



HARK!

THE NEWSLETTER OF GUILDFORD TOWN CENTRE CHAPLAINCY



Cathedral Community welcomes commissioned Angels & Chaplains

We were absolutely delighted to welcome so many volunteers, friends, supporters and dignitaries to our commissioning service at Guildford Cathedral on November 3rd. The Cathedral graciously invited Guildford Town Centre Chaplaincy (GTCC) to Choral Evensong, where the homily, which included references to the work of our three projects, was made by the Venerable Stuart Beake. Our Patron and friend, HM Lord-Lieutenant of Surrey, Michael More-Molyneux, read the Old Testament lesson.

Also participating in the event were Chief Superintendent of Surrey Police, Mark Chapman; Deputy Mayor, Councillor Howard Smith; Guildford MP, Zöe Franklin; Peter Rudkin, representing Guildford Philanthropy and our own Chaplain, Rev Noelle Coe.

We were delighted that so many people took the time to join us and celebrate the amazing work that our volunteers do across the streets, homes and workplaces of Guildford. We have over 130 volunteers and are always pleased to hear from anybody thinking about joining our team. We offer taster sessions for some projects. To find out more visit <https://gtcc.org.uk/get-involved/>





Mayors Charity of the Year

Volunteer Chaplains are very privileged to have been chosen as one of the Mayor of Guildford's charities for this year.

We have been fortunate to work with Charlie Cluff who has produced a film about Volunteer Chaplains. The film was shown at a sparkling fundraising ball held at GLive before Christmas where a tremendous £75000 was raised by generous donors for 7 local charities. GTCC are absolutely delighted that this event raised a stunning £13,000 for our Volunteer Chaplains project. The event was hosted by the Mayor of Guildford, Sallie Barker MBE and Guildford Philanthropy.



We are really chuffed with the result. Why don't you take a look too by clicking here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_YMJYmpY-so&t=19s

Here is Charlie with her thoughts after spending time with us:

Before filming with GTCC, I only had a vague idea of who they were and what they did. I'd seen the Street Angels on Friday and Saturday nights, but I didn't fully understand their purpose. Perhaps, because I'm not particularly religious, I assumed their work wasn't something that would resonate with me.



Talking to Mike about his role as a GP Chaplain was a revelation. Watching him in action at Austen Road Surgery and seeing how people could be brought together at the Clockhouse, gave me a deeper appreciation for the meaningful support GTCC provides. What struck me most was how accessible and inclusive they are. GTCC is there for anyone who needs someone to listen, to provide comfort, or to offer support in difficult times.

Before this project, I might have thought GTCC was only for those within a faith community. Now, I see that they're for everyone, regardless of religious beliefs. Their work is rooted in compassion, care, and connection, and they make a genuine difference in people's lives. My perception of GTCC and the Volunteer Chaplains has completely changed, and I hope more people come to realise that they're there for them too—no matter their background or beliefs.





View from the Street

One of our new volunteers, Rosie Nicholson, mentioned the following when asked about why she joined us:

"I joined the Street Angels as I'm passionate that anyone should be able to get home safely without fear or harm, and wanted to do my bit to make the streets feel a safer place. It's a great community to be a part of and I drive home at the end of each shift knowing I've made a positive impact on people's

Patron patrols the Streets

The Chaplaincy was delighted to welcome HM Lord-Lieutenant of Surrey, Michael More-Molyneux, to a Street Angel patrol along with Chris Britton, our Chair of Trustees. Here's what he wrote to the team leader Sue after that visit.

Dear Sue,

Just a quick line to say thank you for including me in your shift on Saturday night. I was only sorry that I had to bid farewell at 2.30 rather than 4. I found the evening really interesting, and I was surprised how little it seemed to have changed since I was last out with you. There were I'm sure less people out enjoying themselves, but as someone remarked, it was not the last day of the month.

I still find it extraordinary how well behaved they are considering they have consumed so much alcohol! I much enjoyed our

conversations with the young people.

I was left

wondering and

hoping that the dental assistant managed to get herself back to Camberley! Thank you for a really educational evening and one that stimulates thought.

In closing, can I thank you and all the Steet Angels for your time, commitment, and sense of duty, which as we heard on our travels around the town, is hugely appreciated by all concerned. Please do pass on my best wishes to the rest of the team,

Yours ever, Michael



2025 Events

Tuesdays 4 February, 4 March, 1 April, 6 May, 3 June: GTCC prayer meetings, St Mary's Church 12pm

Tuesday 11 March - Chaplaincy Training Day - contact Susanna Hoar for details

April 21 (tbc) St Martha's Tea bar fundraiser

May 21 Sponsored walk (tbc) Shalford Park



Tesco Tokens

We are delighted that our application for Tesco's 'Stronger Starts' has been successful and we are in the current customer token vote in local Tesco stores. Just pick up blue tokens at the tills and place them in the voting box, as pictured left. Voting continues until 12 January 2025.

The project with the highest number of votes receives £1.5K, 2nd place £1k & 3rd place £500. All Tesco stores in Guildford & Milford have collecting points so please support us & share with friends & family. Thank you.

Leading the way

Hidden away on the first floor of an office building next door to Christ Church you can find our wonderful Chaplaincy staff team beavering away. Between them they keep our three projects, Street Angels, Community Angels and Volunteer Chaplains running. So how do they fill their time? They are kept busy recruiting and interviewing volunteers, organising training sessions, liaising with partner organisations and referrers, meeting

new clients, supporting volunteers, compiling rotas, completing DBS checks, buying and maintaining Street Angels supplies, fundraising and reporting to funders and our wonderful team of Trustees - and that's just a start!

Big shout out to Chaplain Noelle, Angela, Anne and Susanna, who all make such a difference to our volunteer community - and of course to our fantastic volunteers themselves who work in so many settings throughout Guildford day and night.



The Team, left to right, Rev Noelle Coe, Chaplain; Angela Gammage, Street Angels coordinator; Anne Thornton, Community Angels coordinator and Susanna Hoar, Volunteer Chaplains coordinator.

Community Angels News Autumn 2024

On 22nd October, volunteers from Street Angels and Volunteer Chaplains joined with Community Angels for an evening thinking about 'Bereavement, Loss and Change,' organised by Anne and Susanna and delivered by Mandy East of the Brigitte Trust. New Community Angel Charlotte shares her reflections on the evening:



'The setting at St Mary's Church was magnificent. It provided such a warm welcome - particularly lovely as I was very new to the Community Angels team. The peaceful environment was so conducive to listening and learning from an informative and educational evening. Mandy was engaging and so easy to listen to. The workshop encapsulated empathetic, holistic and interactive learning throughout.

At the very beginning of the workshop, Mandy had quite startling statistics that highlighted the importance of this training and stay with me still:

- 47% of people surveyed said they were not comfortable talking to someone who has been recently bereaved
- 84% of bereaved people thought others were uncomfortable talking to the recently bereaved

We looked at Bereavement, Loss and Change on a wider spectrum than I had expected or considered before. In particular, the areas of Normal Loss vs Abnormal Loss and Role Stripping - and revisiting important topics such as Effective Listening.

I am very grateful to have been part of the workshop. I attained a much deeper knowledge base of Bereavement, Loss and Change, combined with many positive learning outcomes. I very much look forward to similar opportunities within GTCC.'

And from some other volunteers:



'We all experience loss and grief in our lives - and we all witness loved ones experiencing grief and loss. It was helpful to take time to consider how to care for ourselves and how best we might support our friends and loved ones when grief and loss come calling. I found the dual model of coping slide particularly helpful when thinking about the chaos that ensues in families following an unexpected loss.' Margaret

'I thought that the evening gave me some pointers for listening better, the whirlpool of grief shows that a picture is worth a thousand words and the consideration of roles very thought provoking. It was pointed out that the loss of the smallest roles can have effect e.g. being unable to drive. But I particularly liked the identification of the role as a 'daughter of God.' Bob

Lots of volunteers told us that they enjoyed the opportunity to meet with others in the GTCC volunteering community – and the cakes went down very well too!

We look forward to further such events in 2025.

Anne Thornton, Community Angels Coordinator

Photo above: For confidentiality reasons, we don't often have photos of Community Angels in action, so we were delighted when Margaret agreed to have her photo taken with her Community Angel Sarah, who has been teaching her to crochet. They've had lots of fun together and Margaret is now using her new skills to work on a scarf.



Photo right: Bereavement, Loss and Change event

Peeps into the past

After over sixteen years of operation our volunteer teams have covered many town events as well as participating in some novel fund raising events. On this page we share some of those events.

Below left, Street Angels helped out at Guilfest in late 2000's. 2nd down left our eldest Street Angel Caroline served until she was 83. Bottom left, you never know what you'll see at 3am, perhaps an extra from the movie 'Up!' Bottom middle and 2nd right helping at the Torchlight parade to the Stoke Park firework display. Top right our first Chaplain Rod raising money by abseiling down the Cathedral. 3rd down right Trustee Carol and co-ordinator met HRH Prince Philip on a visit to Guildford Cathedral. Bottom right volunteer Nan gets an unexpected spin on her shift



Mr & Mrs Street Angel!

Retired couple Wendy and Ray Dunnett reflect on the joys and challenges of being Street Angels.

"The great joy of being out with Street Angels is the interaction with people - especially as we have both been sixth-form teachers. We've had many chats with people wanting to share personal problems and also discussions on a range of topics, both social and, if it arose naturally, religious.

What has been really pleasing has been the number of younger people who tell us that they have learnt about us from RE lessons in Guildford schools and appreciate what we are doing and the huge number of thanks we get for having personally helped individuals or their friends.

There can be frustrations: when we cannot find a way of helping someone or, even more so, when we don't know the outcome of help we have given, especially if the person has had to be taken to hospital. There can also be traumatic times e.g. when we saw a young woman throw herself backwards into the river from the bridge in Bridge Street. Fortunately, with assistance from all the emergency services, we got her out and a report in the next Surrey Advertiser suggested that she had recovered in hospital.

Despite being well into our 70s, we still enjoy the work and gain a lot from it, hopefully giving as much back. It's a real joy to be part of this work!"

Wendy & Ray Dunnett



We are grateful to the United Reformed Church (URC) in Guildford for supporting, once again, the work of the Chaplaincy by holding a Christmas Tree Festival through December. The Chaplaincy had its own tree decorated, as seen here, with a host of heavenly angels, Street Angel beanies, cards and other materials that the teams out patrolling on a Friday or Saturday night might take with them.



We are very grateful to Wendy and Ray Dunnett, the United Reformed Church, its members and friends who supported this event once more this year. With so many projects in operation we are pleased to receive generous gifts such as these.

We are absolutely delighted to say that £1,000 was raised by the URC for our work. Thank you very much to our URC friends and supporters.



Let's Get Quizzical!

No, sadly, we couldn't have Trivia Newton John for the GTCC fundraising quiz & curry night, kindly hosted by Christ Church in Guildford. But we did enjoy a fabulous quiz, masterminded by the renowned quizmaster Michael Tame, who has generously helped us out in such a professional way for many years. In a sold out event questions covered a wide range of topics and trivia. The teams navigated rounds which included topics such as music, travel, sport and general knowledge.

A delicious Asian meal was included in the price of entry and a raffle took place at the end of the evening. One of the prizes was a generously donated family holiday home stay in Devon.

We were very grateful for the tremendous generosity of so many which enabled us to raise almost £3000 on the night. These funds will be used to keep our projects running, sending Street Angels onto the streets, equipping our Community Angels to befriend and support socially isolated people at home and enabling our Volunteer Chaplains to reach those in need in workplaces, such as at the Police Station and in GP surgeries.

So thank you very much to all those who attended and supported us and the team of volunteers that made the event the success that it was.



Local Community Collaborations Drive Positive Impact

Partnership working is key to the work of the Chaplaincy and over the past few months we have worked with Guildford Shakespeare Company, whose knife crime awareness event linked with their summer production of Romeo & Juliet, which explored street violence, bereavement & much more where our activities overlap.

Our partnerships with Surrey Police, Pubwatch, Guildford Borough Council, Guildford churches and many more have driven crime rates down and given the town 'Purple flag' a safety rating for numerous years, testament to the positive effects our projects make in our community.

Asda Foundation post on social media about their sponsorship of GTCC December 5 at 10:00 AM

Today is International Volunteer's Day



Faye with GTCC staff and volunteers

We're shining a light on [Guildford Street Angels](#), whose team of volunteers operate every Friday and Saturday night, keeping people safe and making a positive impact reducing crime and antisocial behaviour by providing a calming presence late at night. This project wouldn't be able to run without 50 amazing volunteers dedicating their time and skills to make a positive difference and the group recently received an Asda Foundation grant to support this important work.

Louise, Trustee, said: *"This grant will provide essential equipment and uniforms to keep our volunteers visible, warm, and prepared to fulfil their caring duties on their long and challenging shifts as they care for anyone who finds themselves in difficulty. We are known affectionately as the "fourth emergency service", helping people at their time of need, preventing minor issues escalating into significant problems and keeping people safe."*

Faye, Community and Customer Champion at Asda Woking Sheerwater, said: *"It has been a pleasure working with this fantastic group of volunteers. The Guildford Street Angels work hard though all weathers on Friday and Saturday Nights making sure everyone is safe. I am so pleased that with the support of Asda Foundation they can continue with their great work. Thank you for everything you do Guildford Street Angels!"*



Angels lighting up the shadows

With some spooky goings ons in town around the Halloween weekend, we are thankful that our Angels are well trained in dealing with most situations!

Team leader Mike Smith who was out that weekend said, "We get accustomed to seeing many types of fancy dress whilst out on patrol, from zombies to Power Rangers, nuns to skeletons, but it's great that our Angels can bring light to so many who aren't having the best night of their lives as well as celebrate with those who are."

Fundraising Update

The three projects run by GTCC cost around £120k pa to operate safely. We are very grateful for regular gifts that we receive from local churches and individuals, although increasingly we are dependent upon financial support from grants and running fundraising events. Currently GTCC operates with a planned deficit. Readers will be delighted to know that GTCC projects have been recognised by a wide range of funders over recent months, here are just a few of the highlights.

Our **Ambassador Angels** have been supported by Surrey County Council who have generously funded a new laptop, projector, PA system and branded gazebo for outreach and fundraising events.

Our **Community Angels** have been supported by Guildford Poyle Charities, the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioners, and most recently by a tremendous grant from the National Lottery Fund to support this work in 2025-27.

Our **Street Angels** have also been supported by the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner, Guildford Philanthropy, Charles Russell Speechlys and St Catherine's School. Meanwhile both the ASDA Foundation and Surrey County Council have funded much needed volunteer equipment, including uniforms to keep our volunteers warm and dry as they provide their friendly patrols.

Our **Volunteer Chaplains** were honoured to have been chosen to be one of the Mayor of Guildford's Charities of the Year and to be a beneficiary of the sparkling fundraising "Mistletoe Ball" held in December 2024.

GTCC ran or participated in a number of successful **fundraising events** in 2024 including the Pancake Race, the sponsored Angel Ascent at Guildford Cathedral, our autumn Quiz night and we had a plant stand at the Summer Picnic at the Castle grounds. These events collectively raised £14,600 thanks to the support and energy of so many people. GTCC is currently looking for extra help with running events and working on grant fundraising applications - please get in touch if you think you can help in this important area.

Ways to donate to GTCC

Last year it cost over £120,000 to run all of our three community projects. Outside of our generous church donors, much of our income comes from individual supporters who have set up monthly standing orders with Gift Aid declarations, so we can claim back the tax on their kind giving. If you can help us out in this way, have links with local businesses which might like to nominate us as their chosen charity or want to see how you can support us in other ways please visit our giving page here: <https://gtcc.org.uk/donate/>

Easy Fundraising

Easy Fundraising turns your everyday online shopping into free donations for your favourite cause. How? Just start your online shopping first at easyfundraising, then shop as normal. The retailers will then make a small donation to say "thank you". So if you online shop at Sainsbury's, Argos or many other retailers, you can help us raise funds. Our page link is here: <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/guildfordtccchaplaincy/?q=Guildford%20Town&cat=cause-autosugges>

SMS Text

To send a donation by text via your mobile provider please send an SMS message starting with the word **ANGEL** followed by your donation amount of either 5, 10 or 20,

e.g. **ANGEL10** would donate £10
Text Giving to the number 70085

GTCC Registered Company Number:
06639603

Gift Aided Regular Giving

Find out more about how to give electronically and set up a regular gift download a Gift Aid donation form here: <https://gtcc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/GTCC-Trifold-Leaflet-2021-v.4-3.pdf>

Annual Review

GTCC publish an Annual Review. You can read all about our finances and more by clicking here for a copy of our 2023 Annual Review here: <https://gtcc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/GTCC-Annual-Review-2023-16.pdf>

MONTHLY GTCC PRAYER AND

All volunteers, supporters and friends of the Chaplaincy are warmly welcome to join us on the first Tuesday of the month in prayer for the work of GTCC through its three projects. We meet at mid day in St Mary’s Church, Quarry Street Guildford for around 30 minutes with a chance to enjoy tea or coffee at the end if you have time to stay and chat. We’d love to have you join us if you can.

For all forthcoming Chaplaincy events please visit <https://gtcc.org.uk/upcoming-events/>



Life Changing Story

Street Angels work can vary from the serious to the mundane. A typical night might involve looking out for bottles or glasses that have been abandoned, helping people to get home safely or tending those who have drunk or taken drugs to excess, but most importantly it’s powerful stories like one below that motivate us to do things and help others!

“A young man, J told us a couple of years ago a SA had taken time to talk to him seriously about his substance abuse. He told us that as a direct result of that conversation he stopped from that point on. He now feels very positive about his life and foundational Catholic teaching despite the fact his father, D has terminal cancer. D also came and talked with us and thanked us for the work we do. He was aware of his son's previous encounter with SA. It seems they both had their minds changed about how effective or useful the role of Street Angel is”



Living Legends

Most weekends, when our Angels walk around Guildford's town centre streets, or when one of our volunteers visits a home or workplace, many people presume that we are employed by someone like the police, a charity or the council, to do the valuable work we undertake. When our volunteers explain that they go out without remuneration and sacrifice their own time to support vulnerable individuals, most enquirers are 'blown away'. A recurrent phrase Street Angels hear when operating on our streets is "you're legends" for doing that. Following that they may even get a 'high five' or hug from the individual.

But if you ask our wonderful volunteers what they've gained from their experiences with us, their answers often show that volunteering is not only good for the community, but can improve your own personal physical and mental health and wellbeing. Volunteering is known to have many benefits. For some it may be new skills and valuable work experience; for others making new friends or the sense of giving something back or connecting with the community in a useful and valuable way.

There is also a sense that by positively contributing to the community you make it a better place to live and work which benefits everyone whether or not you have a need for us. We are blessed to have good working relationships with Surrey Police, PubWatch, Guildford Borough Council and many other local charities. We have also been delighted when senior community representatives, such as MPs, Councillors, three of our Mayors and other local dignitaries have come out with us.

We are so pleased that our 130+ volunteers are making a difference to our community week by week and are grateful they have done so for more than 16 years. If you or anyone you know want to find out more about volunteering with us please visit our website www.gtccc.org.uk and click on the Street Angel, Community Angel or Volunteer Chaplain tabs to find out more, and then maybe you could become a living legend too!



Chaplain's Correspondence

Over the years GTCC has travelled on a faith journey. As you will see from this addition of HARK the work has expanded from its small beginnings - where the Christian churches in Guildford wanted to come together and support a chaplain for Guildford. We now have three wonderful projects: Street Angels, Community Angels, and Volunteer Chaplains. Each one reaches out to come alongside people in the community who may need: a helping hand; a safe confidential place; encouragement and gentle support. It's such a privilege to be able to do this, whilst working with so many indispensable volunteers, who give their time so selflessly. Please do get in touch if you want to know more, or are considering becoming a volunteer!



We began 2024 with a planned £35,000 deficit, (an amount that is only sustainable for a limited time). Our trustees had the difficult task of deciding whether to cut back on our vital services to the community, or continue with the risk of the deficit. After careful consideration, it was decided to trust God and continue with the expected deficit. I can now excitedly say that 2024 has ended in December with our books almost balancing! Our heartfelt thanks go out to all those who have made this possible, so that we can continue our work. We feel optimistic and 'protected on our journey' starting 2025, even with the challenge of considering another planned deficit, but believing that, with God, anything is possible.

Community Angels celebrate after receiving £20,000 of National Lottery funding



GTCC is celebrating after being awarded £20k in National Lottery funding to support the work of its well respected "Community Angel" befriending project. Zoe Franklin MP was delighted to present a cheque to the GTCC team recently which is a great start to the New Year.

Chris Britton, GTCC Chair, says: *"We're delighted that The National Lottery Community Fund has endorsed the value of our work with such a generous donation. We will be able to press on with greater confidence over the next two years to continue to walk alongside those facing a mix of very challenging issues, to help them make a positive step change to reconnect with others, so help rebuild broken lives. We are so proud that our Community Angels are making a much needed impact and that*

this has been recognized by recently receiving both the Lieutenancy Award for Excellence during the Pandemic and the Mayor of Guildford's Award for Service to the Community".

The new funding is from The National Lottery Community Fund, which distributes money raised by National Lottery players for good causes and is the largest community funder in the UK. The funds will contribute to the on-going operating costs of delivering the project over the next two years, at time when demand is constantly rising.

Anne Thornton, Project Co-ordinator says: *"We are absolutely over the moon that we have been gifted this funding at a time of growing need for our services. We receive more referrals than we have the capacity to befriend and welcome enquiries from potential new volunteers to join our fabulous team of compassionate volunteers"*



Emergency Services Christmas Carols

It was a privilege to share in the Surrey and beyond Emergency Services carol service last December, hosted by St. Saviour's Church. Amongst the guest readers were Tim De Meyer, Chief Constable of Surrey Police; Damian Watts, Area Commander for Surrey Fire and Rescue Service; Greg Smith, Operations Manager for the Southeast Coast Ambulance service (SECAM); Frances Novillo, lead Chaplain with Surrey & Sussex Police services, along with our own Rev Noelle Coe and Associate Minister at St Saviour's, Lucy Webb.

The police and church bands kindly led the selection of carols and Christmas music and local police cadets served refreshments at the end. Thank you to the Christian Police Association (CPA) for inviting Angels to this community celebration. Around a dozen Angels and Trustees attended on behalf of Guildford Town Centre Chaplaincy.

