



Annual Report 2010

Chaplaincy
for Wycombe

It has been an amazing year for the Chaplaincy. We currently have a team of ten Chaplains, each voluntarily giving two hours of their time a week to support and encourage those who work in the retail trade. We have endeavoured to build relationships with those whom we meet frequently. Each Chaplain now has a regular “beat” where they are recognised and known to those who work in those particular shops. It has quickly established the opportunity for a more personal relationship to develop, and meaningful conversations have taken place.

Over the Christmas period each Chaplain took a personalised Christmas card, together with a small gift of sugar almonds to their own shops, and they were warmly received. We also took part in the Christmas outreach which Debbie Orriss organised to give a free wrapping service for passers by.

As I wander the shops, it is clear that we are still seeing the effects of the recession. Many shops have had to close, leaving empty units, and those that struggle to remain open often have only one person working all day alone. This makes the role of the Chaplaincy vital as it is always good to see a friendly face in the loneliness of the day: and important to be available when the future for so many staff seems uncertain.

Sadly, our recruitment drive last year was not successful, and we have lost two Chaplains, one to a new career and one moved out of the area. Thanks go to Lizzie Thomas-Davies and Colleen Gardner for their dedication and commitment to the Chaplaincy over the past years, and we wish them well for the future.

It has been interesting to see how the role of the Chaplain has expanded over the months. I have been warmly welcomed into the pubs and clubs of the town and Roberta has recently made contact with the Betting shops. Our work is varied and challenging, but I hope that the other Chaplains find it as much fun and fulfilling as do I.

Our thanks go to the local churches, other faith communities, our Chaplaincy partners and town centre management, especially Melanie Williams, Bill Pollard, Jette Peddie and all at the Eden Centre, for their support and encouragement.

It is a privilege for us to go out into the town; it is always great to meet new people and to bring the gospel message of love to those whom we meet. My personal thanks go to the Chaplains who are out and about whatever the weather, with such dedication and fortitude.

Lead Chaplain, Rev'd Yvonne Murphy

Meet the Chaplains!



Joyce Joules

With a very outgoing and enthusiastic personality, Joyce is spiritual positivity on the move. She belongs to Studley Green Christian Fellowship.



Wendy Bull

A very actively involved member of the local community, Wendy fits in her chaplaincy role around many other commitments. She belongs to Christchurch, Flackwell Heath.



Andrew Green

Our caring chaplain, Andrew works with Biblelands and loves to serve people. He belongs to The King's Church



Roberta Lunt

Roberta fits this chaplaincy role into her busy schedule of caring for grandchildren. She is a member of The Avenue Methodist Church.



Monica Brown

With an established background in pastoral work, Monica brings particular expertise to the role of chaplain. Monica belongs to The King's Church.



Errol Baker

With a gentle disposition and years of experience in the voluntary sector, Errol is an excellent chaplain. He belongs to All Saints' Church.



Pamela Salinas

Read Pamela's story elsewhere in this report.



Deacon Ruth Richey

has been an active Chaplaincy Team member since December. She is a minister at Wesley and The Avenue Methodist Churches and also is developing work in the Town Centre supporting other community groups.



Lead Chaplain

Rev'd Yvonne Murphy

In post since July 2009, Yvonne has a background in education and loves meeting people. She is Vicar of St Mary and St George Church, Sands



Sheila Doig

A naturally caring and reflective person, Sheila brings a sense and sensibility to her role. She belongs to All Saints' Church.

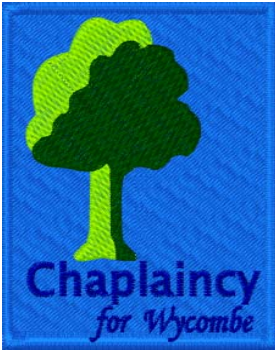


Lynne Ankrom

Coming from a medical background, Lynne revels in the opportunity to meet new people and listen to them on their own terms. She belongs to St Mary and St George Church, Sands.

The Chaplaincy for Wycombe Logo

We adopted the image of a Beech tree because:



We serve as a safe, steady and non-judgemental presence.
We help the workplace be somewhere that personal growth happens.
We invest in and enrich the life of the town for the long term.
We reflect upon the rewards and challenges of modern working life.
We model the value of service before self.

Chaplains **always** wear a uniform of a dark blue fleece and/or light blue polo shirt both of which show our logo and have the word CHAPLAIN printed on the front and back. They also wear an identity badge, carry a mobile phone and leaflets about our work. We operate a monthly rota which is emailed out in the last week of every month.

What we do

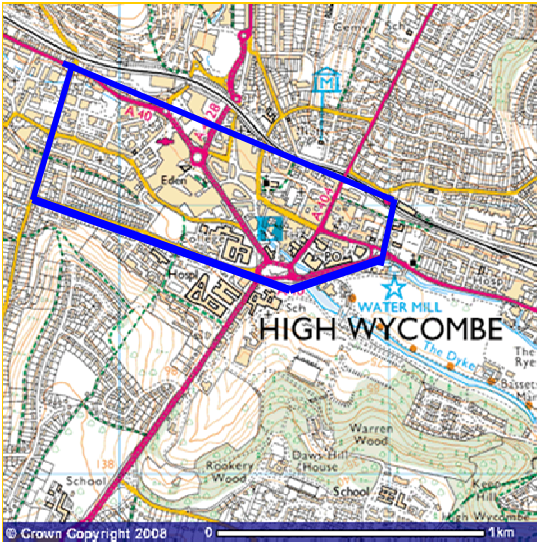
Our team of ten chaplains serves staff and/or shoppers of any faith and none with:

- A listening, supportive, non-judgemental ear
- Private, one-to-one chats
- Care and accompaniment throughout a formal disciplinary process
- Thoughtful insights into personal and workplace ethics
- Signposting towards our range of locally-based professional Chaplaincy Partners.

Our Lead Chaplain also provides:

- Guidance on the spiritual needs of employees
- Confidential mentoring
- Liaison with larger companies

The area we serve



The blue line shows our boundary. This area was carefully selected to include both established and newly developed retail centres in the town.

**OUR CONTACT DETAILS
ARE ON THE BACK PAGE**

Image produced from the Ordnance Survey Get-a-map service. Image reproduced with kind permission of Ordnance Survey and Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland.

The Management Team

Rev'd Yvonne Murphy, Dr Michael Bowker

It is with sadness that we said goodbye to Lizzie Thomas-Davies, who is moving away from the area. We wish her every blessing for the future and thank her for all she has done for the Chaplaincy since it first came into being.

The role of this Team is to:

- *manage* and be *responsible* for our medium term policy and operation.
- *liaise* with senior management structures
- *oversee* and *guide* the work of the Lead Chaplain

Board of Trustees

The Board meets once a quarter to discuss and make decisions on overall chaplaincy policy and practice. Trustees represent a range of interests in the town and are an important link between the Chaplaincy and the community.

The Chaplain Development Programme

All chaplains take part in a formal recruitment, training and supervision programme, as follows:

1. The prospective candidate tells their faith leader that they would like to become a chaplain.
2. The candidate contacts the Lead Chaplain who arranges for them to accompany a chaplain on duty. This allows us to assess a candidate's suitability while in context.
3. The chaplain feeds back to the candidate and Lead Chaplain as to whether the candidate will be permitted to go forward in the selection procedure.
4. If they are allowed to go forward they receive an application form with a request for two references. *(If not, the refusal is confirmed in writing and copied to their Faith leader).*
5. On completion of a written application and receipt of positive references the candidate proceeds to training.
6. Training is designed to be challenging, highly interactive and lasts approximately 10 hours. It builds upon the pastoral experience and aptitude of a candidate. Most will be skilled in pastoral ministry but few will have used those skills in the middle of a busy high street!
7. Candidates are commissioned in their own faith community. This enables their community to find out about their new role and support them in it. It also upholds the policy of the Chaplaincy not to stand apart from their Faith community but to be accountable to it.
8. Chaplains take up their place on the monthly rota and receive supervision, monthly support and training from the Lead Chaplain to whom they have access at all times. Additional, external opportunities for training are regularly arranged in conjunction with local agencies.

Working with local Churches

The ongoing connection between each chaplain and their Faith community is expressed in three different ways

- to *educate* by the sharing of insights into workplace spirituality
- to encourage the *recruitment of new chaplains*
- to stimulate well informed *prayer* for the life of the town

Working with other Faiths

We would like to extend a warm welcome to members of other faith communities to come and observe our work in person, and actively invite chaplain applications from all faiths represented in the town.

We believe the knowledge that chaplains from differing faiths work alongside each other in the town would be a powerful source of hope and a fine example to less tolerant members of our community.

Chaplaincy for Wycombe “Partners”

In the course of fulfilling their role, chaplains occasionally come into contact with people experiencing problems involving, for example, abuse, legal and financial difficulties or bereavement. These problems may require specialist help which we can't yet provide

It's at this point that a chaplain can suggest to the person they contact an appropriate Chaplaincy Partner. The person self-refers to the Partner using the number held by the chaplain.

The decision to contact a Partner is always left to the person in question and chaplains will not intrude into the new relationship between the Partner and the individual. Our current Partners are MPF Counselling, Wycombe Islamic Society, the Youth Enquiry Service, CRUSE Bereavement Care, Wycombe Citizens' Advice Bureau, Shopmobility, The Richmond Fellowship and Samaritans.

“Another Year Loitering!” by team chaplain, Pamela Salinas

Another Year! It does not seem possible that the Chaplaincy is in its third year.

We have a new lead Chaplain this year and some new Chaplains. Sadly some Chaplains have had to step down due to other pressures. Nevertheless there is a core group of chaplains that are going out every week and maintaining a presence in the town centre. The Chaplains are now recognised by many other people who work in the Town Centre to support and protect shoppers and workers such as the Security staff in Eden. We were asked to provide a service for the late night shopping evenings leading up to Christmas. It was very cold but we were there! We have also been asked to support the lap dancing girls in one of the pubs, which our lead chaplain has undertaken. There was also an occasion when one of our chaplains worked with Security staff to defuse a potentially violent situation.

The important thing is that in a busy Town Centre the Chaplains have the time to just stop, for the time we are out every week we have nothing else to do but listen to anybody who wants to talk.

We have been encouraged to concentrate on our own ‘beats’ this year so we are becoming well known in our particular areas. For me that is the market on a Tuesday morning, I usually manage to visit the Library, Marks & Spencer, Shopmobility as well as a few shops in Eden also. I also walk down Crendon St and along Easton St calling in on some shops. The management of the market changed again this year and some regular traders moved on but there is still a core of traders who have been here for many years now supplemented by newcomers. Some new shops have opened which include national chains and independent traders. The opening of the Pound shop and Iceland has encouraged shoppers back into the High St which has increased opportunities for existing traders.

As I am out at the same time every week I also regularly see the same members of the public and they recognise me, I was once called Vicar, I did correct them immediately! I have also been called 'Charlie' as in Charlie Chaplin!! So I often chat to people in the street sometimes just to pass the time of day or discuss the weather but at other times to listen to whatever is on their mind.

I have talked to people through illness, bereavement, job loss and so on. I feel humble that so many people have taken me into their confidence when they have problems and also when something good has happened.

Every week is different, sometimes hardly anyone wants to speak or say 'hello' and you begin to wonder what you have done. I have to remind myself not to take this personally although that is particularly hard when I have walked round for two hours in the freezing cold with hardly any response. But those times are the minority and the good times when people really respond more than make up for them.

This year we have started to try and evaluate the effect of the Chaplaincy. So two researchers from the University have designed a feedback form for us to complete after each session then they will use this information to evaluate the Chaplaincy. We feel the service we offer is worthwhile; it will be interesting if research backs up our feelings.

I still look forward to Tuesday mornings when I meet so many Friends and find this such a rewarding way to serve. Please, if you see me or any other Chaplain, stop and say Hello. We value your support and prayers so much.

If you enjoy meeting people and listening to them and have some time to spare, perhaps you would think about joining us.

A minimum commitment of one hour a week is asked and training is given.

I or one of the other chaplains would always take you out with us if you want to see firsthand what happens.

If you want to know more please have a word with me or speak to our lead Chaplain Yvonne on 07847 367366

Funding

- *Income*

Chaplaincy for Wycombe receives no public funding nor do we currently charge for our services. We are fortunate that external funding sources cover all of our costs.

Such external funding for which we are most grateful included another £1000 from the MF Wright Trust and up to £750 per year from Wycombe Deanery.

Opinions vary on the question of whether ventures like Chaplaincy for Wycombe should be financially supported by the businesses they serve.

- *Expenditure*

Our main expenditure is the provision of uniforms for chaplains, publicity materials and sundries.

Chaplaincy for Wycombe “Partners”

Plans for 2011 and Beyond

Mentoring Service

We are pleased to offer mentoring to those of any job position or anyone who wants to reflect on their current professional development.

This is a service that is provided on a one-to-one basis, and can be tailored to specific needs, where in complete confidence an individual may discuss current professional experiences, work/life balance and their future career pathway.

For more information please contact the Lead Chaplain.

Recruitment of more chaplains

Our responsibilities are changing so it is vital that we recruit more individuals to serve as volunteer chaplains.

Applications are warmly invited from members of any mainstream Faith community in the town. We would especially welcome enquiries from men and women aged 18 years or older who belong to the Muslim faith.

If you, or someone you know, might fit the bill, why not get in touch with the Lead Chaplain for an informal chat?

**Thank you for taking the time to read
the Chaplaincy for Wycombe Annual Report.**

**If you have any questions, would like to benefit
personally from this free, local service or are
interested in becoming a chaplain,
please call the Lead Chaplain on 07847 367 366.**

We warmly invite requests for help (including requests for prayer) **from anyone of any faith or none who lives, works or shops in High Wycombe town centre.**

Our service is free, confidential and not connected to any company or business.

Chaplaincy for Wycombe

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