

Threlkeld Village Hall

Covid-19 Risk Assessment and Operating Procedures

Document Approval

This document has been approved by the Trustees of the Threlkeld Village Hall as follows.

Version	Trust Approval Date
1	26 th August 2020

Change Log

Version	Changes from previous version
1	Initial Version

Purpose

This document records the risk assessment and operating procedures established to address the identified risks, required to allow Village Hall operations to restart following the lifting of lockdown regulations established for the 2020 Covid-19 Pandemic. It identifies the risks that hirers and volunteers could be exposed to as a result of visiting or working in the hall, quantifies them and details the mitigation measures to be taken to make the Hall as safe as it reasonably can be. The risks before and after mitigation are compared with the risks associated with those deemed acceptable based on Government policy.

Where there is a conflict between existing hall policies and this document then this document shall take precedence.

Risk Assessment

The sole risk of concern in this assessment is that of transmission of the Sars-Cov-2 virus. Potential transmission could occur between attendees at an event or between different events whether overlapping or sequential. The routes of transmission are assumed to be either airborne or manual, that is breathing in viruses exhaled by others or touching a surface that has previously been infected. Risks will be assessed for typical "attendee journeys".

To assess acceptability we shall compare the risk due to the old operating procedures with the new ones designed to mitigate virus exposure and with the risk level of what is deemed acceptable by Government from the 4th July 2020 onwards. Government acceptable risk is based on the use of indoor spaces with 1m social distancing allowed where 2m is not possible but with other mitigating factors employed.

To assess risk levels we must make certain assumptions to allow the calculations to be made. The assumptions used in this document are listed below. These are not intended to be absolute risk levels but are based on data where available and estimates where not. Primarily this is to establish a means of calculation that will allow comparison of pre and post-mitigation risk in relation to a baseline acceptable risk level.

Assumptions

The chance that a person met at random has the virus is assumed to be 0.076%.

This is based on 1000 new, detected cases per day multiplied by 10 to account for the number of undetected cases¹, multiplied by 5, on the assumption that this is the period during which people are unaware that they have contracted the disease and thus are not isolating, to give 50,000 potential spreaders at any one time. Dividing this by the population gives the chance a person met is infectious of 50,000/66,000,000. This is roughly 1 in 1,320.

¹ Randomised surveys indicate that about 4 million people have had the virus but the official figure of detected cases is roughly one tenth of this.

The actual figure will now be lower but this was about correct in the time leading up to the removal of lockdown measures so serves as the basis for calculating Government acceptable risk.

The chance of being infected by being at 2m spacing from an infected person for 1 hour is assumed to be 10%.

This is an extremely difficult number to estimate but there have been studies looking at this (see for example <https://www.ft.com/content/2418ff87-1d41-41b5-b638-38f5164a2e94>) and the number here is roughly based on these, particularly the case where 34% of people on a bus for 100 minutes were infected by a carrier.

Doubling the distance increases the exposure time that gives the same risk by factor 10².

This is an estimate based on some of the relevant evidence given in the “Environmental Influence on Transmission”.

A virus carrier will contaminate hard surfaces for at least 24 hours or until cleaned with suitable sanitiser

The virus survives on most surfaces, particularly hard materials like stainless steel, for about three days. The surfaces would normally be cleaned once a day so there is up to a day for others to be contaminated. Personal use of sanitiser and more regular cleaning will mitigate this risk.

A person touching contaminated surfaces without subsequent sanitisation will have a 50% chance of contracting Covid-19

This is a working assumption based on the chance being greater than airborne exposure for an hour (10%) and certainty of infection (100%)².

A complete air change over an exposure period is assumed to halve the risk of infection due to airborne viruses. Multiple air exchanges over the same period reduce this risk by 0.5ⁿ for n complete air changes.

Again, this is based on incomplete evidence as discussed in “Environmental Influence on Transmission”. Room level circulation should be avoided as this just spreads airborne particles more efficiently. Outside is assumed to be equivalent to one air change every second.

The chance of being infected by being at 2m spacing from an infected person for 1 hour with enhanced respiration is assumed to be 20%.

² “Environmental Influence on Transmission”, SAGE – Environmental and Modelling Group

Enhanced respiration in an exercise class will double the amount of virus exhaled compared to normal breathing so we assume that the probability of someone else in the vicinity contracting the virus is similarly increased.

Risk Scenarios

To assess risks, we define typical attendee scenarios so that these can be quantified. These are defined as follows.

Exercise Class

- One hour spent in the hall
- Enhanced respiration and hence potential virus spreading

Meeting

- Two hours spent in the hall
- One visit to the toilet

Workshop

- Four hours spent in the hall
- Use of kitchen
- Two visits to the toilet

Reception

- Eight hours spent in the hall
- Use of kitchen
- Four visits to the toilet

Risks Associated with Normal Working during the Pandemic

In this section we examine the risks associated with the risk scenarios defined above assuming that normal working practises, that is those followed prior to the lockdown in March 2020, are followed during the Covid-19 pandemic. Calculations are detailed in the Appendix.

For these calculations we assume that a person will be within 2m of 10 people plus two, 1 minute encounters during each hour of their time in the hall. Use of the kitchen is assumed to be covered by the increase in 1m encounters given the longer durations of these events. Also, the toilets are cleaned at the beginning of each day and that the number of people that have used them before a particular customer is 50 based on 100 users of the hall and coffee shop per day and taking account of how this increases as the day progresses.

Based on these assumptions the risks of event attendees contracting Covid-19 to attendees is given in the table below. It is worth noting that a significant risk is from transmission via the toilet surfaces and cleaning every hour reduces this by about a factor of ten.

Event	Normal Working Covid-19 Contraction Risk
Exercise Class	0.15%
Meeting	2%
Workshop	3.99%
Reception	7.81%

Baseline Acceptable risk

Our baseline risks, that is, what is deemed acceptable following Government guidelines, assumes a person spends time indoors in the presence of 3 people at 2m, not in their social bubble, in addition to 1m encounters for 1 minute but with mitigation measures. Mitigation measures are treated as halving the probability without mitigation. Finally, we assume toilets are cleaned every hour.

Using the same methods as before gives rise to a risk estimates for hall visitors as given in the table below.

Event	Normal Working Covid-19 Contraction Risk	Acceptable Risk Level
Exercise Class	0.15%	0.047%
Meeting	2%	0.24%
Workshop	3.99%	0.47%
Reception	7.81%	0.95%

Operating Principles

The principles of operation are:

- to keep people separated as much as possible, and at least by 2m
- to be cleaning regularly
- to make use of as much ventilation as is reasonably possible
- Anyone with any Covid-19 symptoms must stay away

Operating Procedures

The measures put in place to increase the safety of attendees are as follows:

- Anyone showing Covid-19 symptoms or having been notified or at risk of possible exposure must stay away from the hall for at least 14 days
- All people using the hall should maintain 2m distancing at all times. Where groups of people live in the same social bubble then this rule is not required.

- With the required social distancing the number of people in the hall at one time should not exceed 24. Where there are groups within the same social bubble this figure can go up to 30.
- Seating or positioning should be side to side rather than face to face
- Face coverings are required unless an exemption applies. Use tissues and dispose of these in the pedal operated bins
- Ventilation should be maximised during all use of the hall by keeping windows and doors open wherever possible. The fire door in the hall can be opened for this purpose.
- If it has not been possible to maintain ventilation during the event then doors and windows should be opened afterwards for sufficient time to allow a full change of air in the hall.
- The Trust will setup up a cleaning station inside the main door supplied with all the necessary materials (anti-viral spray, cloths, paper towels, disposable gloves etc.) for disinfection of surfaces for use by all hall users.
- Surfaces likely to be touched in toilets (handles, flushes, taps etc.) should be cleaned hourly unless it is known that the facilities have not been used. This is the responsibility of the hirer who should complete the record sheet outside the toilets to confirm completion.
- After each use of the hall, the surfaces that have been touched (not including the floor) should be cleaned using disinfectant supplied by the hall. For events of two hours or more this should be repeated hourly unless all contact is by people within the same social bubble in which case clean when the bubble moves elsewhere. This is the responsibility of the hirer who should complete the sheet at the cleaning station to confirm completion.
- It is difficult to guarantee floor sterility so where exercise mats are required these should be provided by the users and a 2m x 2m clean plastic sheet placed between the mat and the floor
- Six hand sanitisation stations have been placed around the hall and people are encouraged to use these when entering the hall and whenever appropriate such as before and after using common facilities.
- A clearly signed one way system is in place to avoid the need for people to pass each other in the narrow corridors when moving around the building. This should be followed at all times.
- During the day, when the coffee shop is in operation, users of the hall should use the door on to the street while users of the coffee shop use the door from the car park. In the evening, when the coffee shop is closed, either door may be used.
- Contact details are requested from all attendees to comply with test and trace requirements. These should record the times of entrance and exit and be held by the hirer for 21 days.
- If someone is taken ill during an event the procedure described below shall be followed
- In the event that an attendee is reported to have had the virus when they visited, the hall will be closed for deep clean and all attendees should be notified and advised to obtain a test. Notification should be done through the official test and trace body with details of contacts provided to them by the hall hirer.

Risks after Mitigations

The risk assessments outlined above are now repeated for the new operating procedures. The relative risk assessments are given below. Remember that these are not absolute numbers but are for risk comparison.

Event	Normal Working Covid-19 Contraction Risk	Acceptable Risk Level	Mitigated Risk
Exercise Class	0.15%	0.047%	0.045%
Meeting	2%	0.24%	0.23%
Workshop	3.99%	0.47%	0.46%
Reception	7.81%	0.95%	0.94%

The mitigations specified above do not make much difference compared to Acceptable Risk level requirements. This is because the single most effective measure, based on the assumptions given above, is the cleaning of toilet touchable surfaces on an hourly basis. Hourly cleaning alone reduces risk factors tenfold so should be seen as the most important mitigation along with good ventilation.

Trust Obligations

Based on the operating procedures described above, the Trust is responsible for ensuring the following:

- Maintain clear signage throughout the building and periphery to remind all of the need to maintain 2m distancing, washing hands for 20 seconds, using hand sanitisers regularly and disposable tissues.
- Put up posters summarising the operating procedures given above
- Where possible remove items that would be touched such as the curtain between the hall and the coffee shop.
- Setup a cleaning station for use by hirers. Ensure supplies of cleaning materials, soaps, towels, rubbish bags etc. are maintained
- In the event of a case of Covid-19 being identified the hall will need a deep clean. This may require specialist work with full PPE etc.
- No volunteer/employee can be asked to do anything they feel uncomfortable with in respect of Covid-19 risks
- Provision of Covid-19 First Aid Box.
- Provide cleaning record sheets.

In addition, hall volunteers should also adhere to the relevant requirements on hirers such as cleaning the computer keyboard after use etc.

Hirers Obligations

The following items should be added to the terms and conditions of hiring the hall. Some flexibility is allowed given the wide variety of users of the hall so long as the principles outlined above are followed.

Please note that the relevant requirements should also be followed by Trust members or volunteers when working in the hall.

Hall users

- Should use the front door on to the street for access.
- Ensure that attendees comply with 2m distancing at all times and hand sanitising requirements.
- Ensure no more than 24 people may use the hall at any time unless some groups are from the same social bubble in which case the maximum number is 30
- Note that face coverings are required except where a person is exempted. Encourage the use of disposable tissues.
- Ensure seating or positioning of attendees should be side to side rather than face to face
- Ensure ventilation wherever possible and certainly after the event for sufficient time to refresh all air in the hall. All windows and doors are to be locked on completion of the event.
- Ensure that if exercise mats are required these should be provided by the users and a 2m x 2m clean plastic sheet placed between the mat and the floor.
- Make sure that touchable surfaces should have been cleaned on conclusion of the previous event and a record made of this. The hirer may wish to clean prior to the event to ensure this.
- Ensure that touched surfaces in the hall, the toilets and elsewhere are cleaned on conclusion of the event. For events of 2 hours or more surfaces should be cleaned hourly except where only used by people in the same social bubble when they should be cleaned when the bubble moves on. Cleaning should be recorded on the sheet in the lobby for the hall and the sheet in the corridor for the toilets.
- Request people to use the toilets one at a time and encourage use of the hand sanitisers.
- Must follow the established one way system.
- Must gather track and trace information (name, contact details, times of arrival and departure) noting that attendees are not obliged to provide this.
- Must make sure everyone likely to attend your activity or event understands that they must not do so if they or anyone in their household has had COVID-19 symptoms in the last 7 days, and that if they develop symptoms within 7 days of visiting the premises they must use the Test, Track and Trace system to alert others with whom they have been in contact as well as notifying the VH Trust.
- Will be responsible for the collection of all rubbish created during your hire, including tissues and cleaning cloths, rubbish bags will be provided.

In the event that someone is taken ill during an event:

- Move the person to a chair in the lobby where the small table is. There will be a Covid-19 first aid box here.
- Open the doors to allow ventilation.
- Ask others in the hall to leave and then close the hall
- Arrange for the unwell person to travel home safely.
- Ask them to contact the NHS and to let the VH Trust know the outcome.
- Notify the VH Trust of this event.
- All rubbish to be safely disposed of.

Conclusions

A risk assessment has been carried out for the operation of the hall. The risks associated with the measures adopted have been estimated based on the assumptions stated. Based on these the results show that the measures adopted have reduced risks to attendees by factors of 5 to 10 depending on the type of event. The measures are just below those estimated for simply following Government mandated measures. The main risk driver is infection from contamination of surfaces in the hall and toilets so keeping these clean is the overriding priority. Provision of good ventilation is also of importance in reducing risk.

These conclusions are dependent on the assumptions made and the main value is to determine relative risk levels. Absolute values given here should not be employed in isolation and are not intended to be an accurate estimate of risk.

Appendix: Calculation Details

The calculations are encapsulated in the attached spreadsheet and notes.