

February 2025

Thank you for your continued interest in SWCC. Here is our latest news..

STAFF & TRUSTEE CHANGES

We are delighted that we have welcomed two new members of staff to join the team - Jim as our Project Support Administrator and Merrill as our SALT Community Chaplain. They bring a wealth of knowledge and experience with them, which will be an asset to the work of SWCC. Jim will be in the office Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings and Merrill will be working Monday, Tuesday and Wednesdays. We have also said goodbye to one of our long standing and much valued Trustees, John Robinson. He will be missed! Thank you John for all you have done for SWCC. We wish you well for the future.

As Spring approaches, we have our own new Leaf blossoming! We are delighted to announce the roll out of our Lived Experience Advisory Forum (LEAF). The Forum is made up of members who have lived experience of the criminal justice system working alongside the SWCC staff team. Our aim is that this will be a community of practice whose primary concern is the wellbeing of our clients. LEAF will contribute to the development, improvement and dissemination of best practice in support of the work of SWCC. The group will be meeting on a monthly basis to help us deliver better outcomes, as well as be a great resource not only for our Trustees, Chaplains and Mentors but to the wider Community Chaplaincy Association.

The LEAF team is currently looking at a number of projects. These include working alongside the Community Chaplains and our Mentors to support clients, sharing insight and motivation through their lived experience. They are also in the early stages of building a Community Award scheme to recognise and promote the good work of people across the criminal justice system and beyond. If you would like to know more about the vision and work of LEAF, please do get in touch. We are excited for the potential that this amazing project has and look forward to seeing it grow.



FINANCES

We are delighted to be able to report that with the wonderful grants and donations we have been given, we have been able to secure all the finances we need for this financial year and anticipate having a modest surplus. A huge thank you to all who have so generously given to support the work. We are now concentrating on the new financial year, which begins on the 1st April 2025, and so far we have been able to secure about 70% of the £227,000 we will need, leaving approximately a further £65,000 to find.

Chaplains Chat...

The story is told of a man who just loved old books. He spent hours searching in bookshops and auctions, and the walls of his house were lined with bookcases, containing ancient old tomes in lovely old bindings. His knowledge on old books was second to none.

One day, he was chatting to an acquaintance, who just happened to mention that he had been clearing out the attic of his ancestral home and had thrown out a dust-covered old Bible he found that had been sitting there for generations. "I couldn't read it", the man explained. "Somebody named Guten-something-or-other had printed it." "Not Gutenberg!" the book lover cried in horror. "That Bible was one of the first books every printed. Why, a copy sold recently for well over a million pounds!" His friend was unimpressed. "Mine wouldn't have even been worth 50p. Some chap called Martin Luther had scribbled all over it in German." It is possible, is it not, to discard something of great worth, not appreciating its true value?

We live in a world where, sadly, when it comes to prisoners, there is a common mantra that goes 'lock 'em up and throw away the key'. Many people who have lived experience of the criminal justice system feel that they have been discarded, rejected, thrown out, excluded. But, the truth is that each person is unique and of inestimable worth. As it says in our mission statement, 'The foundations of SWCC are derived from Christian faith-based principles, not least of hope, compassion, forgiveness, the intrinsic uniqueness and value of every person, and the possibility of change and renewal for all, regardless of what has happened in the past.'

A huge thank you to all our volunteers, supporters, staff, trustees and many others, who give of their time and their talents in so many different ways to value, to treasure and to bring hope to people of very great worth, whom society has mistakenly rejected.



You may remember the Go-Bag project SWCC has started recently? Over the last few months, we have been able to send out to those leaving prison both small rucksacks containing some essential items, and some larger ones with camping essentials for those released who would be homeless. These have been well received as one delighted person said...

'Opening the Go-Bag was like Christmas!'

We continue to look for ways to bring hope & value to our clients.

Training

We are about to begin our next Induction Training for new mentors who are largely based in the Cornwall area. If you or anyone you know might be interested in learning more about being a mentor with SWCC, please get in touch as we plan another Induction Training in May!

