

In May, David Slater, Richard Oliver and I attended the Kent and Medway Resilience Forum (KMRF) Seminar in Detling. The day-long event combined an exhibition from organisations involved in resilience planning, preparation and response with talks and seminars and the opportunity to network. Included in the exhibition were the Kent Fire and Rescue Service, South East Coast Ambulance Service and various organisations and charities such as Kent Raynet – who provide radio and communications support, Kent Search and Rescue, the Salvation Army and Kent Workplace Mission.

It struck me that resilience and preparedness are very Christian principles. Examples of personal resilience under suffering in Romans 5:3-4 “...suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.”

We are also cautioned to be ready for Jesus’ return, and we think of the parable of the wise and foolish bridesmaids and their lamps. However, it can mean simply being aware of the needs around us so we can fulfil Jesus’ commandment to love our neighbour.

Kent Resilience Forum



PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES IN KENT AND MEDWAY

The seminars started with a review of Community Resilience and looking forward to new projects. Vicky Morris and Neil Cameron from Aberdeenshire Council spoke about the lessons learned from Storm Arwen in November 2021 which left homes without power for days, buildings, vehicles and other structures badly damaged, and thousands of trees destroyed. They spoke of the challenges, often in very rural areas, in checking on people, to see if they have the basics of food, heat, light and shelter, when the normal means of communication have been knocked out.

Another highlight was Psychologist Dr Noreen Tehrani who spoke about building personal resilience and the impact of trauma on emergency workers.

Many churches already keep an eye on the vulnerable in their communities. Two of the biggest risks in Kent are flooding and outbreaks of disease, such as COVID or flu. There are other potential hazards, such as gridlocked traffic and key sites such as Dover Docks, the Dartford Crossing and Dungeness Power Station.

This summer, there are risks involving hot weather and churches can share information such as [Summer heatwave | Kent Prepared](#) to help keep vulnerable people safe. KMRF are looking for more people to train as flood wardens, and there is free training for this and other emergency volunteer roles. [Courses and workshops | Kent Prepared](#)

Penny Culliford (KWM Coordinating Chaplain)

Every life is precious

Madeleine usually wants upbeat good news stories for the newsletter, but sometimes we have to be honest and say that real life can be a bit harder.

In the last few weeks, the Dover team have seen the death of one of our lifeboat crew members who collapsed getting up for an overnight shout, leaving a young family. About 50 people from the wider crew (land and sea based) saluted the cortège as it came past the lifeboat station for the funeral.

Last week another of the long serving RNLI fund-raisers died.

Overnight there have been further deaths of migrants in the Channel, just in French waters but initially picked up by a Kent lifeboat.

Yesterday I officiated at the funeral of the aunt of a former Port employee. He had had very bad experiences of the church and various clergy over the years; but was still looking to his ex-workplace chaplain to put his trust in at a personally very difficult time.

Sunday is our first Remembrance Service of the year for the Royal Artillery Association, the same weekend as the Dunkirk anniversary. The chaplaincy is seen as an impartial, caring, ministry to lead the prayers on the cliff top looking towards France.

Plans are also being drawn up for a special Railway Remembrance Service involving the railway wagon that carried the Unknown Soldier.

That is probably more deaths than most chaplains see in a typical fortnight, it's certainly more than I normally get, but it is an important message about how people accept chaplaincy, even if they don't trust Church.

Although we want to get people into the Kingdom we are not recruiting for our particular denomination. As individuals it is vital that we know where we stand in order to do the job, but it is the beliefs, feelings and pastoral needs of the person in front of us which drives our agenda.

There is a large part of the population, 1 in 5, who are “**de-churched-closed**”. * They have been hurt in various ways and walked away – but they still need spiritual support for a wide range of things. Even if they no longer trust the normal church structures, we can, and indeed must, be there for them.

Chaplaincy is not always the joy of seeing people come to belief, it is also vital that we are prepared for, and prepared to, support our colleagues when things are much darker.

Based on Philip Richter and Leslie Francis, **Gone but not Forgotten, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1998*

Canon David Slater (KWM Trustee)

KWM 2025 AGM

The 2025 KWM AGM was well-attended. The Annual Report was presented after having been independently examined. The Annual Review was summarised highlighting the good work of our Chaplains across the County.

A new Trustee was appointed for the Salvation Army – Major Fiona Broom, the Divisional Leader for the South East Division (we hope to post an introduction shortly).

Canon David Slater stepped down from the Charity Secretary role. In the absence of a successor being nominated, the Trustees agreed that the functions would be carried out by the Administrator, Madeleine Shepley, overseen by the Operations Group.

We were delighted to welcome Canon Chancellor Gordon Giles who spoke on Chaplaincy at Rochester Cathedral.

Volunteer chaplains needed



Kent Police

Kent Police are looking for [volunteer chaplains](#) to support police officers and other staff working in the North Kent area.

If you are interested, or would like to know more, please contact Penny by email on: penny@kentworkplacemission.org

Weekly Fellowship

Wednesdays, 10.00am-11.00am on Zoom

We really look forward to you joining us some time to share with us in an engaging hour of reflective Bible study and supportive prayer for the work of KWM. For joining details follow this link on our website: [Weekly Fellowship | Kent Workplace Mission](#)

or email: admin@kentworkplacemission.org

Spreading the word

Kent Workplace Mission is a very small charity covering a very large area. What we say to whom, and how we say it are some of the things we have been thinking about recently. In some ways, chaplaincy is a very “under the radar” ministry. It is often one-to-one, confidential and geared towards the needs of the person. On the other hand, if no one knows of the services available, we cannot grow or expand chaplaincy into new areas. There are many ways KWM’s story can be told, and we had a communications training day last September, that looked at media and newsletters.

Word of mouth is one of the most effective ways of both recruiting new chaplains and letting workplaces know about KWM’s services.

We have a website, packed with useful information and a point of contact to find out more | Kent Workplace Mission We also have a presence on social media as well as chaplains, trustees and supporters giving talks to churches and groups.



KWM Banner 200cm x 100cm

Chaplaincy with Kent Workplace Mission

Supporting

Listening

Signposting

Christian registered charity, serving the welfare and wellbeing of those at work.

Registered Charity: 1105783

Visit KWM website here

- ❖ Kent Workplace Mission offers professional chaplaincy services to places of work across Kent, Medway, Bromley and Bexley.
- ❖ Our chaplains are trained and supervised to offer confidential, open-minded listening and informed, supported signposting.
- ❖ Chaplaincy for us is all about being alongside our neighbours at work and serving their welfare and wellbeing needs.
- ❖ We are a Christian registered charity, facilitating church engagement with people of all faiths and none in the world of work.

Your information here

- If you are a Business who would like chaplaincy support
- If you are interested in becoming a KWM chaplain
- If you would like to support us financially or in prayer

...please get in touch: www.kentworkplacemission.org

Contact:
admin@kentworkplacemission.org
07423 767 051
Registered Charity: 1105783

Chaplaincy teams or individuals can print their details here:



In spring this year, we created two new resources to support people who want to ‘spread the word’ about KWM. They are an A5 colour leaflet with general information about KWM that can be used in your setting, your church or anywhere else appropriate. They have a QR code to link to the website. There is also the potential to add your team’s details and location to them.

The second item is a large roller banner 200cm x 100cm, that can be used if you are talking about KWM at an exhibition or a church.

If you would like to order leaflets or borrow the banner, please get in touch with Madeleine at: admin@kentworkplacemission.org

Rock UK, Carroty Wood Chaplaincy

Rock UK is a Christian charity providing outdoor adventure. Carroty Wood, one of its four residential centres, is situated just outside Tonbridge. Carroty Wood has been around since 1922, when a group of Sunday school teachers from London, took their school children out of the city for the first time, for a holiday designed to improve their health, spiritual and mental wellbeing. The activity centre is enclosed in 58 acres of mature woodland and offers group accommodation, over 20 instructed activities and a heated indoor swimming pool. The staff comprises administrators, outdoor activity instructors, operations and site management staff; and interns on the Instructors' Training Programme for one or two years.



Penny and I still can't recall how an introductory conversation with Jeff Hawthorne, another KWM chaplain and long-time friend of mine, turned to the opportunity at Rock UK, Carroty Wood. As a Licensed Lay Minister (LLM) in Rochester Diocese, I had been continuing learning through training in Spiritual Direction with Rochester and Canterbury dioceses and studying for an MA in Theology at St Augustine's College. One of my fellow students on both courses 'happened' to be member of staff at Carroty at the time. We had often discussed the centre and its opportunities and challenges and its need for a chaplain. Also, my daughter had spent a year on the Instructor Training Programme there a couple of years ago. It seemed like far too many coincidences not to be God's plan.

More on Rock UK, Carroty Wood Chaplaincy

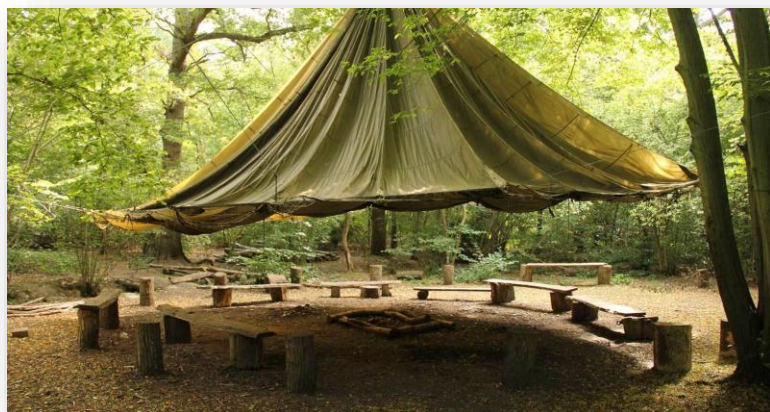
Chaplaincy at Carroty has two distinct elements: It's based in a wood, and we are exploring together what that means theologically in a time of environmental challenge; and nearly all the staff are Christians, many of whom are heavily involved in their respective local churches in the Tonbridge area. The chaplaincy role therefore has an extra core element of leading worship and bible studies in addition to being available for the staff.

For all the staff, the challenge for Carroty and other Rock UK centres is to be a Christian presence and witness to the many users of its facilities, not just church youth groups but schools and other non-Christian, and in some cases, other faith organisations. The kindness of the instructors towards all its users is clear to see as I walk around the site.

We are learning together on our faith journey and exploring what it means to be a Christian charity ministering to the visitors.



The interns are young adults, interestingly the largest age demographic joining churches in the UK. I am learning that faith explorers in this age group are hungry for a living, authentic faith, wanting real answers to life's challenges. Unlike many young people who have no previous experience of church, the Carroty interns are bible literate and keen to deepen their theology. They challenge me to provide more depth in bible studies and want to grapple with the tough questions of faith. Conversations are very thought provoking. They also sing wonderfully in our times together, so it has been good to take my guitar. Many of them have a vision to be the light of Christ when they leave Carroty.



All photos displayed with permission from Rock UK.

Verity Mitchell (KWM chaplain)

Meeting the Challenge

I have a hole in my sock.

I didn't ask for it and don't know what caused it. I could do without it but it's there. So, what do I do about it?

I could ignore it, even though I know it would only get bigger. I could patiently darn it, which would undoubtedly have been my mother's solution: once a wartime necessity, now environmentally friendly. Or I could just throw the sock away.



Chaplains of course hit this problem all the time. They meet people who have something that has intruded into their lives that they didn't ask for but now they have to decide how to respond. A listening ear may help them decide that ignoring the problem is only storing up trouble; or alternatively help them get the issue back into perspective and see there is no need to brood on the matter, and it can safely be cast aside. Or maybe help them to see there is a way to repair the brokenness that is troubling them.

The repair job will always look the most demanding option. But with relationships even more than with socks, it may be the wisest course to take. Carefully weaving some threads of love to and fro across the hole might result in it gradually disappearing, and the fabric even ending up stronger than it was before.



Thank you if today you have helped someone take the harder path towards the better end, especially if you went some of the way with them.

John Ellis (KWM Vice Chair)

KWM Trustees and Office Holders

KWM is a Local Ecumenical Partnership being a mission partner of Churches Together in Kent, and so has trustees from the partner denominations, as well as trustees representing the membership. Trustees are appointed, and officers elected, annually.

Denominational Trustees

Anglican Rochester Diocese

Canon Ellen Couzens and *one vacancy*

Anglican Canterbury Diocese

Ven William Adam and *one vacancy*

South East Baptist Association

two vacancies

Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark

Revd Michael Dale and Fr Gary Dyer

South East Methodist District

Revd Dr David Hinchliffe and Revd Naomi Oates

South East Division Salvation Army

Major Fiona Broom and Major Richard Oliver

Southern Synod United Reformed Church

Richard Blackwell and John Ellis

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