



WHERE TO BEGIN

MAKING LINKS WITH YOUR LOCAL PRISON CHAPLAINCY

Useful contacts for London churches wishing to work with people coming out of prison

Community Chaplaincy Wormwood Scrubs

Befriending prisoners to support their successful return to the community.

The Community Chaplaincy at Wormwood Scrubs is part of the multi-faith chaplaincy in the prison. Its aim is to help reduce the risk of re-offending by befriending and resettling prisoners into their communities upon release from prison. We are looking for more volunteers prepared to befriend (ex-) prisoners and help them return successfully to life in the community.

We are working towards a closer involvement of all communities in west London including those who are faith-based. As part of this work, we would welcome the opportunity to visit your community or faith group in order to provide more information and discuss with you how you can get involved more closely.

Contact:

Ingrid Mayer:

Ingrid.Mayer@hmps.gsi.gov.uk

*Wormwood Scrubs Prison,
Du Cane Road,
London W12 0AE
Telephone 020 8588 3262*



Basic Caring Communities, (pact).

Basic Caring Communities (BaCC) involves volunteers motivated by their Christian faith working together to support an ex-offender to rebuild his life on release from prison into South London.

BaCC provides support to men who are released from Wandsworth Prison. What is unique about this project is that a small community of volunteers (a total of 6) provide that support to one man. Volunteers are recruited in a variety of ways and the majority are from a Christian faith community. They are trained to enable them to befriend and support men, of faith or of no faith, who are returning to life 'outside'. BaCC work across London.



The role of the volunteer involves one of them contacting the ex-offender each day: to offer to walk in the park, have a cup of coffee, help with benefits or housing, accompany to probation or a doctor's appointment, talk on the telephone. Once a week the whole group, including the ex-offender, meet together. The relationships begin inside the prison, where the ex-offender will meet one or two volunteers and eventually the whole group. He is met at the gate on release and then given daily contact and support for an agreed length of time.

The first step is to do a 'Taster' as this is designed to give an overview of the project and to help people decide if they wish to take things further. These are on Saturday mornings 9.30 – 12.30. If the volunteer wishes to become involved in the project, there are 4 evening training sessions which is also part of the recruitment. On completion of training all volunteers are asked to take part in a short interview and to have a CRB check.

This is a 3-year pilot project which started in May 2007 and is being evaluated carefully.

Contact:

*Tricia Anderson - Project Coordinator:
07976 284 355 - patricia.anderson@prisonadvice.org.uk*

*Allison Waterhouse - Resettlement Chaplain:
020 8588 4238 - Allison.Waterhouse@hmps.gsi.gov.uk*

*Wandsworth Visitors Centre,
17 Heathfield Road,
London SW18 3HR*

Feltham Community Chaplaincy Trust

Feltham Community Chaplaincy Trust is a multi-faith mentoring organisation in which people of different faiths work together to help young offenders rebuild their lives.



The Trust provides support to young men who are released from Feltham Young Offenders Institution. Volunteers are recruited from a number of different faith communities across London and are trained as mentors to enable them to befriend and support young men, of the same faith or of no faith, who are returning to their local areas.

The work of the volunteer mentors covers a range of practical support for the young men such as advocacy (e.g. with probation services and Youth Offending Teams), family facilitation, accommodation and housing, and encouragement to access training, education and employment opportunities. The mentoring relationship starts in HMYOI Feltham, and is continued through the gate into the community for up to 2 years post release.

The role of mentor includes:

- Meeting the young man at the prison gate on release
- Helping him to fill out benefits or housing related forms
- Helping him to access local training and employment services
- Being encouraging and providing emotional support

We normally recruit volunteer mentors throughout the year, in preparation for training, which is run twice each year, normally before May and after September. The training takes place on a weekend from Friday evening starting 18:30 to 21:30 through to Saturday starting from 10:00 am to 16:30 pm for two consecutive weekends. If you are interested, please contact us. We are keen on recruiting people from all denominational backgrounds.

Contact:

Emma Rogers - Project Coordinator: emma.rogers@hmps.gsi.gov.uk

Arthur Gwagwa - Community Chaplain: arthur.gwagwa@hmps.gsi.gov.uk

Office telephone: 020 8844 5585

HMP Feltham.

Bedfont Road, TW13 4ND

www.felthamcommunitychaplaincy.org

Wandsworth Prison - Resettlement Chaplain

The resettlement chaplain at Wandsworth seeks to encourage links with all faith communities which support the resettlement of prisoners in the community.

Based in the multi-faith chaplaincy we refer prisoners to the Basic Caring Communities project, other faith organisations and faith based hostels. We work closely with St Mark's Church, Battersea Rise, and are keen to develop links with other faith groups who are interested in developing resettlement work.

One area of work is among those men who are isolated or homeless. The prison resettlement team works hard to find accommodation for those who are of no fixed abode. Men who are well nourished and alcohol free on release can still go downhill. Even if they have accommodation they need the support of a community. An offender can also drop through the net. Organisations such as the local Salvation Army provide a change of clothes and a sleeping bag. We are aiming to build a network and provide a passport where men can get a meal, friendship and advice. If your church or faith community houses such homeless projects, please let us know.

We also work with the resettlement of sex offenders (a broad range of offences) who wish



to be within a faith community and help ensure that the correct procedures are in place and they are supported.

I talk to prisoners who are worried about their release and often can only listen. By creating links, raising awareness and building on current work in the faith community we can work more effectively to reduce re-offending. In the future we aim to work more closely and more effectively across London and nationally with other Community Chaplaincies. An encouraging story was when we supported an offender with a disability to resettle in North Staffs by using our chaplaincy networks.

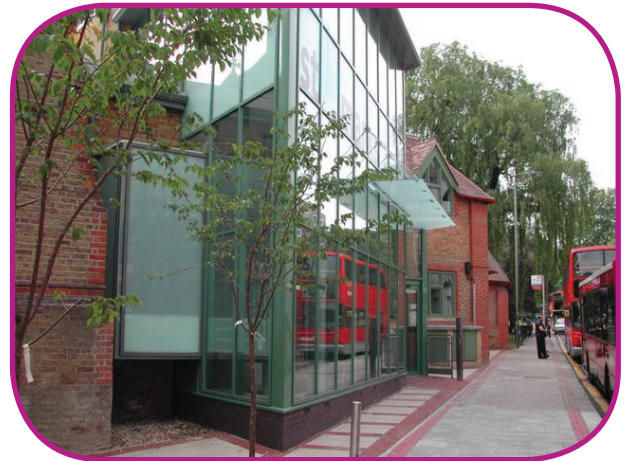
Contact:

*Revd Allison Waterhouse - Resettlement Chaplain:
020 8588 4238 - Allison.Waterhouse@hmps.gsi.gov.uk*

*Wandsworth Prison,
Heathfield Road,
Wandsworth, SW18 3HS.*

Working with Ex-Offenders at St Mark's Church, Battersea Rise

St Mark's has worked with our local prison, HMP Wandsworth, for more than 10 years.



We run the Alpha courses and also the Sycamore Tree Course, a 6 week restorative justice programme run by Prison Fellowship. Four members of our church assist the Chaplaincy team at Wandsworth on a voluntary basis.

Currently we have a number of ex-offenders actively involved within our church community. For example 'A' is part of a home group and pastorate, and helps the staff team 1 day a week. He attended the church Alpha course on leaving prison having attended Alpha and Sycamore in Wandsworth. He has a mentor but also a group of 6-8 people who regularly support him in prayer, friendship, and practical support. Over the last 20 years have been welcoming ex-offenders into our church community, offering pastoral support, and offering voluntary roles within the church under staff supervision. Our objective is to help men keep from returning to their life of crime or addiction by valuing and supporting them. Over the past 10 years we have seen approximately 1 man a year turn his life around and stay away from his old life.

The Church runs a weekly Wednesday lunch and service for those who may not be working, ex-addicts/prisoners, the homeless and those reaching out to the community. This involves a hot meal, bible study, worship and prayer for each other. It involves various members to help lead, teach, cook, and share testimonies.

Contact:

*St Mark's, Battersea Rise, SW11 1EJ Telephone 020 7223 6188
office@stmarks-battersea.org.uk*

Belmarsh Prison- Resettlement Chaplaincy

We see many prisoners finding faith while in Belmarsh Prison but they need the support to be able to maintain this new walk once they are released back into “normal” life.



- When released, most of our men return to Greenwich/ Lewisham/ Bexley/ Newham/ East Essex areas, so we visit churches in these areas on invitation in order to envision, train and equip the church to be more able to receive ex-prisoners appropriately.
- We link a prisoner with an appropriate church / key person prior to their release and arrange for their key person (pastor/mentor/befriender) to visit them prior to release so that the relationship is already started and the “befriender” is aware of significant issues.
- “Bless Up”/Encouragers Group – this is a Christian support group which meets locally every 6 weeks. We share a simple meal, have fellowship together (welcoming the newly released men), share joys and difficulties, worship and prayer. Although a team of committed Christians (headed by Alison) oversees the event, we aim to encourage the men to care for each other and continue mutual support outside the gatherings (e.g. an ex-prisoner who is already becoming stable will talk to and encourage one who is less stable). We plan to start a “Bless up” in East London and need churches to support that.
- In addition there are Celebration events (hosted by Christian Life Fellowship’s Prison Ministry Department) mid-summer and at Christmas (as these are vulnerable seasons for the men). These focus around a multi-cultural buffet meal. There will be an opportunity for a time of testimony/thanksgiving to God. Partners and their children are invited to this celebration (unlike at the “Bless Up”).
The aim: “to join with Jesus to set the captive free Inside and Out ”

Contact:

*Alison Smith- alison.smith03@hmps.gsi.gov.uk
020 8331 4523 or 0776 646 0420*



Other Useful Contacts

Changing Tunes

Changing Tunes is a registered charity that uses music teaching, rehearsing, recording, performance, improvisation and composition to aid the rehabilitation of prisoners and ex-prisoners. Each week they lead music sessions in 13 prisons and also work with ex-prisoners. Each session in prison is facilitated by a trained professional musician, able to play at least two instruments to a high standard, and coach in other instruments as well as singing. Most of the work involves guitar tuition and band rehearsals but other styles and instruments are encouraged. We are looking for churches and individuals to sponsor our work in prisons and provide venues for our concerts.

Changing Tunes Director is Tim Snowdon: www.changingtunes.org.uk

Churches' Criminal Justice Forum

This is a network of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. Its purpose is to uphold Christian values in the field of criminal justice, to promote awareness of criminal justice issues in the churches and to make representations to Government on behalf of the churches. It advocates the use of restorative justice, supports Christians working in the criminal justice system, and promotes community projects to reduce offending. www.ccjf.org

Clinks

Clinks was established to strengthen and develop the partnerships between voluntary and community-based organisations and the Prison and Probation services in England and Wales, which now includes the new National Offender Management Service. It seeks to support and develop the work that voluntary organisations undertake within the Criminal Justice system. Among other activities it contributes towards the creation of 'Voluntary and Community-Based Liaison Forums' that network H.M. Prison establishments, community-based groups and others within particular prison establishments and maintains a national Directory of voluntary and community organisations providing services to offenders and their families. www.clinks.org

New Bridge

New Bridge aims to create links between the offender and the community. It offers a wide range of programmes to help prisoners keep in touch with the outside world and prepare themselves to rejoin it. It achieves its objectives by befriending men, women and young people in prisons through a national network of volunteers; by running projects in specific prisons focussing on resettlement needs; and by encouraging the public to accept the need to reintegrate ex-offenders into the community. At present it is working from Brixton Prison and works across London.

New Bridge Foundation, 27a Medway Street, London SW1P 2BD

Telephone 020 7976 0779 www.newbridgefoundation.org.uk

Pact

The Prison Advice and Care Trust (pact) has its origins in faith-based work to support people affected by imprisonment. It provides practical support to prisoners' children and families, and to prisoners themselves. Working at a number of prisons across the UK, pact runs family-friendly visitors' centres outside prisons, children's play services in prison visits halls, and more. www.prisonadvice.org.uk

Prison Reform Trust

The Prison Reform Trust believes that the state of our prisons is a fair measure of the state of our society. It works to ensure that prisons are just, humane and effective.

www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk



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