



The Church of England  
in Essex and East London  
Diocese of Chelmsford

**The Venerable Ruth Patten, Archdeacon of Colchester**  
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**To: the Parish of St Stephen's New Town & The Hythe  
and the Parish of St Margaret's, Berechurch**

12 November 2021

Dear Friends,

**Re: Lorraine's phased return to work**

I know that you have all missed Lorraine during her time of sick leave and that you have been holding her and her family in your thoughts and prayers. Lorraine now feels well enough to tentatively begin a phased return to work and her GP is supportive of this too.

A phased return to work means that Lorraine won't be back to a full-time rhythm of ministry for a number of months, but that she will gradually pick things up over the coming months. I thought it would be helpful to let you know what that might look like so that you are able to do everything you can to support Lorraine and care for her in this.

Lorraine will work for up to 12 hours a week for the next few months. She will work these hours flexibly over 3 or 4 days in the week, and any Sunday duties will be included in these 12 hours. Lorraine will begin to lead Sunday worship again on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> November. For the remainder of this year, she will lead worship twice a month on Sundays, alongside another minister, and once a month midweek. She hopes to lead services at both St Stephen's and St Margaret's. At present, Lorraine won't conduct any weddings, baptisms or funerals.

Lorraine is still receiving support for her health and well-being and needs time and space to recover well and return to work well. Bishop Roger and I have therefore strongly advised her to proceed carefully in her phased return to work. At the moment, we have advised her not to conduct pastoral visits and not to attend any formal parish or deanery meetings. She will be contactable via email only, and John, Martin and Fred (as Churchwardens) will remain the key contacts in each parish alongside Andrew Topple as Administrator. Paul Norrington, as Area Dean, will continue to offer pastoral and leadership support to the Churchwardens and Ministry Team members. Lorraine will focus on long-term planning and key conversations with the Churchwardens, Parish Administrator and Ministry Team members.

As with all plans of this nature, Lorraine and I will review them regularly and will make any adjustments as necessary.



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My dearest wish is for Lorraine to recover well over the coming months and to enable her to engage with as much parish ministry as she feels able to participate in. Bishop Roger and I are grateful to John, Martin and Fred as your Churchwardens, to Andrew as Parish Administrator and to your Ministry Team members, as well as to Paul Norrington as Area Dean, for all that they are doing to lead your parishes at this time. We are also grateful to all of you for your love and care for Lorraine and would ask you to do all that you can to support her in this gradual and careful return to work.

With thanks, prayers and best wishes,

The Venerable Ruth Patten  
Archdeacon of Colchester

cc. Revd Lorraine Badger-Watts  
Revd Canon Paul Norrington  
Canon Roger Ennals  
Rt Revd Roger Morris

