



Re-Opening Parish Halls

With the easing of lockdown, parishes may be considering re-opening their halls or may be under pressure from third party hirers who want to access parish premises in order to re-open their own businesses.

It is essential that all relevant Government guidance on the re-opening of parish halls ('community facilities') is reviewed and followed before any decisions are made. Please note that the appropriate guidance may vary depending on your location (i.e. England, Wales or Scotland).

Ellis Whittam's template Reoccupation Checklist and Covid-19 Risk Assessment can be found in the Members' Area of the CIS website, under 'Coronavirus':
<https://catholicinsuranceservice.co.uk/member-login/>

What do we need to do in order to re-open our hall for Parish use?

From a risk and insurance perspective, before re-opening your parish hall you need to ensure that:

- Government guidance permits the specific activities planned and that any requirements for that activity are met.
- A Covid-19 risk assessment is undertaken and documented, and all identified risk control measures are put in place before the hall is permitted to re-open.
- The hall's general Health & Safety risk assessment is reviewed and updated, as necessary. Steps required under the Covid-19 risk assessment might create new hazards, e.g. the creation of a one-way system may involve paths not ordinarily in use and not therefore as well maintained as areas in regular use. Particular attention should also be paid to the Legionella section of the risk assessment, as the risk of Legionella may have increased as a result of the closure of the premises. Further guidance can be found at: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/legionella-risks-during-coronavirus-outbreak.htm>
- A documented inspection of the whole parish site is undertaken, including paths and car parks, to ensure that no hazards have developed since closure and any hazards identified are repaired before the site is reopened.
- If you have allowed childcare providers or any other hirers to resume their use of the hall on the basis of sole occupancy of the premises the Covid-19 risk assessment must be updated before the hall is opened to other users.