

ChAt

Chaplaincy About Town in Weston-super-Mare

Setting up and running a Chaplaincy

Some businesses have had chaplains for a number of years now and from this experience the following is recommended as good practice. This constitutes the terms of reference on which we at [ChAt](#), recommend a chaplaincy be established and run.

A. Guiding Principles of Chaplaincy

1. Chaplaincy is provided by designated and accredited chaplains visiting stores to interact with people for their emotional and spiritual well-being. Chaplains visit regularly and are available for staff and customers to consult.
2. A chaplain's visits are organized with the agreement of the store management and staff.
3. A chaplain remains independent of the company he or she visits.
4. A chaplain, as a representative of a local faith community, acts as a bridge builder with the store and will be a key contact for developing good community links.
5. The chaplain, as well as offering comfort and help to customers, staff, managers and indeed the whole organisation, is also someone who can help to ask key questions of the way a business operates, the way it fulfils its responsibilities and obligations in the local and wider community - rather like a 'critical friend'.
6. The chaplaincy service is open to all without distinction and is confidential. Confidentiality covers all aspects of a chaplain's work within a store including individual conversations and information about the company and store.
7. Chaplains are motivated by the faith of the tradition from which they come to care for people and communities. They are not there to proselytize but to offer care and comfort, and to be someone to listen non-judgmentally.
8. The chaplaincy is a listening service, not formal counselling, and should be conducted in such a way as to complement existing provision and services.

B. Setting up a Chaplaincy in your store.

1. It is recommended that the chaplain or chaplains will be appointed in consultation with Chaplaincy about Town ([ChAt](#)) for the reasons stated above.
2. All chaplains should have had an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check. All [ChAt](#) chaplains will have undergone this process and have been appointed in line with our recruitment policy.

3. All chaplains should be covered for insurance purposes. They are not colleagues and may not be covered by your company insurance, even though they are in the store in an official appointed capacity. [ChAt](#) will arrange insurance for their accredited volunteers.

4. The store would provide orientation as part of the induction of a chaplain on the background to the company and the industry.

5. It is good practice for the store to designate a 'Key Contact' for the chaplain or chaplains. The key contact would be the main administrative link between the store and the chaplain, for example in respect of:

- Liaising with the chaplain concerning times and dates of visits and how they should be publicized.

- Providing information to the chaplain about new policies and procedures.

- Providing input on behalf of the store and its colleagues at regular reviews.

6. The chaplain will undergo an induction process by the Key Contact or other appropriate person. This would include orientation on health and safety, fire safety & emergency procedures, and all other relevant policies.

7. The chaplain would normally act as a volunteer. The only cost therefore would be in terms of publicity (leaflets, a name badge, posters etc.), equipment (high-visibility vest etc.) and possibly transport. Some stores may wish to cover the cost of refreshments. Agreements about such costs would be a local matter between the store and [ChAt](#).

C. How Chaplaincy will be conducted.

1. Confidentiality at all times will be emphasized to chaplain and colleagues.

2. Times, days and frequency of a chaplain's visits and the degree of access will be agreed with the Key Contact, as will how visits are to be publicized (Colleague Newsletter, notices in the store, leaflets for the chaplains to give out etc.) As a guide it is recommended that visits should be weekly for 1-4 hours, on different days and at different times. As the chaplain(s) would have a role in respect of colleagues as well as customers this will ensure as many colleagues as possible would have access to the chaplain. If possible occasional late evening visits should be included.

3. The store should provide as full access as possible for the chaplain(s). The chaplain(s) should take care not to disrupt business either by disturbing customers or colleagues whilst they are busy. This will include, where possible, access to a confidential space (a private room for example) for use as need arises. Access will include the shop floor but also offices, the warehouse and other places where colleagues are at work behind the scenes where it is easier to talk to such colleagues. A key location in this respect is the colleague restaurant.

4. Chaplain(s) should sign in and out as visitors in the normal way and have badges that identify them as chaplains but are different to normal colleagues' badges. This will avoid confusing customers into assuming they are colleagues who can and will carry out normal activities such as directing customers to different parts of the store, helping with carrying items etc. for which they are not insured or trained.

5. The store should provide to chaplains relevant information about staff developments and changes in order to achieve the most effective Chaplaincy service to staff. Induction for new colleagues will include information on the Chaplaincy service.

6. In addition to visiting in the store Chaplaincy could include participation in meetings, colleague circles, focus groups, colleague training and other occasions as will serve to develop the Chaplaincy.

D. Accountability and Review

1. Chaplains operate at all stores as visitors and not by right. As such they are responsible to the HR person (or otherwise directed) for the way the Chaplaincy is conducted. Issues that arise in respect of how the Chaplaincy is carried out shall be initially addressed between the chaplain and the Key Contact.

2. A review of each Chaplaincy will be undertaken at least annually. This will involve the chaplain, the Key Contact and the **ChAt** Lead Chaplain. The purpose of this review will be to consider the benefits of the Chaplaincy to the various parties and draw up proposals for further development of the Chaplaincy at that site. This might include, amongst other things, identifying;

- a. Further training and support needs of the chaplain.
- b. Any issues affecting how the Chaplaincy is conducted.
- c. Opportunities for extending Chaplaincy.

A brief written report noting the scope of the Chaplaincy over the previous 12 months and detailing the conclusions from the review meeting will be published and passed the **ChAt** Trustees.

Revd. Gill Putnam

Chaplaincy about Town Ltd