



Kent Police Chaplains Report 2016

Submitted to the Chief Constable of Kent and Bishop James Langstaff
by Chief Inspector Bradley on behalf of the Chaplains to Kent Police.

Introduction

This report is our second annual report and is submitted on behalf of the Kent Police Chaplaincy Team. It provides an overview to both Chief Officers and Bishop James Langstaff of what has been achieved by the Chaplaincy in the last twelve months and also looks to the year ahead.

The last twelve months Rev. Keith McNicol has retired after many years work as Chaplain to Sittingbourne District and we also sadly lost our colleague Paul Cave who will be remembered at the North Kent memorial service in September.

However we have been well supported by some fantastic new volunteers who have come forward and I am pleased to welcome them to the Chaplaincy.

This autumn will see the introduction of divisional and departmental meetings between the local Chaplaincy team and the relevant SMT to discuss local issues. This is seen as a more effective way forward than SMT representatives attending Chaplaincy meetings at FHQ and I believe this will help to forge closer working relationships.

Three of our Chaplains have attended the National Association of Chaplains to the Police Conference this year, which will ensure that the Chaplaincy team are up to date with current developments at National level.

The Chaplains take a keen interest in the quiet rooms across the force as valuable facilities for our staff. Chaplains are ensuring that up to date materials are provided and, in at least one case, leaving snack bars for staff free of charge.

Following the successful Kent Police Memorial Service in September 2015, a service is being held this year on 28th September in the County Room at Force Headquarters and this will be advertised more widely nearer the time.

I am very grateful for the continued support of Bishop James Langstaff, Lead Chaplain Rev. Gary Colville and of course, all of the Chaplains who give so freely of their time to support our colleagues.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M G I Bradley', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Martin Bradley Chief Inspector 8252

Co-chair of the Kent Police Chaplaincy Committee

Chaplain's Annual Report to Kent Police

Medway and Lead Chaplain Report

My colleague Nigel has ably covered the details of Medway's Chaplaincy activities, but I continue to visit regularly and to be a pastoral help whenever asked.

My Lead Chaplaincy role over this past year has been to work closely with our Joint Chairs of the Chaplaincy Committee, Chief Inspector Martin Bradley and The Rt Revd James Langstaff, to further embed Chaplaincy into the DNA of Kent Police, and to ensure that this is firmly connected to the development of Police Chaplaincy in the United Kingdom through our partnership with the National Police Chaplain, The Revd Canon David Wilbraham, and the National Association of Chaplains to the Police (NACP).

To this end, in partnership with NACP Deputy Chaplain Revd Adrian Gatrill and our Chaplaincy colleagues in Essex, we ran a combined National Training Day for nine police chaplains at our training school in Maidstone. We hope that this will continue to be the model for the future, sharing our chaplaincy experiences, and also the cost of the necessary and needed training that all chaplains will be required to undertake within two years of appointment!

Along with Chief Inspector Martin, I have also been involved with the recruitment of Chaplains across Kent and together we have worked hard to get the right people to replace valued colleagues. We have tried hard, but not yet succeeded, in recruiting our first chaplain from another accepted faith group other than those who are Christian.

This will be a challenge for us in the year ahead, and one that we are committed to make every effort to achieve. It is good to record that we can now say that we have a better balance, gender wise, and also between Ordained and Lay Chaplains.

We are continuing to work hard at recruitment and retention of chaplains but, despite that, this year we have more vacancies than we'd like. Steps are being taken to make good appointments and I really appreciate that all of us in the Kent Police Chaplaincy team together are helping to fill those gaps well.

Alongside my voluntary duties in Kent Police Chaplaincy, I was a National Executive Member for the South-East of NACP this past year, and have been attending meetings that will eventually see decisions made at our bi-ennial conference in July

that will change the way that the National Chaplain and NACP work with the forty-three police forces in the UK. We look forward to hearing back soon about this from our three national conference representatives: Anthea, Denise and Suzy.

In this capacity, I attended the National Police Memorial Service in Edinburgh last September for my first time and, in an incredibly moving service, was made more appreciative of the costly nature of wearing a police uniform and being a police officer. I look forward to this year's service at St Paul's Cathedral on Sunday 25th September. We intend to try and ensure that similar but smaller affairs will also happen in that week across Kent and, already, a North Division Police Memorial Service is planned at Medway on Tuesday 27th September at Noon.



A Picture of me and the National Police Memorial Star from the National Police Memorial in Washington DC May 15th. This was a part of my study of Police Chaplaincy in the USA and the Concerns of Police Survivors Conference (COPS).

Revd Gary Colville

Tunbridge Wells and KPTS

The year opened with my regular programme of visits to Folkestone, Ashford, Lydd and Longport, timed wherever possible to coincide with briefings. This was an exciting time for East Kent, with the trial of the "Health and Well-being" project, and also an opportunity to take part in "Code of Ethics" training. The Senior Management Team at Folkestone and Ashford seemed to be a particularly visionary combination of people, conveying a real sense of support to other ranks and civilians alike.

Change was on the way, however, with the retirement in June of the Revd Peter Hills from Force Headquarters, occasioning a re-think in our deployment. I had retired from my employment as a Public Enquiry Officer in February so, in June, I was able to become chaplain to the Kent Police Training School, in addition to my duties on East Kent. Then, in September, I finally said good-bye to East Kent after twenty years, and moved to Tunbridge Wells. By now I lived in East Sussex, so this meant I could be called in at short notice in an emergency.

I visit Tunbridge Wells once a fortnight, and also cover Tonbridge pending the appointment of a new Chaplain. Contact is fruitful in both places, as my employment was in West Kent, and I am still well-known to officers and staff. I also visit the Training School once a fortnight, where I offer appropriate support to students and staff in all parts of the School, including Tac Ops. I give introductory talks about the Chaplaincy to new recruits as part of their training. I also attend their passing-out parades and other key events.

In November, I accompanied members of the Training School to the Remembrance Day service at Force Headquarters, at which I preached the sermon. As time goes on, I look forward to other opportunities which may present themselves in this new and very rewarding area of chaplaincy.

Revd Anthea Williams

Dover and Deal

I consider myself richly blessed to be able to be chaplain for Dover and Deal stations. I have enjoyed the role for a number of years now and really feel part of the furniture! Kent Police are extremely lucky to have an area commander of the standard of Chief Inspector Barlow who I appreciate so much for his care and understanding to the folk he is responsible for. The general feeling around Dover is one of being appreciated, and I have no doubt that the area commander is responsible for that in so many different ways; he certainly is a "people person"!

Obviously, given the past government cuts, and the threats of more to come, there is a degree of apprehension amongst the staff, especially at the loss of some first class colleagues over recent times. I realise that a great amount of good expertise and knowledge has been lost from their midst, yet the whole ethos seems to be one of getting on with the job in hand and doing it to the very best of their ability. I hope that, having served thirty years as a police officer, folk realise that I am very much aware of the stresses and strains that they face. It has been interesting to meet some family members and share some of their concerns as well.

Deal on the other hand is a bit of a mystery to me! It is maintained by a number of Police Community Support Officers who are very, very rarely in the station when I visit! On the odd occasions that I do manage to find someone present, I am struck by the fact that they are always in the process of getting back out onto the streets where they belong. I admire the ethos they display, despite the fact that I would like to be able to catch them more often!

Revd. John L Lines MBE

Force Headquarters and Force Control Room

For the past months, I have continued my programme of visiting at the Force Control Room, and Force Headquarters. I am, I believe, establishing good relationships in both places, and am gaining a better sense of the different stresses and challenges that policing involves in Kent compared with my previous work as a chaplain in Northumberland.

The Quiet Room is proving helpful in offering a peaceful space both for rest and reflection, as well as for quiet conversation. The busyness of the surrounding environment, of course, is sometimes not conducive to such conversation. I have set out a number of books that people can borrow or take or add to, as they please. I also inherited from my predecessor a large stack of boxes full of New Testaments donated by the Gideons. I have made these freely available and the pile is much reduced. I am more than happy to donate any of the remainder to other chaplains.

From now until mid-August, I shall cover for Donald Lugg in Canterbury, whilst he is away on an extended holiday.

Suzy M. Gregory Deputy Lead Chaplain NACP

Medway

The highlights of the chaplaincy year have included providing a simple Christmas event with carols for the station staff at Medway, and a more reflective memorial event to resonate with the National Police Memorial Service. The first was essentially fun but somehow connected with wider themes of family and community. The second was clearly more serious in nature, but included a number of family members of those who were being remembered locally, and was important in showing to all current officers and staff how society values all the sacrifices, large and small, that they make.

Essentially, I think these events, as well as a presence at various times, are an aid to morale as they address aspects of life in ways which the more normal structure of the organisation would find hard to achieve. Following the memorial event, the Division Commander wrote, "I've canvassed feedback and all of the opinion is that it continues to be very well received and worthwhile".

More generally, over a period of approximately eighteen years, it has been a privilege to be a resource for the Kent Police force. I have seen that police officers, PCSOs and the civilian support staff are under considerable and increasing pressure in numerous ways. They have to present the best of society at all times, which can mean in the hardest of situations and to people who are not at all supportive of the police or the wider community. Officers and staff do this in a financial environment that always seems to be asking for more with less. It is also true that society has become more complex culturally and with less agreement on shared values. It is amazing that officers and staff are able to deliver the service they do. In simple ways, the chaplaincy offers both a support to individual officers and staff and a resource - in terms of cultural, ethical, moral and spiritual awareness - to the organization as a whole.

Revd Nigel Bourne

Canterbury, Nackington and Herne Bay

I continue to regard it a privilege to be a chaplain of officers and civilians employed by Kent Police; a service I have been providing now for the past nineteen years. Throughout that time, I have witnessed many changes, but what has not changed is the welcome I receive on my weekly visits. Whilst to some of the police officers and civilians I am 'Rev', 'Padre' or 'Chaplain'; to most I am 'Donald' - an indication to me that they regard me as a friend. I only wish I could remember all their names, never an easy task when there is so much coming and going as people are moved around, changing departments, creating new ones, etc., etc.

This past year, it was particularly sad to say "Goodbye" to thirty or more people when their department was moved to another Police Area in Kent, and even sadder that many of those people - fully trained and experienced in their job - left Kent Police Force altogether rather than make a move involving extra hours each day travelling to and from work. I have been amazed that morale hasn't dipped further than it has over the years, given that there is no longer the security there once was for those working for the Police, Ambulance Service, etc., etc. Yet again this year there has been a change in the leadership at Canterbury and Herne Bay. Mark Arnold was particularly supportive of the chaplaincy, and I in turn did my best to support him, particularly in his endeavours to bring people together through various fund-raising efforts for local charities.

Although at the age of eighty-four, I am no longer able to go out on duty with police officers, I continue to try and do my best to meet up with officers when they are being briefed prior to going out on duty, and following more serious incidents. I have on occasions attended debriefings. Most of my visits are spent wandering around, chatting to as many people as I can. That, in turn, has led to giving support to a number of officers and civilians over such things as stress, sickness, injury, family bereavement and so forth.

On the brighter side, I have tried to attend leaving-dos, offered congratulations to those getting engaged, married, or having children. I have attended funerals and, on occasions, taken funerals of ex-police officers and others with police connections. I was particularly impressed when, having been told that there might not be any mourners at the funeral of Taffy Green - an ex-"cop" - over fifty serving and ex-police personnel turned up.

Throughout the year I have tried to attend many of the training evenings of Kent Special Constables, which I have found helpful, not only as a way of meeting them, but as a way of learning more about the things all police officers have to learn and do. Hopefully I can remain fit and well to continue as a police chaplain for a few more years - or just as long as Kent Police will have me.

Revd Donald Lugg

Shepway

Having only started at the beginning of 2016, it is difficult to give much information, but it has been the highlight of my week, and I really look forward to Thursday afternoons.

I was very pleased to be able to follow Anthea into this role. She has paved the way remarkably for chaplains in this station.

When I arrived at the beginning of Jan 2016, I made a point of calling into everyone and indeed sat in for the first five weeks on the briefings, so that I got to meet all the teams.

At those briefings I made it known that I was available 24/7, and posters were kindly put around the station with my mobile number and email address. I also advised everyone that I would be on the 5th floor just before 12 noon every Thursday if a coffee was needed.

So I arrive just before 12 noon every Thursday and head for floor five, and the coffee area. I have a coffee, talk to anyone, or no one on occasions, and then head to floor four. It is a huge privilege and a real pleasure to visit the team on that floor. From the Chief Superintendent, Superintendent, and Chief Inspector to the fantastic secretarial staff, this is such a great team to be part of, and the thing is, I am made to feel part of the team. It is an awesome privilege to be able to sit with the leadership team individually and talk through the "stress" of the day or week. The business of that floor is incredible, so the time afforded to me is not taken for granted.

I then head down each floor and end up at reception, having spoken to anyone or everyone who has time to chat, or who needs to chat. I then leave at whatever time I leave.

It is a shame that I am moving on. I feel that I am just getting to know some people, but I'm pleased that I will be able to continue with the chaplaincy at Sittingbourne station.

Captain Neil Abbey

Tactical Operations

Tactical Operations is unusual as it encompasses many varied departments: Dog Handlers, Roads Policing (Motorways and A-Roads) and Firearms, to name but a few.

Over the past three years, many changes have been forced upon them. This has applied to all of the Kent Force and, although it has not been easy to accept, they have taken it at face value. However, during this time, morale seemed to drop from its normal level. Over the past eighteen months this has changed again, and I am pleased to say that the morale of those in this department has once again returned to its normal level.

One of the major points which I constantly remind myself of, is the fact that each serving officer has wanted to be in this department; those who always wanted to drive, now drive, and the same goes for all of them: they are doing the job they wanted to do. This, I am sure, enables them to keep morale mostly at a high level. They are really one big happy family but, at times - like all families - when a setback occurs, it can and sometimes does affect all.

On my visits, which for the past few months have been interrupted by family matters, I have always had the feeling that I am part of their family. They know that I am available for them, and it is a pleasure to be part of this family.

Revd John Newman

Frontier Ops, Folkestone and Ashford

I cover three Special Branch offices: Dover Harbour, Folkestone Police Station, and Longport.

Folkestone Police Station

Floor level 2 – access to all offices and the reception has been friendly.

Floor level 1 – access to all offices and the reception has been friendly.

Longport

When meeting uniformed staff in the canteen, they seem to be a bit reserved towards a chaplain. I am trying to become a chaplain to the Tunnel, so that will make access to officers better.

I understand from an Inspector at Dover SB office, that in a few months, all SB offices will be security upgraded, above my current level, and that current levels of access will be denied. I visit each department about once a month which I've been told seems to be about right. I'm very aware about not getting in the way.

There are reports of stress across all offices. This stress is caused by the work, and also the probable down-sizing (through government-enforced cutbacks).

Besides the SB departments, I was covering Folkestone Police Station, after the existing chaplain - Revd Anthea Williams - had moved, in August 2015, and before the new chaplain, Captain Neil Abbey, was appointed in January 2016. I found all departments in the building very friendly and accommodating, from senior management downwards.

Since our meeting in February, I volunteered to be the chaplain for Ashford Police Station. On the 22nd May, I made my first visit to Ashford police station, and found the officers to be very friendly. I look forward to many more visits.

As a former police officer, I remembered the members of the Christian Police Association being very useful, particularly during the Miners Strike, when we were away in various parts of the country. I have made contact with the county's CPA rep, hoping that I can advertise its existence and, hopefully, grow its membership.

Malcolm Sawyer