID-19 Risk Assessment

Issue 3.0

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1. Introduction

This document provides the COVID-19 Risk Assessment for Elim Church Romsey. The document was originally developed prior to the reopening of the building after first lockdown and has been updated as circumstances have changed. This review has been conducted based on the information available at the time of the review. This is a living document. As government guidance, Elim National Leadership Team (NLT) recommendations and other circumstances dictate, this document will be reviewed and updated as required.

1.1.Scope of this Risk Assessment

This risk assessment covers the reopening of the building to church members and members of the public. This reopening has taken place in stages, in line with government and Elim NLT guidelines supported by an appropriate risk assessment.

This update of the risk assessment covers the removal of most COVID legal restrictions which occurred on 19 July 2021. This has permitted congregational singing and socialising by congregation members. A cautious approach is advised with social distancing and mask wearing being recommended.

Other events that may be anticipated in the future are children's and youth work, mother and toddler groups, weddings, funerals, baptisms and social events. This risk assessment will be updated at an appropriate time prior to the commencement of any other activities.

2. Methodology

The methodology to conduct the risk assessment was originally to undertake an inspection of the building and surroundings to identify any COVID-19 related risks. This initial risk identification was then reviewed by the church leadership team and the risk register was developed. This methodology will be followed whenever updates are required during the life of this document.

The detailed risk assessment is documented in **Section 4** and the **Appendix A** to this document.

2.1.Register of Review Meetings

Meeting	Date	Attendees
Initial building inspection	13/6/2020	Paul, Tim, Pastor Dave
Initial Zoom review meeting	18/6/2020	Pastor Dave, Paul, Tim, David, Phil, John, Pete
Update based on comments received from David Oliver (email 30/06/2020) and Government guidance published on 29/06/2020	01/07/2020	Paul. Email review by Pastor Dave, Tim, David, Phil, John, Pete
Update to cover singers on stage in small meetings and those sharing testimonies from the front in meetings.	2/10/2020	Paul. Email review by Pastor Dave, Tim, David, Phil, John, Pete

Update to cover the removal of most COVID legal restrictions on 19 July 2021	30/07/2021	Paul. Email review by Pastor Dave, Tim, David, Phil, John, Pete
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2.2.Future Reviews and Updates

This risk assessment will be updated whenever government guidance or Elim NLT guidance are updated and other circumstances dictate. As a minimum, this document will be reviewed at intervals of no more than 6 months.

3. Assumptions and Limitations

Fundamental to any risk assessment is to understand and document the assumptions upon which the risk assessment is based. This is then likely to result in some limitations on the activities that can be undertaken. For example, a social distancing measure may limit the number of attendees at any meeting. Any change to these assumptions will require a review of the risk assessment to ascertain if any of the risks have changed, or if new risks now exist. The risk assessment is then updated as appropriate.

3.1.Assumptions

The following assumptions have been made:

- On 19 July 2021 most legal restrictions were lifted, however it remains best practice to continue to follow government and Elim guidance where relevant. A summary of this guidance is provided in **Table 3.1**.

Description	Government Guidance	Elim NLT Guidance
People with COVID symptoms	Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 should not attend (this remains a legal requirement).	Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 should not attend.
People instructed to self-isolate	Someone who has been instructed by NHS Test and Trace to self-isolate because they have tested positive for COVID-19, or they are the close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, must not attend. Note: From 16 August 2021 double vaccinated close contacts no longer have to self-isolate. Those who test positive must still self-isolate and not attend.	
Social distancing	Personal choice. You may choose to limit the close contact you have with people you do not usually live with in order to help reduce your risk of catching or spreading COVID-19.	It would seem reasonable to continue social distancing in your building at approx. 1 metre.

Hand Sanitizing	Use hand sanitizer regularly is an effective way to reduce your risk of catching illnesses, including COVID-19.	Keep the hand sanitizers in place and ask people to clean their hands when they enter the building or move around.
Ventilation	Ventilation is important and should be considered alongside other control measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission.	The single most important mitigation to reduce the spread of the virus. Open doors and windows for at least 10-15 minutes before and after services. Keep as many open during the service as possible.
Shared objects	The use of shared communal objects is now a personal choice.	Either use 'prefilled communion' elements; or Keep the elements covered whilst words are being spoken over them. Stewards stand wearing a face covering, and have the congregation come to them.
Cleaning regime	Keep the area clean to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Frequently cleaning of objects and surfaces that people touch regularly.	Continue to have a more enhanced cleaning regime in place, especially around surfaces.
Attendance records	You are encouraged to continue to collect names and contact details.	It would be wise to continue to gather NHS Test & Trace data for the next few months.
Singing	There are no limits on singing or performing indoors, however, singing, dancing, exercising or raising voices can also increase the risk of catching or passing on COVID-19.	Congregational singing is considered by all scientific analysis to be a high risk activity for the transmission of Covid-19. Mitigations to reduce the risk are ventilation, face coverings and social distancing. If ventilation is limited, transmission risk will be less with face coverings and, where possible, to keep at least 1m apart.
Personal prayer		In line with what the person being prayed for is comfortable with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay 1m away, wearing a mask and not touching them; • Lay hands on a shoulder or arm and not the hands, face or head; • Wear a face covering and ask the person being prayed for to do so; • Keep the prayers short.

Table 3.1: Summary of Government and Elim NLT guidance

3.2.Limitations

The following limitations have been identified:

- Use of the building is limited to the scenarios identified in **Section 4.2**;

4. Detailed Risk Assessment

4.1.Structure of the Risk Assessment

The main structure of the risk assessment is based on the risk assessment matrix provided by Elim NLT [Appendix 3 EFGA Covid19 Churches Risk Assessment]. Risk Categories

In line with Elim NTL guidelines the risks in the matrix have been assessed as Low, Medium and High. These risks are known as “pre-mitigation” risks. They are the risks that exist before any control measures have been put in place. They represent the risk of harm if nothing was done to address the risk.

The assessment of risk is a combination of both the frequency with which the risk occurs (how often the risk occurs) and the severity of the risk (how bad the outcome is). As this risk assessment is simply about people attending the building, the risk categorisation can be simplified to “what is the risk of a person suffering harm when they attend the building. Is it High, Medium or Low?”.

Control measures should then be put in place to minimise the risks. It should be noted that some risks may not be mitigated to zero. This is normal and in our everyday lives we accept some level of risk in the activities we undertake, such as driving a car and crossing the road. Control measures should be used ensure that the risks identified in this risk assessment are reduced to acceptable levels as follows:

- High risks should always be subject to control measures to reduce them to acceptable levels;
- Medium risks should always be subject to control measures to reduce them. In some cases it may not be possible to reduce medium risks to lower levels and in some cases a medium risk may be acceptable where it is not possible to reduce it further and it is similar to other risks associated with the activity. However, while medium risks may be acceptable for bungee jumping or downhill skiing, they are unlikely to be acceptable for a church meeting;
- Low risks should normally be subject to control measures to reduce them. Some low risks will be acceptable where they are similar to other risks of attending a meeting. However, a key requirement of a risk assessment is that risks should be As Low As Reasonably Practicable (ALARP). As a responsible organisation our duty is to apply control measures to reduce low risks where it is financially realistic and reasonably practical to do so.

4.2. Specific Scenarios in this Risk Assessment

4.2.1. Risk Assessment – Appendix A

This risk assessment covers items that will apply to all activities within the building such as cleaning, use of the toilets and kitchen as well as general access, egress and movement issues. It includes a number of specific areas that are likely to occur as a matter of course during services and other meetings. It covers all meetings and other activities that are likely to take place in the building with the exception of those items specifically excluded in **Section 4.2.2.**

4.2.2. Other Activities

In order to limit the scope of this risk assessment and to avoid complications, the scope of this risk assessment has been limited. The following scenarios have been identified where an additional risk assessment will be required before these events can be undertaken.

- Children's activities and Youth Work
- Mother and Toddler Groups
- Baptisms
- Social Events
- Weddings
- Funerals

Appendix A: Risk Assessment Matrix

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	Is the risk High, Medium or Low	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Date Completed
<i>List the hazards or risks that you have identified? Use a separate box for each hazard or risk identified</i>	<i>List the person(s) or personnel groups</i>		<i>Briefly describe any actions that you have already put into action</i>	<i>Briefly describe actions that you. Your department or the organisation need to undertake</i>	<i>Name the person responsible for making it happen</i>	<i>Please put the date by which the action needed to be completed</i>	<i>Please put the date here when the action has been completed</i>
RA1: Risk of Legionella in little used water services.	All users of the building.	H		A specialist Legionella inspection has been undertaken and the recommendations implemented. A regular routine of flushing water outlets is being undertaken and recorded. Post mitigation risk: Low (A more thorough regime now in place than before lockdown).	Pastor Dave	Routine flush Ongoing	Routine flush Ongoing
RA2: COVID-19 risk to employees and others using the office and other parts of the building outside service times e.g. musicians and technicians, maintenance and cleaning team.	Pastor Dave and church members using the building for their duties.	L	A more rigorous cleaning routine is in place since lockdown.	The new rigorous cleaning routine is assessed as suitable for this stage of unlocking and will continue.	No change required.	Regular cleaning regime Ongoing	Regular cleaning regime Ongoing

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	Is the risk High, Medium or Low	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Date Completed
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RA3: COVID-19 risk should the previous cleaning regime be insufficient or inappropriate to mitigate the COVID-19 risk.	All users of the building.	L	A more rigorous cleaning routine is in place since lockdown.	The new rigorous cleaning routine is assessed as suitable for this stage of unlocking and will continue.	No change required.	Regular cleaning regime Ongoing	Regular cleaning regime Ongoing
RA4: COVID-19 risk due to the use of inappropriate cleaning materials.	All users of the building.	L	To ensure that the cleaning regime is effective due to the use of appropriate cleaning materials the COSHH list of COVID-19 approved products has been checked and suitable products purchased from the list.	The new cleaning products are assessed as suitable for this stage of unlocking and will continue.	No change required.	Regular cleaning regime Ongoing	Regular cleaning regime Ongoing
RA5: COVID-19 risk of contamination or transfer of the virus during the serving of refreshments.	All users of the building.	L	Due to the small space available and to ensure that preparation, serving and clearing away refreshments is COVID-19 secure, this is currently not practical. As a result, no refreshments are being served.	A separate risk assessment will be conducted prior to restarting refreshments.	No action required as no refreshments will be served.	Not applicable	Not applicable

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<i>List the hazards or risks that you have identified? Use a separate box for each hazard or risk identified</i>	<i>List the person(s) or personnel groups</i>		<i>Briefly describe any actions that you have already put into action</i>	<i>Briefly describe actions that you. Your department or the organisation need to undertake</i>	<i>Name the person responsible for making it happen</i>	<i>Please put the date by which the action needed to be completed</i>	<i>Please put the date here when the action has been completed</i>
RA6: COVID-19 risk of contamination should people use the kitchen (e.g. to get a glass of water).	Anyone using the kitchen and cleaning staff.	L	To minimise risks and reduce the potential amount of cleaning required, the kitchen is locked during times of access to the building. Note: Water for emergency use is available in the minor hall.	A separate risk assessment will be conducted prior to restarting refreshments.	No action required as the kitchen is locked.	Not applicable	Not applicable
RA7: COVID-19 risk of contamination or transfer of the virus during communion.	All users of the building.	L	Communion using individually packed elements is currently permitted under the previous risk assessment and this can continue.	In addition, in line with Elim NLT guidelines, the previous arrangement for communion may take place with the following restrictions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The elements must be prepared, placed on the table at the front of the church and covered by a person using appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (e.g. mask and gloves); • The elements must be kept covered whilst words are being spoken over them; • The elements may be uncovered and the congregation come to collect 	Pastor Dave.	Prior to meetings where communion is served	Ongoing

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				them, or a steward may stand wearing a face covering, and have the congregation come to collect them.			
RA8: Inability to maintain social distancing due to too many people in the building.	All users of the building.	L	At present 2m social distancing maintained throughout the building (except those briefly passing in the aisle and minor hall) and a booking system is in place to prevent overcrowding.	In line with Elim NLT guidelines and government recommendations social distancing will be reduced to approximately 1m with additional ventilation. A booking system will be continued to ensure that the building capacity is not exceeded.	Pastor Dave.	Ongoing at each service.	Ongoing
RA9: The risk of people carrying COVID-19 into the building.	All users of the building.	L	Hand sanitizer is currently provided inside the main door.	In line with Elim NLT guidelines and government recommendations continue to provide hand sanitizer and recommend it's use on entering and leaving the building.	Pastor Dave.	Ongoing at each service.	Ongoing

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RA10: The risk of COVID-19 transfer between people using toilets.	All users of the building who use the toilet.	L	The male and female toilets are currently limited to 1 user at a time.	Maintain the limit of 1 user at a time in the male and female toilets.	No change required.	Not applicable	Not applicable
RA11: The risk of COVID-19 transfer between people in transit between the main hall, kitchen and toilets.	All users of the building transiting from the main hall to the kitchen and toilets.	L	Due to the small size of the minor hall and narrow corridor only 1 person is permitted at a time in the corridor.	Maintain the limit of 1 person at a time in the corridor.	No change required.	Not applicable	Not applicable
RA12: The risk of COVID-19 transfer between a patient and somebody administering First Aid.	A patient and a person administering First Aid.	L	PPE is provided for the person administering First Aid.	Maintain the provision of PPE for the person administering First Aid.	No change required.	Not applicable	Not applicable

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RA13: The risk of COVID-19 transfer through use of the offering box.	All users of the building but primarily those processing the offering.	L	Use of standing orders or internet bank transfers is recommended. Treasurer and assistants should wear gloves or use hand sanitizer before and after handling the contents of the box.	Maintain the current system.	No change required.	Not applicable	Not applicable
RA14: The risk of COVID-19 transfer to/from external contractors.	External contractors and those attending the building.	L	External contractors recommended to wear a mask and maintain social distancing.	Maintain the current system.	No change required.	Not applicable	Not applicable
RA15: People are unaware of the risk assessment and COVID-19 procedures in place.	All users of the building.	L	The COVID-19 risk assessment is published on the church website: www.elimchurchromsey.com	In line with Elim NLT guidelines and government recommendations publish the updated COVID-19 risk assessment on the church website: www.elimchurchromsey.com	Paul	7/8/21	

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RA16: Increased risk of COVID-19 transmission due to excessively long services.	All users of the building.	L	Service times have been restricted to around 45 minutes.	There is no government or Elim NLT limit on the length of the service, however those planning and leading services should consider the risk of spreading the virus keep service lengths under review.	Pastor Dave, or person nominated by Pastor Dave to lead each service.	Prior to each service. Ongoing	Ongoing
RA17: The risk of COVID-19 transfer between people due to the sharing of church bibles and other literature.	All users of the building.	L	No bibles or other literature are currently provided.	The use of shared literature and communal objects is now a personal choice. Literature may be provided on the table at the back and it is personal choice if people wish to take it.	Pastor Dave.	Prior to each service. Ongoing	Ongoing
RA18: COVID-19 risk due to singing and playing of instruments.	All users of the building.	L	Limited singing and playing of instruments is permitted on the stage during services subject to social distancing,	There are no limits on congregational singing, however, singing, dancing, exercising or raising voices can also increase the risk of catching or passing on COVID-19. In line with Elim NLT guidelines singing is permitted with mitigations of ventilation, face coverings and social distancing of approximately 1m.	Pastor Dave	Prior to each service. Ongoing	Ongoing

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RA19: Attendees may not self-isolate if the church is unable to support NHS Test and Trace.	General public	L	A register of attendees is currently kept.	Continue the practice of maintaining a register of attendees.	Pastor Dave	At each service. Ongoing	Ongoing
RA20: Symptomatic or self-isolating people creating a risk of them spreading or contracting COVID-19.	All users of the building.	L	People who are symptomatic or self-isolating are not permitted to attend. Poster at door advising those not to attend.	Maintain the current system.	No change required.	Not applicable	Not applicable
RA21: Spread of COVID-19 can be limited by the use of face covering.	All users of the building.	L	Face coverings are currently mandatory.	In line with ELT guidelines and government guidelines recommend that face coverings are worn.	Pastor Dave	Ongoing	Ongoing