



CHAPLAINCY REPORT

2025



CONTENTS

Prison	04
Healthcare	07
GP	09
Armed Forces	10
Rural	12
Emergency Services	13
Sport	15
Workplace	17
Community & Parish	19



WELCOME

The past year for many has been one of turmoil and uncertainty. Chaplaincy in its various guises has been present in many contexts across the diocese offering support to organisations and individuals through presence, prayer, pastoral care and encouragement.

This report captures some of this ministry and mission from our chaplaincies through the reflections and photographs from lay and ordained chaplains, full time, part time and volunteers, active in organisations, networks and parish communities.

Many of our chaplains are working in places facing financial cuts, increased public scrutiny, and even existential threats. The impact and pressures on many people is immense at the moment, from those making difficult decisions about resources and capacity, to those facing uncertainty about their roles. It is a privilege to be alongside people in often challenging and stressful situations. Some of our chaplains themselves are not immune from these pressures yet continue to offer care, kindness and God's blessings.

I am grateful for the contributions to this year's report, and to Bishop Andy's ongoing oversight and support. This report gives a flavour, but is not comprehensive, and I want to also give thanks for all our chaplains in Higher Education, schools, the Deaf Community and Care Homes and those offering chaplaincy in Civic roles, with the Royal British Legion and other charities.

Each year a number of people, lay and ordained, begin exploring and discerning if God is calling them to ministry and mission as chaplains. Please do get in touch if you would like to know more.



David McCoulough

Diocesan Chaplaincy Lead

davidmcc@southwell.anglican.org

01636 817246

PRISON

Chaplaincy in the four prisons in the diocese continues to be both challenging and rewarding.

At the beginning of 2025 new lay chaplains began their ministries at HMP Nottingham and HMP Lowdham Grange. Full time ordained Anglican Chaplains minister in HMP Lowdham Grange and HMP Ranby. Currently there is a vacancy at HMP Whatton. We are grateful for the voluntary priestly chaplaincy offered at HMP Whatton and HMP Nottingham and the support of other volunteers through their visits and prayers.

The following report from Fr Joe Cooper Anglican Chaplain at HMP Ranby gives a flavour of the transformative ministry and mission going on in our prisons, often in contexts where resources and staffing are stretched.

Key Statistics - Attendance:

28

*Sunday Eucharist
Average Weekly Attendance*

8

*Epiphany Cell
Blessings*

15

*Wednesday Bible Study
Group Average Weekly Attendance*

5

*Thursday Bereavement Course
Average Weekly Attendance*

22

*Sunday Eucharist
Average Communicants*

9

Confessions

4

Confirmations

31

*Bereavement
Course Completion*

4

*Memorial Services
(Prisoners)*

1

*Memorial Services
(Prisoner's Family)*

1

*Memorial
Services (Staff)*

12

Baptisms

2

Last Rites



Prisoner 'S' On the Work of Anglican Chaplaincy in General:

"Having Anglican Chaplaincy here at Ranby has, to me, meant the difference between being able to cope with the stresses that prison life brings, and doing something detrimental to myself and grievous to my family.

The support of Anglican Chaplaincy has had a major impact in helping me with my mental health, coming to terms with being incarcerated, acknowledging my offending behaviour, and fixing my life. The fact that my Anglican Chaplain goes above and beyond 'religious provision' speaks volumes.

Not being seen by the Mental Health Team or the Substance Misuse Team in a timely manner is incredibly frustrating. My Anglican Chaplain has gone above and beyond to help me when I have needed it, and I know that I am not the only one who feels that he does more for the lads here at Ranby than most of the other departments put together.

He offers counselling, guidance, grief management sessions, mentoring, the list goes on!

Anglican Chaplaincy is a cornerstone to many here – many without much hope. It is because of my Chaplain that I've found my faith again. In Anglican Chaplaincy, I've found a sense of belonging and communion.

Without my Chaplain I would not be writing this report here today. He helps me get through the dark days and helps me battle through the storms. It is by his guiding light that I have hope for a better future."

Wider Context: Prisoner 'S' regularly accesses Anglican Chaplaincy through one-to-one pastoral support sessions and attends the weekly study group and Sunday Eucharist. He was confirmed in November.

PRISON



Prisoner D on his baptism:

Before coming to prison, I had an awakening through a dream that I believe was a firm message from God that my life had to change. I made significant changes prior to being sentenced that I am determined to continue on the outside. With Bible classes and having my baptism I now have the strength to continue this. I will be forever grateful for the message I received from God and for my baptism by my Anglican Chaplain at HMP Ranby.

Wider Context: Prisoner 'D' regular accesses Anglican Chaplaincy by attending the weekly study group and Sunday Eucharist. He was baptised in November.

Prisoner J on his confirmation:

The whole holy confirmation experienced from confession, study and the service was a huge spiritual journey for me. I feel so much closer to God and my relationship with Him is the best it has ever been. The atmosphere was magical, and I could feel the Holy Spirit present.

The sacrament of reconciliation has lightened the load of what felt like the weight of the world on my shoulders. Some who are skeptical may think: "what has this actually done for you?" My answer would be, it was a moment that I will hold dearly in my heart forever, and one that has encouraged me to cherish and nurture my relationship with God. Thank you, to my Anglican Chaplain.

Wider Context: Prisoner 'J' regular accesses Anglican Chaplaincy by attending the weekly study group and Sunday Eucharist. He was confirmed in November.



HEALTHCARE

Nottingham University Hospitals (NUH) NHS Trust

The Spiritual and Pastoral Care Department has just produced its Strategy for Spiritual Care and Wellbeing 2026-2029 and is wholeheartedly committed to

“Ensuring that the Spiritual and Pastoral Care are the specialist spiritual care resource for the whole hospital community: staff, patients, their loved-ones and visitors to the hospitals of the Trust”.

This means that we are examining every aspect of spiritual care practice to ensure that our provision aligns with the NHS Chaplaincy Programme (2023), The United Kingdom Board for Healthcare Chaplaincy (2020), all statutory legislation, and the Trust’s own strategy to deliver outstanding health outcomes by placing People First (2024-2026).

Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust

Armistice Day Act of Remembrance at Highbury Hospital, Bulwell, and the dedication of the hospital’s new Memorial Bench.



HEALTHCARE

Hospital Chaplains can be contacted on the numbers below:

Bassetlaw General Hospital – 01909 500990 ex 2846

Nottingham University Hospitals Trust (QMC and City Hospital) – 0115 924 9924

Extensions: 83799 (QMC) or 76187 (City)

E-mail: contactachaplain@nuh.nhs.uk

Nottinghamshire Healthcare Trust (including John Eastwood Hospice)

Tel: 01777 247523

Email: chaplaincyandspiritualcare@nottshc.nhs.uk

Sherwood Forest Hospitals

King's Mill Hospital 01623 622515 extensions 3047, 4137 or 6201

Newark Hospital 01636 681681 extension 5643

For urgent calls please ask switchboard to contact the on call chaplain.



This Chaplaincy is supported by St Stephen's Church, Sneinton and the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham. The Chaplaincy sessions are an invitation to be heard, to be seen and if appropriate to be sign posted to other organisations for further support.

We currently have 3 chaplains (one ordained, 2 lay) offering regular sessions: Monday afternoons, Tuesday mornings, once a fortnight, Monday mornings, once a fortnight.



GP Comments

Comment from a support staff member ***“Just to see you makes me feel better”***



Patients' Comments:

“I have really enjoyed these sessions, I love being listened to”

“No one has ever listened to me like this before”

“Thank you for listening”

“There is no one else I can talk to about this”

“This is a space to be held”

Looking back

“This year we do know of two patients who are now connected with local churches on a regular basis. We also know of one baptism and one renewal of baptismal vows of patients – both these patients were seen by a chaplain and they are both fully committed in a local church now.

One person who engaged with chaplaincy is now engaged in recovery support. Recurrent themes are grief and loss as well as unjust housing/employment situations.”

ARMED FORCES

Currently in the diocese the focus of Armed Forces Chaplaincy is in two very different contexts.

The Defence National Rehabilitation Centre at Stanford Hall, in the south of the diocese has an experienced Army Chaplain serving the military dimension of the centre. In 2025 the NHS national centre opened next door on the same site as part of Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust.

In Nottingham we have recently licensed a new chaplain, James McWhirter to HMS Sherwood.



On Tuesday, December 2, HMS Sherwood was afforded the same privilege as the largest aircraft carrier or naval base when the RNR unit gained its own chaplain.

The Reverend James McWhirter has been a Chaplain, RN, for many years and served as a Chaplain with the British Army before becoming a Royal Naval Reservist. Living and working in the East Midlands, James has been a long-standing part of the company of this Royal Navy 'stone frigate', far from the sea in Nottingham. And of course, James has supported reservists as a chaplain in that time.

But now he is officially 'in post' as the ship's chaplain – a position that needed the recognition of the local diocese to be made official. In a service at HMS Sherwood, at Foresters House at Chilwell, Revd. McWhirter was officially licensed for ministry by Revd. David McCoulough, Commissary for the Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham.

This means that James is now officially able to act as the 'Padre' (or the 'Bish', in less formal naval terminology) of HMS Sherwood. This means providing a unique form of pastoral care and a source of support that is very much part of the Naval Service but outside its normal structure.

Chaplain James does not hold a rank other than that of 'Chaplain' (the Royal Navy is unique among the British Armed Forces in this regard), and 'Padre' is held to be of the same rank as whoever they are talking to. This puts a chaplain in a special position within a Royal Navy unit, whether that's a ship on the far side of the world or an RNR unit in Nottingham. They can be approached by anyone, from the newest joiner adapting to military life to being a key link for command.

RURAL COMMUNITY

"I continue in my role as FCN (Farming Community Network), to support the team that work on the front line. I back them with prayer and help when they request it.

At the moment they have heavy caseloads due to the current climate in farming and the pressures everyone is facing. I have attended a meeting for all volunteers from across the East Midlands at Sparken Hoe farm in Northamptonshire.

The Nottingham group along with other relevant organisations and the local MP, hosted a Farm Well event for local farmers at Dunstall Barn. This was very well attended. One of our local team organised a chaplains' meeting for the East Midlands at St Michael's Church at Stockton. Very informative to what others do and how they are supported or not by their dioceses."

Revd Georgie Hadley



EMERGENCY SERVICES

Nottinghamshire Police - Revd Jo Tatum Lead Chaplain

This year saw some significant upheaval within the force. The force is still understaffed and under much pressure and the Chaplaincy Team are never without someone to support.

The multi-denominational team now is 8 people strong including myself and we have just been granted permission to assign a new chaplain.

Our oldest Chaplain Emeritus David Monkton died in December, and I was asked to represent, and speak on behalf of the Police Chaplains at his funeral.

I attended the National Police Chaplains Conference where a new gold standard was launched. We await the announcement of the new Deputy CC (who carries the Chaplaincy portfolio) in order that we can meet and discuss how this might be best implemented to raise the awareness and standards of Police Chaplaincy.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Police Chaplaincy is an extraordinary role and one that should have more time afforded to it. So much more could and should be done.

At Easter we told the Easter story to a room full of people, many joined up with the Christian Police Association, and continue to ask questions. People are eager to listen to a story that offers them hope. There is a huge opportunity for ministry but as so very often the workers are few in the harvest field. But we continue to do what we can, when we can.



Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service

At the end of August John Chambers stepped down from his role as chaplain to Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service. At a farewell gathering Craig Parkin DL, Chief Fire Officer, and other senior officers, made a presentation to John thanking him for his important and supportive role as chaplain.

At the beginning of 2026 a new chaplain will hopefully begin a new phase of support to the women and men of the Fire and Rescue Service. This is proceeding positively and an announcement will be made soon.

SPORT

We continue to work closely with Sports Chaplaincy UK to both, support current chaplaincies, and to develop new opportunities. As well as the established chaplaincy at Notts County FC we are actively exploring new possibilities at Mansfield Town FC and Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club. We have a vacancy to Notts County FC Academy and hope and pray a chaplain can be found for the Women's Team.

Liam O'Boyle Notts County FC Chaplain:

One of the highlights over the past year has been being part of the development of Notts County's Memory Lane Club. Former footballers are three and a half times more likely to die of dementia than people of the same age range which for many is caused by the repeated heading of a football (chronic traumatic encephalopathy/CTE).

Thanks to the dedication of Penny and Dave Watson (former England Captain) many former players and their families are receiving help and support through Notts County's Memory Lane Club. Meeting once a month - with guest speakers such as Kevin Keegan, it's a real privilege to be alongside members of the group who may struggle with tasks like making a cup of tea, but can always remember names of people and details of football matches from their playing careers, including scorelines and line-ups.

What's encouraging about the Group is that it is made up of those who are not well, as well as their former teammates who (are well) and want to come along to support those who are struggling. These former players memory clubs are increasingly being set up at football clubs around the country bringing help, support and understanding to many.



Garden of Remembrance

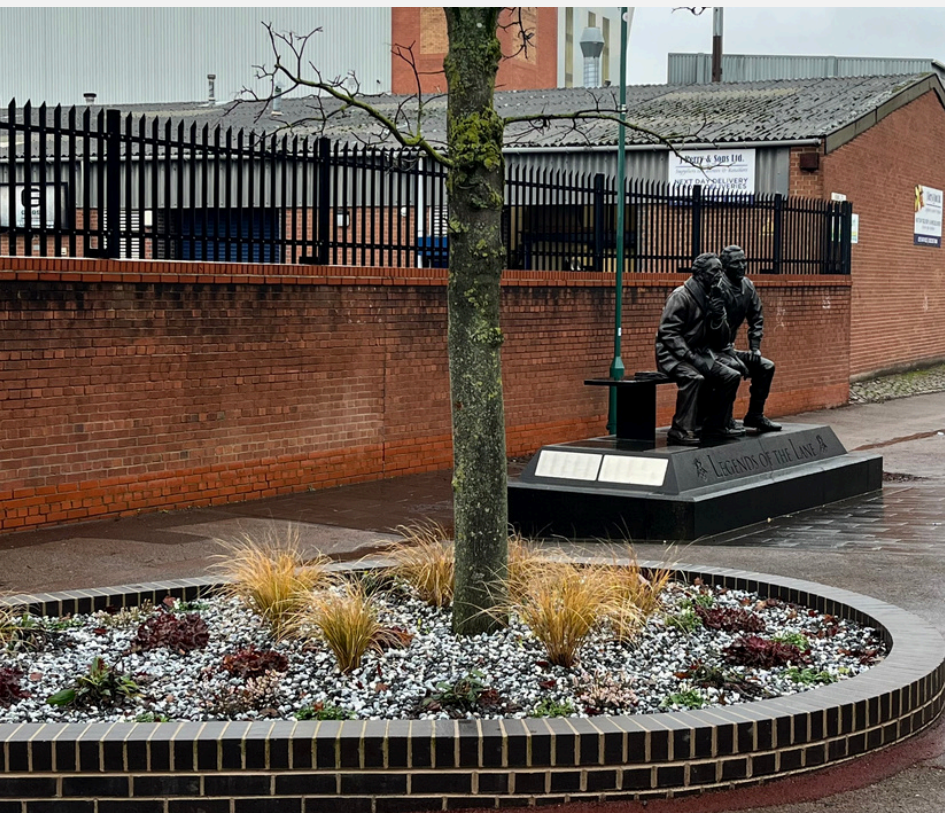
Like football chaplains around the country I've taken many internment of ashes in the Club's stadium responding to supporters last wishes to have their ashes laid to rest at their football club, with some travelling from far away places like New Zealand or the USA.

Unfortunately, due to the technology now involved in the materials and fibres used in professional football pitches it's no longer possible to 'scatter' or bury ashes on the pitch or to the side of pitches.

Thanks to an initiative by the Football Club and the Supporters Club a new Garden of Remembrance has been developed outside the main gates and I had the privilege of opening and blessing the Garden recently.

We've also got a wall of remembrance where people can have their loved one's name engraved into one side of the stadium. Last year I came across a dad comforting his distressed teenage daughter who was in floods of tears as she wanted to feel close to her nan (his mum) who had just passed away. So, they came to the stadium where they all used to come together.

Now families like theirs have a place they can come whenever they want to feel close to their loved one's.



WORKPLACE

Revd Jo Tatum Nottingham Workplace Chaplain

Capital One

Chaplaincy can be challenging in large open plan working environments – though there are good relationships with the canteen, cleaning and security staff.

However, in the case of a company trauma – death or incident then Chaplaincy is the first port of call. Through that there come requests for prayer and 'meaning of life' conversations.

Nottingham City Transport (NCT)

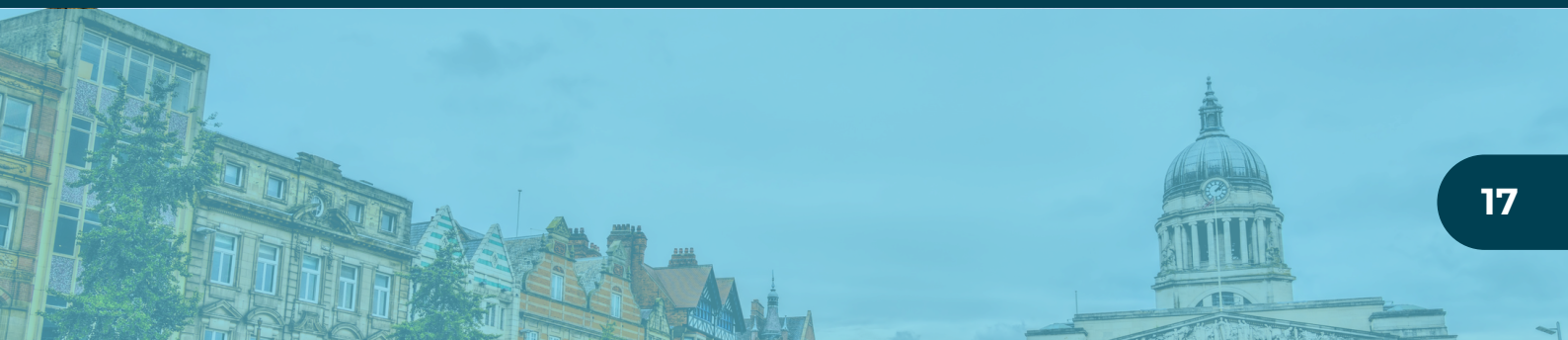
There are many longstanding relationships within company. Senior Management, Wellbeing and Ops and Trade Union all regularly signpost staff to receive Chaplaincy support. There have been significant redundancies toward the end of the year and I was kept informed from the very beginnings of the consultations to support both those delivering the news and those receiving their notice.

There have been significant incidents causing both serious injury & death of pedestrians (in all cases the drivers have been exonerated) and have supported drivers and their families through the investigation process.

The Chaplaincy is fully integrated and appreciated.

YMCA

Since the move to Newark for their main point of public delivery it has been fragmented contact. For a while there was a chaplain who visited Newark but post covid that has ceased. There is also a hostel at Mansfield. At the moment visits are only made to the Malt Cross where a cross section of staff are based – HR, Accounts and some marketing. As part of the review of 2026 the plan to find a better way to serve them. This may mean Chaplains recruited to serve Newark and Mansfield or simply to remain as is – calls are received for support particularly from those who work in the hostels so perhaps this might be a better area of focus.



Browne Jacobson

The relationship has developed since the lay chaplain here and I deliberately engaged with a senior partner who holds the Chaplaincy in his portfolio of responsibilities. Simple changes (reception emailing staff when Chaplains are 'in house') has increased engagement significantly and we feel as though there is a real difference. We continue to offer our support at their own Christmas carol service at St Peter's church.

Rothera Bray

Rotheras support St Mary's Lace Market carol service which has become the service we invite our Chaplaincy link businesses to join. Year on year the numbers grow and it has become a highlight for the admin staff at NCT and staff at Freeths.

Specsavers

Good relationships here, in our 10th year of relationship with the Chaplaincy. Staff are familiar and speak to me easily, with a variety of questions and problems. One man asking to see me privately – turned out his friend had asked him to come to Alpha and he wanted to know if it was an ok thing to do. Equally over Christmas there were a number of people who were facing the absence through death, of someone they loved and we were able to support them and pray with them.

Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC)

Grief Café Online Chat

Over the past few years the Chaplaincy has facilitated the Grief Café for NCC staff.

- *These happen on 3 Consecutive Months 3 times a year – with 4/6 weeks in-between.*
- *Open to all staff – can complete one or all sessions and can attend more than one rotation if wished.*
- *Accessed by Teams link – set up by an administrator within the People Services Team.*
- *Advertised on the NCC Intranet (internal only)*
- *Participants are encouraged to be in contact with each other in between sessions.*
- *Some remarkable things have been shared as people have begun to find the tools to live with grief.*

COMMUNITY & PARISH

Chaplaincy is offered in some of our parishes by clergy and lay people connecting with the local community. The GP chaplaincy at St Stephen's Sneinton is one example; St Mary's Bulwell has started chaplaincy at a local supermarket and continues a weekly presence at Highbury Hospital in the parish. We have a new Anglican Chaplain to a Methodist Care Home in Toton, other parishes regularly minister in care and nursing homes. We have two emerging Waterways chaplaincies in Sutton in Ashfield and Retford, working closely with the Church Army.

Below is an update on what has been happening in Sherwood and highlights how such ministry and mission evolves and adapts.

-St Martin's Sherwood - Rev Sue Pendenque

Over the year we have visited the shops and businesses but without any real regularity due to business and team numbers. We had a big push before Easter which included not just visiting shops and businesses but gathering other willing volunteers from church to give chocolate, Easter wishes and invitations to people on the street – this latter aspect was a real joy, being met with genuine surprise by people on the street and some good conversations. It felt like it had life.

NOURISH CAFÉ - Helena Shipston

We started Nourish Café in the summer of 2021 during Covid and we are still going strong. We do not have a Community Hall or Church Hall, so we serve light refreshments in the Church, at the back.

We are a thriving "warm place" with approx. 15-20 'punters' (as I like to call them). These are the ones that stay. We can serve as many 40-50 drinks as some do not stay the whole time.

On a weekly basis, there are always at least 3 'official' chaplains present, but also regularly another 5 or 6 members of St Martin's who serve and sit and just chat with our 'punters'. We are often being asked to pray with people and regulars are much more open now to talking about God and faith.

Nottingham Deaf Community Chaplaincy

Revd. Wendy Murphy has been voluntary Anglican Chaplain for the Deaf Community in Nottingham since before Covid. On average she attends Nottingham Deaf Society on a Wednesday lunchtime at the 50+ club 3 times a month.



**GROWING
DISCIPLES**

COMPASSION CONFIDENCE COURAGE