

Fond farewells and new adventures



Alison Comlay, Office and IT Manager

Few Diocesan staff have seen as many changes, or been so key in moving Church House work forward into the future, as Alison Comlay.

Alison joined the DBF as IT Services and Office Manager on 2 October 2000.

When she arrived:

- The network cabling had only just been installed;
- The database ran on Omnis 3, loaded on a single PC;
- Bulk copying was performed on a risograph, which involved cutting stencils for each page and lots of messy ink -
- And email was barely used.

In addition, the office space itself was much smaller with the Sowter & Clerical Library occupying the Great Hall, the empty “Miss Trott’s Flat” taking up half the ground floor of the 18th Century wing and the Communications/ Pastoral/ Ramsbury Office section not even built. In fact, this last part of the site was still the old Victorian toilet block which was being used for storage by the Sudan Committee!

She has both overseen and assisted with a huge amount of change and improvement over the past 20 years, including software and hardware updates, networking within and between diocesan office spaces, the Diocesan database, and the latest Health and Safety protocols.

It is largely thanks to her years of planning and procurement that Diocesan staff were able to transition to work from home so efficiently once lockdown happened in March 2020 - the necessary equipment and software were already in place by the start of 2020.

Alison has been the Church House authority on cricket, crafting, and all things Portsmouth/ Portchester! If she wasn't working in Church House - including hunting down a wiring problem or doing detailed checking and updates in the server room - then Alison was either in The Mouse Loft creating something amazing with fabric, or in better weather, at The Ageas Bowl.

Family means everything to Alison and her extended family at Church House will truly miss her.

Alison is married to Stephen, Deanery Treasurer for Stonehenge.