

Our priority is to safeguard the health and wellbeing of our people, members, customers and all those we work with. We are closely monitoring the situation with the Coronavirus and are continuing to follow Government and Church of England guidance.

In line with this guidance, we have taken steps to ensure we can continue to operate our services as normally as possible, whilst protecting individuals.

- Our team normally based at Church House largely continues to work from home. We have for some time conducted an annual exercise where all staff based at Church House are asked to work remotely to test our business continuity plans, so we have a well-rehearsed plan.
- We have ensured our teams can access our systems and key files from home, within a secure environment.
- We are automatically redirecting calls so that queries to our helplines can still be dealt with even when working remotely. But please do contact us via email wherever possible. Our contact details are below.
- Incoming and outgoing mail continues to be managed through our Pershore mail handling centre. This address (shown below) should be used for all paper correspondence.
- Some staff are able to travel to undertake essential visits to our properties. Otherwise we are continuing to limit non-essential travel for staff around the country and abroad.
- We are encouraging any member of staff who feels unwell to self-isolate as a precaution and take a test as soon as possible.
- We have asked colleagues not to physically attend any meetings, conferences or seminars, but to instead seek to join meetings remotely.
- We are in contact with our suppliers and professional advisers to understand the latest developments to their contingency plans.
- Together with our Advisers, we are continuing to monitor and evaluate the situation in the global economy carefully. The Pensions Board is a long-term investor with a well-diversified investment portfolio. Planned work on scheme valuations is continuing.

Our teams are continuing to prioritise delivery of critical activities. At present we are able to offer a full service and are working hard to deal with all queries promptly. If any further changes to our services are necessary, this page will be updated.

For **housing services**, the following specific arrangements apply, reflecting latest Government guidance:

### **Maintenance and repairs**

- Our maintenance contractor Sanctuary will continue to operate its normal 24-hour helpline for emergency repair issues for all customers in our rental properties.
- Sanctuary are continuing to undertake non-urgent repairs and major works, although lead times for these works may be longer than normal. This is due to a significant backlog of works and restricted availability of certain materials. We are continuing to monitor the situation.
- All work will be done in accordance with a strict risk assessment and with preventative measures in place to help protect residents.
- We are continuing to undertake annual gas safety inspections and other compliance checks as required e.g. electrical testing. We would encourage all customers to get the checks booked in, as and when contacted by our team.

### **House moves and planning for retirement**

We are working hard to minimise any potential delays to imminent retirement housing moves. For instance:

- Where clergy are delaying retirement during the current crisis this will not adversely affect already reserved retirement housing.
- We are seeking to match customers to properties already owned by the Board as far as possible, where customers are due to retire in the next 18 months
- Our property bulletin continues to be distributed by email, six times per year. Properties are normally advertised prior to any refurbishment works being undertaken. Refurbishment works are instructed once a property has been reserved (to ensure any particular needs are taken into account). The anticipated time from reservation to available to move in is indicated against each property. For more details on how the bulletin works please see [our guide to retirement housing](#).
- We are arranging viewings of available properties, where safe and possible to do so (with additional Covid-secure controls in place). Virtual (on-line) tours can also be provided for properties.
- Also in line with government advice, house moves can continue to take place.

Please note, in some instances it is taking longer than normal to get properties ready for customers to move in. This is due to delays in securing certain materials for some works, and reduction in workforce availability. We are closely monitoring the situation, and keeping customers updated.

If you are planning to retire in the near future and may need housing assistance, please contact us. **We accept applications up to 5 years in advance.** If you have already applied to CHARM for retirement housing, and your retirement date is likely to change from what you have previously told us, or there are likely to be other changes to your needs, please contact your Housing Officer.

### **Our Supported Housing schemes**

- Within our seven Supported Housing schemes, we are continuing to maintain our strict hygiene and social distancing protocols to protect those who live and work there. Our workplace risk assessment, which reflects the latest guidance from the Government and Public Health England, and demonstrates that the schemes are 'Covid-19 safe workplaces' [is available here](#).
- In line with the Government's 'roadmap' and the successful roll out of the vaccine, we are continuing a gradual return to normal business. We have started to let our empty flats and to allow viewings from prospective new residents, subject to the appropriate hygiene protocols.
- Visits can now take place to our schemes, with all visitors asked to follow guidance on keeping residents safe during their visit (e.g. wearing face masks, observing social distancing).
- As with our rental properties, repairs are continuing to be carried out, as are normal safety and compliance checks.

For up to date information on any changes we are making please contact the relevant scheme manager.

## What you should do

If you need to contact us, we recommend contact via email wherever possible.

### For Pensions:

Email us at [pensions@churchofengland.org](mailto:pensions@churchofengland.org)

Phone us on 020 7898 1802 (9am - 5pm, Monday to Friday)

### For Housing:

Email us [housingservices@churchofengland.org](mailto:housingservices@churchofengland.org)

Phone us on 0207 898 1824 (9am - 5pm, Monday to Friday)

### For all paper correspondence:

The Church of England Pensions Board

PO Box 2026

Pershore

WR10 9BW

If you email or call us, for data security we might need to reply by post.

## Useful information during Covid-19

If you are worried about your pension, [the Pension Protection Fund has some useful information](#) and steps you can take

If you are concerned about your wider finances, MaPS have some helpful [guidance on steps you can take](#)

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