

Introducing Anna Chaplaincy

Report on a Two-Year Project on Dementia in Rochester Diocese

Supported by Henry Smith Charity Christian Projects Fund

Executive Summary

WHAT DID WE SET OUT TO DO BY APRIL 2017?

1. Research what people with dementia need from churches
2. Work with people with dementia, The Gift of Years and local organisations to set up new forms of spiritual and pastoral support
3. Identify people interested in ministry with people with dementia and help them discern a sense of calling
4. Commission Anna Chaplains to work in local parishes
5. Catalyse social and worship activities for people with dementia

WHAT DID WE ACHIEVE BETWEEN MAY 2015 AND APRIL 2017?

- We held 25 events on dementia across the Diocese
- We established 4 new Anna Chaplaincy hubs covering 10 deaneries
- We commissioned 8 Anna Chaplains and 16 Anna Friends
- Anna Chaplaincy was established in 20 parishes and Rochester Cathedral
- We helped lead national conversations about faith and dementia

WHAT FEEDBACK HAVE WE RECEIVED?

- ✓ Anna Chaplains and Friends have skills and support, and feel affirmed
- ✓ Carers sense greater awareness and support and are less isolated
- ✓ Churches are better equipped and more confident in ministry
- ✓ Partner organisations value new links and recognise spiritual needs

WHAT NEXT?

- Commission more Anna Chaplains and Anna Friends
- Work with academic partners to evidence the benefits of community chaplaincy in dementia

The Story of Anna Chaplaincy in Rochester

1 – Why Anna Chaplaincy?

In 2014 the mission and community engagement department in Rochester Diocese commissioned work on the theme of 'dementia friendly church'. A series of half-day workshops included a Dementia Friends awareness session and space to discuss how churches respond. Participants agreed we could be better at meeting spiritual and pastoral needs in dementia.

At around the same time, The Bible Reading Fellowship (BRF) set up The Gift of Years, which included the aim of developing Anna Chaplaincy as a way of accompanying the spiritual journey of older people. Anna Chaplaincy takes its name from the faithful older Bible characters in the second chapter of Luke's gospel, Anna and Simeon. Anna is recorded as being 84, and to have been widowed for many decades. She speaks of redemption to all who will listen. This new community chaplaincy approach seemed a good way to help churches become better at meeting spiritual needs in later life and dementia. In late 2014, we approached Henry Smith Charity's Christian Projects fund with a request to pay for a project officer. The Diocese was awarded two years' funding to cover the salary of a project officer working 21 hours a week.



Anna Friends and Anna Chaplains commissioned on 11 April 2017 by Bishop James With Abbeyfield Kent CEO Leon Steer (at Abbeyfield's Watling Court in Gravesend)

Anna Chaplaincy varies according to local need and includes: one to one support and prayer ministry; leading care home services; supporting dementia activities; advocating for people with dementia; supporting carers.

2 – What we did to establish Anna Chaplaincy

Staffing – Julia Burton-Jones was appointed dementia specialist project officer and began work in May 2015 to introduce Anna Chaplaincy.



Steering group – a group was brought together of interested people in the Diocese to meet quarterly and shape the new dementia ministry.



Scoping exercise – May to Sept 2015 were devoted to a scoping exercise in which over 200 people consulted expressed support for Anna Chaplaincy.



Introducing Anna Chaplaincy – working with BRF's The Gift of Years we developed two new roles, Anna Chaplain and Anna Friend. At events in February and April 2016 Anna Chaplaincy was introduced. Eighty attended from 40 parishes. 30 expressed interest in being an Anna Friend or Chaplain.



Discernment process – the project officer and local clergy met with each person who had expressed interest to help them discern a sense of calling. Four Anna Chaplaincy hubs were created: **Bromley**; **Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells**; **Medway**; **Dartford, Gravesend and Cobham**.



Training – training needs were analysed and a new licensed lay ministry module on Anna Chaplaincy introduced in March 2017.








Commissioning – On 11 April 2017 Bishop James commissioned 24 people as Anna Friends and Anna Chaplains working across 12 deaneries: eight Anna Chaplains (of whom four are leaders of the hubs); 16 Anna Friends.

115 of 186 parishes in the Diocese actively engaged in the project (62%). Anna Chaplaincy is now in 10 deaneries out of 17; it has a presence in 20 parishes and Rochester Cathedral, and five new parishes are joining.

3 – Other ways the project developed support for people with dementia

Spin-offs during the project included churches taking positive steps to increase awareness of dementia and ways of supporting people with dementia and their families. The project contributed to national and regional conversations.

<p>Dementia cafes and other social activities</p> 	<p>5 churches in the diocese (in Rochester, Dartford, Chelsfield, Tonbridge and Chislehurst) set up new dementia cafes with training, support and guidance from the Diocese. Parishes have adapted established social and community activities to include those with memory problems. We commissioned and helped design a new conversation game, Table Talk for Fourth Agers.</p>
<p>Information events</p> 	<p>To enable people to find out what help is available in their area, parishes held events with local providers of care and support. An event on 16 April 2016 at St Matthew's Wigmore in Gillingham deanery was planned with the help of 10 local organisations and attended by over 150 people.</p>
<p>Dementia friendly services</p> 	<p>Three churches have introduced special services aimed at those with dementia, and others are planning to. This was enabled by two workshops on dementia friendly worship. Many parishes are now holding services which cater better for people with dementia in care homes.</p>
<p>Contributing to events</p> 	<p>Other organisations in Kent, Bromley, Bexley and Medway have invited us to contribute to events, either through planning or speaking on the day, for instance about the importance of meeting spiritual needs in dementia, including at a Kent-wide conference in Herne Bay on 29 September 2016.</p>
<p>Working with retreat houses</p> 	<p>We have two retreat houses in the Diocese (St Benedict's in West Malling and Burrswood in Groombridge). Anna Chaplaincy support is enabling them to address how they reach out to people with dementia and their families, resulting in new regular activities.</p>

<p>Carer support activities</p> 	<p>Two parishes have offered new activities for carers of people with dementia - including a carers café, a learning group on dementia, and a monthly support group. The Diocese is offering spiritual direction to carers of people with dementia and working with carers' organisations to consider ways of addressing unmet needs.</p>
<p>Partnering with local dementia organisations</p> 	<p>We work closely with organisations who share our goal of supporting people with dementia. They help in running events and setting up new activities. We have strong links with the new dementia hubs in Bromley and Northfleet. The project officer has joined the board of Age UK Medway as a dementia specialist.</p>
<p>Being part of a social change movement</p> 	<p>The Dementia Action Alliance is driving efforts to create dementia friendly communities. The Diocese has been represented in local and regional DAAs, contributing the experience/expertise of churches. The project officer is a founding steering group member of Medway DAA and has spoken at DAA events in Kent and Bromley.</p>
<p>Increasing skills and knowledge</p> 	<p>Our Dementia Friends Champions ran regular Dementia Friends sessions, and we also delivered: 10 dementia awareness events; 3 half-day workshops on running a dementia café; 2 training days on worship and faith in dementia; 3 events on Anna Chaplaincy. The project officer spoke at 14 parish, deanery and diocesan events and wrote articles for parish and diocesan publications.</p>
<p>Giving people with dementia & carers a voice</p> 	<p>A group of 20 'experts by experience' has guided our work to raise awareness and increase support for people with dementia. They have shared their stories with the project officer and spoken at learning events. Parishes consult and involve local people in setting up activities.</p>
<p>Joining with colleagues in the Anglican Church</p> 	<p>We have and shared ideas and resources with other dioceses working on dementia, speaking at a July 2016 General Synod fringe meeting and The Liturgical Commission's national conference in April 2017.</p>

Feedback on the Anna Chaplaincy

Questionnaires were sent to 65 individuals in late April 2017, asking them to reflect on the impact of the project and their hopes for the future of our work.

Recipients	Questions	sent	replied	%
Anna Friends and Chaplains	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Is this a new ministry, or is Anna Chaplaincy supporting roles you had already? 2 What have you gained from joining the diocesan Anna Chaplaincy network? 3 What are your hopes for the future of Anna Chaplaincy in Rochester Diocese? 4 Any other thoughts? 	24	17	71%
Carers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Has the project to introduce Anna Chaplaincy in Rochester Diocese made a difference to how needs of people with dementia are understood and met in church life? If so, how? 2 What are your hopes for the future of Anna Chaplaincy in Rochester Diocese? 3 Any other thoughts? 	10	5	50%
Lay and ordained ministers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Has the project to introduce Anna Chaplaincy in Rochester Diocese made a difference to how needs of people with dementia are understood and met in church life? If so, how? 2 What are your hopes for the future of Anna Chaplaincy, and ministry with people with dementia, in Rochester Diocese? 3 Any other thoughts? 	20	4	20%
Local organisations working with people with dementia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Does having a project on dementia, introducing Anna Chaplaincy in Rochester Diocese, enable your organisation to work in partnership with local churches? If so, how? 2 How would you like us to develop work in churches to support people with dementia in the future? How can we best complement the support your organisation offers? 3 Any other thoughts? 	11	7	64%
	Total	65	33	51%

So in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. (Romans 12: 5, Bible New International Version)

What Anna Chaplains and Anna Friends told us

New or continuing role?

For several people, this is a new pastoral ministry, whereas for others it is affirming and adding to an existing role in church life.

Gains?

- ✓ *Mutual support*
- ✓ *Networking opportunities*
- ✓ *Mutual sharing of skills, knowledge and good practice*
- ✓ *Confidence*
- ✓ *Encouragement*
- ✓ *Affirmation*
- ✓ *Enrichment*
- ✓ *Inspiration*
- ✓ *Awareness of other organisations*
- ✓ *Awareness of spiritual needs*
- ✓ *New skills*
- ✓ *New directions of thought*
- ✓ *Feeling less isolated in ministry*
- ✓ *Learning opportunities*
- ✓ *Shared vision*

'I have shared ideas and gained confidence in how I can develop my work with older people. It has been particularly valuable to meet with other people who look positively at the contribution older people make, and who can also appreciate the benefits on us, the people who do this work. The experience has fired my enthusiasm!'

Future hopes for Anna Chaplaincy?

- ✓ *More Anna Chaplains/Friends*
- ✓ *Greater involvement in local communities*
- ✓ *Churches working together and ecumenical links*
- ✓ *Churches more aware and better equipped*
- ✓ *People with dementia feeling welcome at church*
- ✓ *Valuing older people ministry*
- ✓ *Valuing wisdom of old age*
- ✓ *That I can help, listen, and be a trusted friend*
- ✓ *Training on leading worship*
- ✓ *All parishes to have a person leading work with older people*
- ✓ *More parish activities designed for people with dementia*
- ✓ *Written guidance and materials to support activities*

'I hope through Anna Chaplaincy elderly people and those affected by dementia will feel included, loved and cared for with the compassion they deserve, through dementia friendly church services, cafes or other social activities, or through individual support.'

What carers told us

Impact of the project?

Carers felt the project had created more awareness of dementia in church life, and greater insight into the needs of carers, particularly the impact of dementia on faith. They said it had contributed to more dementia friendly activities being offered, both social activities and opportunities for worship. One carer added a note of caution, sensing her parish had moved on to the next issue and that it is easy for churches to make 'token gestures' of support.

Future hopes for Anna Chaplaincy and dementia ministry?

Carers all felt that having named individuals, such as Anna Chaplains, working in a parish or group of churches, would ensure the needs of people with dementia were not forgotten, including those in care settings. They talked about the risk of individuals becoming invisible when they no longer came to church. Carers feel isolated at home and value friends from church popping in for tea. Care home residents need spiritual encouragement and fellowship at a time of life when their faith is a key source of strength and hope.

'I cared for my husband. It was a difficult time and as a carer I felt very alone. Since he died so much has been put in place in local churches. It would have been very helpful had the help been around when he was ill. How I longed to be able to talk with someone.'
(wife)

'We need Anna Chaplains in every deanery so carers know who to contact and parishes are encouraged to look at ways they could support.'(wife)

'I would like to see Anna Chaplains in every part of the Diocese supporting faith, encouraging those who are living with dementia to join in while they are able and giving them appropriate support when they are no longer able to be part of the congregation. Also visiting and leading worship in care homes. An Anna Chaplain would be very important to someone who was still able to respond to a familiar hymn or bible reading.'(wife)

'Carers are reticent to acknowledge that anything is wrong and struggle on before asking for help. This is where Anna Chaplains are vital, as they can perhaps take the first tentative steps to helping people acknowledge what is going on so they start to get the help they will need. I am hoping that in 20-30 years' time dementia will not be the taboo it is at present – I think the Anna Chaplaincy programme will go a long way to helping this happen.'(daughter)

What lay and ordained ministers told us

'I think the profile of dementia needs has been raised and this has enabled churches in the deanery to think more seriously about how to make links with and refer folk to the new dementia hub opening locally. I hope that there will be an Anna Chaplain in each deanery at least, a contact point for ministry teams as a link between agencies locally offering assistance and advice, and people with dementia and their families. Also, I hope that dementia cafes could be set up co-operatively within clusters of churches. I hope that no-one with dementia will feel excluded from any church service, so special training for worship leaders should be increased. Also, I hope the way in which people with dementia are cared for by families from non-white ethnic backgrounds could be taken into consideration.'

(Rev Richard Martin, vicar of Holy Family and St Margaret's Gravesend)

'Having an Anna Chaplain has meant that we have a trained person going in to one of the care homes locally. It seems to have increased our confidence. We have set up a Sunday afternoon tea for older people, getting 35-40 people each month, and the group running this benefitted from your Dementia Friends training. The training is more effective done in home groups – I think the need for this level of training is endless and invaluable. As time goes on there will be a smaller and smaller pool of collective memory – at the moment most people have knowledge of the same hymns and general pieces of liturgy from their childhood – we are going to need far more help and training when there aren't these memory hooks.'

(Rev Sheila Perkins, associate vicar at St Stephen's Tonbridge)



'In my opinion, the condition of dementia has become less stigmatised and more comprehensively understood. My hope would be that there will be further growth in Anna Chaplaincy. Perhaps there is a role for the team to share their enthusiasm in the deaneries so that members of other churches 'catch' their enthusiasm and recognise that they too may have a calling. It would be good if every church had someone who is able to recognise the signs of dementia and know how to offer support to that person but also help to educate other members of the congregation in appropriate ways of showing Christian love. I hope this work can continue as it is essential that what has already been achieved can be rolled out to the churches that are yet to see it as something that affects us all in some way, rather than people in other places. I hope the work goes from strength to strength.'

(Rev Sue Brewer, area dean of Gravesend and vicar of Christ Church Milton)



What people in dementia care leadership roles told us

'When appropriate, it would be good to offer an Anna Chaplain to those who have been more recently diagnosed so the volunteer and those with the diagnosis can share the journey as the disease progresses.'

Nicola Fishman,
Bromley Dementia Support Hub



'I would like to see someone within the church ensure the quality of this work, like is being done currently, as the danger is it becomes well-meaning but not very effective.'

Katie Antill, Alzheimer's Society



'It would be really useful to know what dementia-specific services local churches have so that we can pass this information on to people who use our organization.'

Lesley Knight, Alzheimer's & Dementia Support Services



'Having Rochester Diocese as such supportive members of the Medway Dementia Action Alliance is helping people with dementia living in Medway to maintain their spirituality.'

Jane Page,
Medway Dementia Action Alliance



'We have found working in partnership with local churches raises awareness of what services we have to offer and we also learn more about what others can do to support people living with dementia.'

Heather Woolley, Age UK Medway



'For the future, the biggest thing is raising awareness in churches of dementia. This will enable those with dementia to be part of the community for longer with many around to support them and their families.'

Trudy Donachie, Medway Carers First



'Having the project has enabled us to work in partnership with local churches as we have one direct route of contact.'

Lorraine Foster, commissioning lead,
Medway Council and Medway CCG

Building On What We Learned – Next Steps

Building Anna Chaplaincy – how we aim to grow

- ✓ Anna Chaplaincy in every parish
- ✓ More dementia cafés and other groups for those with dementia
- ✓ Fresh expressions of worship so that everyone with dementia in our Diocese has the choice to attend services, enjoy fellowship with other Christians and share their faith journey
- ✓ Working with colleagues in Canterbury Diocese to establish Anna Chaplaincy across Kent
- ✓ Appointment of paid Anna Chaplains by parishes (where appropriate) to lead work with older people, following the lead of Bromley Parish Church

Deepening the ministry and building an evidence base

- ✓ Testing and refining the model we have introduced through development of policies, practices and training routes for Anna Chaplaincy, in partnership with The Gift of Years
- ✓ Establishing research partnerships to build an evidence base for Anna Chaplaincy alongside other dioceses and denominations
- ✓ Making the case for spiritual support in dementia, influencing health and care sectors to take account of spiritual needs
- ✓ Researching principles of effective partnerships between churches and providers of care to older people, in reducing risks of social isolation

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