

# INTRODUCING OUR 2020 CHARITIES!

During 2020, Sports Chaplaincy UK is delighted to partner with three amazing charities to support our chaplains and those we work with.

We'd love to introduce you to them and hope you might be inspired to check them out. Visit our website to see videos from each of the charities we work with.



**CARE FOR THE FAMILY**  
careforthefamily.org.uk

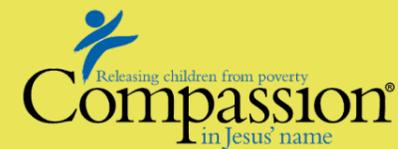
Care for the Family has become a national family charity running events and courses across the UK, and creating resources that are used all over the world. Its work is motivated by Christian compassion, and its resources and support are available to everyone, of any faith or none.



HOPEJUSTICE

**HOPE FOR JUSTICE**  
hopeforjustice.org

Hope for Justice is a global non-profit organisation which aims to end human trafficking and modern slavery. It seeks to investigate and rescue trafficking victims, assist in aftercare, hold traffickers accountable, and campaign on a wider level to improve awareness and legislation.



**COMPASSION**  
compassionuk.org

Compassion is a leading children's charity. At its heart is a relentless passion to act on compassion and empower every child left vulnerable by poverty. Its approach to fighting poverty is highly focused and personal. It's summed up in three simple words: Compassion for children. For 66 years, they have been giving children the opportunity to escape the suffering and fear poverty brings.



(Mark Fleming with his Compassion Child)



(Warren Evans and Mark Fleming in Togo)



(Ross Georgiou, Global Sports Chaplaincy Association, at our English Conference 2019 encouraging us on our trailblazing in sports chaplaincy)

We are delighted to work with Ross Georgiou who heads up the Global Sports Chaplaincy Association and Warren Evans, our own CEO is Chair of that work. The impact of the work that Sports Chaplaincy UK is doing in the UK is also being felt globally. We are looking forward to bringing together chaplains from across the globe, including the US, Europe and Australasia later in October 2020 to share with chaplains from across our Home Nations.

[www.sportschaplaincy.org.uk](http://www.sportschaplaincy.org.uk)

## SPORTS CHAPLAINCY NEEDS YOU!

### Pray

To pray for the expansion of the work of Sports Chaplaincy UK please register for our monthly prayer letter  
[www.sportschaplaincy.org.uk/prayer](http://www.sportschaplaincy.org.uk/prayer)

### Join Us

You can become a volunteer of Sports Chaplaincy UK  
[admin@sportschaplaincy.org.uk](mailto:admin@sportschaplaincy.org.uk)

### Keep in touch

You can keep up to date with news of Sports Chaplaincy UK by  
Facebook: Sports Chaplaincy UK,  
Twitter: @sportchaplaincy  
[www.sportschaplaincy.org.uk](http://www.sportschaplaincy.org.uk)

### Support Us

To help us extend the work of Sports Chaplaincy UK go to  
[www.sportschaplaincy.org.uk/support](http://www.sportschaplaincy.org.uk/support)

### TRUSTEES

- David Chawner** Chair of Trustees
- Bert Cadmore** Secretary & Gorleston FC Chaplain
- Linvoy Primus, MBE** Former Professional Footballer
- Bob Hamer** Premier League Referees' Assessor
- Rob Wilson** Scottish Advisory Board & Church of Scotland
- Philip Manchester** Trustee of Life Church
- Anne Wafula-Strike, MBE** Gold Medallist Paralympian
- David Courteen** Former Fit Lives Chair

# ACTIVATE



Chaplaincy Reviews from across our Home Nations



CEO Warren Evans and Don Esson on a recent Compassion trip to Togo

**NATIONAL SPORTS SUNDAY**

[NATIONALSPORTSSUNDAY.ORG.UK](http://NATIONALSPORTSSUNDAY.ORG.UK)

THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT & EXCITING

“The DREAM is to see an expression of God's love and compassion in every community called sport”

**SPORTS CHAPLAINCY UK**  
SERVING SPORT THROUGH EXCELLENCE IN CHAPLAINCY



# WELCOME

## CEO'S THOUGHTS

We believe God has given us this incredible dream, a dream to see an expression of his love and compassion in every community called sport.

This community consists of over 25 million men, women and children - what a mission field, what an opportunity - be challenged and inspired to join us on this God ordained journey!

As I reflect over the last year and look forward to the future, I am humbled and blessed. I don't think that I, the trustees or the leadership team would ever have imagined how far we would have travelled, and the tremendous impact Sports Chaplaincy UK would be having in many towns and cities up and down our Home Nations and beyond.

The church is God's A plan for how we deliver this dream, so it's been such an encouragement to work with a range of churches across all our Home Nations.



One highlight has been joining the Church of England Sports and Well Being Advisory Group and welcoming Bishop Libby Lane, the Bishop of Derby in her new role leading the Church of England's renewed priority around sport.

We look forward to working with Bishop Libby and others in the church to help and support the local church in seeking to reach and serve

the community of sport.

Real people with real lives are being touched by the love and compassion of God through his local church in action.

Wonderful leaders and chaplains up and down our nation are quietly going into this community impacting so many lives and we are seeing and hearing so many stories, testimonies, and miracles of what God is doing in people's lives.

Most of these stories cannot be shared but I hope as you read the rest of Activate you will see beyond the words on the page and see with God's eyes of compassion.

I want to honour all those who have supported, partnered and worked with us to help make a significant difference in the community of sport; which is such a wonderful community, full of vibrant men, women and children who have seen and experienced a positive expression of the local church.

We are so excited this year to see more and more chaplains, churches and denominations engaging with the community of sport from football to cricket, from rugby to horseracing, from gyms to ice hockey, and everything else in between.

This is not just about an activity but people!

**Warren Evans**  
Chief Executive Officer



## CHAIR'S THOUGHTS

The start of a new decade offers an opportunity to reflect on the work of SCUUK over a longer period than the past year. As I look back 10 years, three things catch my eye.

The first is the amount of growth. Since 2010 we have witnessed a trebling in the number of active chaplains.

The second is the rate of that growth which has increased exponentially. And this momentum is not in isolated pockets here and there but spread right across the home nations.

These statistics represent something much more significant; the fact that God's love and compassion are touching and changing the

lives of tens of thousands of children, women and men daily in the community of sport.

The third is the impetus all this has brought to the culture of Sports Chaplaincy UK. Challenges there will be, but there is a belief that so much more lies ahead.

Our task as trustees, staff, chaplains, and supporters is to remain faithful to God and the calling he has placed upon us. Who knows what exciting new outworking of his grace we will see in the decade ahead?

**David Chawner**  
Chair of Trustees



## Women's Chaplaincy

2019 has been an exciting year for the growth of women's chaplaincy in a range of sports in all our Home Nations.

In the last 7 months, for example, the number chaplains working in women's football in England have more than doubled, bringing the total to 12. We are thrilled to see volunteers willing to brave the elements during the cold and wet winter months in order to minister to their teams. Grateful thanks go to the local churches who have helped find new chaplains, commission them and pray for them regularly. Christmas time saw us sharing creative ideas on how to engage players and staff with the church. Chaplains involved players in packing food hampers for those in need, decorating gingerbread houses, singing carols and making Christingles. Favours with love verses from the Bible were placed on one team's Christmas dinner table.

Mental health and wellbeing is a key part of our ministry. Organising a Bake Off and leading a session for the players with the Sports

Psychologist were used by two chaplains to help team bonding. The contribution of chaplains was recognised by both Crystal Palace and Everton who have both acknowledged in the media the beneficial contributions made by their chaplains.

We are hoping the number of chaplains involved in women's sport will grow in 2020.



(Bake Off at Bristol)



(Everton players with their Christingles)

**Angy King**  
Pastoral co-ordinator for Women's Football



## Mixed Ability & Disability Sports

At the end of October 2019 Sports Chaplaincy UK signed a partnership agreement with the governing body IMAS (International Mixed Ability Sports)



(Warren and Christian meeting the IMAS team)

which is at the forefront, both in the UK and internationally, of supporting and developing mixed ability versions of a range of different sports. Mixed ability sport is purposefully and intentionally inclusive whereby people with all sorts of physical or intellectual disabilities train and play alongside able-bodied players in modified versions of traditional sports such as rugby and football. This partnership has seen IMAS commending sports chaplaincy to its constituent and member clubs, whereby some of them have already connected with

Sports Chaplaincy UK to find a suitably trained volunteer chaplain to support players and their families. Amongst the first of these clubs to do so were the Cardiff Chiefs and the Port Talbot Panthers mixed ability teams. There are plans and hopes for other clubs in Wales (Newtown, Colwyn Bay, Dragons AllStars and Llanelli Warriors) followed by other parts of the UK likewise to avail themselves of the services of a Sports Chaplaincy UK volunteer chaplain.

Chaplaincy to mixed ability sports clubs is a recent development as well as disability-specific clubs which has also continued to grow. Two more chaplains started serving wheelchair rugby teams in 2019, and with wheelchair basketball hearing about the type of support available through Sports Chaplaincy UK it is expected that the next few years will see several chaplaincy appointments made in this growing and exciting wheelchair sport too.



(Darren Dowey serves Dragons Wheelchair)

Sports Chaplaincy UK development officers are continuing to think broadly



**Does your local church or churches together group know what sports clubs are in your area?**

Since 2018, National Sports Sunday has been growing as an opportunity to mobilise Christians to see how they can best serve the community of sport, which has over 25 million people in it.

Coordinated by Sports Chaplaincy UK but working in partnership with a range of ministries, we provide great resources to equip Christians to pray and consider what they can do. To find out more, visit:

[NATIONALSPORTSSUNDAY.ORG.UK](http://NATIONALSPORTSSUNDAY.ORG.UK)

when it comes to the world of all-ability sport. The aim is to invest and build relationships with clubs and governing bodies from a wide variety of sports including para-powerlifting, para-taekwondo, para-cycling, visually impaired rugby and goalball (another Paralympic sport for players with sight-loss). In the months and years to come larger numbers of pastorally gifted individuals from within UK churches are going to be needed to serve in the many opportunities that are opening in this area. Preparation for such service includes appropriate and effective training to equip chaplains to minister effectively amongst sports people with different disabilities. To this end, and with the specific goal of maximising the quality of training to those who will serve amongst individuals with intellectual and learning disabilities, Sports Chaplaincy UK has partnered with ENABLE, part of The Message Trust. Through the expertise of John Williams who leads Enable, drawing on his wealth of experience in church ministry and his personal journey of living with cerebral palsy, this will be a huge benefit to SCUUK.

**Steve Jones**  
Pastoral Support Director for Disability Sport



# WALES



**2019 proved to be another amazing year at so many levels as God continued to bless this great ministry. We saw not just great growth of chaplaincy roles and opportunities but also across a wider range of sports throughout Wales.**

The phone didn't seem to stop ringing with new requests and at times it felt like "whatever next"? which is just so exciting, bringing more amazing answers to prayers.

It was fantastic to place one male and one female chaplain within Welsh elite hockey to support the senior international players, coaches and staff where feedback has already been so positive. We have also placed a chaplain within Welsh elite cycling at the Newport Velodrome which has again been well received.



*(Helen Lewis, John Funnel, Karen Lorimer)*

Furthermore, four chaplains have been placed into Welsh elite gymnastics covering a wide age range with one chaplain specifically supporting the management staff. We supported all the major Run4Wales events with a chaplaincy team which came about due to two tragic deaths in the 2018 Cardiff Half Marathon. There were many great conversations at each event, along with the sad honour of sharing some words of reflection and encouragement to one of the families as they ran with friends in memorial for Ben McDonald who tragically died running the event the year before.

We have seen our footprint across disability sport grow and real opportunities to show the love and compassion of Jesus into this wonderful, but sometimes challenging environment. Steve Jones, Heather Lewis and Elliot Mayor are doing a great job in driving this forward. Through Steve, Wales continues to support and train people across the globe to work and develop chaplaincy in their countries (See Steve's report for more info). Elliot is also doing a fantastic job in developing the work across North Wales where again we are seeing much progress.



*(The importance of chaplains praying)*

Many of the above opportunities have come because of Heather's role which takes her in to the Wales National Sports Centre most weeks, and the benefit of doing major games (like the Commonwealth Games) chaplaincy has led to real connectivity.

We have continued to build chaplaincy numbers in both rugby and football and are getting many other organisations asking. Just before Christmas we had the Welsh Surf Life Savers Association ask for chaplaincy across their 31 clubs to support 3000 members. Life savers to the



*(Chaplains to Martial Arts)*

life savers! Similarly, we are still waiting on confirmation from the WRU to endorse chaplaincy at all their clubs, some 310 across Wales. With most clubs now having both men and women's sides, there is a need for many, many more chaplains. Indeed, our greatest challenge remains finding suitable Christian people who can commit the time and energy required. Cricket Wales may potentially want support too! Please keep praying with us that our great God will keep meeting these ever-growing needs.

In Wales we believe prayer is vital to do what we do, and it's been amazing to see we now have over 75 sports chaplaincy roles and could well be soon over 100 if we could fulfil all the requests we have. Prayerfully could YOU be one of those needed chaplains?

We continue to look to upskill ourselves and many of our chaplains are now accredited Mental Health First Aiders with the hope that all our chaplains will undertake this over the next year or so. This will give us even greater traction and added value into our roles to support our clubs and NGBs.

Spiritually we are seeing so many gentle opportunities to witness and share why we do what we do. Our boxing chaplain took a major funeral amongst the traveller community following the death of a boxer and he is beginning to see much blessing in that field. People are constantly amazed we all do our roles voluntarily, often going way beyond what SCUUK asks of us. Over Christmas many athletes – able bodied and not so able, enjoyed carol services, helped feed the homeless, undertook things like Operation Christmas Child, and enjoyed special New Year's Eve parties organised by local churches.

I truly believe that with the heart to pray God will continue to do great things in Wales. To God be the glory.

**Martin Lewis**  
National Director for Wales and Chaplain to Cardiff Blues



# ENGLAND



**For many the highlight for Sports Chaplaincy UK in England last year was the annual conference, held for the second time at Bradford Life Church.**

Mark Fleming, SCUUK National Director in Scotland joined us to deliver three excellent sessions on Mental Health Awareness. The mental and emotional wellbeing of athletes is an area the sports world is becoming much better at addressing and it is a privilege for us as chaplains to be able to support in such an important way. Perhaps the most significant life changing moment for a sports person is facing retirement so we were honoured to have Jamie Jones-Buchanan (England & GB Rugby League international) & Dan Leo (Rugby Union international for Samoa) speak about the highs and lows of their careers and how they were dealing with the spectre of retirement.



*(Matt interviewing Dan Leo and Jamie Jones-Buchanan)*

Antonio Hall continues to do a great job in Rugby League where all 12 Super

League Clubs have a chaplain including Toronto Wolfpack (Canada) and Catalans Dragons (based in Perpignan France). This year as well has seen the introduction of female chaplains to the women's game with chaplains being appointed to Castleford Tigers, St Helen's and the England Women's team. Antonio also had the opportunity to tour with the GB Lions to New Zealand & Papua New Guinea and whilst the results weren't good for the team it was great to offer chaplaincy at such a high level in the game and also meant he could meet up with chaplains from Sports Chaplaincy New Zealand. Tony Brown also leads the way in offering support to match officials in the game, a form of chaplaincy SCUUK is keen to offer to those officiating in other sports.



*(Antonio Hall and Jamie Jones-Buchanan in Australia)*

As ever we are very grateful for the football authorities – the Premier League, the English Football League and the Professional Footballers' Association – who are still very supportive of chaplaincy and this year have helped fund a Mobile App for sports chaplains to use. This will benefit not just football chaplains but all our chaplains in different sports and across the home nations, improving our ability to communicate with chaplains and helping us collate the added value chaplaincy is making in the sports community.

SCUUK continues to strengthen its presence in the horse racing industry under the guidance of Simon Bailey, our National Support Lead to Horse Racing based in Newmarket, the home of flat racing. A good working relationship with Racing Welfare and other organisations

help greatly in supporting and caring for racing's workforce. We have also recruited Nigel Johnson who is based in Durham and serves Sedgefield Racecourse, alongside helping locally in Middleham, as well as looking at further chaplaincy opportunities in South Wales.



*(Simon Bailey, National Support Lead to Horse Racing, being interviewed)*

Simon comments, "In all issues in life and with the focus on mental health over the last couple of years, it is a privilege to be playing a part in caring for people, which both SCUUK and Racing Welfare have at heart."



*(Female Chaplaincy Leaders - Angy King, Heather Lewis, Carolyn Skinner, Pat Cooke-Rogers)*

With continuing strong development in chaplaincy in women's football, gym chaplaincy growing and more opportunities to appoint chaplains in men's & women's rugby league, rugby union and cricket, the prospects for the next twelve months in chaplaincy look very exciting.

**Matt Baker**  
National Director for England



# NORTHERN IRELAND



## What a privilege it is for Sports Chaplaincy Ireland to serve people in clubs and associations up and down the country!

Every person is important and valuable - from the athlete, to the supporter, and every staff member, volunteer and helper in between. As a team of volunteer chaplains, we can bring a gospel of care and love that does not have to fit a budget or particular outcome. We are instead able to bring pastoral and spiritual care that cuts across all agendas and is totally people centred. This past year we have seen the demand for chaplaincy increase significantly and we have been able to appoint 12 regional chaplains as a consequence of our work with the Irish FA and their Ahead of the Game initiative - "Mental Health Awareness Program" which has broadened our geographical footprint.



(Northern Ireland conference)

Mental health is a major topic of concern within every sports club and the recognition that a chaplain has a vital

role to play through their presence and availability is evidence of God at work. In this last year God has been at work through all the difficulties that life has produced for the sporting community in Northern Ireland. Our chaplains have been required more than ever to help and journey with people through troubled waters, as well as celebrating life with them and bringing fresh perspective. God has been present through our chaplains during incredible heartbreak and journeys of renewal and refreshment. We have also been there when people's worlds have come crashing down and have been able to journey with them through the pain and anguish. We have been there to listen, support and provide practical, pastoral and spiritual care to many others, hopefully helping prevent their worlds from crashing down round them.



(Irish chaplains sharing a meal at the Irish gathering)

Our task is great: to have chaplains serving in every club and at every level in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland and we would love to see an increase in our footprint across women's sport and disability sport. We can thank God that He is starting to open doors for us not only here, but across many sports in the province.

We have seen an increase in the appointment of chaplains in Northern Irish amateur football across a range of leagues such as Newcastle & District League, Mid-Ulster League and Ballymena Provincial



(Roy Walker is a former football manager and player in Northern Ireland. Roy spoke at our NI Conference in 2019)

In rugby, five clubs have appointed chaplains in the last 12 months including Coleraine Rugby Club and a chaplain has been appointed in a cricket and hockey club which has 1100 members. On the topic of cricket, we have been endorsed by the North West Cricket Union and have been delighted to appoint chaplains to four new clubs.

We want to serve every person, within every club, sport and level of ability across all of Ireland. Our resources seem so limited, but we are praying to the God who owns the harvest to send workers. No matter how overwhelming the task may seem to some, we know who is in control and capable of more than we can think or imagine. So, as we step into this new decade, we must have the strength and courage to do what God has asked us to do and have faith that He who has begun a good work will carry it on to completion. As we listen, He guides us, being fully persuaded that He can do what he promised.

Please continue to pray for and support our chaplains

**Philip Mitchell**  
National Director for Northern Ireland



# SCOTLAND



## In Scotland we now have over 120 sports chaplains, most of them in football, but now also in cricket, rugby, basketball, gyms and in the latest development, shinty.

There are significant areas of Scotland (in the Highlands and Argyll) where shinty is the most popular sport rather than football or rugby. The Camanachd Association (who oversee the sport) have expressed an interest in chaplaincy being offered to all the clubs in the top two tiers of the national leagues. It was agreed to start off with a pilot chaplaincy project with Kyles Athletic in Tighnabruaich (photo) which has gone very well over the last year. As a result, between March and November 2020, Mark will be pioneering chaplaincy in Scottish shinty by seeking to source, train and appoint five more chaplains, with the view of having a chaplain in every shinty club in the top two tiers within the next three years.



(Kyles Athletic shinty team)

Chaplaincy within football continues to grow. Most clubs in the Scottish Professional Football League's four divisions now have a chaplain, as do the clubs of the Highland League and Lowland League. We have also seen



(Mark Fleming, National Director for Scotland)

considerable growth in the next tier down of the Scottish football pyramid, with teams in the East of Scotland league now having chaplains. Chaplaincy in Scottish women's football continues to grow too. Every club in the Scottish Women's Premier League (1 and 2) have female chaplains and as the game continues to grow with more SPFL clubs forming women's teams, we are seeking to source, train and appoint chaplains for them too. We aim for female coaches, players and staff to have the same access to pastoral resources as the men's teams and we are already finding that the female teams are responding well.



(Brandon Newman - Chaplain to Glasgow Rocks, Basketball)

Brandon Newman is now chaplain to Glasgow Rocks Basketball Team (photo), who are the only professional basketball team in Scotland, which has given him access to talk to clubs all over England when he travels to away games with them. He is also looking at the possibility of developing chaplaincy in the semi-professional leagues in Scotland.

Ben Thorpe continues to do a great job as our first chaplain in Scottish rugby union, at Stirling County RFC. He is also making lots of new contacts with other rugby clubs and there is a burgeoning interest in the role of a chaplain in their respective teams.



(Inonge Siluka, chaplain to Glasgow Women FC)

Sports Chaplaincy Scotland is facing a significant crossroads just now. We need an injection of significant finance so that we can facilitate the development of chaplaincy into other sports (e.g. basketball and rugby) as well as growing our infrastructure with the appointment of key personnel. As well as Mark's role as National Director, we recognise the need for a Managing Director (to coordinate and oversee the operations of Sports Chaplaincy Scotland), and also a Fundraising and Communications Director (to bring in finance in order to facilitate the continued growth, and make good use of social media opportunities).

Our chaplains are financially sowing into the vision of Sports Chaplaincy Scotland and we would welcome any individuals or churches to partner with us financially too. There are many great opportunities and we want to make the most of them so if you can support us please get in touch!

**Mark Fleming**  
National Director for Scotland

