



The Diocese of
Southwark

The Venerable Simon Gates
Archdeacon of Lambeth

The Ven Moira Astin
Archdeacon of Reigate

The Ven John Kiddle
Archdeacon of Wandsworth

The Venerable Dr Jane Steen
Archdeacon of Southwark

The Ven Dr Rosemarie Mallett
Archdeacon of Croydon

The Ven Alastair Cutting
Archdeacon of Lewisham &
Greenwich

1st April 2020

To the Clergy of the Archdeaconries

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Caring for your Building

Some of you have asked about the vulnerability of your church and hall buildings when they are unoccupied. We hope you find the following helpful:

1. The Ecclesiastical Insurance Group has advice on its website for ensuring your building is safe prior to closure. Please make sure the church buildings are checked regularly in the coming days, following the recommendations, with another person if you are two meters apart. The advice can be found at <https://www.ecclesiastical.com/risk-management/unoccupied-properties-during-covid-19/>. It is also attached for ease of reference.
2. There is also guidance on the Church of England website which is helpful here, available on the coronavirus page: <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches#na>. Scroll down to FAQs and as you read down the headings, you will come to, 'How do we ensure the church building is safe and secure while closed?'. The document is several pages long but is again attached for ease of reference.
3. If you still have a foodbank or other community service operating, your building will not be completely unoccupied. If that gives you the opportunity to check other buildings or parts of the building which are unoccupied, do check. If you live near to the church or if you or others can pass it on your daily exercise, again, consider checking it. We have not had reports of thefts from empty churches in this diocese, but others have had - so do keep an eye on the premises if you can.

We hope this is clear but do contact us if you have questions. As ever, this comes with our thanks for all that you are doing, and with our prayers.

The Archdeacons of the Diocese.