

## Congregational Statement — 20 March 2020

In these unprecedented and constantly evolving times, we appreciate that some churches will wish to close in order to protect all members, employees, volunteers and other users of the property from infection by coronavirus.

It is important, however, that reasonable efforts are made to protect the church during this period.

For a period of 12 weeks from the date of this statement, we confirm that if the church decides to close for a period **solely** due to concerns about coronavirus (COVID-19) , we will a) waive the condition to advise us of that closure, b) waive the restrictions in the policy relating to premises which are empty, disused or not in use, subject to the following:

- In accordance with the policy wording, the church must take reasonable steps to prevent injury / damage and consideration should be given to ensure that this is the case. It is recommended that such steps be documented.
- Portable valuable items to be removed from the property and stored securely at church officials or members homes.
- The church be inspected internally and externally at least weekly and any signs of damage / attempted entry or unsafe condition be repaired immediately and reported to us without delay and a record kept.
- All security devices including intruder & fire alarms be placed in operation.
- Services (gas, water and electricity) to be turned off where the church is able to do so. If churches are unable to turn off services then we would require an increased inspection regime of every three days. If electricity is required to enable fire or intruder alarms, then this may be left on.

### Note

- If the church decides to close on a permanent basis or for other reason, please contact us in the usual way.
- As the situation with COVID-19 develops and we receive new instruction from the UK Government and Regulator we may be required to adapt this statement in the future, we will let you know and will aim to provide further guidance towards the end of the 12-week period or earlier if relevant.
- For guidance on general safety and security issues please refer to [www.spow.co.uk](http://www.spow.co.uk)