



Press Release

03 February 2011

Statement from Ushaw College

A spokesman for Ushaw College said: "We can confirm that the commercial activities of the Conference Centre have ceased, and the Centre closed, with effect from 31 December 2010. A number of teaching and non-teaching staff remain at Ushaw College, where the activities of St Cuthbert's Seminary will continue until June 2011.

"The seminarians currently engaged in study at St Cuthbert's Seminary will continue with their studies as planned. It is proposed that those with studies which are to continue after June 2011 will be transferred to another seminary although the future of their studies is a matter for their respective dioceses.

"The Trustees have established a Steering Group, chaired by Bishop Mark Davies, which includes Bishop Tom Williams along with members of teaching and non-teaching staff at Ushaw College. The Steering Group will also have a representative of the Patrimony Committee of the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales, who have indicated that Sophie Andreae, Deputy Chair of the Patrimony Committee, will be asked to support the work of the group. There have also been several offers of assistance from eminent individuals and charities, and further formal announcements may be made in due course should the individuals or charity wish to make their support a matter for public knowledge. The remit of the group is to look strategically at the entire estate, including its buildings, land, libraries, archives and collections, and provide a report to the Trustees about options for its future.

"We are aware that Ushaw College has considerable support within the Roman Catholic community and are grateful for all of the offers to assist at this uncertain and distressing time. It should, however, be said that whilst there are proposals to be discussed, no firm solutions are available at this time. We will not engage in speculative conversations with any organisation or individuals not directly involved in those discussions until the appropriate time. Private meetings and conversations will remain confidential so as not to raise false hopes should discussions fall through and also to allow for full and frank discussions to take place away from the public eye."

Archbishop Patrick Kelly, Chair of Trustees said: "The proposal to close Ushaw College was one of the most difficult the Trustees have had to contemplate but was one which was based on the inability to sustain Ushaw College's future. We are working with potential partners to identify a viable solution for the future of Ushaw and are hopeful that a solution can still be found."

Monsignor John Marsland, President of Ushaw College, added: "We are aware there has been some debate among the wider community about the future of the historic collections of Ushaw College and of the buildings. We are acutely aware of the historical importance and heritage value placed upon the buildings, collection of books, manuscripts, letters and other items we have within our various collections and we are committed to ensuring that they remain intact."

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