

Dear All,

On Monday evening I got a call from GSR of one of the Woking meetings. The United Reformed Church in Woking informed her directly that even if the Church itself closes, they will keep the venue available for AA meetings as they realise how important meetings are to our recovery.

They also offered their venue to meetings who might have lost their venue. The Quakers of the Quaker hall in Guildford said the same on Monday – but already they are wondering again if they will close completely. Wondersh seminary was willing to host the meeting but the Wondersh group has decided to close for social distancing reasons.

Since Monday - Farnham Tuesday evening, Shere Tuesday morning, Frimley Park Thursday, Farnham Friday lunch and Chertsey St Peters Tuesday, Not Saints Sunday, Sunday West Horsley, Wondersh Thursday, Aldershot Friday Step and Lightwater Wednesday are temporarily suspended. So about 10 meetings closed in 3 days since our government asked for social gatherings to stop. Not every meetings has closed as each group is autonomous and AA meetings are not for social purposes.

Please check the www.aamidsurrey.org.uk website meeting list as it will be the most up to date information available – before you set off to attend your meetings.

<http://aamidsurrey.org.uk/meetings/>

Re meeting temporary suspension – when you update Karla please also say why the meeting is closing. Is it the conscience of the group or is it the venue excluding? Or anything else?

Guildford Tuesday lunch had a conscience meeting this week and voted overwhelmingly to keep the meeting open.

This is all one day at a time. Things change fast, and we will change as we need to. So long as there is a meeting venue and two group members who want to hold a meeting then they can do so – if their group conscience agrees. However we all realise the pressure to temporarily suspend meetings is getting stronger for a multitude of reasons.

Many groups are busy planning how to keep going – perhaps by planning alternative venues (including outside venues), and planning E-meetings (online and email groups). A face to face meeting and an online meeting can be combined (see <https://alcoholics-anonymous.eu/suggestions-for-groups-moving-temporarily-online/>). This includes details about how to start an online meeting and even keep Tradition 7 going while face to face meetings themselves are closed. Bear in mind that some members may not be happy to share their phone number in an open WhatsApp group. I hope to announce a local email group soon. Email groups have the advantage of running 24/7 in our inbox.

If we lose our face to face meetings – it may be for a significant period, so for those who need to attend I think it's good there are still face to face meetings happening.

Remember – an AA group is not a meeting. The group continues outside of the meeting. A group may have multiple meetings, and “regularly scheduled meetings are the chief activity of a group”. (see The “AA Group” Pamphlet p24).

The 0800 Phone Responders and I have a list of members happy to chat to members who feel isolated. We could do with a couple more men. Message me.

Please keep Committee up to date day by day, and check our website.

Alice N, Chair of the Mid Surrey Intergroup of AA

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