



From The Diocesan Secretary, Gabrielle Higgins

Information about Church House arrangements issued on 18th March

Clergy and churchwardens will have seen Bishop Martin's email earlier today about the new advice to suspend public worship following yesterday evening's message from the Prime Minister and discussions in Parliament. The changing circumstances of course also affect Church House. We have been working on our resilience plans over the last few weeks, and are confident that we will be able to continue to provide many services by implementing our home working plans.

With immediate effect, the majority of staff are working from home. The best way to contact staff will therefore be by email. However, desk telephones will wherever possible be forwarded automatically to employees' mobile phones. The switchboard will also remain open, and you will be able to seek advice on how to contact staff by calling that number (01273 421021).

The majority of meetings, conferences and training courses will however be cancelled. Where possible, meetings will continue to take place using video or telephone conferencing facilities but this is likely only to be feasible for smaller meetings. The meeting organiser will be in touch with attendees in respect of each meeting to confirm the position. In the first instance, we will be focussing on meetings and events due to take place before Easter. We will review meetings and events due to take place after Easter in the week commencing 30th March.

If you do not have a planned meeting, please do not visit Church House in person without contacting the appropriate member of staff or the switchboard to check arrangements first.

At present, a skeleton staff will continue working at Church House, so that post can still be handled. Where practical, items of post will be scanned and emailed to the appropriate member of staff. However, we do ask that wherever possible, communications are sent by email or other electronic method, and you should be aware that if conditions worsen, post may not be received.

We would also ask that non-essential matters are not sent at the present time as we all adjust to these new circumstances. Meanwhile, the best contact email for general enquiries is adminhelpdesk@chichester.anglican.org, which multiple staff have access to. Please do be aware that we are, like so many of you, receiving a high volume of enquiries, and it is not possible to deal with all as speedily as we would like.

Like all organisations, we continue to review the situation daily. As circumstances change we may need to make further changes to our service. Meanwhile, we will hold continue to hold the parishes

and people of the diocese in our prayers as we face these challenges together, and ask that you do the same for our staff.