

Next steps for chaplaincy... | News, resources and opportunities to explore

The story continues...

This booklet can only give the smallest of glimpses into the multi-faceted world of chaplaincy; and each story only represents a tiny fraction of the chaplaincy. There are also many more chaplaincies than could be included. For instance there are chaplaincies in:

- ◆ Agricultural markets
 - ◆ Businesses
 - ◆ Football clubs
 - ◆ Local government
 - ◆ Shops
 - ◆ Armed forces
 - ◆ Theatres and arts centres
- the list goes on and is growing.

Some of the chaplaincies which are currently being developed are...

- ◆ **Pupil Chaplains:** Working alongside an adult chaplain, school children will also be chaplains, listening, caring and praying.
- ◆ **Hinkley:** A new full-time chaplain to Hinkley C starts in January 2020.
- ◆ **Court Chaplaincy:** The courts in Somerset have asked for chaplains.
- ◆ **Neighbourhood Chaplaincy:** Local teams of chaplains will offer spiritual and pastoral care. www.countiesuk.org/neighbourhood-chaplains

A few chaplaincy web links

Chaplaincy in Bath and Wells: www.bathandwells.org.uk/chaplaincy
College of Health Care Chaplains: www.healthcarechaplains.org
Association of Hospice and Palliative Care Chaplains: www.ahpcc.org.uk
Chaplaincy in General Practice: www.acgp.co.uk
Centre for Chaplaincy in Education: www.c4ce.co.uk
Festive (FE Chaplaincy): www.festive.org.uk
Chaplaincy Central: www.chaplaincycentral.co.uk
Churches HE Liaison Group: www.chelguk.org.uk
Association of Town and City Chaplaincies: www.atcchaplaincies.org

Sign up for the Chaplaincy newsletter: <https://bathandwells.us5.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=e82b029abdb69c673d6dd1081&id=cf2b7f96f1>

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Chaplaincy

in our own words... stories of love and grace

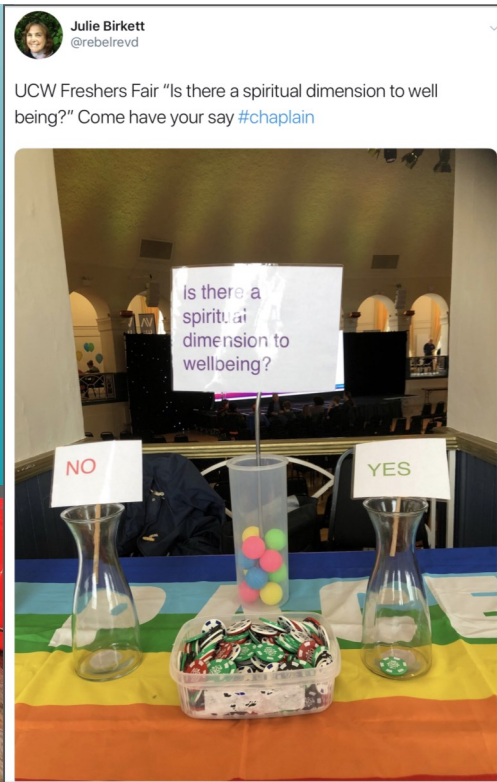
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From Bath FE College.

The Vice Principle said:
'We didn't realise how much value the Chaplain gave until he wasn't there.'

Bath College have since re-appointed and a new chaplain is in post.



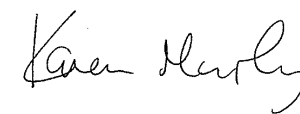
A spiritual presence, ideally placed to share the mystery

Listening, compassion and the gift of attention are our bread and butter

The rich diversity of chaplaincy roles described in the booklet also highlights the common skills chaplains are using. Good listening skills, giving attention to people, compassion and kindness are our 'bread and butter' personal resources. There is a growing understanding, however, of the value of supervision, self-awareness to prevent burn out, and being realistic in what we can offer where we are.

I'm not religious, but... being in touch with spirituality

Whatever your role and however you are doing chaplaincy, it's a joy and a privilege to be a spiritual presence in our various settings. The changes in our society means that fewer people 'do church' and more describe themselves as 'non-religious' but this belies the reality that people are in touch with their spirituality. Chaplaincy now looks very different to when I began and the conversations I have with people coming to the end of their lives are also changing. Yet the big questions remain: Who am I? What is my life about? What happens next? Chaplains are ideally placed to share the mystery of these questions and I certainly wish everyone blessings and joy in their chaplaincy.



Revd Karen Murphy
Chaplain and Spiritual Lead, Weston Hospicecare
President of the Association of Hospice and Palliative Care Chaplains



A joy and a privilege | Closing reflection by Karen Murphy, Weston Hospice Care

A huge range of creative opportunities to serve

When I began volunteering as a chaplain over 20 years ago, there were limited opportunities available to people considering chaplaincy roles. The obvious choices of healthcare, education, armed forces and prisons realistically provided the main routes into chaplaincy until relatively recently. The content of this booklet demonstrates the huge range of creative ideas and opportunities that now exist and I am full of admiration for the depth and breadth of settings in which chaplains now offer time and support. It is an incredible achievement to have such a diverse range of chaplaincy in this region.

New pathways for formation and training



The nature of chaplaincy has changed beyond recognition. My particular focus has been hospice care. I'm pleased to say that chaplaincy in this area, and beyond, now acknowledges the value of training at all levels, from volunteer to full-time paid posts. There are many opportunities for chaplains of all flavours to access training that provides accreditation, accountability and validation. Far from limiting chaplains in our various roles, my experience is that the other professions and organisations we work with appreciate that we have such boundaries and practice in place.

Listen, Care, Pray, Bless | a foreward by the Rt Revd Peter Hancock, Bishop of Bath and Wells

Day and night, winter and summer, throughout the whole year, and indeed long before people ever came to live in this part of the world, the waters of Wells have flowed. When I think about that I am always reminded of the Spirit of God, moving across the waters in creation bringing life into being. In many ways, chaplaincy is like that. Chaplaincy is one of the ways in which we ourselves experience and are invited to join in with the wind of God's Spirit stirring us up and bringing hope and purpose to our lives.

What is chaplaincy about?

'To listen and care, to pray for and bless...'

That is the work of chaplaincy (defined by an 11 year old) as it offers spiritual and pastoral care to all and lives and tells the story of God's love.

'Chaplaincy; spiritual and pastoral care for everyone.'

Who is chaplaincy for?

Serving the 95%

Chaplaincy is a key part of the ever-growing diversity of the church, from the local parish church to church schools, from youth and children's groups to food banks, from pioneering to Street Pastors and so much more. Chaplaincy meets people in their places of work, learning, healing or leisure and lives and tells the Story of God's love there. Chaplains enable Christians at work to live out their everyday faith.



A huge, growing and significant phenomenon

At a time when only 5% have regular (monthly) contact with a local church (<https://faithsurvey.co.uk/uk-christianity.html>), chaplaincy is one of the ways in which people continue to have access to the good news of God's love. Indeed Dr Nathan Mladin of Theos has said:

'When we talk about chaplaincy we are talking about a huge, growing, and significant phenomenon. We are rapidly approaching a position where people are more likely to encounter religion via a chaplain than any other way.'

I think that is profound, encouraging and yet also challenging.

'how much value a chaplain gave...'

What is happening on the ground? Growing chaplaincy

Whether they are 'religious' or not, people and organisations want chaplains. The Vice Principal of Bath College recently said: *'We didn't realise how much value the chaplain gave until he wasn't there.'* (Bath College have now appointed a new Chaplain). Hinkley Point C worked with local churches to appoint two local ministers as half a day a week chaplains and were so impressed that they have now appointed a full-time chaplain who will start in January 2020. That exciting news is hot off the press as this booklet is published.

In Somerset we have good news to celebrate. We have over 300 chaplains, working across 127 projects in all sectors of chaplaincy. Chaplaincy is God 'at work' in education and healthcare, leisure, transport and business, government, the police and the armed forces. Chaplains are present where people are, in a huge variety of contexts, and reveal God's presence there.



Formation | Training, Mentoring and Consultancy

The Chaplaincy Adviser is there to help anyone explore chaplaincy;

- ◆ whether an individual discerning whether God might be calling them to be a chaplain,
- ◆ or an organisation considering setting up a new chaplaincy.

The Chaplaincy Advisor will also assist with the following:

- ◆ **Training:** There is a two-day initial training course 'Exploring Chaplaincy' and other local and national training available.
- ◆ **Appointments and Re-appointments:** Help can be offered with developing job descriptions and with interviews.
- ◆ **Mentoring:** All chaplains who are new in post are offered a mentor for their first year.
- ◆ **Reflective Practice:** There are opportunities for chaplains to join peer-led Reflective Practice Groups.
- ◆ **Gatherings and on-going training:** There are regular opportunities to meet together and learn.
- ◆ **Review:** A chaplaincy review can be arranged on request.



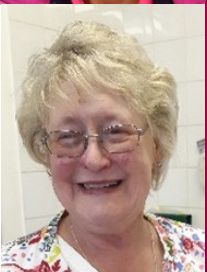
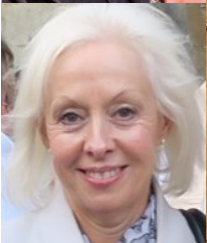
Called by name | Community and Village Chaplaincy in Wellington and Trull



Wellington

The churches in Wellington and district are raising up chaplains to serve in some of the following areas.

- ◆ Chaplaincy to schools and families; and the beginnings of pupil chaplaincy.
- ◆ Chaplaincy to health and wellbeing; food, faith, fitness and wellbeing walks.
- ◆ Chaplaincy to those who are at home, in hospital or in care; with a particular focus for people in later life.



Trull Village Chaplains

In Trull, near Taunton, the Village Chaplains includes one who serves the **dog walking** community and others who are there for **business, sport, residential care** and **vulnerable people** in the village.



Be inspired by these stories of God at work

We also celebrate that chaplaincy is growing so fast that, between the time of writing and the time of publishing this booklet, those figures will almost certainly be out of date. Revd Mike Haslam, Chaplaincy Development Adviser, reports that some of the most common questions he hears are:

I think that God may be calling me to be a chaplain, what do I do?
and
Can you help us develop a chaplaincy?

'Is God calling you to be a chaplain or help develop a new chaplaincy?'

As a result of the ensuing conversations, there were 15 new chaplaincies established in 2018 and more are coming on stream in 2019. You can read some of the stories in this booklet. The vocations come from people of all Christian denominations and traditions and many of the new vocations to chaplaincy have been from lay people. However, there are also new vocations from ordained people and in June 2019, for the first time in its 1110 years, the Diocese of Bath and Wells ordained deacons who will serve their curacies in both chaplaincies and parishes.

Chaplaincy stories: read on...

I hope that you will be inspired by these stories of God at work in chaplaincy; and feel inspired to find out more. There is a huge amount of good news; from the Soul Café at The Blue School, Wells; to 'Chill' at Bath Spa University; from Rail Responders in Taunton to growing sports chaplaincies in Weston-super-Mare and Bath; from the spiritual care offered to people at the end of their lives to the developing of pioneering chaplaincy in the rural communities around Wellington... The story of chaplaincy goes on and on. At the licensing of a new chaplain, one member of the community welcomed him with the words, *'It's really good to have a shepherd again.'*

That is indeed good news and something to shout about!
With my very best wishes and prayers,

+ *Peter Bath and Wells*

Rt Revd Peter Hancock,
Bishop of Bath and Wells

God at Work | Mike Haslam, Chaplaincy Adviser, Diocese of Bath and Wells

Chaplains are present where people are, and reveal God's presence there. There are over 300 of us in Somerset, which means that there are at least 300 different models of chaplaincy. We come from all Christian traditions and we welcome among us a few from other faiths and spiritual pathways.

Chaplains are:

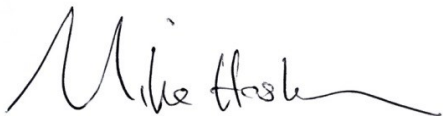
- ◆ both distinctive and inclusive, working with people of all faiths and cultures and bringing 'abundant life' to their communities;
- ◆ present to listen and care, to pray for and bless the community and offer spiritual and pastoral care for all;
- ◆ the public face of God, at ease with spirituality and matters of life and death;
- ◆ members of the team, sharing the life of the community.

Huge potential

When I began my ministry as Chaplaincy Development Adviser in 2017 I knew that there was the potential for chaplaincy to grow. However, I never in my wildest prayers or dreams, guessed that 15 new chaplaincies would be established in 2018. Businesses, community schools, football clubs and dog-walking communities all have chaplains, where before there was no explicit Christian presence.

If you believe that God might also be calling you to explore chaplaincy, please get in touch.

With my prayers and best wishes,



Revd Mike Haslam, Chaplaincy Adviser

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'Distinctive and Inclusive'



Police Chaplaincy makes a difference | Andy Paget, Avon and Somerset Police

To see the people they are, as much as the work they do

Rt Revd Peter Hancock, Bishop of Bath and Wells, received a warm welcome when he visited the headquarters of the Avon and Somerset Police force. He had spent the afternoon with them, *'To see the people they are, as much as the work they do.'*

There are 6000 staff and serving officers in the Avon and Somerset force. Senior Force Chaplain, Andy Paget, who arranged the Bishop's visit and showed him around HQ, has worked with the police for more than 20 years. He says of his job, *'We bring compassion, but we find it too. Police work has become increasingly complex and demanding. It is often daunting and sometimes dangerous. It can be stressful and dehumanising. Chaplains are not welfare officers, counsellors or psychologists, but are available as a listening ear to anyone who needs it.'*

'We bring compassion, but we find it too.'

Making a difference

Bishop Peter says *'Chaplaincy has already shown it can make a difference.'* That's a view echoed by the Chief Constable, Andy Marsh, *'Supporting staff and officers as they face some of the most challenging human situations is essential to the wellbeing of those staff, but also is key to the public. Our staff and officers face tragedies and emotional challenges at work. Helping them cope helps them support the public better.'*

Chaplain Andy Paget was recently awarded a Love Your Neighbour Award by the Bristol Multi-Faith Forum. Speaking about the award, Chief Constable Andy Marsh said, *'Andy's wise and experienced outlook is often called upon to add a different view on the choices and judgements that have to be made.'*



I opened my arms wide in that cacophony and called out 'As Salaam Alaikum'

Greet him in peace

I was called to court. Cell staff were trying to stop a 19 year-old Afghan smashing his head against the cell walls to kill himself. As I waited at the gate to be let in I realised none of my bright plans would work. I said, 'Lord, help!' A thought came. 'Go and greet him in peace. In Arabic.'

When I got to the cell, staff were trying to restrain the Afghan's shoulders, legs and head. I opened my arms wide in that cacophony and called out 'As Salaam Alaikum' (the Peace of God be with you). He collapsed through the restraining arms of cell staff into a weeping heap.

Journeying through pain

A conversation could begin. He eventually told me that his entire immediate family had been killed a fortnight earlier by a drone strike in Afghanistan. He'd decided he didn't want to live any longer.

Mike Haslam @revmikehaslam · 6d
Me (introducing myself): 'I'm here to explore Court #Chaplaincy.'
Chief Usher: 'Can you start tomorrow?'
Me: 'Well today I was just asking if the courts wanted Chaplaincy.'
Chief Usher: (with a huge smile): Absolutely!
Exciting possibilities for court Chaplaincy in @BathWells .

We prayed. Afterwards with his agreement, I then called a Muslim prison chaplain, who agreed to meet him as soon as possible after arrival at prison, and then journey alongside him throughout his sentence.



'In response to the invitation to develop chaplaincy in the Somerset Courts some potential chaplains have already come forward.'

Might God be calling you?



Are you God? | Jenny Jeffrey, Bishop Henderson CofE Primary School, Taunton

The wisdom of children!

As I entered one of our two reception classrooms, an enthusiastic four year old bounced up to me and asked 'Are you God?' I was taken aback and wondered how to respond and found myself saying, 'No I'm not God but I'm a friend of his!' He seemed satisfied!

Another five year old arrived at the front of the school hall one day for collective worship. He looked up at Bishop Ruth, who was in her full regalia and had joined us for a day on inspirational women, and with eyes wide open in amazement, declared in a very loud voice 'A princess has come!'

'A Princess has come!'

Moments like this and prayers to the 'Holy Spirit' and 'Holy Goat' are part of the joy of being a chaplain. In fact most of the pupils don't know me as the chaplain, I'm Rev Jenny!

Being present

Chaplaincy is about being church in the community and in the school; and I say 'being' rather than 'doing' for this is an important part of my role. I 'loiter' in the playground as Jesus would have done, I'm in the playground as parents collect their children. I'm around in the staff room. I'm available and present in all parts of school life.



A huge privilege to be involved in so many lives

Planting seeds

I see my role as very much 'planting seeds', seeds of the kingdom. I'm not to know what soil they fall into. I pray that in God's time they bear fruit.

It's a huge privilege to be involved in so many lives, supporting the school and community. Whether that's sharpening pencils or providing bread, fruit and cheese as everyone works late into the evening following the dreaded phone call that OFSTED will be with you in the morning. Or sitting at the bedside with a member of staff and her family whilst their husband and dad is seriously ill in ITU, or visiting one of our cleaners following twelve hours of brain surgery in Bristol ... and everything in between.

Two days are never the same and God is a God of surprises, but always a strength.

'Planting seeds... Supporting the school and community'



God's love amidst human judgement | Andrew Wells, Salisbury Courts

Debt Free

A debtor owed creditors over £20,000. He wasn't coping, he was ignoring enforcement letters and he was contemplating suicide. His girlfriend was pregnant with their first child. I pointed him to a trusted charity to help him on the long debt-fixing haul. 18 months later, he was debt free. He and his girlfriend have now married in church, and are a part of the congregation. Their son is to be Baby Jesus in the next Christmas play.

'Courts chaplaincy is about being God's love in places of human judgement. It calls all of us to show love tirelessly to everyone, whatever happens.'

Novichok Day

Last year, on Novichok attack day in Salisbury, I received a text from one of our Muslim Chaplains. She asked me to find a room for a Moroccan illegal immigrant, released from prison 3 days earlier. He'd served a sentence for entering the UK on a false passport in order to marry his British fiancée.

No rooms were available through usual channels. So, in prayer, a local Muslim restaurateur sprang to mind. I rang him to ask for help. He said 'I've a spare bed in a staff room upstairs. Come and see it Andrew.' 'I'll be there in 20 minutes.' So I walked to his restaurant – right past the unfolding Novichok drama. He showed me his upstairs room. 'How long could he stay there, if the social workers and probation agree?' 'Three months?' he said. 'What cost?' 'Nothing' he said. 'Halal food?' 'He can have all he wants – after the restaurant closes' he said.



In the parable of the Good Samaritan and the Judean victim, the one perceived as the 'enemy', the Samaritan, is the person God chose to care for the Judean who had been mugged and robbed. Who are the equivalent of those Samaritans and the Judeans who loathed and despised them? How must we respond? If we overcome our enemies, we've failed. If we make our enemies our partners, God has succeeded.

I'm here for you | Steve Cosslett, Railway Mission

Caring on the railways

Steve Cosslett works for the Railway Mission an organisation that has worked in partnership with the railway industry since 1881. It started out planting churches alongside the tracks and it set up convalescent homes. Today the Railway Mission provides a professional chaplaincy service to all train operating companies, Network Rail, the British Transport Police and heritage railway lines across England, Scotland and Wales.

Steve covers the South West of England, from Penzance to Bristol to Swindon. His priorities are to provide welfare support to the men and women working across the network, as well as seeking to bring spiritual support to those of all faiths and none.

Tragedies on the tracks

The most common and most distressing side of the support Steve and his colleagues provide comes following deaths on the railway. On average, every 36 hours, somewhere in the UK someone is stuck by a train.

The ripples following such a tragedy are vast and profound and involve a wide range of people. Most often these fatalities are suicides, but they can also include accidents. Steve is there to provide support and to give time and care to all.



Soul Café | Sarah Curl, The Blue School, Wells

An atmospheric space

Soul Café meets once a month, at lunch, for students to come and drink hot chocolate and eat toast, or quietly eat their own lunch. During that time, the room is turned into an atmospheric space, with worship videos being played on the screen.

Encouraging conversations

Cheryl Govier, Go Team Adviser, commented:

‘...during Soul Café, I engaged in a bunch of conversations with young people. It was so encouraging to see this time being seen as a safe space for those from faith backgrounds, but also for those from none. Some of the young people freely talked about their involvement in local churches, while others said that they had no church connections. It was also great to chat with some members of staff who came along and who are hugely supportive of Sarah and all that she is doing as Chaplain at The Blue.’

‘A safe space for all’

The many things that come in a chaplain's direction...

Sarah also runs ‘Faithworks’, a small group, talking about life issues accompanied by prayer and scripture, and a Zambia Link project. The remainder of Sarah's role is pastoral work with young people, staff support, Collective Worship, and the many other things that naturally come in a chaplain's direction.



Biscuit Club | Patrick Weld, Haygrove School, Bridgwater

Not enough biscuits for even a half-decent bribe

Youth Alpha was what the Chaplain called it. Biscuit Club is what it has become. Fifteen or so lads turn up at lunch each week. Yet, as Patrick says, there aren't even many biscuits, certainly not enough to be even a half decent bribe. The lads apparently rarely sit still or keep focused in class, but week by week they engage in discussions about life and faith and how it all works itself out in school.

The Headteacher of Haygrove recently wrote:

'Patrick has earned huge respect in our community and has added a calming and reflective element to our culture, which is noticeable on the days when he is with us.'



How do we appoint a chaplain?

Before September 2018 Haygrove Community School had never had a chaplain. Then the Head Teacher heard a school chaplain talk about the ministry and asked a question that has become wonderfully familiar around Somerset: 'How do we appoint a chaplain?'. A year, and a very generous donation from a local charity later, Patrick Weld began his ministry as chaplain at Haygrove and two other local centres. The only 'concerns' that the school have about him is that he isn't full time with them! Patrick has earned huge respect within the school and added a calming and reflective element to the culture of the school.

Patrick is also Chaplain at Danesfield Middle School, Williton and at Great Wood Camp.

Rail Responders | Adrian Prior Sankey, Taunton Team Chaplaincy



A request for help

Christians in Taunton have responded positively to a request for help from the British Transport Police. Patrolling in and near the railway station, 'Rail Responders' are the latest expression of chaplaincy in Taunton. Whilst rail travel is very safe, sadly stations and railway lines are locations where some people suffer due to accidents and illness.

The British Transport Police are responsible for public safety on and near the railways. They approached Taunton Team Chaplaincy to ask if volunteers from local churches could offer a welcome and caring presence at Taunton station. Drawing on many years of experience offering a listening ear, prayer and compassion in workplaces and in the community, Taunton Team Chaplaincy recruited a team of 12 volunteers. Rail Responders seek to respond to human need with God's love, following Jesus' call to care for those who suffer and struggle with many aspects of life.

A caring, listening and reassuring presence

Like the Street Pastors, Rail Responders do not preach but provide a caring, listening and reassuring presence in an informal manner. Working in teams, each volunteer patrols at least once a month. They also help rail operators spread basic safety messages among young people.

'a caring, listening and reassuring presence in an informal manner'



Similar schemes elsewhere in the UK have brought the added bonus of a reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour.

For further details or to find out how to join the Rail Responders team visit

www.tauntonteamchaplaincy.org
or call 07581 424 420.

On the Kennet and Avon Canal | Martin Gillmore, with Nomadic People

Food boxes and prayers

With food boxes in the cabin and prayers under our belts, it was a privilege to see Canal Ministries and Martin Gillmore (the Chaplain to Nomadic People) at work. A sign on the towpath says 'Caution! Serious risk of relaxation.' Travelling at just 2 miles per hour it was good to slow down; but there is also loneliness, suffering and poverty amidst the peace of the canal.

Living and telling the story of God's love

The chaplains and pastors who serve the canal know almost all the 'locals' or will soon; and they are also there to welcome visitors. The depth and breadth of the relationships is immediately apparent. Martin and his colleagues are pastors and evangelists. They live and share the love of God, build trusting and caring relationships; and out of these relationships they see people come to faith.

Being in the 'right' place

Martin spoke of his own journey of faith, and of the call of God which he couldn't resist, despite his best attempts. Each day he has an overwhelming sense that he is in the right place as he shares the love of God with some of the most vulnerable and excluded people in Somerset.



'Building trusting and caring relationships.'

'Seeing people come to faith.'

Breakfast Club | Neil Wylie, Nailsea School

An alternative option

The Breakfast Club in Nailsea school started because we saw how effective they were in other schools where students began the day with something healthy in their bellies and spent time with supportive staff. We also saw an alarming number of students consuming chocolates, sweets and energy drinks at 8.30 in the morning. Some of those students were then getting into trouble by mid-morning as the sugar had worn off and they became tired and belligerent. I wanted to offer an alternative option.

Nailsea has a relatively low pupil premium percentage, but we have a large number of students who arrive at school not having had breakfast. The Breakfast Club specifically targets students from low-income or socially vulnerable contexts, young carers and students with behavioural issues.

Making a difference

Very quickly the club yielded results. Staff were able to identify students who had attended the group and were more attentive and engaged in lessons because they had had breakfast and started the day positively.

Relationships

For me, the ministry of the Breakfast Club comes in the relationships. Most of the kids enjoy a free pancake or croissant; even more appreciate the time that we give them in the morning to talk about the day ahead, their worries about home or issues with another student. We have had students who start coming to Breakfast Club in year 7 and end up leading it in year 11. This is a testament that setting a loving and Christ-focused example will inspire others. Breakfast Club has led to great conversations about faith, with students and staff.

Whilst the (very) early start may take some getting used to, there are few things in my role as encouraging as seeing a group of excited students waiting well before 8am for the group to begin.

'I don't have to hang around the school and wait for the bell, I can talk to people and have a free pancake.'

Year 7 Student

Breakfast Club | Jerry Parr, St Mark's School, Bath

'Our box of cereal ran out a few days ago and mum has not got any more yet.' In that instant I knew we had to do something that did not set him apart but supported him and others. We now provide a free breakfast for all of the school. Thanks to local churches, charities and Kellogg's we have kept going for 10 plus years!

What do I see ... ?

I see those that need breakfast coming in, leaving happy and full!

I see students in a safe space before school, some are in an hour before they need to be!

I have conversations I would not have had.

For some, knowing someone cares is life changing.

I see local church members help out.

I see tears and laughter and friendships blossom.

I see year 7's sitting quietly and looking nervous but safe.

I see boisterous year 8's and 9's who were those nervous year 7's.

I cry and laugh with them and I see God at work daily.

I see God's love transforming the school community ...



'We don't need to do massive things, we just need to do little things with massive love.'

'Go low and go slow, serve one at a time. If you stop for one, God will provide for the one you stop for..'

Heidi Baker

Woolly hats, prayer and time at the Port | Jeremy Hellier, Avonmouth Port

Welcome and hospitality from Mission to Seafarers

A place of prayer, teddies, bibles in every language, hats and scarfs knitted across the diocese, toiletries, phone cards, clocks with international time zones and Mission to Seafarers chaplains!

Bishop Ruth says: *'We went aboard a ship transporting six and a half thousand vehicles to Europe and saw some of the conditions of sailors at sea. I was hugely impressed by the work of the chaplains who offer practical help, spiritual care and a warm welcome.'*

The chaplains visit every ship that comes into port and they are often the first to welcome a ship to the UK. They go on board with SIM cards for phones (crucial for sailors to contact home) hand-knitted woolly hats, bibles in a wide range of languages, and time to listen and care.

Pastoral and prophetic

There can be concerns, a crew who hasn't been paid in six weeks, or who haven't received proper training, or even the tragedy of modern slavery. Advocacy, fighting for justice and supporting the powerless, is an important part of Port Chaplaincy.

Sometimes the chaplains will meet a crew on a one-off visit. Often relationships and friendships are formed that last and spread right across the world. Everyone knows and trusts the Mission to Seafarers and the chaplains are always welcomed.



'Chaplains aim to be the first to visit a ship and they are the only people who arrive with gifts rather than forms and inspections.'

Spiritual Care Centre | Royal United Hospitals, Bath



On 12 April 2018 the new Spiritual Care Centre at Royal United Hospitals, Bath was opened and blessed by Bishop Ruth Worsley.



On Campus | Nigel Rawlinson, Bath University

Keen to learn about faith

Camilla had been keen to learn about our faith. We talked about the psalms as mood poems, words from the heart, happy or sad. The Gospels tell about the life of Jesus. Who is he? What does faith mean? We noted the historical facts. Something extraordinary happened 2000 years ago, something that continues now, when millions of people still seek to learn. This is why an English-speaking chaplain meets with a Mandarin-speaking student.

We wanted to do something to remember the year. We met by the lake, read, and then shared bread and wine, blessed by prayer as Jesus had shown. We took some each, remembering his words, 'do this in remembrance of me'. Suddenly the fountain stopped. Silence, a beautiful silence. In that moment we were held. It was so peaceful. I wondered about explaining how the Spirit of God works. This was a God moment. I didn't to explain, they already knew. The blessing of remembering.....

Camilla's response:

'I am really excited and grateful to go to your classes. You have patiently answered all my questions and engaged me in deep thinking. The last session by the lake was a really moving one. It was so beautiful to pray and feel that suddenly quiet world; it was amazing and exciting.'



Chill | Jan Knott, Karen Turner and James Collie, Bath Spa University

Space to relax, connect and recharge

Chill was a two-week event set up to help students and staff through the stressful exam time. It offered a space to relax, connect and recharge... The word that seemed to sum up the whole thing for us was 'joy'.

A group of drama students were in the thick of performances. Originally bumping into them as they practiced Shakespeare around the grounds (which was moving to the point of goosebumps), we invited about 15 along. An hour later two turned up, smiled, made mocktails, played Frisbee, then slipped away. An hour later they returned with two more, who became fixated on the rather challenging 1000 piece jigsaw and were most concerned that the same puzzle would be there when they returned. Later that day, a larger crowd of drama students turned up and over the coming days, made Chill their home.

Some really good conversations

We must have had around 120 students and over 40 staff in all. It was really encouraging to walk around campus and talk to a further 400 or so students who, for the most part, really warmed to the idea of Chill and were grateful that someone had gone to the effort to create a space to de-stress. The University and Student Union were amazing in how they got behind the idea. The news of Chill spread and students heard about it through social media and from their lecturers, tutors, classes and friends.

We had some really cool conversations over the exam period, from talking about the twists and turns of life at home, to discussing a sense of vocation, to hearing about different cultures from international students. It was good to Chill.

*'Choosing to make
'Chill' their home.'*



People are desperate to be valued for who they are

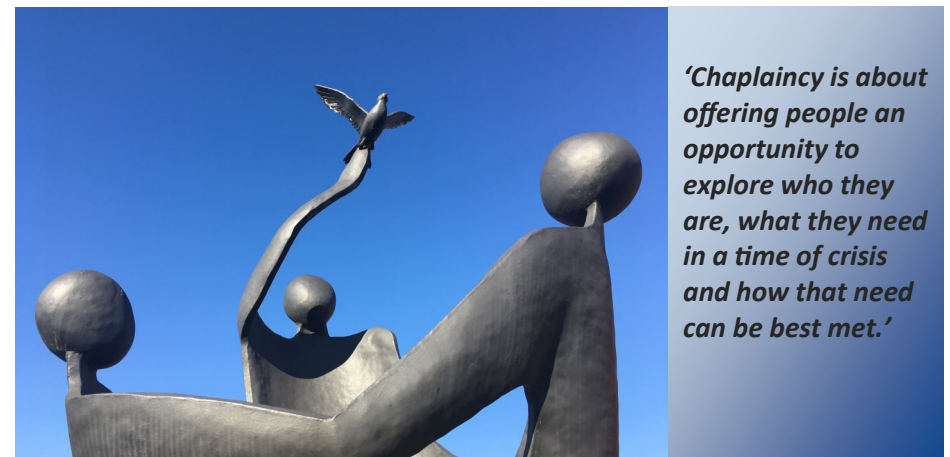
I spend a lot of time exploring with people what they are hoping to gain from meeting a chaplain, so that we can discern what is helpful and why and for how long. I try not to guess what a person may need. I believe that chaplaincy is about offering people an opportunity to explore who they are, what they need in a time of crisis and how that need can be best met.

Hearing and valuing

Most people are desperate to be heard and valued for who they are. They are not seeking advice and are fearful of platitudes. I believe we all carry the seeds of change and healing within, but these can sometimes be very difficult to find. In the words of Carl Rogers, being given unconditional positive regard can lead us to recovery and towards wholeness.

Communicating our fragile and beautiful shared humanity

Healthcare chaplains will regularly meet people who cannot express themselves verbally, due perhaps to age, illness or trauma. We need to develop additional skills to communicate with those for whom words are meaningless. Chaplains whose own spirituality allows questioning, painful change and creative growth are well placed to find ways to connect deeply to another, when we both become aware of our fragile and beautiful shared humanity.



'Chaplaincy is about offering people an opportunity to explore who they are, what they need in a time of crisis and how that need can be best met.'

Mental Health and Community Hospitals | Robin Pfaff, Somerset Partnership

Meeting people where they are

Being a healthcare chaplain means being prepared for the unexpected. In the course of a day I have numerous interactions. Some are formal, like meeting a patient who has asked to see me or leading a spiritual wellbeing group on our mental-health wards.

Being aware, listening, exploring

Many encounters are fleeting and informal: noticing a heavy sigh from a carer; a member of staff telling me as I wait at the photocopier that she has had to reluctantly agree to admit her mum to a nursing home; the ward clerk telling me that her bank shifts won't be renewed; approaching a visitor who is looking tearful and bewildered in the hospital lobby.

Offering space and time

People may want to confide something very intense and private, without any further follow up. Others are seeking a longer dialogue where they can explore questions like "Why has this happened to me?" I try to listen and seek ways to convey what I have heard. I hope that this allows the person to know that they are not completely alone and have a space to become clearer about their own thoughts and feelings.



'Healthcare Chaplains accompany those who find themselves dwelling in the perpetual half-light.'

A very new chaplain in Residential Care | Jason Organ, Hamilton Park, Taunton



The welcome I have had at Hamilton Park Nursing Home has been fantastic. The kindness and enthusiasm shown to me, as one of the Taunton Team Chaplains, by the manager and the team, has been nothing less than amazing.

I have made three visits so far, staying around five hours. I am taking each visit very gently, getting to know the residents and staff team. There is a mix of residents, some come from Musgrove Park Hospital and some are long stay. I am starting to form relationships. The manager invited me to eat with the residents, which I am doing; it is good to be present there. I feel that God has led us to this care home. I am finding them to be so enthused about what we are doing and able to offer; in a way far more than I could have imagined.

Spiritual Care | Ann Fulton, St Margaret's Hospice Care

First and foremost we try to listen to the spiritual language of each patient and members of their family. Who are the people and what are the things most important to them? What are their sources of strength? Then, as well as responding to what they may ask of us, we try to encourage and empower each person, as they are able, to draw on those spiritual resources within themselves.



'You met M where he was, in a confusion of pain and fear and resignation and preparedness to die, but also still wanting to talk about art and curiously hopeful about life.'

Doctors order Chaplains for Surgeries | Tina Cumberlege, Lymington, Hampshire

Time to talk

My work as a chaplain in a local doctor's surgery since 2016 is a real privilege. ('Doctors order chaplains for surgeries' The Times 22 June) The doctors in the partnership recommend patients who they feel need time to talk. A number of those don't want to worry their families with the diagnosis they have received; others include those who have been recently bereaved, or those who have received news that the end of the road has been reached and no more treatment can be given. We spend nearly an hour together during which I listen to their concerns, offer reflection and together we seek a way forward. A number of patients ask for prayer. There are often a lot of tears but it is a safe place.

Most return for a second and third visit, and it is amazing to see the difference in them; most with a real load lifted. The feedback to the surgery has been very encouraging.

'There are often a lot of tears but it is a safe place.'

'It is amazing to see the difference in them – most with a real load lifted.'

Chaplaincy in every GP surgery?

My work is funded by a generous patient giving £1000 per year for three years, so that overstretched GP's can offer this service to patients who need more support. I suspect my experience is typical, and that chaplaincy needs to be present in every surgery.

A letter by Tina Cumberlege to The Times [adapted].



Prayers and Patience | Mary Dolman, Paulton Community Hospital

Journeys of discovery

I have learned so much from talking to the patients who have lost their faith and who want to find it again, as well as those who are members of churches. As a retired nurse and a Reader, my calling to be a Volunteer Chaplain at Paulton Community Hospital seemed natural and I have received such bountiful rewards. Thank you God.

'I have learned so much and received such bountiful rewards.'

Some of the patients have dementia; others are there for rehabilitation with the prospect of going home (or into a care home). I never say that I am the Hospital Chaplain, but it is on my name badge and this tends to open up the opportunity for anyone to discuss spiritual issues if they wish.

Multi-sensory celebrations

When there is a Christian festival, I lead a visual celebration. The visual aspect is important and often communicates in a way that words cannot. Hymn singing also means much and the patients really appreciate it. One man sat holding his wife's hand (she had dementia) and sang all the verses. When I said to him how well he sang, he told me he hadn't sung hymns since his school days as he never went to church. Perhaps I opened a door for him, but I will never know as the patients are not in hospital for long.

However, there is one gentleman who I spoke to and prayed with as his wife was dying. He later came to faith and was excited to be doing the Alpha course at church. I saw him at a Deanery service and we embraced like old friends.

