

# Charity regulator issues Official Warning to Christ Church, Oxford

Christ Church has been involved in long and costly disputes involving its former Dean, who left his role earlier this year following a mediation process. In 2020 the Commission had told the parties to the dispute to enter into formal mediation.

The Commission has found that trustees failed to act on its previous advice, given between 2019-2020, to continue to have “close oversight of costs” in the dispute. In December 2021, the Commission asked the trustees to provide information about the costs of the actions connected to the former Dean and how these costs were being managed. The trustees were unable to provide the information in a timely manner. The Commission was later informed that the trustees had not set a fixed budget for the costs associated with the dispute, and instead that the full trustee body agreed expenditure retrospectively. Between August 2018 and late January 2022 the college had spent over £6.6m on legal and public relations fees in various actions related to the former Dean, of which over £5.3m appears to have been approved retrospectively.

The regulator is also critical of the trustees’ failure to ensure the college was accountable for its expenditure on legal and public relations fees during the dispute. The Commission has found that the charity’s published accounts (for years ending 2018-21) categorised costs associated with the charity’s actions involving the former Dean as “other direct costs – teaching, research and residential”. The Commission says that this has the potential to mislead the readers of the accounts. The trustees had been advised by the charity’s auditors to consider reporting on actions related to the dispute specifically, and to seek advice on its reporting.

The regulator has determined that these failures and omissions amount to misconduct and/or mismanagement in the charity’s administration.

The Official Warning sets out the actions that the Commission considers should be taken by the charity to rectify the misconduct and/or mismanagement and to address its concerns, including:

- Completing a full independent Governance Review and taking all reasonable steps to implement its recommendations. This work is already underway.
- Keeping the Commission informed of the progress and implementation of the Governance Review at key milestones.
- Ensuring that the charity’s accounts and Trustee Annual Report for the year ending 31 July 2022 comply with the legal requirement to ensure the charity is accountable.

Failure to take steps to remedy the misconduct and/or mismanagement may lead to further regulatory action being taken against the charity’s trustees.

Helen Earner, Director of Regulatory Services at the Charity Commission, said:

These long and protracted disputes risked undermining the reputation of Christ Church and harming wider trust in charities.

It is not for us as regulator to take sides in disputes. Our role is to ensure that charities are governed effectively and that charitable funds are properly accounted for. All trustees must demonstrate sound financial stewardship, regardless of the level of resources available to them.

We consider that the actions of the trustees at Christ Church amount to mismanagement and/or misconduct, after they failed to manage the charity's resources responsibly or ensure that the charity is accountable in the context of a costly dispute.

The Commission welcomes the fact that an independent governance review is now underway at the charity, led by the Rt Hon Dominic Grieve KC, and we expect the trustees to keep us updated on its progress.

Good governance should be a priority for all trustees, especially those involved in important national institutions such as Christ Church, Oxford”.

## **Ends**

## **Notes to editors**

1. The Official Warning is issued under section 75A of the Charities Act 2011.
2. Information about this power can be found in an [online Q&A](#).
3. The Charity Commission is the independent, non-ministerial government department that registers and regulates charities in England and Wales. Its purpose is to ensure charity can thrive and inspire trust so that people can improve lives and strengthen society.

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# **Appointment of Interim Member to the**

# Senior Salaries Review Body

News story

The Cabinet Office has appointed Philippa Hird as an interim member of the Senior Salaries Review Body.



The Cabinet Office has approved the appointment of Ms Philippa Hird as an interim member of the Senior Salaries Review Body, with immediate effect. The appointment is until 31 July 2023.

The Senior Salaries Review Body provides independent advice to the Prime Minister and senior ministers on the pay of many of the nation's top public servants.

Philippa is an independent director with a particular interest in governance, people strategy, recruitment, remuneration and the delivery of complex change. She is currently Chair of the NHS Pay Review Body, Senior Independent Director and Remuneration Committee Chair of Ordnance Survey and a member of the Board of the University of Manchester. Philippa is a Non-Executive Director of UK Strategic Command, and an independent member of the Remunerations Committee of St Edmund's College, Cambridge.

As Group Human Resources Director of ITV Plc until 2009, Philippa led the consolidation of the regional ITV companies. Prior to that she held general management and then HR roles in Granada Group Plc. She began her career in marketing with ICI and has an MA in Politics, Philosophy and Economics from The Queen's College Oxford.

Philippa has been a non-executive director of HMRC, Deputy Chair of City, University of London and of AQA, a Board member of Opportunity Now and of Creative Skillset and Vice President of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD). She is a Companion of the CIPD and a fellow of the RSA.

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## UK veterans get their say

- A 12 week long UK-wide Veterans' Survey has been launched today (10 November)
- The survey is the first ever government funded survey for all veterans across the country to provide their views
- The survey launches alongside the Office for National Statistics' release of Census 2021 data on the veteran population.

The government has launched the first ever UK-wide survey, for veterans and their families.

Over the next 12 weeks, veterans across the country are able to complete the survey to shape the future of veteran services. Funded and commissioned by the Office of Veterans' Affairs, this is the first ever exercise to collect feedback from the entire veterans community across the UK.

This survey, in collaboration with the Office for National Statistics (ONS), will ask veterans to describe their experiences of being a veteran and of using government services. This will ensure that the government can adapt services to better meet the needs of veterans and their families.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Johnny Mercer said:

Public services need to reflect the people they serve and so it's really important we hear from veterans on their experiences in accessing support.

No one knows better what it's like to be a veteran in Britain than ex-military themselves. So I urge all ex-service personnel to take the small amount of time to fill in the first ever Veterans Survey.

Your voice can help shape stepped-up services for veterans.

The launch of the survey comes alongside the release of the ONS's Census 2021 data on the veteran population in England and Wales. Last year was the first time a question about someone's military service was included in the Census.

The new ONS figures released today show that there were 1.85 million people in England and Wales who reported that they had previously served in the armed forces.

In England, regions with the highest proportion of veterans were the South West (5.6%) and the North East (5%). The proportion of UK veterans was higher in Wales (4.5%) of the population and in England (3.8%).

Sir Ian Diamond National Statistician at the Office for National Statistics

said:

Responses to the survey will help us better understand the experiences, needs and wellbeing of our veteran community, and to guide future action. It is important we hear a wide range of views.

We are passionate about investing time and effort to produce high quality estimates that properly help us all understand how our veterans' needs can be best met.

The stats from the ONS released today, as well as the veterans survey, deliver on commitments under the Veterans Strategy Action Plan to improve the data and understanding of Britain's veteran population. This will help better target support and public services for those veterans who require help.

The ONS will be releasing further statistical information on the veterans population next year.

The survey can be completed online in under 30 minutes, and veterans can access tailored support to complete the survey through the Office for National Statistics' dedicated helpline.

Veterans can fill in the survey [here](#).

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## **Ten years of Automatic Enrolment achieves over £114bn pension savings**

In 2021, employees across the UK saved £114.6 billion into their pensions. This is a real terms increase of £32.9 billion compared to 2012, when Automatic Enrolment was introduced.

The figures reveal how the policy has transformed pensions saving over the last ten years for people from Sterling to Southend, by normalising workplace pension saving, establishing a culture of retirement saving for a new generation, and helping foster a greater sense of security in later life.

More than 10.7 million employees were paying into a workplace pension in 2021, with the proportion of women saving into a workplace pension, be it public or private sector, jumping by about 50% since 2012. And young people too have benefitted, with those aged 22 to 29 saving into a workplace pension more than doubling in the same time period.

Minister for Pensions, Laura Trott, said:

Automatic Enrolment has completely transformed how people save – with staggering results. In the ten years since its introduction, 10.7 million people have started saving for their pensions with this easy to use scheme. We have also seen a huge and much needed increase in women and young people being enrolled into a pension.

Automatic Enrolment is doing its job – helping more people save more so they can do more in retirement.

Retail Entrepreneur and Dragons' Den investor Theo Paphitis said:

In the ten-years since I was involved in the launch of Automatic Enrolment, pension saving in the UK has gone from strength to strength with more than two million workplaces signed up – this is something to celebrate.

It is right that employees are given the chance and encouragement to save and I am proud for my businesses to be involved. The evidence is there that people are indeed saving more and benefitting immensely.

Nest's CEO, Helen Dean, CBE, said:

Over the past 10 years, Automatic Enrolment has completely changed the UK's saving landscape, bringing millions of new people into pensions saving, many for the first time. It's taken a lot of hard work and dedication, from the people who develop the policy, to schemes across the pensions industry, and employers up and down the country.

It's been a privilege for Nest to be part of this retirement revolution and we look forward to the innovations we will achieve together over the next 10 years

The anniversary was marked by a celebratory event, attended by those who have made Automatic Enrolment a success including businesses, employers, pension providers and regulatory bodies.

Following the success of the Automatic Enrolment, the government intends to continue its work with thousands of employers and pension providers to further boost the amount of people in a workplace pension.

It will also continue its work on empowering savers to know their pension options by introducing revolutionary products such as Pensions Dashboards and Mid Life MOTs, providing accessibility and innovation in how people save for their retirement.

And now that a record number of people are saving for retirement, the

government is exploring how Automatic Enrolment can go even further to help more people save more, sooner – by abolishing the Lower Earnings Limit for contributions and reducing the eligible age to 18.

Media enquiries for this press release –

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## [COP26 President meeting with Vietnamese Minister Ha: 8 November 2022](#)

News story

COP26 President Alok Sharma met with Vietnam's Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Ha at COP27 in Sharm El-Sheikh.



COP26 President Alok Sharma and Vietnam's Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Ha met to discuss a potential Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP) between the International Partners Group and Vietnam.

They welcomed the progress made towards the agreement of a JETP, noting that ongoing discussions had deepened our respective understanding of the challenges and opportunities of a low carbon transition in Vietnam and how we might work together to address these.

Minister Ha and COP26 President Sharma looked at the capacity for a JETP to reduce the planned coal pipeline in Vietnam and to bring forward the peaking date for power sector emissions, discussing the peak level of Vietnamese power sector emissions that such measures would imply. This would be to deliver ambition that goes beyond Vietnam's recently updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC).

They also noted the progress to mobilise a substantial package of financial support that could be used for a Resource Mobilisation Plan in the future, including the support from a group of private sector financial institutions convened by the Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero – who have made clear their commitment to supporting the JETP.

Minister Ha and COP26 President Sharma recommitted to finalising the details of an ambitious political declaration and package of financial support for Vietnam's energy transition, with the intent to launch the agreement before the end of 2022.

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