

Horse Racing

My first year of horse racing chaplaincy has given me the chance to build friendships and working relationships with trainers, staff and organisations throughout the industry. This build up of trust gives us a solid platform to work from when dealing with the many issues that are experienced by horse racing staff. The key to these relationships is based around the workplace, meeting staff in their environment offering a listening ear, help and advice without prejudice or judgement. The work started by the Rev Graham Locking has continued in Newmarket as well as stretching further afield especially into Lambourn and Malton. The setting up of a pastoral care team in Malton, Yorkshire has been a great help to me in dealing with the day to day issues in that area, providing support to staff at times when I can't make a personal visit. I am encouraged by the support I have had from the various sections of racing and the welcome extended to me.

My hope for the future would be that we could see more race course chaplaincy teams in operation at the different racecourses in the UK. We have established examples of teams working on race days in York and Ascot who mingle with the crowds, ensuring an enjoyable and safe day is had by all. My view is that chaplaincy enhances race days and we have exciting projects now starting at Lingfield and Beverley. There could be scope for more. When doors open and opportunities arise Sports Chaplaincy UK would like to be at the forefront of growing this fulfilling work across the country. In my role it is important I now step up my visiting throughout the UK. Trainers and their staff who live and work "off the beaten track" still experience the same issues as those who are based in Newmarket. Getting to know and value them is all part of this expanding role.

Simon Bailey
Chaplaincy Support Director
for Horse Racing



“Sports Chaplaincy UK seeks to serve the people of sport through the love of Jesus”

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Motor Sport

Chaplaincy has definitely moved up a gear over the past twelve months in the world of oval motorsport. Inroads have been made into both the national and domestic racing scenes and serves BriSCA F1 and F2 Stock Cars, 2L Saloon Stock Cars and National Mini Stox as well as GT Hot Rods and MD Hot Rods. Although Skegness Stadium is the main venue where I serve, I also try to operate at a national level, supporting the drivers, their teams and their families, those who serve the sport and those who support it as spectators.

One of the joys of chaplaincy I am finding is the opportunity to meet people who come together from across the country and elsewhere, to pursue their love of sport. This sport sees generations of families behind the wheel, and race meetings feature a great family atmosphere. Fans are usually afforded the opportunity to meet their favourite drivers and see the cars close up. Although the term 'family' can sometimes be over used, it certainly applies to oval motorsport.

As a racing fan, I see the provision of chaplaincy as a natural opportunity to serve, and I hope to develop the chaplaincy further in the 2015 season and beyond, to raise general awareness of chaplaincy.

For more information on Skegness Stadium please visit
www.skegness-stadium.info

Adrian Smith
Chequered Flag Chaplaincy



INSPIRE

SPORTS CHAPLAINCY UK
SERVING SPORT THROUGH EXCELLENCE IN CHAPLAINCY

- Professional Football
- Lower Leagues Football
- Scottish Football
- Women's Football
- Wimbledon
- Rugby Union
- Rugby League
- All Ability Sport
- Horse Racing
- Motor Sports
- Training
- Events

Chaplaincy reviews
from across the country



Warren Evans, Sports Chaplaincy CEO meeting
John Boyers, Manchester United Chaplain

“If you have a passion for sport and a heart after God, why not contact us and see how you can support or get involved in this great work!”

THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT & EXCITING

Welcome

We here at Sports Chaplaincy UK have been given a great mandate by God to impact the community of sport with the love of Jesus. We have a big heart and a big vision to embrace the world of sport knowing that we are making a positive difference. Sports Chaplaincy UK has been on an incredible journey of engagement and growth. As we approach our 25th Anniversary in 2016 we believe we are only seeing the tip of the iceberg with regards to opportunities and the needs that are there for us to meet. OUR VISION is twofold:

"To initiate, nurture, support and resource high quality Christian chaplaincy to the world of sport"

"To enable, equip and challenge the church to engage with their community called sport"

Our aim over the next five years is to grow to 1000 sports chaplains to serve the elite, professional and semi-professional sports community. Over the next ten year period our aim is to work in partnership and seek the intentional engagement of 300,000 people from local churches to engage with their local community called sport.

This community called sport is SIX times larger than the church in the UK. We cannot ignore a community of this size purely because they meet at a similar time of the week as us. This community has some great values and many fatherless kids, single parents; broken people attend sports clubs as well as church! We the church have a responsibility to engage and make a positive difference. If we can impact our community called sport we impact OUR community and our Nation.

Why don't you help us to increase the great support that sports chaplains provide. If you really have a heart for God and a passion for people and sport, I challenge you, I dare you to join us... you won't be disappointed.



Warren Evans
CEO - National Director



TOP: North West regional training day.
BOTTOM: Warren Evans and Simon Bailey meeting Princess Anne.

Professional Football

Chaplaincy in English & Welsh Football continues to grow and develop with the significant ongoing support of the Premier League, Football League and the PFA for which we in Sports Chaplaincy UK are very grateful. We now have chaplains at 69 of 92 clubs in the top 4 divisions with a number of these now having more than one chaplain. Recently Dudley Martin was appointed as chaplain at Huddersfield Town. Chris Powell, former Premier League player and England international and now Huddersfield manager gave this glowing endorsement of the role of a chaplain within football; "There have been times in my career when Club Chaplains have provided amazing support to players and staff. I am delighted to have Dudley at Huddersfield Town."



Chris Powell & Dudley Martin

As football chaplains we have always operated on the basis of being pastorally proactive and spiritually reactive. At a recent Player Care Conference held by the Premier League it was notable how often faith and spirituality were raised as issues in players' lives. With chaplaincy becoming embedded in the life of football there is an increasing role that chaplains can play in helping players of all faiths settle at a club and meet those important spiritual needs. A number of chaplains are already involved in providing prayer facilities for players but this is something we want to see further developed in the future. Football sees chaplaincy as a vital resource and so we are keen to work with the football bodies to see that more and more clubs at all levels of football have chaplaincy in place. We also want to continue to offer the best possible training to our chaplains and are looking to develop in such areas as bereavement support and mental health awareness.

Matt Baker

Pastoral Support Director in English Football



Lower League Football

'Guy Lister, as Club Chaplain, makes a huge difference to our family oriented club – this has been one of the best signings we have made.' Richard Lynes, Chester FC

The past year has been a year of significant growth and expansion for chaplaincy in Lower League Football at all levels. Chaplains here find plenty of scope in smaller clubs to develop their role according to their gifts. We are finding clubs who partner intentionally with their local church, chaplains serving as supporters' representatives, Club Directors and engaging with the community, academy and youth departments. As ever chaplains are available as a pastoral safety net and during the last year have been valued in times of crisis such as the unexpected and sudden death of a player or staff member. The National League (formerly Football Conference) again publically welcomed and profiled chaplaincy to every club at their AGM. In addition the Northern League encouraged chaplaincy and invited all clubs to explore appointing a chaplain. A Lower league chaplains day in London spent time identifying key trends in society and sport, celebrating achievements and setting goals for the coming 5 years.

Looking forward demand for Lower league chaplains is outstripping supply as clubs approach us for contacts and suitable people to support their club. For some situations it's as they face a crisis that they identify a need for help. Other highlighted areas of concern would be getting alongside academies and younger players released from league clubs who are struggling to remain in the game. The community ethos of many clubs is very strong and they see a chaplain and the local churches as a natural support and partner. In the next year we expect to appoint at least 10 further chaplains in the Lower leagues and to continue to strengthen our partnership with the National and Northern League. We also aim to be proactive in developing chaplaincy teams in clubs with a variety of skills and expertise. Recruitment remains a big challenge so we actively use football connections to find openings and suitable candidates. In partnership with local churches we will also look to develop prayer support groups.

Ian Nicholson

Pastoral Director for Lower League



Scottish Football

The Scottish Professional Football League (SPFL) has seen God open many doors with chaplaincy now being offered. This last year has seen chaplains appointed at 16 out of the 18 Highland League Clubs and 10 out of the 12 Women's Premier League Clubs. Many clubs are regularly expressing appreciation of their chaplain. Stuart Brown, chairman of Stirling Albion FC quotes on his club's website:

"A very, very special thank you to our Club Chaplain, Duncan Strathdee. A number of people associated with the Club have faced personal tragedies or difficulties over the course of this season and, unseen and unheralded, Duncan has provided them with a listening ear, comfort and guidance that I know has been very much appreciated."



Into the future, we seek to source, train and appoint chaplains at all 15 Lowland League clubs. We aspire to work with NHS Scotland to write a bespoke mental health first aid course for sport. Our biggest challenge is to equip the church in sports chaplaincy and not just depend on church pastors to take on chaplaincy roles.

Scottish Women's football has historically been undervalued, under-resourced and overlooked. Our desire is to give the women players the same value and resources that we have been giving to the men's game over the years and this has been warmly welcomed and greatly appreciated. We have been training women to be chaplains and so far, seven appointments have been made to Premier League teams with a further two in process. We are also looking at offering chaplaincy to women's teams in the next level down, the Scottish Women's Football League. Our role in this regard is helping source appropriate chaplains with the right skill-sets, personality and experience. We also share in their training of them and giving them ongoing pastoral support. Women's Premier League in Scotland continues to expand and in this coming year we will endeavour to supply all 16 teams in these leagues with chaplains.

Mark & Aileen Fleming

Pastoral Directors of Scottish Football



Women's Football

Angy King has been chaplain to Reading Women's Football Club since July 2014 and was asked to develop chaplaincy within the game of women's football. Women's football is one of the most popular and fastest growing sports for women. Since Angy's appointment more chaplains have been appointed to Women's Super League 1 teams and Angy has also begun working with the Wales U17, U19 and 1st team to provide chaplaincy provision at international level.

The Reading general manager said "Players and staff regularly comment positively of the effect Angy has had on their wellbeing, thoughts and ambitions, always looking to Angy for inspiration and guidance. Angy has become an integral part of the Reading FC Women 'family' and we thoroughly appreciate her input, guidance and support."

Chaplaincy to women's football has involved many cold evenings being spent on the side of the training pitch but this has helped develop relationships with players and staff members which has made it all worthwhile. The opportunities for chaplaincy are numerous with recent bereavements within the women's football community raising awareness of the need for chaplains. One club was approached by a local higher education institute to ask if they had a chaplain available to talk to one of the players who was also part of the college. There is also great opportunity for chaplaincy provision to families and players in the academy age groups. There are currently plans in place to introduce female chaplains in five other women's football clubs. It will be exciting to see the development of this ministry over the next few years and we are on the lookout for Christians with a heart for pastoral work and an interest in sport to fulfil this role.



Angy King

Pastoral Co-ordinator for Women's Football



Northern Ireland

God's footprint for sports chaplaincy in Northern Ireland has always been there, whether in an official capacity or not – if God has had his hand in it – it's official! Sport has been a huge part of Northern Ireland life for many generations and the very nature of the games that we call sport, themselves garner friendship in a real competitive environment, allowing Christian to stand alongside non-Christian and to sow the seeds of conversations, practical care and camaraderie that has impacted and changed lives.

Central in God's plan to take forward the work of sports chaplaincy has been former Sprinter and Presbyterian minister Ossie McAuley who continues to be a huge encouragement to the existing Chaplaincy Directors here. During this period the most high profile professional team in Northern Ireland – Ulster Rugby became a focal point in the sports chaplaincy footprint, through the work of Ossie and the current Ulster Rugby Chaplain Andrew Thompson.

In April 2015, Keith Mitchell and his brother Philip Mitchell, a former Irish League player were asked to take up the baton and serve in the role of Co-sports chaplaincy Directors and help support and develop Sports Chaplaincy here in Ireland.

We have just short of 30 chaplains working in the sporting environment in Northern Ireland across 5 sports – a mere drop in the ocean. With God's grace these numbers will multiply as we love people and seek to serve God in a local, national, international and global sporting environment.

Keith Mitchell

Co-Chaplaincy Support Director for Northern Ireland Sport



Phil Mitchell

Co-Chaplaincy Support Director for Northern Ireland Sport



Scotland

Glasgow 2014 saw Sports Chaplaincy UK chaplains (Steve Jones, Carolyn Skinner & Neil Urquhart) participate as chaplains in the Athletes' Village Multi-Faith Chaplaincy Team of 24, where we were happily joined by 3 international chaplains from SCUUK's sister bodies in Canada, India and New Zealand. Under the leadership of Rev Stuart MacQuarrie the Religion and Belief Centre (Rab C) became a vibrant and harmonious spiritual hub for the Games' international community!

SCUUK were represented by Neil Urquhart in the authorship of a national report entitled, 'Striving Together: celebrating competitiveness in sport'. This was presented to the Church of Scotland's General Assembly, at which the important role of chaplaincy among sports people was affirmed and encouraged. The report can be downloaded from the Church of Scotland's 'Science, Religion and Technology' website.

There is a growing appreciation for the value of sports chaplaincy in Scotland. Opportunities are countless and ideally require a part or fulltime worker. After 10 years service to Kilmarnock F.C as chaplain, Rev Neil Urquhart has relinquished this role to devote some time to being Chaplaincy Support Director in Scottish Sport. As well as developing chaplaincy nationally, he hopes to see sports chaplaincy grow locally in Irvine too, where he serves as a fulltime church pastor.

Neil Urquhart

Chaplaincy Support Director in Scottish Sport



Wales

This past year has seen new appointments of chaplains within sports clubs in Wales. With the departure of Steffan Morris as chaplain at the Academy of Rygbi Gogledd Cymru (RGC) (North Wales Rugby) in Colwyn Bay, I was eventually able to introduce Tim Feak, an Anglican Youth Worker in the Diocese of St. Asaph, to take up the role. Phil Thomas has taken on chaplaincy duties at Pontypridd RFC, another of the clubs in the Welsh Principality Premiership League. Phil joined with 15 other chaplains and prospective chaplains for the SCUUK Regional day in July which took place in the National Sports Centre of Wales, Cardiff with a session on Suicide Awareness delivered by an expert from the mental health specialists MIND CYMRU. The year has also seen ongoing discussions with clubs in the Welsh Premier Football League about the possibility of chaplaincy. A key challenge has been finding churches willing to release pastorally gifted members to serve as volunteer chaplains but I continue to visit churches and denominations to encourage them to consider supporting this incarnational ministry.

In July 2014 I served as the Welsh representative in the chaplaincy team in the Athletes' Village at Glasgow's Commonwealth Games. In particular I made myself available to offer pastoral support to Team Wales and was warmly welcomed (and utilised) by the team management. Early December saw the first ever Christmas carol service held in the Liberty Stadium, the home ground of Swansea City FC and Ospreys Rugby. Kev Johns, Eirian Wyn and I led the event with Bible readings given by the Ospreys and Swansea City FC players and management. The service took its theme from the Christmas truce of 1914 when British and German troops held a ceasefire, sang carols and played football together on the frontline. The event was a resounding success with 3,500 in attendance."

Steve Jones

Chaplaincy Support Director for Welsh Sport



Sheffield

2014 was a good and busy year in Sheffield. At our annual 'Celebration of Sport' service, held at Bramall Lane, the home of Sheffield United FC (SUFC), we said goodbye to Rev Nigel Manges who served as SUFC Club Chaplain and welcomed Alistair Beattie as Nigel's replacement. Nigel offered great service to the club and was a real source of support to the staff and players after the tragic death of Gary Speed.

The work continues to develop here in Sheffield and the team has again this year sought to serve the clubs faithfully. Malc Drew & David Jeans have served well at Sheffield Wednesday FC. They continue to serve the staff and young people in the Academy and Education department and also the 'Wise Old Owls' Luncheon Club. David has led the Annual Hillsborough Memorial service which last year marked the tragedy's 25th anniversary. Harry Steele continues to bang his drum at all the home games of the Sheffield Sharks Basketball team and continues to be a great encouragement to all players & staff at the club.

Alistair Beattie has settled in well at SUFC, he is doing a fine job getting himself known and serving the club in many and varied ways.

My work at Sheffield Eagles Rugby League Club & Sheffield Wednesday FC also continues to grow.

Sue & Grant Sharp require a word of thanks for all their support and work for Sheffield Sports Chaplaincy over the last few years as they stand down due to work commitments.

2015 and beyond is an exciting time for Sheffield Sports Chaplaincy and the possibilities that are opening up for us within and surrounding the city.

Baz Gascoyne

Pastoral Director for Sheffield Sports Chaplaincy



North East

It's been an exciting first 12 months developing chaplaincy across the North East. It's been great building up the profile of Sports Chaplaincy UK across churches and throughout clubs at all levels as well as supporting existing chaplains. Now in my 3rd Season with Gateshead FC there have been numerous opportunities ranging from chats at the training ground, walking with staff members through tough illnesses to writing freely in the match day programmes. One steward ran up to me at the first game of the season to tell me she had a mini stroke during the summer. She went on to say that throughout the situation she had constantly been reminded of what the chaplain had told her about Jesus and His power to heal and was adamant there must be a God as she'd now been miraculously healed!

An exciting chaplaincy opportunity has come via the Northern League. After the good work of Leo Osborn (former Northern League chaplain) the League Chairman has been a great advocate in supporting a new structure of chaplaincy within the League. This has involved a recruitment drive and training of 6 chaplains, each being installed into a cluster of clubs. The new recruits are a great bunch with fantastic pastoral and servant hearts who I am sure will be a great blessing to the clubs they serve. There are 44 clubs within the League, so the eventual goal is to get 44 chaplains to cover every club.

The future vision is to focus on training and recruiting as many sports chaplains as possible for Northern League clubs and to make links between churches and their local communities.

Furthermore there is a strong interest from Northumbria University to bring in sports chaplains for their expanding work. Regional meetings are also being worked on to try and create a stronger network for existing and potential chaplains to feel better supported. Chaplaincy across all sports will also look to be developed with the North East boasting many professional and amateur sports clubs still yet to be offered chaplaincy.

Christian Wienkamp

Pastoral Consultant for the North East



Wimbledon Tennis

Every year during the Wimbledon tennis championships, I organise a team of volunteers from local churches to head down to the tennis fans who camp overnight in Wimbledon Park, to show them love and kindness.

We call the team Love All Serve All, not just because it's a tennis pun but because that's what Jesus came to do and what he calls us to do. We offer free refreshments, a listening ear, conversation and prayer to hundreds of fans.

This year we had 100 volunteers from 22 churches. We prayed with 55 people and saw 3 people come to faith. Throughout the fortnight we served, we listened, we prayed, took risks, had fun, laughed, shared tears, shared stories, had divine encounters, saw God's glory and "genuinely oozed love" as one tennis fan told us!

For a couple of nights we set up a prayer tent for people who wanted to come to us and step into a spiritual space. We are also there for the stewards and security guards, many of whom we see year after year and have been able to build relationships with them. There's an informal sense of chaplaincy involved in it all. It's brilliant to think that people came for a tennis experience and left with a God encounter!

Carolyn Skinner
Events Chaplaincy



Rugby Union

Do you know when, and where, was the last (or possibly the first) time an England team in any sport prayed together on the pitch after a game?

The answer is 22nd November 2014 at Twickenham, when after the game against Samoa both teams knelt in a circle in the middle of the pitch and thanked God for the privilege of taking part in such an event.

Today, there are an increasing number of young professional players professing the Christian faith and many other instances of a strong and respected Christian influence within Rugby Union. It appears that God is strong at work within the sporting community, particular through the regular activity of many faithful chaplains.

As yet we have not achieved our quota of chaplains in every professional club and have some way to go. But the signs are encouraging and we look ahead with eager anticipation.

Although chaplaincy is now established within the professional game, there is a vast area as yet relatively untouched by chaplaincy within amateur and semi-professional clubs.

During the Rugby World Cup churches have been encouraged to form links with their local clubs in various ways, with the objective of building relationships that could lead to chaplaincies.

It is hoped that these newly formed relationships will be mutually beneficial to both club and church, in particular overcoming the tension that can exist for parents between church and minis rugby on a Sunday morning. Parents might now begin to see themselves as pastors in a club, rather than victims of the sport.

Final thought is being given to ways in which Christians involved in Rugby Union could develop greater links locally and nationally to encourage each other and to be witnesses within the sport.

David Chawner
Rugby Union Consultant
& Engage 15



Rugby League

2014/15 has been a pretty incredible year so far – in some good ways and with some challenges. When Warren accepted the post of CEO, he asked me to take some responsibility for Rugby League more widely. My name is Paul Johnson and I joined the chaplaincy team at St Helens RFC in 2012. It has been an amazing few years at the club and I now lead the team, with my colleague Kathryn Cunliffe.

Probably the biggest thing to happen within chaplaincy, at a management level this year, has been concerning the role of chaplaincy within Player Welfare. Each full time club must have a Player Welfare Manager and it is their responsibility to ensure that every player is cared for effectively and is thinking about life after rugby. This year, The RFL has decided that it is now a condition of being a member of Super League for every club to have a chaplain. This is because of the excellent work that our chaplains are doing already. I am confident that this will cascade through the rest of the sport, as good practice is demonstrated across the board.

This coming year, I have a real sense of excitement about what, I believe, God is inviting us to become. I believe that we are stronger when we support one another effectively. I am still getting to know the RL chaplains, but each one has an incredible ministry to bring greater awareness of God's presence into our great sport. I have a vision of Rugby League chaplains being in a strong network, sharing best practice and sharing our struggles too. I am looking forward to catching up with the different members of the team and exploring the possibility of establishing huddles across our sport. A huddle would be a 1 hour session, each month, when 6-8 chaplains would meet for mutual support and encouragement. This could mean physically being in the same room or meeting via Skype. Please consider being a part of this vision.

Paul Johnson
Pastoral Support Co-ordinator
for Rugby League



All Ability Sport

Predominantly through our two volunteer chaplains, Dave Hibbin and Heather Lewis, who serve in Cardiff with Disability Sport Wales the sterling work of supporting para-athletes has continued throughout this past year.

The close of the 2014 Commonwealth Games saw the start of the International Paralympic Committee's European Athletic Championships. On behalf of Sports Chaplaincy UK I worked with the Local Organising Committee to plan and deliver a comprehensive Christian chaplaincy service to the athletes and backroom staff. We recruited and trained a team of 24 national and international chaplains who served sacrificially throughout the tournament. We became known as the 'Purple Pastors', due to our volunteer uniforms being the same style as other volunteers apart from our distinguishing colour of purple.

A number of Christian para-athletes from the UK and many other European countries visited the chaplaincy centre in the athletes' village for spiritual and pastoral support. This was offered through Bible studies, worship services and one-to-one conversations.

Chaplaincy support to sportspeople with disabilities is growing across the UK. In the autumn of 2014 Tim Feak Chaplain to North Wales Rugby region and I forged strong relationships with regional wheelchair rugby teams. We have been able to expose some of the able-bodied players to the challenges faced by their wheelchair player.

Autumn 2015 sees the World Wheelchair Rugby Challenge taking place in London alongside the Rugby World Cup 2015. Sports Chaplaincy UK seeks to build a good relationship with GB Wheelchair Rugby's governing body that oversees this sports development. We hope to include some chaplaincy arrangements in the world tournament itself.

At the 10th European Blind Football Championship I was also able to offer spiritual support to more than 100 volunteers and to introduce the concept of sports chaplaincy to administrators and coaches.

Steve Jones
Chaplaincy Support Director
for Welsh Sport



Blind football championships

Christmas



Sports Chaplaincy UK are so excited to be partnering once again with Hope and Tear Fund in helping share the good news of God's love this Christmas in stadia up and down our nation.

In a country that increasingly claims to have little allegiance to the church and Christianity, it's amazing how Christmas still holds such wonder and fascination. Interestingly in the world of sport there is an increasing number of sports clubs who are willing to open their doors to players, staff, supporters and the local community to hear the real meaning of Christmas.

Last year we saw over 135,000 programs given out up and down the Nation as part of the Silent Night Carol Service initiative. This project was unique and resources were linked in with the 1914 Christmas Truce. Many clubs from North to South and from East to West engaged in this campaign, small events at lower league clubs to more substantial events like that held at Swansea Stadium where over 3500 people attended a joint venture organised by Swansea FC and Ospreys Rugby Club. There was much positive feedback from many involved at Preston and there were reports of several individuals from the same family coming to know the Lord as a result of the Christmas event. At Crystal Palace Prince Kiril of Prussia, a Lutheran pastor but also the great great grandson of Kaiser Wilhelm II attended and spoke about forgiveness. Bolton Wanderers held an event in their banqueting and conference room with over 1200 people in attendance engaging with local schools and the club's Community Trust with the event recorded for airing on Christmas Day.

Training

The training of chaplains continues to be an essential part of the work of Sports Chaplaincy UK. Matt Baker and Warren Evans have travelled throughout England & Northern Ireland to deliver one day induction training to new chaplains with Mark Fleming delivering similarly in Scotland. The winter and summer regional gatherings of chaplains throughout the UK saw training delivered in Addiction Awareness and Handling the Media.

The Sports Chaplaincy UK Annual Conference continues to be a highlight in the year, recently being held at King's Park Conference Centre in Northampton. Contributions have included an excellent and challenging paper delivered by the Revd Dr Lincoln Harvey on "A Brief Theology of Sport" as well as an equally stimulating presentation from Dr Nick Watson on "A Theology of Sport, Disability & Chaplaincy".

As the number of chaplains continues to increase more induction days are planned to train up new chaplains as well as regionals to improve existing chaplains' skills in supporting individuals with Gambling Addictions as well as Bereavement Care.

Events

The role that I have within Sports Chaplaincy UK is to serve as a chaplain at major events. This has allowed me to serve at summer and winter Olympics and Paralympics, as well as the 2014 Commonwealth Games, amongst others. Whilst there are many similarities between event chaplaincy and regular club chaplaincy, there are some key differences. You have to account for the fact that athletes are away from their regular environment, miles away from home. This is particularly highlighted if a crisis occurs back home during their time at the event. There is also the issue that for many athletes a major event is hugely significant for them, potentially the highlight of their career, they have given years to this one moment, so the sense of pressure is immense.

As a positive, the atmosphere is incredible, as is the camaraderie, and with so many nations in one place there is something truly unique about such events.

The next event that I will be serving at will be the first ever Wheelchair Rugby World Cup in London in October 2015. It is such a privilege to have chaplaincy established at this event from the start. In the future we hope not only to increase the presence of chaplaincy at events, but to be able to build ongoing relationships with many of the athletes throughout the year so that we can be more effective in our role.

Carolyn Skinner
Events Chaplaincy



SPORTS CHAPLAINCY NEEDS YOU!

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To pray for the expansion of the work of Sports Chaplaincy UK please register for our monthly prayer letter
www.sportschaplaincy.org.uk/prayer

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