

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

