



# Planning and holding events during Covid-19

A guide to holding events safely and with confidence.





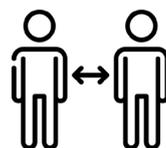
## The basics

With the regularly changing nature of the Covid-19 pandemic, we know that planning and holding events in CCT churches might seem a little daunting! This guide contains all you need to know to be able to hold events, including religious services, safely in CCT churches.

We've brought together published Government Guidance and advice provided by the Church of England to provide you with a step by step guide to holding a successful event in your CCT church.

As you plan your event, please remember that CCT staff are here to help you. Please do get in touch with us, usually by contacting your Local Community Officer, and ask us any questions. We are happy to work through any issues with you to help your event be a success.

All Government guidelines on working and living with Covid-19 refer to 3 key points in order to reduce the risk of spreading the virus to the "lowest reasonably practical level":



**1. Social (physical) distancing**



**2. Additional hygiene measures**



**3. Undertake a risk assessment**

All CCT churches are unique and government guidance will change over time, so you will need to think about the specific circumstances of the event you want to hold. The sections of this guide will help you to do this. In your planning, please remember that churches may need to be closed to the public at short notice because of local restrictions or lockdowns, something that CCT has no control over, so you may want to think about a Plan B for your event, just in case.

## What types of event can I hold?

In normal times, CCT churches are used for a wide range of activities including:

- Services of worship
- Baptisms, weddings and funerals
- Performances of drama, comedy and music
- Professional and community productions rehearsal space
- Civic meetings, public meetings and local consultations
- Recreation, leisure and social gatherings
- Indoor markets
- Exhibitions of arts and crafts
- Voluntary sector provision, e.g. food banks
- Early years and youth provision
- Retail

Some of these activities, such as services of worship, weddings and baptism have been able to take place, with capacity limits, throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. Whilst restrictions remain in place, we are regularly publishing an up to date and useful summary of what can happen and when at a CCT church. You can find the latest version on our website. Please use this to help you plan which events you want to hold.

## How do I plan a safe event?

The best way to plan a safe event in a CCT church is to carry out a risk assessment. All this means in practice is:

**1. Thinking through all the different things that will be going on during your event**

**2. Planning how you will reduce the risk of people attending the event transmitting the virus to each other whilst taking part in your event.**

We've put together a helpful guide, Factsheet 1 – How to Complete a Risk Assessment as part of this Events Pack. The next few pages will take you through the different things you are likely to need to include and you'll need to share your risk assessment with CCT's staff, usually your Local Community Officer, before your event takes place.



# Working out how many people can attend your event

You will need to decide on a maximum number of people that can attend your event, which will be influenced by:

**1. The number that can be accommodated in line with any current Government guidance on Covid-19**

**2. Government restrictions on attendees to certain event types of events**



## Your starting point

Your starting point is the predetermined 'maximum capacity number' that is noted in the church's fire risk assessment. This has been worked out by assessing: the escape route travel distances, the number of exits and the width of these exits. It is not about the number of people that can fit into the pews but is about the number of people that can escape the building in 2.5 minutes. Your Local Community Officer or other CCT representative will be able to share this figure with you. Ordinarily 1 exit = 60 people maximum.



## Adjusting this capacity to allow distancing

The maximum capacity figure may need to be reduced so that your event can meet any current Covid-19 safety measures, for example, ensuring people stay 2m away from each other. If you need to plan for this, a relatively simple way of positioning audience members 2m apart is to seat people in every other pew and away from the aisles. A tape measure may be useful to measure the distances between the rows of pews and the widths of the aisles or to work out the layout of chairs if your church does not have fixed pews. You may also need to discount some additional pews if, for example, they are too close to the performers or are next to the queue for toilets.



## Keeping to this number

Once you have totalled up the number of people who can be positioned 2m apart, checking that this number does not exceed the predetermined maximum capacity figure, you can start to think about how you are going to keep to this number. There are examples of popular CCT events being repeated on the same day so that all the people that want to attend can be accommodated. Selling tickets through a ticketing system such as Eventbrite can help you manage the audience numbers and you won't usually be charged for organising free to attend events.



## Preparing the church for an event

The main things to think about when preparing the church for your event is how you are going to enable any current Government guidance, such as social distancing and supporting additional hygiene for people attending.

### Some common steps you will need to take are:

- Thinking through how you are going to remind those attending at the start and the end of your event of the need for social distancing and additional hygiene measures.
- Taking steps to improve the levels of ventilation, most commonly by opening windows and doors to help circulate fresh air whilst the church is in use
- Providing hand sanitiser for use by event attendees on entry and on departure from the church and in other key locations depending on the type of event being planned. CCT staff, usually your Local Community Officer, can support you to provide hand sanitiser.
- Thinking through how you want to direct people to move through the space using temporary signage and/or stewards. Please do not mark areas using floor tape to help people to maintain social distancing. By far the majority of floor surfaces in CCT churches are historic or delicate. Even so-called ‘temporary’ adhesive products can cause damage.
- If there are toilet facilities, providing clear guidance on good hand hygiene technique, increased frequency of hygiene and to avoid touching the face. If the church doesn’t already have guidance on hand hygiene in place, you can download and display a poster from the NHS accessed here: [Hand Washing Poster](#)

The government advises that no event should cause people to unduly raise their voices to each other. This includes – but is not limited to – refraining from playing music or broadcasts that may encourage shouting, including if played at a volume that makes normal conversation difficult. This is because of the potential for increased risk of transmission – particularly from aerosol and droplet transmission. So, if it is important that attendees hear a person or people speak during your event, you may want to consider the provision of microphones.



# Common questions

## Do people attending my event need to wear face coverings?

Government guidance may require all visitors to CCT churches and those attending events to wear face coverings. A face covering is a covering of any type which covers your nose and mouth, and can be as simple as a scarf or bandana that ties behind the head to give a snug fit. Whilst the Government continues to require face coverings to be worn, CCT Churches will have signage informing visitors they need to wear a face covering, but you may want to think about informing people in advance. This might be through including the need to wear face coverings on any invitations, promotional posters or ticketing communications.

## How can I support people to arrive and leave my event safely?

Depending on where your CCT church is located, you might need to think about other venues open locally at the same time and whether to stagger entry times to avoid queues or congestion in surrounding areas. This might include:

- Thinking about travel routes between transport hubs and the church
- Limiting the number of available parking places to maintain social distancing
- Staggering arrival and departure times to avoid congestion at entrances and exits
- Planning and approach to queue management to reduce congestion and contact

## Can I serve refreshments?

You can serve refreshments at your event. We've put together a guide, Factsheet 2 – Serving Refreshments, as part of this Events Pack.

## How should I support NHS Test & Trace?

You may need to provide the opportunity for everyone at your event to log their presence with the NHS Test and Trace system. Whilst the Government continues to require it, CCT Churches will have an NHS Test and Trace QR code Poster on display. For those unable to use the QR code process, the Poster also provides information on how to register your presence via CCT's website at:

[www.visitchurches.org.uk/testandtrace](http://www.visitchurches.org.uk/testandtrace)



## How should I deal with clearing up after an event?

Most CCT churches are open for visitors daily. CCT staff, usually your Local Community Officer, will advise you of the current cleaning arrangements to support safe visitor access. In planning your event, you must take this into consideration and think through how you will clean the church after your event. CCT churches are historic buildings and protected by the listing system, so we have developed a guide, Factsheet 3 – How to Clean After an Event, as part of this Events Pack.

## If my event is a religious service, is there anything special I need to think about?

All CCT Churches can be used for Church of England religious services and many host special and seasonal services. We've put together a guide, Factsheet 4 – Holding Religious Services as part of this Events Pack.



## Where can I find more help?

We hope this Events Pack provides you with everything you need to know to plan and run a successful, safe event in a CCT Church. However, we know you are likely to have specific questions so, as you plan your event, please remember that CCT staff are here to help you. Please do get in touch with us, usually by contacting your Local Community Officer, and ask us any questions. We are happy to work through any issues with you to help your event be a success.