

Development Plan 2024 - 2026

Meeting the Challenge: Sustaining Workplace Chaplaincy in Worcestershire

Faith at Work in Worcestershire (FWW) has a long track record promoting and encouraging the Church's mission in the economy of the county. For 50 years this has been financially underpinned by the generous support of many individuals, businesses, congregations and denominational bodies.

The current context presents us with new challenges of sustaining our work in the face of increasing pressure on Church finances, locally and county wide. Since 2018 the annual expenditure for FWW has risen from £31K to £38K, with the majority covered by grants, including from our denominational partners, and donations from local congregations and supporters. From 2024 denominational partners have told us this level of support is unlikely to be available.



In producing a 3 year plan for 2024 – 2026 we have to begin by recognising this trend. But we also know that the need for chaplaincy in the workplace continues to grow. The present economic pressures we face are also very real for businesses and organisations across Worcestershire. The challenge is to sustain, and indeed, grow our mission, but at a much lower financial cost.

Meeting the Challenge

Whilst we acknowledge the challenges, we also want to renew our commitment to those at work in the varied workplaces of the County, and affirm that we believe God is calling us to continue our mission of chaplaincy. More than this, we believe that God will provide the people and resources for us to continue this vital work.

We do though need to find ways of doing more with less. To this end we set ourselves the objective of becoming a 100% volunteer led organisation by January 2026. We currently employ two part-time staff, and maintain an office at Top Barn Business Centre. This accounts for 84% of our annual expenditure.

We are fortunate to be in a position to make the changes needed to achieve this objective of becoming a volunteer-led organisation over a period of more than two years. FWW has some financial reserves as a result of a one-off generous grant from Kidderminster Industrial Chaplaincy in 2021.¹ With this, and increasing donations from individual and congregational Supporters of FWW, we are able to plan for a measured transition.

Planning for Change

As well as adjusting finances we also need to develop new leadership and volunteer roles to replace our current staff, as they retire.

We already rely on volunteers in many ways. All our chaplains and trustees are volunteers. We do need though to develop new volunteer roles and refresh our current team. This will include, amongst other things:

- Developing the role of local chaplaincy leader. Most chaplaincy is undertaken locally – by a group ranging from just a few people, to ten. One or more people need to take on local leadership – co-ordination, planning, recruiting and managing the team. This already happens, but needs to be further developed.
- New volunteer roles to take over tasks currently undertaken by staff, including safeguarding, training, publicity, bookkeeping and account management, maintaining the website and our network of Supporters and contacts, data management, seeking new opportunities for chaplaincy in new sectors of the economy, and so on.
- Reviewing and revising the structure of the charity, and the makeup of the Board of Trustees, as well as recruiting new trustees to take on this key role in the next phase of our work. Without a part-time Development Officer, leadership of the charity, and of the work on the ground, will need to take new forms, which will depend on those then involved, the continuing support of workplace chaplaincy by congregations and denominational bodies, and God’s gracious provision.



It will take time to implement these changes, which is why having the resources to manage this over a period, is a great advantage.

¹ Kidderminster Industrial Chaplaincy (KIC) was set up as a separate charity supporting full time chaplains to the carpet industry in the town in the 1970s. This included providing a house for a full-time chaplain. As the industry, and the ministry, contracted this asset was sold and funds invested in local projects, including an annual grant to Worcestershire Industrial Mission, which was continued after WIM changed its name to Faith at Work in Worcestershire in 2008. In 2021 the KIC trustees dissolved their charity, transferring the remaining funds to FWW for the continued support of industrial mission through chaplaincy across the county.

Budgets

Including proposals to reduce costs by:

- Closing the FWW Office at Top Barn Business Centre by the end of 2024.
- End of paid employment contracts for Communications & Administration Officer and Development Officer due to anticipated retirements.

The impact of expected changes on budgets is summarised in figure 1, which includes a modest annual increase in costs of 3%.

Figure 1

	2024	2025	2026
INCOME	£	£	£
SFWW & Donations	2500	2500	2500
Grants	19250	14000 ²	4000
Total Income	21750	16500	6500
EXPENDITURE	£	£	£
Staff costs	34145	19179	0
Office Costs	3508	0	0
Administration	1262	1300	2000
Insurance	361	371	382
Enabling Chaplaincy	1594	1638	3500
Running the charity	151	156	618
Total Expenditure	41020	22644	6500
WCM UK Expenses recovery	-2966	0	0
Gross Expenses	38053	22644	6500
<i>From Reserves (excluding KIC)</i>	<i>16303</i>	<i>6144</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Reserves at year end</i>	<i>43867</i>	<i>27723 ²</i>	<i>27723</i>

In 2026 we have budgeted for higher costs of running the charity, including reimbursing of volunteer expenses.

The overall impact on our reserves, once the annual deficit and KIC future funding drawdown is taken into account, is to reduce funds to £27,700 at the beginning of 2026. With a balanced budget finances should thereafter remain steady.



² 2025 sees the final draw down of £10,000 from the KIC legacy fund.