

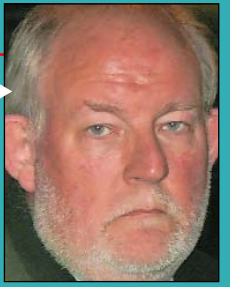
# GOOD NEWS

FOR NORWICH & NORFOLK

Easter 2012: FREE

## Inside

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## Delia defends Christians in Lent appeal plea



■ Delia Smith has leapt to the defence of Christian belief while launching an appeal to raise cash for development charity CAFOD and offering a chance to spend a VIP day with her at Norwich City.

Well known cookery writer and a devout Catholic, Delia Smith is calling on her online followers to support the work of the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development in their Lent fundraising campaign to provide clean, safe water in some of the poorest countries in the world.

As an incentive, Delia is offering supporters the chance to enter a competition to win an exclusive VIP day out for four at a Norwich home game, joining Delia (who is a joint majority shareholder at the club) and her family for a Champagne lunch before the game.

At the same time, Delia has taken the opportunity to

leap to the defence of Christian belief, which she sees as under attack in public.

"I am, as you may or may not know, a passionate believer but of late, we are somewhat under the cosh," said Delia. "There is a running battle going on in the press, and militant neo-Atheists and devout secularists are busting a gut to drive us off the radar and try to convince us that we hardly exist."

"Whilst the belief battle grabs the headlines, one thing we all stand united on is hopefully our common belief in human life and human flourishing."

The Government have pledged to match fund all donations to CAFOD, doubling their value and the campaign, and competition, ends on May 17.

[www.cafod.org.uk](http://www.cafod.org.uk)  
[www.deliaonline.com](http://www.deliaonline.com)

# Football agent is answer to prayer

By KEITH MORRIS

**T**he football agent who answered Norwich City's prayers by helping to bring star player and captain Grant Holt to the club, believes that faith and football is a winning combination.

Lee Payne had a successful professional career himself with top clubs in both England and Holland and is now a FIFA-registered football agent, living in Norwich.

He helped to make possible leading striker Grant's move to Norwich City from Shrewsbury Town in 2009, and also his signing of a new three-year contract with the Canaries last May – a negotiation assisted by a little divine intervention, according to Lee.

"Holt's contract was due for renewal and I flew from my home in Brazil to have a meeting with Norwich City's chief executive David McNally," said Lee. "The Canaries were at home on the Saturday before my meeting on the Monday. In my hotel room, I laid it before God in prayer and asked him to bless the situation and make it as easy as possible. Grant had had two tremendous years at Norwich, back-to-back promotions, two player of the year awards, top goalscorer and he wanted rewarding for that. There had been one or two players before who tried to renegotiate with Norwich and it had been a long drawn-out affair. Holt did not want that.

"Norwich were playing

Scunthorpe United and it was a beautiful day. I prayed that Grant would have a good game. By half-time he had scored a hat-trick and the crowd were singing 'There's only one Grant Holt'. At half time, Delia Smith came onto the pitch to draw a raffle and it was a roll-over so there was a £1000 prize up for grabs. Delia puts her hand in and pulls a ticket out and she looks very surprised when she says 'the winner is – Grant Holt'. It does not get any better does it," said Lee.

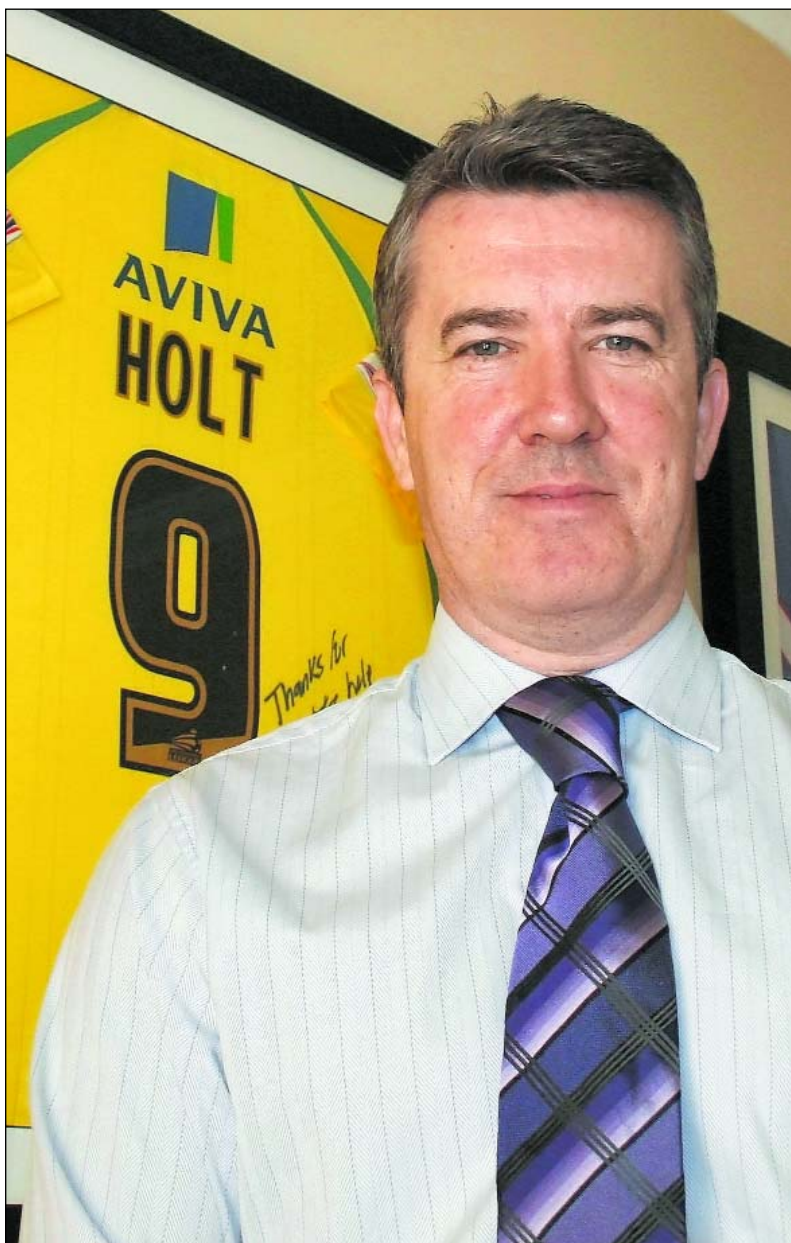
"Grant donated the money to charity, got the man of the match award and I felt that God had answered all my prayers. We went in on the Monday morning and within a couple of hours we had negotiated a new deal.

"Obviously the fact that Grant had had an outstanding couple of years was great, but I felt God's presence throughout that weekend and at the meeting. Grant was overjoyed," said Lee.

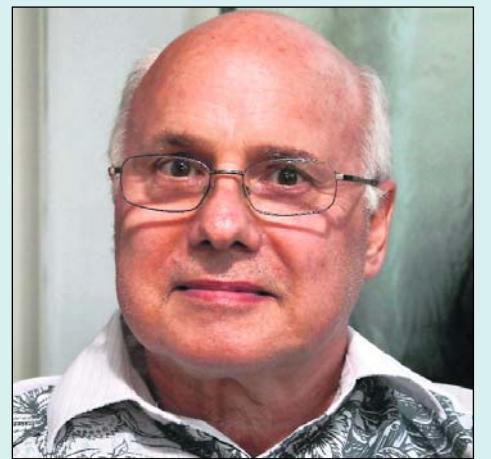
"Grant is a tough guy but a special one and I like to think there might be an England call-up if he keeps on scoring goals. I pray for all my players that they will remain healthy and strong and spiritually in a good place. I think if players stay strong good things can happen for them."

Football is in Lee's blood, with a dad who was a manager of several top non-league football teams. But right from the start, he also felt God's presence in his life despite the fact that his family, like him, were not church-goers.

This belief helped Lee  
■ **Story continues on page 4**



Football agent Lee Payne.



Inspirational story: Eddie Pleban.

## Olympic torch honour for Christian trio

■ Three members of the Norfolk Christian community have been honoured by being named as Olympic Torchbearers when the flame reaches Norfolk on July 4 and 5.

Inspirational former Housing Services Manager, Eddie Pleban, who was given only 48 hours to live by doctors after suffering a stroke during a flight from Australia, is set to carry the Olympic Torch through the Royal Sandringham Estate.

Blind Norwich church minister, Rev Simon Stokes was nominated by Bowthorpe Church administrator Jane Cole from for the difference he has made to the community through his church and non-church work.

At the same time, YMCA Norfolk Fundraising and Communications Manager, Susie Knights, has been honoured for her commitment to raising funds for the YMCA in Norfolk and in particular for a £1m appeal towards 40 move-on accommodation units. To date £750,000 has been raised.

Eddie Pleban has made a remarkable recovery from the debilitating stroke which left him paralysed below the neck and unable to breathe for himself, swallow or talk. And he has now pledged that with the help of his physios and family by July 4 he will be able to walk again when carrying the Torch.

From being on a ventilator in a Dubai hospital and then being medically evacuated to the Norfolk & Norwich Hospital, Eddie fought for his life during a courageous eight-month battle. He returned to his home, and devoted wife Jeannie, on Colman Road in Norwich last September and has been inspiring family, friends and medical staff ever since with his iron determination and strong Christian faith.

That fighting spirit has now been recognized after he was nominated to carry the Olympic Torch by his family and in particular daughter Lila, who spoke of his 26 years of work helping homeless young people with YMCA Norfolk and of his battling spirit and determination to recover after the stroke.

Eddie is delighted with the tribute: "For me carrying the torch will be a great honour as it's a landmark in my recovery," he said.

"To think that a year ago I was literally hanging onto life not knowing whether I would walk or talk again. God has been my strength during the last year, always there in the darkest despair."

■ For more on this inspirational trio visit  
[www.networknorfolk.co.uk](http://www.networknorfolk.co.uk)



## GOOD NEWS

FOR NORWICH & NORFOLK

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 This will not only encourage those Christians involved in similar activities but also inform leaders in other churches who are contemplating similar forms of outreach.

■ The deadline for material for the June, Celebrate edition is Friday April 27. It will be available for distribution from Friday May 18.

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## Why prayer is important to government

**Following the recent High Court ruling, and subsequent government statement, about prayers before council meetings, Norfolk County Council Chaplain, Rev Chris Copsey, explains why she believes they are still an important part of local government business.**



■ There has been much debate, since the recent High Court ruling, about prayers at council meetings. I wonder if many of the comments are grounded in misunderstanding? As Chaplain to Norfolk County Council, I lead prayers before full Council meetings. It gives a brief time to stand together in stillness before the formal agenda begins. This time of stillness and reflection gives everyone an opportunity to step aside from the often frantic preparation before the meeting and collect their thoughts before a short prayer.

Each prayer is an expression of thanksgiving, concerns, hopes and aspirations for the tasks to be debated, planned and decided upon. The prayers are centred around universal themes - justice, integrity, discernment and good provision for communities in all their diverse needs. These prayers are offered with no sense of exclusion or compulsion, so that those of all faiths and none can approach them in their own way. These prayers are to continue to be offered, with the wonderful opportunity for personal and

corporate reflection for the elected members and Officers of Norfolk County Council who can share a sense of common purpose and know God's grace.

These formal prayers are only part of the Chaplain's role in this busy workplace. The Chaplain takes a part in leading Remembrance and Christmas services as well as Armed Forces Day and an interfaith commemoration of Holocaust Memorial Day.

As the Chaplain at County Hall in Norwich, I am available to both officers and members of Norfolk County Council, of all religious faiths and none. My role includes being alongside people in the workplace; to share their anxieties, delight in their joys and to listen to personal or work related matters.

Work is normally demanding but it can be very stressful if change or circumstances challenge self-confidence or job security. It's particularly true at times of illness, bereavement or other personal or family pressures.

These pastoral encounters are a large part of the job and sign-posting to other professionals and faith leaders is part of the chaplaincy support.

## Bringing Easter alive

**T**he Easter story will be brought to life in an innovative new way through a series of co-ordinated events staged by six churches in various locations across Norwich city centre on Good Friday (April 6).

The Easter Journey will include a reading of the Passion on London Street, a short service with the international leader of the Salvation Army, General Linda Bond, on Gaol Hill, drama outside City Hall, children's plays on Millennium Plain, silent reflection on Hay Market and Easter eggs being given away at Chapelfield.

The six events will all be linked together by the procession of a large wooden cross from one to another, starting at the Anglican Cathedral at 11.45am and finishing at Chapelfield Road Methodist Church at 3pm. People are welcome to join in the whole journey or just enjoy one or two events.

The inspiration for the Journey has come from chair of Transforming Norwich, Rev Madeline Light.

"A few years ago at a Transforming Norwich Annual meeting someone asked why we walked through the city at 5pm on Good Friday when there are so few people about," she said. "So this year we decided to extend this walk so that between 12 noon and 3pm the cross is going to move slowly through the busy streets carried by different churches. It will, we hope, be a way of introducing more people to the story of Good Friday and Easter Sunday.



"Six different churches are going to present different aspects of the story in music, reading, drama and silent meditation. We hope that this will lay the foundations for the possibility of a Passion Play in our city sometime in the future."

Madeline has been on a journey of faith herself: "Brought up a Roman Catholic, married to a Methodist and now an Anglican minister, the movement that drew churches together was a place of common ground," she explained. "The differences of theology, liturgy and church culture were put aside for a walk of solidarity and unity."

"A younger generation of Christians take unity for granted. People move between churches in a way that is quite new. So there is a greater sense of being Christian and a great confusion about why there are denominations. Church unity is still a challenge but not an

insurmountable barrier.

"The big concern for many churches now is how to relate to those who have never been to church. Church-going can seem a minority hobby, irrelevant to normal, everyday life. However, we know that at the heart of our faith is a remarkable story that changes perspectives and changes lives and many people do not know that story," said Madeline.

The traditional Walk of Reconciliation will also still take place in Norwich city centre from Chapelfield Road Methodist at 4.45pm, ending with an ecumenical service at the Anglican Cathedral from 6pm.

A leaflet that plots the route and tells the story behind the Easter Journey can be downloaded from the Transforming Norwich website on [www.networknorfolk.co.uk](http://www.networknorfolk.co.uk) and will be given out at all points during the Journey.

### Easter Journey

- 11.45am Start – Anglican Cathedral
- 12 noon (London Street) – Reading the Passion, Derek Haylock and members of Surrey Chapel
- 12.30pm (Taxi Rank on Gaol Hill) – Service with General Linda Bond - International leader of The Salvation Army
- 1pm (War Memorial opposite City Hall) – Drama, Norwich Family Life Church
- 1.30pm (Millennium Plain outside The Forum) – Children's Plays, Eternity Church
- 2pm (Hay Market) – Silent Meditation, St George Tombland
- 2.30pm (St Stephen's Chapelfield) – Easter Egg distribution, Norwich Central Baptist Church
- 3pm Finish – Chapel Field Road Methodist Church

### Other events

- 12 noon to 3pm – Meditation on the Cross, St Peter Mancroft
- 12 noon to 2pm – Children's Event, Norwich Anglican Cathedral
- 4.45pm Walk of Reconciliation – Chapel Field Road Methodist Church to Anglican Cathedral
- 6pm Ecumenical Service – Anglican Cathedral



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# Clarke defends role of faith in society

With the place of faith in society under ever-increasing attack from secularists and atheists, the agnostic former Home Secretary and Norwich South MP, Rt Hon Charles Clarke, has sprung to its defence. **Keith Morris** reports.

In an interview in the Telegraph newspaper and an article written for the Catholic Tablet news weekly, Mr Clarke has nailed his colours firmly to the mast.

"It's time to talk openly, confidently and in a well-informed way about the place of faith in Britain," he said.

"My work in inner-city Hackney in the early 1980s convinced me, despite my personal agnosticism, that the contribution of religion overall is usually a force for good. Almost every leader of the voluntary, community and charitable organisations which promoted education, social care and community strength, did it because of their own committed religious faith.

"Whatever their religion, they were not engaged in some sinister recruitment campaign. They wanted to fulfil the faith values by which they had chosen to live.

"That should be unsurprising because the main faiths of the world all promote love, understanding, respect and hope, care by the strong for the weak and societies based upon justice."

It was the terrorist bomb attacks on the London Underground on July 7, 2005, that crystallized the issue for Mr Clarke, Home Secretary at the time, as he told the Telegraph:

"One of the main fears that morning was that there would be massive anger against the Muslim community, with riots and attacks. I asked the main faith leaders to come together in my office that afternoon, to make a statement about the importance of living together and acknowledge that these terrible acts were not the responsibility of the Muslim community as a whole. They were delighted to do that."

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Chief Rabbi and leading Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus joined together. In that moment, Mr Clarke began to realize that New Labour had made a big mistake. "We as a government didn't know how to talk about faith, or how to talk to people of faith. We weren't clear how we were thinking about the place of faith in Britain."

Alastair Campbell had famously said Labour didn't "do" God. "I've always thought that was overstated," said Mr Clarke. "He was reacting against the idea that Tony Blair would claim he had a particular insight because he happened to be a Christian."

In his home and former constituency of Norwich, Mr Clarke has seen first hand Christian organizations directly involved in social action.

During his unsuccessful campaign at the last General Election, Mr Clarke took time out to spend an evening in Norwich with Norfolk Street Pastors (now Norfolk Street Partnership) and was very impressed by the work he saw them do.

After spending a couple of hours with the Street Pastors, Mr Clarke told Network



Charles Clarke out with Norfolk Street Pastors in Norwich.

Norfolk: "The most important impression I have, having seen the Street Pastors in action, is that they try to contact and establish a relationship with people who are at various stages of difficulty or even desperation in their lives to try to help them talk through how they might find a way forward which is more constructive.

"I think that that is very good and an important thing. We have been at the Norwich soup kitchen where people, almost by definition, are people who are in difficulty in their lives in some way and that is what you are trying to do.

"I gather from talking to people that that takes a very long time and there are no instant results but I think it is a very positive thing and it is a very important part of a wider provision.

As a former Home Secretary, Mr Clarke also recognizes the importance of faith organisations in the criminal justice system. He wrote in the Tablet: "The place of faith in prison, including the role of prison chaplains and the contribution of religious organisations to reducing re-offending, is a significant part of the criminal justice system."

As a former Education Secretary, Mr Clarke also counters the arguments against a central role for faith organizations in education, usually based upon references to extremists in Belfast or Beirut.

"Surely it is far truer that the promoters of such conflicts abuse the label of faith," wrote Mr Clarke. "Humanists and atheists would rightly deny that beliefs such as theirs lead inevitably to the secular totalitarianism of Stalin, Hitler or Pol Pot. They should not argue that theism leads inevitably to the damaging sectarianism they rightly dislike."

Mr Clarke is now actively engaged in helping others to understand better the practice of religion and faith in our national life. He is one of the organizers of a series of public Faith Debates in Westminster lasting

until May, based on the latest research into the role of religion in public life and co-ordinated by Religion and Society.

Debaters include Richard Dawkins, Trevor Phillips, David Blunkett, Julia Neuberger and Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali. [www.religionandsociety.org.uk](http://www.religionandsociety.org.uk)

## news in brief

### Easter journey for schoolchildren

■ **NORWICH:** Over 360 school pupils will be going on an Easter journey of discovery thanks to an innovative move by a Norwich church.

Oak Grove Chapel, in Catton Grove, is transforming itself into an Easter Island for three days from March 27-29 for the benefit of local primary schools.

The experience, which was developed by staff at Oak Grove Chapel as a creative teaching resource, will lead children through the last week in the life of Christ.

Each child will be given a passport to get through Easter Island customs and then travel in groups of ten around seven zones.

The zones are 'The Think Tent', 'Angry Street', 'The Washing Zone', 'The Meal Zone', 'The Garden Centre', 'Cross Hill' and 'The Graveyard'. As they travel they will hear the claims of Christ, and be challenged to think about the meaning of Easter.

Ian Savory, Senior Pastor of Oak Grove Chapel, said: "Within three weeks of writing to local schools all three days were fully booked and 360 children will go on the Easter journey."

[www.oakgrovechapel.co.uk](http://www.oakgrovechapel.co.uk)

### Church is on the move

■ **WYMONDHAM:** City Church Wymondham has celebrated its move to a new larger home, Wymondham Central Hall, to cope with a growing congregation.

The move will allow the growing congregation to remain centrally based while providing a larger hall for Sunday meetings, which start at 10am and more rooms and facilities for the developing Sunday School and other activities.

Pastor Barry Rooks said: "We are very grateful to the United Reformed Church for allowing us to meet in Fairland Hall over the past few years. However, as we grew steadily in 2011 it became apparent that we needed to look for larger premises."

City Church organise the Wymondham Fun Day, due to take place on Sunday, July 1, from 11.30am at Ketts Park.

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# Football agent Lee helps to answer Norwich City's prayers

## ■ Story continues from page 1

overcome setbacks to his football dreams as a teenager, as he was in and out of hospital with asthma and a growth disease in his knee. By age of 16, Lee had been rejected by a number of football clubs he had trialled for, because of his poor health and low weight.

"I felt that God was still telling me to keep going with my dream," said Lee, "although I did not really understand what the Christian faith was all about – it was just an inner feeling.

Age 20, Lee still had not broken through. He was working on a building site and playing semi-professionally under Barry Fry at non-league Barnet. But his belief kept him focused and on the right path.

"I was asked to play in a trial game by manager David Pleat for Leicester City against Newcastle United. I felt God telling me to play," said Lee.

And it proved his big break-through as two days later all the headlines were "Newcastle sign 21-year-old wing wizard". Newcastle paid a non-league transfer record of £125,000 for Lee and that was the moment his career took off.

"When I arrived at Newcastle one of the first people to talk to me was Gazza," said Lee. "God had created a tremendous platform for me. Within a few weeks I was lining up against Manchester United who had Bruce, Robson, Hughes and Sharpe playing for them.

"God turns the impossible into the possible, like coming from a building site to playing in a top professional team. I got rave reviews and felt I was just glorifying God."

Lee was public about his faith in God but the reaction was mixed. "What I did not realise – because I was not involved in a church at that stage – was the spiritual warfare that I was going to go through over the next couple of years. The reaction to talking about God was incredible. I got a lot of ridicule – I was called Holy Joe.

"I moved on from Newcastle to Reading and I remember one game when at half-time the manager threw a teapot at me and said: 'look son you better change your attitude, you are not putting your foot in any more, you are not

**"God turns the impossible into the possible, like coming from a building site to playing in a top professional team."**

on it and not playing for the team'.

"It really hurt," said Lee. "I thought that my faith was getting in the way of my career, I felt the pressure and started to drift away from God. I felt maybe I could do certain things, like having a drink with the boys. After a while I was unrecognisable – I had money, fame, a sports car and I began to lose my focus. My life started to escalate in the wrong way because I had lost my connection with the Lord.

"A Dutch first division team, BV Veendam, made an offer to buy me. I made the decision to go. It was almost like I was trying to run away from God – like Jonah in the Bible – because I was getting so much ridicule. Although there were some good times in Holland, it was the worst thing I could have done because the country was spiritually dead, churches were closing down. I lost my connection with God and was doing things I could never have imagined before," said Lee.

Lee played top-flight football in Holland for



Lee Payne with Grant Holt at Carrow Road after re-signing for Norwich City.

five years, but between the ages of 26 and 29, he had eight operations that brought his playing career to an end.

"I felt angry with myself because I was going my own way," said Lee. "My career was ending and I was going nowhere. I got to the point where I felt like committing suicide.

"I had played over 100 professional games and had some really good times, but I feel that if I had kept in harmony with the Lord I could have achieved so much more."

Because Lee could speak Dutch he started scouting, becoming European scout for Harry Rednapp who was manager at West Ham at the time. From there, because he was watching so many young players, making the move to becoming a football agent was easy.

As an agent, Lee did some multi-million pound deals such as taking goalkeeper Ben Foster to Manchester United and Birmingham. He was responsible for bringing Jussi Jääskeläinen from Finland to Bolton where he has now played over 500 games. He also represented players such as Bulgaria international Svetoslav Todorov, goalkeeper Paddy Kenny, midfielder Stephen Ireland and Vicente Rodriguez, as evidenced by the signed players' shirts hanging on the walls of his home.

"I was making money and doing deals but it was driving me further from God," said Lee.

Lee was invited to go to Brazil by his former Newcastle colleague, Mirandinha, and it was there he met and fell in love with future wife Christina, with whom he now has two teenage daughters, Larissa and Gabrielle.

It was around this time that Lee had an experience which changed his life forever.

Back in Europe, doing some transfer negotiations, Lee went into partnership with a

businessman, who double-crossed him and disappeared with a six-figure sum from a successful deal.

Lee was mad and wanted to go after his partner and teach him a lesson. He went back to his childhood home of Luton to find school-friends who had become "proper villains", according to Lee.

"They said to me, for £1000 we will get your money back but you need to tell us the names of his wife and children.

"I got back into my car and said to God 'what is happening to me, why am I doing this. I cannot go down this road anymore.' I was full of guilt and in my hotel room I felt I needed to rededicate my life to God. I felt He said to me to drop it – so I did. That day I asked Jesus to come back into my life and it was like the

**"I was making money and doing deals but it was driving me further from God."**

Prodigal Son in the Bible. I felt God welcoming me back and the guilt went away – it lifted a big weight off my shoulders.

"I wanted to ring Christina, who was back in Brazil with the girls. But I felt it was too much to say on the phone. Three days later I got back home and said to her, 'I need to tell you something'. She said to me 'I need to tell you something as well'. She went on to tell me that while I had been away the three of them had been watching a Christian missionary on TV every night and they all felt that they wanted to commit themselves to Jesus.

"I could not believe it, it was just incredible.

It was almost like the day I decided to come back to God he has also touched my wife and children across the other side of the world."

Ten days later the whole family were all baptised together at a Baptist church in Fortaleza.

"I can't tell you how much God has blessed my life since that day," said Lee. The family decided to come back to England, so they sold their ten-bedroom home and were in the position to help the local Baptist congregation put a new roof and new frontage on the church before they left.

After Lee's experiences with Grant Holt in Norwich, they decided that the city would be the perfect place to come. The family has just settled into a house in Thorpe St Andrew and joined the Norwich Family Life Church in the city, where they feel really at home.

Lee wants to keep working in football and he has a dream of working with young players and helping get them off on the right foot, using some of his Brazilian experiences.

"In Brazil there are about six born-again Christians in their national team, players like Kaka and Lucio. The football role models in this country are often very poor in comparison," said Lee. "And how many times have they won the World Cup?

"I know what some players still get up to. They play on Saturday and then go out and get drunk. It will take them Sunday to recover and on the training ground on a Monday they are still recovering. Brazilian players go home to their families after the game and then to church on a Sunday morning, so by Monday they are in great shape. Throughout their careers they have a peace.

"There is also a massive gambling culture in football in the UK, which I slipped into when I was younger. We keep hearing stories about players with crippling gambling debts. It can't be doing players any good. Once you allow Jesus into your life and give Him control you can eradicate all that negativity.

"A lot of our players are spiritually in a wrong place with crippling gambling debts or cheating on their wives or they are drinking too much. How can you prepare to play in front of thousands of fans with all that going on?

"The Brazilians have an inner confidence which comes from their faith. Zambia are another great example. As massive underdogs they have just won the Africans Cup of Nations against Ivory Coast. They were all praying in a circle on the pitch after their great victory on penalty kicks.

"I don't think you can ever reach your true potential unless you are working in true harmony with God," said Lee.

Lee believes that there are a growing number of Christians playing professionally in England, many of them from overseas.

"Hernandez gets down his knees to pray at Man United," said Lee. "And David Luiz at Chelsea was recently pictured laying hands on and praying for Fernando Torres on the pitch before a match.

"It is something that can only be good for our football and our culture," he said.

"I still intend to continue working as a football agent," said Lee, "but I hope to be able to use my experience to help young footballers both into the game and to a faith in Jesus and would like to link up with people and organisations with the same outlook."

If you would like Lee to speak at your group or to contact him, e-mail [web@networknorwich.co.uk](mailto:web@networknorwich.co.uk) and we will pass your message on.



# Matthew Project names new chief

By KEITH MORRIS

**T**he Matthew Project, the Norwich-based Christian drug and alcohol service, offering support and advice to local people, has announced Rosalie Weetman as its new chief executive.

Rosalie was Policy and Development Manager for the National Offender Manager Service with national responsibility for Drug Rehabilitation Requirements and has a strong background in probation, specialising in substance misuse.

She said: "I am looking forward to taking up my new position as CEO of the Matthew Project. These are challenging times of significant political and social change in the field of substance misuse, but with the strong positive ethos of the Matthew Project and its highly skilled staff, I know that, together with other local agencies, we will be in a fantastic position to make a real difference to people's lives."

"I have been so blessed by the churches I have attended over the years, with their emphasis on equipping me to live a God-centred life seven days a week and not just on Sundays. I have always tried to ensure that my life and work reflects God's purposes for me and for His world, and I am looking forward to working for the Matthew Project which has its basis in solid Christian principles of social action. No Compromise on Hope" underpins the ethos of the Matthew Project and fits exactly with my own view of working with people with substance misuse problems," she said.

"Together, I believe that we can bring hope to individuals suffering with addiction and help strengthen local communities and families to build resilience against the impact of substance misuse."

Bishop of Norwich, the Rt Rev Graham James, patron of the charity said: "I'm delighted that the Matthew Project has secured someone of the calibre of Rosalie Weetman as its next CEO. It is a tribute to the reputation of the Matthew Project that it has been able to appoint her. Those most grateful



Rosalie Weetman.

will be the many people the Matthew Project serves so well."

Following graduation with a degree in Law with Sociology, Rosalie started working for the Probation Service in 1997 and went on to qualify as a Probation Officer with a Masters degree in Social Work gained from the University of Nottingham. She has since worked in a number of different settings across the UK with a primary focus on offenders and substance misuse, as well as working for a year in the Correctional Service in New Zealand.

In 2005, an opportunity to improve the quality of drug treatment outcomes in Oxford saw her move to work for Thames Valley Probation where she won an Oxford Women's Forum award which enabled her to undertake a post-graduate qualification in Coaching and Mentoring for Leadership. Since moving back to the East Midlands, she has managed the Probation Substance Misuse team in Derby and undertook a four-month regional project evaluating delivery of drug treatment in Probation settings.

Having moved around this country and overseas, Rosalie Weetman has attended a variety of churches, and therefore says she feels fortunate to have experienced many denominations. With every move, she has chosen her church family based on locality and the availability of good teaching rather than specific church traditions.

"I have always placed high value on being involved in small groups, particularly in some of the larger churches I have attended where it is easy to feel disconnected," said Rosalie. "I enjoy the fellowship of building up meaningful and accountable relationships with other Christians, and engaging in discussion-based Bible study. I also enjoy leading worship and singing in my local church worship band."

Having spent her childhood in Lincolnshire, Rosalie has happy memories of holidaying in north Norfolk and says she is delighted to move to such a beautiful and friendly city as Norwich.

Rosalie took up her post on February 29. [www.matthewproject.org](http://www.matthewproject.org)

## news in brief

### Julie's mission inspires beauty and belief hope

■ **NORWICH:** City author Julie Prentice has launched a Beauty & Belief mission to inspire others to look beyond their limitations to enable them to exceed their expectations.

"I have been involved in business for many years, originally in the beauty business but in the last five years I have also helped my husband in our consultancy company," said Julie. It has not always been easy, but the Lord provides. It has established our passion for building people as well as business. God utilizes our talents; I have a passion for good beauty products as well as a passion for helping people feel good about themselves – a bit of pampering can do us the world of good.

"The aim of the course is to show you that if you are prepared to make a few changes to your life for a few weeks it will prove you can become a better you if you want to."

The outreach event is at the Brook Hotel, Bowthorpe Norwich on Friday April 27, at 7pm. Cost is £15 and includes a two-course dinner.

This is a ticket only event, from Julie Prentice at [julie.jules2007@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:julie.jules2007@hotmail.co.uk) or on 01603 261236.



### Pizza and table tennis

■ **HINGHAM:** Offering pizza and table tennis, St Andrews Church in Hingham has launched a new youth cafe project to provide a safe, inspiring space for young people to meet up in the market town.

The church was motivated to start the initiative when it identified a lack of activities for young people in the town.

Zoe Jones, the Youth Cafe Coordinator, explains: "We noticed a growing number of young people within the church of high school age, and were aware of a lack of organised activity for post primary school children in the town. We decided this was a service that the church might be able to provide."

Funding for the pilot stage has been secured from the Diocese of Norwich Sharing the Good News Fund, Momentum and the Youth Task Fund, with support given by Hingham Town Council.

Two more pilot evenings will be held in May and July. If the youth cafe proves successful, it is hoped that it will become a regular event from September.

For more details, contact Zoe on 01953 852314.



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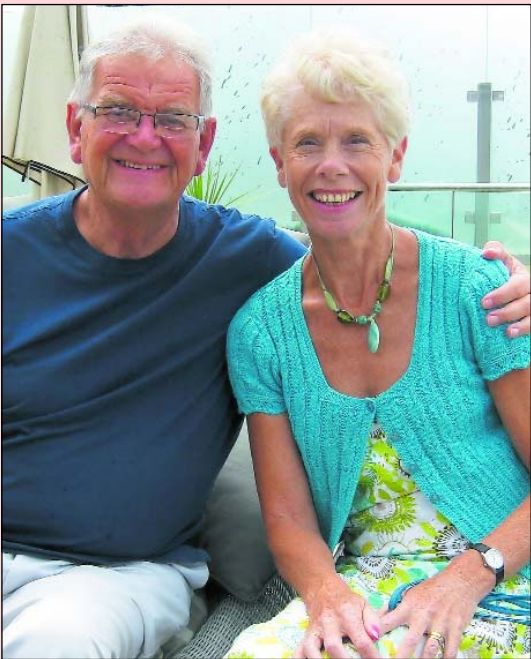
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Wendy Virgo with husband Terry.

## Book aims to empower women

■ **NORWICH:** Nearly two decades ago a night-time awakening began a publishing idea that has enabled Wendy Virgo to help empower thousands of women from across the world. The wife of Newfrontiers' founder, Terry Virgo, was guest speaker at the King's Centre, Norwich on March 17 in a bid to provide a further boost for those who attended the Visions 2012 event for women from East Anglia, Essex and Kent.

Wendy has written a biblical study that cuts across diverse and changing cultures to release today's women into their creative role as wives and mothers. Life Issues was republished in its present format by Suffolk publisher, Last Word Publications, over two years ago. Studies from the book of Titus provide a timeless blueprint for small and large groups of women to understand the biblical principles that will help them flourish, as God intended, in and outside the home explains Wendy.

Wendy recalls her own experiences as a wife: "I was conscious that first and foremost God called me to be Terry's wife and not an apostle's wife. I very definitely felt I was called to be alongside him and as I have looked at the roles of wives, I believe God calls them to help facilitate husbands in what God has called them to do. Being a wife and mother has been a creative release as I have discovered that I can speak, write, use the gifts of God's spirit and pray for people – they have all come in the context of being Terry's wife."

"My own parents were missionary-minded and I came from a loving, disciplined childhood that gave me a stable grounding in life," says Wendy, who used a similar parenting pattern for her own offspring. As a young mother in her early forties, with five children, she had prayed for ways to help other young women at her Brighton Church. The answer came when she was awoken in the night with a bible reference that she was compelled to read. Today that reference – Titus 2 3-5 – has been the foundation stone for her book that has helped empower women to disciple others in the UK as well as Italy, India, America and Australia.

Life Issues imparts godly principles into the heart of home and family for truth and stability in a changing and challenging society. "It is a framework to help women disciple others in their unique roles of marriage and parenting, rather than a manual for marriage and parenting," says Wendy, who is now a grandmother of 13. "It can be used as a study with one or two people or with a bigger group of up to 30 but I prefer it for a group of 12," she adds.

The teaching was piloted nearly 20 years ago in the UK through the Newfrontiers' movement. The tried and tested format was first published by Kingsway as Mainly for Mothers before its current updated version available from [www.lastwordpublications.com](http://www.lastwordpublications.com).

Wendy has written other books including: Leading Ladies, Women Set Free and Mary: Mother of Jesus. By Sandie Shirley



Recent changes in the worldwide family of churches known as Newfrontiers are reflected with the congregations here in Norfolk, as Les Champion reports.

**A**fter 20 years serving as Lead Elder at King's Community Church in Norwich, Goff Hope is switching places with Toby Skipper. Goff will continue to serve as an Elder at King's while spending more time working with other church leaders and churches, both regionally and internationally.

Newfrontiers have over 800 churches in more than 60 nations around the world. Growth and vision is rooted in personal relationship and mentoring among leaders. It was until recently, headed by a leadership team led by Terry Virgo, a well known speaker at Spring Harvest. Now, men who have matured in ministries of an apostolic nature are being released to develop teams and 'spheres of influence' in their own regions in the UK, and around the world.

Here in East Anglia, there is a developing team led by Mike Betts of Lowestoft Community Church. In a note to a Newfrontiers gathering, Mike wrote: "Rarely in church history has

such a daring attempt been made to recreate the essence of New Testament apostolic mission."

King's Church in Norwich, regularly gathers 500 on Sundays and is now based in two locations. The first is the old Lad's Club building on King Street where, since the purchase in the summer of 1997, a multi-faceted ministry has developed including year round conferencing for business and the community, and weekend facilities serving the homeless.

The second location is at the Norman Centre, in Mile Cross where a Sunday meeting is held and soon another building, King's Venue, will be up and running to serve that community.

Recently, the church held a 'Switch' weekend in which, on the Saturday evening, about 300 members gathered for a dinner celebrating 25 years of church family life. A video was shown spanning the years, and photos and stories were swapped and told.

A number of special guests, who had helped steer the church to maturity,

were also present. Each spoke in turn of their recollections, the challenges, and their confidence that God was right at the heart of all that was happening. A presentation and an emotional standing ovation lasting several minutes confirmed Goff and Angie Hope's place in the hearts of the church family.

Then Sunday morning saw the 'Switch' of the lead elder role. Goff Hope and Toby Skipper were prayed for and prophesied over, as was the whole of the eldership team.

The weekend was a landmark occasion for the church, and one member observed: "the combination of the 25 year celebration looking back, followed immediately by the leadership switch was a stroke of genius on the part of the elders."

Toby Skipper says: "Looking back and seeing what God has done in past years helps fuel our faith and encourages us to move forward with confidence into the future, knowing Jesus is in charge and He's promised to build His church - good news indeed!"

## Marking five years as a lifeline on t



Norfolk Street Partnership celebrated its fifth anniversary and commissioned new volunteers, at Princes Street URC in Norwich.

Norfolk Street Partnership is celebrating five years of providing a practical and spiritual lifeline on the late-night streets of Norwich and Norfolk as project administrator Gail Halley reports.





Pictured above is the celebration dinner at King's Community centre in Norwich, below are Goff and Angie Hope and right are Toby and Jean Skipper.



# he late-night streets of Norfolk

■ **NORFOLK:** Believe it or not, it is five years since teams from Norfolk Street Partnership (formerly Norfolk Street Pastors) stepped out onto the streets of Norwich. Those who have been there from the beginning have seen great changes in that time.

To start with, people were unsure about us. They made lots of jokes about what kind of 'pasta' we were (lasagne, spaghetti etc); they were sceptical about our motives ('keep out of their way; they just want to convert you' or 'don't encourage them; that'll be more to pay on our council tax', not realising we are volunteers). There were of course many encouragements too – and not a little curiosity.

We were uniformed, but we were not the police. We had time for people – and that proved to be, and still is, one of our greatest assets. NSP volunteers have spent up to three hours talking to people in difficulty or depression; on a few occasions it could have been a lifesaver when people were seriously contemplating suicide.

We saved a life on that first night too; as a result of various circumstances we ended up

walking past a cafe, and one pastor noticed someone sat at a table with their food but he did not seem to be moving – he was in full view of the window but hidden from the staff by a pillar. Upon entering to check if the person was ok it was evident that he was barely breathing.

The SOS bus were quick to respond, but in the event the man needed immediate oxygen and an ambulance and was rushed to the N&N; who knows what might have happened to him if he hadn't been spotted?

Over the years we've made friends with some of the rough sleepers and some of the door staff; the police have come to appreciate our role and regularly point us in the direction of those who need practical help or a listening ear. On that first night, one officer said to us, 'It's peaceful tonight; I wonder if that's got anything to do with you lot?' We were quick to point out that it hadn't, but it probably had a great deal to do with the prayer team back at base.

Every volunteer, whether on the street team or the prayer team, will have many a tale to tell about answered prayer, about being in the right place at the right time,

about having exactly the right team, about having 'a word in season' for someone they met.

Sometimes people will ask how far we walk during a night so it has been measured a few times with a pedometer. The distance varied between 6.5 and 10.5 miles. As Paul Rendell, coordinator of NSP points out: "What is particularly remarkable is that, despite the distance we walk during – typically – five and a half hours, how often we are in exactly the right place at the right time."

There are too many of these incidents to mention, but one included looking over the side of a bridge just in time to spot someone who had climbed over a guard rail, thrown their phone in the river and then rushing to grab them before they threw themselves in; on another occasion the team looked down a side street and saw a woman in a doorway; further investigation found she had her hands around her "best friend's" throat; and once a pastor was in just the right place to fall to his knees to catch a guy's head from hitting the pavement when someone jumped into his arms and knocked him over.

## 50 peaks challenge

■ **Good News for Norwich** editor publisher Keith Morris and wife Nicky have set themselves a crazy-sounding challenge for 2012 to climb 50 peaks in 50 weeks, to raise enough money to help Norfolk-based Christian charity Mercy Flyers carry out 50 life-changing operations for people in rural Zambia.

As peak walking novices the pair plan to climb the highest mountain in England – Scafell Pike – and the biggest in Wales – Snowdon – as well as scores of other peaks all at least 1,000ft high.

"In total, we reckon if we complete the challenge we will have each climbed the height of Everest - twice," said Keith, who is also publisher of the Network Norfolk Christian community website.

The pair are trying to raise over £6,000 to pay for 50 life-changing operations carried out by the Mercy Flyers team, led by former Norfolk doctors Craig and Rae Oranmore-Brown, whom Keith and Nicky met through the Norwich Vineyard Christian Fellowship.

Three years ago they gave up hospital consultant jobs in Norfolk to launch a flying doctors service in Zambia in southern Africa.

To follow the blog visit: <http://50peaks.wordpress.com/>  
To sponsor the couple visit: <http://www.bmycharity.com/50peaks>

## Making a difference on the city streets

■ Every weekend Norfolk Street Partnership (formerly Norfolk Street Pastors) street pastors are out on the night-time streets of Norwich, Dereham, Great Yarmouth and Diss providing a helping hand to all those in need.



This is what people have said about our work in Norfolk:

*"The street volunteers are doing a fantastic job."*  
**General Sir Richard Dannatt**, ex head of the **British Army**

*"The street volunteers know what friendship is and that is what they are offering in some of the busiest places which are also some of the loneliest."*  
**Bishop of Norwich, The Rt Rev Graham James**

*"The street volunteers really are 'the stars of the night'. It was a pleasure and a privilege to go out with them for an evening."*  
**Charles Barratt**, High Sheriff of Norfolk

*"They are a inspiration to everyone."*  
**Jemma**, Norwich nightclubber

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Pictured above are the Callow family and, below right, Angela Leeding.

# Couple to lead international student work

By KEITH MORRIS

**A**lmost 13 years ago, Angela Leeding moved to Norwich to begin a Friends International Christian outreach work with international students, and on March 1, she handed over to the reins to Dr Joel and Rebekah Callow.

Angela said: "The time has gone so quickly and I am grateful to God for the many opportunities there have been for building friendships with students from around the world. Some have been interested to know more about our Christian faith and others haven't. But we pray that all in some way will have been touched by the love of Jesus."

Joel and Rebekah, and their three children, have recently arrived in Norwich to begin the role as staff workers.

They said: "We're looking forward to starting work and reaching out to international students studying here. After two years living in Athens, Greece, we know some of what it's like to be strangers in a foreign land. It's exciting to be part of this key mission in Norwich – holding out the good news of Jesus to people from so many countries and cultures right on our doorstep."

"We will be welcoming international students to Norwich and working alongside local churches to reach out to them with the good news of Jesus."

"At the moment there's a lot happening including a World Cafe, Bible studies, day trips, hospitality and lots more. It's a real privilege to be part of the team welcoming international students as they come to study in



Norwich," said Joel and Rebekah.

"As we move to Norwich, we are aware that we are strangers in a new place, and while we don't yet know the city very well or yet have ties to it, we serve a God who gives us strength and sends His people out to places where they can reach out with the friendship, compassion and love of Jesus."

"We have learnt what it is like to feel alone, unsure, homesick and exhausted. There are many things we could take from our past experiences in Greece and apply them to our ministry in Norwich – simple acts of hospitality and kindness to a stranger speak volumes. The gospel of Jesus is a treasure worth sharing with other people and we can't wait to start opening the Bible with students again. Mission is both hard work and incredibly exciting."

Existing team members Ruth Holt and Jenny Austin, will be working alongside Joel and Rebekah.

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# Passage to India

An **Indian** church pastor who works in the slum community in the city of **Chandigarh**, has been studying at **The Way Of The Spirit Bible College** in **South Norfolk**, since last September. **Kevin Gotts** reports.



Pictured left is pastor Kartar Singh and, below, an Indian family with shoes they have been given through his work.

**P**astor Kartar Singh's early years were very different from his recent time in Norfolk. Born in a Himalayan village, Kartar was raised as a Hindu for 20 years. He got himself a bad reputation and left in search of a new home and job at the age of 20.

From a nearby room he was befriended by Bal Krishan a pastor, who shared the Christian gospel and gave Kartar a New Testament Bible. Kartar asked many questions, including, "Is the Bible the truth?" Kartar decided that it was and offered all he had to Jesus – he experienced a huge transformation in his life.

For the next seven years Kartar worked as a teacher in computer science and also physical education, then moving to Chandigarh to work as a pastor at the Shalom Family Church.

The neighbouring slums, and the effect on the poor and neglected children, deeply impacted Kartar, who said: "I have a heart for the poor and needy children of the slum."

He investigated further and, after some time, built support from parents so that he could read Bible stories, teach Christian songs and offer advice on health and hygiene. A major effect was that some 30 children were enrolled at a local school, and subsidised to continue their education. This subsequently led to Kartar attending parent-teacher meetings at school on behalf of the slum children.

While there was some persecution, including stone-throwing and beatings, the community supported the children and Kartar. The children have been bold in prayer, with parents seeing

positive changes. Pastors Kartar and Bal surprised the police by forgiving the offenders.

In 2004, Kartar married Ambika who also helps in a growing ministry, with members of the slum community with support from Neelam Krishan, Bal's wife. They offer prayer and counselling at a local hospital leading to healing from addictions and sickness. A 'Father's Heart Day Care Centre' for the slum children has been started in a rented building.

Kartar's time in Norfolk, which ends in March, was through an invitation for further study at The Way of the Spirit Bible College, near Norwich, which he describes as, "Life changing and has built up my faith in Jesus Christ."

He will continue to share his vision for the slum children with other people. This continues the historic links with the College including Course Director Richard George's visits to India and the work relating to the translation of the Bible reading course into Hindi.

As to the future, Kartar returns home in March to be with his wife, sons Samuel and Shaun and to continue the ministry and also meet the growing demands from other slum dwellers.

He will be needing funds for a suitable building to accommodate the 'Father's Heart Day Care Centre', teaching facilities, the church and support for widows and pensioners.

To find out more about Kartar and his work email [info@thewayofthespirit.com](mailto:info@thewayofthespirit.com) or [kartarsammy@yahoo.com](mailto:kartarsammy@yahoo.com)



## Barrister's challenge to Norwich churches

■ **NORWICH:** Speaking in Norwich on the eve of the launch of the Government's consultation into gay marriage, Andrea Minichiello Williams challenged the Church in Norwich to work together, stand in the public space and claim it.

Founder and CEO of Christian Concern and the Director of the Christian Legal Centre, Andrea Minichiello Williams, was in Norwich at the invitation of Call to Prayer on March 14.

Speaking passionately to a group of around 100 Christians at an open event held in the House of Prayer, Fishergate, Andrea called herself a 'missionary lawyer'. It is her mission to crusade against the erosion of Christian laws in the UK and campaign for the rights of Christians. And it is a task she does tirelessly.

Over recent years, Andrea has championed many of the high profile cases involving Christians being penalised for matters of faith. Speaking persuasively and fervently, Andrea listed case after case where Christians – a nurse, counsellors, registrars, a children's worker, foster parents and a GP – had lost their jobs or been given warnings due to acting on their beliefs.

As well as fighting court battles through the Christian Legal Centre, Andrea also lobbies Government on issues of 'permissive' legislation through its sister organisation Christian Concern.

Starting with the Abortion Act in 1967 and continuing to the present day with the consultation into same-sex marriage and the proposals from the Commission on Assisted Dying, Andrea gave her audience a potted history of how the Church has allowed the Christian legal framework of this country to be eroded. Her arguments paint a bleak picture and she is unashamedly outspoken about the outcome: "We are catapulting towards Hell".

Adapting Jeremiah 2 to illustrate God's displeasure at the state of our nation, Andrea concluded: "This is what we have done. We have forsaken the fount of living, beautiful, fantastic life – water – and we have dug sewer pits that can't hold water and what they hold is dirty and rotten and isn't good and makes you sick. "How can we, this nation, how can we have so turned our back on our incredible, beautiful, fantastic heritage which led the world? Isn't it incredible what we have forsaken because we have not loved the Lord?"

Her answer and her challenge is to fight. She said: "Church, we have been silent and now we are facing a rearguard action. If we cross the marriage line where can we go?"

"I feel personally responsible if marriage is redefined, but we are corporately responsible. We are on a slippery slope. Don't leave it to me and Christian Concern because we are not big enough. "We, here, are Christ's hands and feet and mouthpiece. Start acting. Churches need to be creative, come together, not be territorial, but committed, complementary and serving the needs of Norwich. Who else is God going to use? You are God's army of Norwich."

Christian Concern is one of the founding partners of the 'Coalition for Marriage' campaign which encourages Christians to petition against the redefinition of marriage. Another campaign promoted by Christian Concern is 'Not Ashamed'.

A CD of both the leaders' meeting and the evening meeting is available for £2.50 plus postage from the House of Prayer. Please telephone 01603 920074 or email [admin@call2prayer.co.uk](mailto:admin@call2prayer.co.uk).

■ **By Jenny Seal**

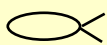


Andrea Minichiello Williams

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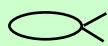
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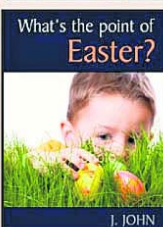
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**A** group of YMCA Norfolk residents and staff have teamed up with Norwich-based youth arts organisation Culture Works East to create and release a completely original charity album.

"Right Tracks" features everything from rap, rock to R&B and easy listening and is available as an eight-track CD or digital download.

Launched at the Open Venue night club in Norwich, all proceeds will go to YMCA Norfolk.

Right Tracks offered a unique opportunity for young people not in employment, education or training to develop skills alongside a real-life project. Over 10 weeks the young participants were responsible for the design, marketing and launch of the album.

Working with industry professionals they found out about what it takes to work in the music industry - including album design, marketing, social media, budgeting and advertising.

Taking part in master classes, specially developed training, vocational tasters and 1-2-1 business mentoring and setting up their own project management group, the young music promoters have been able to build their CV, develop confidence, communication and other skills attractive to employers. They also gained a Silver Arts Award.

Sonya Dover, member of Right Tracks Production Group, said: "We took a lead role in the promotion, designing, marketing and all organising of the album launch. I have been in charge of doing things like press releases and creating marketing materials."

"The album is a compilation of songs that should appeal to a wide group of people, from young people to the older generation. The money raised will contribute to homelessness, training, education and making sure that people get back on the right track."

"It has been produced to raise awareness about the YMCA and how they have helped young people who now want to pay back the favour and help the YMCA with more funds so that they can carry on with helping other vulnerable young people. Most people can relate to music when they are having a hard time and can find that it can help them get back on the right track," said Sonya.

YMCA Norfolk chief executive, Tim Sweeting, said: "We are delighted to be working in partnership with Culture Works to create our first charity album to promote the gifts of our amazing young people who have used and developed their talent for design, promotion,



**Above, recording for the Right Tracks album**



sound technology and other industry skills as well as expressing their own story through music."

Elli Chapman, Director at Culture Works East, said: "Right Tracks is an exciting project that gives participants a unique insight into music promotion and event management, whilst gaining first-hand experience of what it is like to work in the creative industries. They are working alongside inspirational industry experts and tutors to help them develop all the skills required to bring their ideas to life."

"Right Tracks has given them a chance to get their voices heard in the community, to participate in decision making, showcase their talents, develop life-long skills, improve personal and social skills and explore potential career pathways. Already participants are discussing how they might use their experience in the future including becoming a volunteer at community station Future Radio, using it to gain a place on training courses or going into an apprenticeship."

Solicitors Mills and Reeve also supported the project and CDs can be purchased at YMCA Shops in Thetford, King's Lynn, Diss, Great Yarmouth, Gorleston and Hunstanton, or by sending a cheque made payable to "YMCA Norfolk" for £6 (including £1 p&p) to Susie Knights at YMCA Norfolk The Street, Trowse, Norwich, NR14 8SP, or can be downloaded at <http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/righttracks>





Clockwise from top left, Roughshod, the Chip Kendall Band, Dance Off and Brokenfor.

# Chip K to headline Celebrate youth gig

**A**n exciting line-up of top class Christian music, dance and theatre, headlined by The Chip Kendall Band, has been brought together for the new Celebrate Youth Event in Norwich on Saturday June 9.

Organized by Danny Doran-Smith, director of ENYP and part of the Celebrate Norwich & Norfolk team, the event will also feature Christian DJ Galactus Jack, Talk Black Guy, local band Brokenfor, ENYP's Dance off! crew and Riding Lights' Roughshod Theatre Company.

The event will take place from 7pm at Norwich Central Baptist Church on Duke Street in Norwich and tickets (£10 including booking fee) are only available online from the Network Norfolk website, with an age limit of 11 years and above.

After 10 years of touring the world, performing and speaking with Thebandwithaname, Chip Kendall has now gone solo. He continues to broadcast regularly as a youth presenter on both Cross Rhythms and GodTV, but Chip still believes there's nothing like face-to-face contact and showing up in person.

Danny Doran-Smith said: "Chip is a passionate evangelist and gifted communicator. He carries his unique calling to connect with people of all ages from a variety of different backgrounds. We're really pleased to have The Chip Kendall Band as part of the Celebrate weekend."

Galactus Jack has just been awarded Best Contemporary Album by the Christian Broadcasting Corporation for his album Reality Bytes. His music style has already been

compared with the household names of The Prodigy and Fatboy Slim.

Tall Black Guy, from humble beginnings in Detroit and home-grown on a diet of Motown, jazz and early hip-hop, combines a penchant for smooth beats and heavy digging, putting out a hip hop heavy neo-soul vibe.

Dance Off! is a local dance crew which is part of ENYP (Equipping Nurturing Young People). Over the last few years the reputation of Dance Off! has grown. They have performed at several large shows since 2008 including two Lord Mayor's Processions and at Thebandwithaname gig at the Cathedral.

Norfolk Christian band Brokenfor bring some interesting new music to excite and sensate your taste buds. Full of catchy poppy choruses, unexpected synth lines and driving guitars, there's a little bit of gourmet cuisine for all the sweet and sour taste loving fanatics!

Riding Lights Roughshod is a professional touring theatre company - created by Riding Lights in 1992 to concentrate on grass-roots community touring.

Churches are being encouraged to bring along their youth groups en masse to enjoy an exciting action-packed event which offers something for everyone. To encourage this there is an offer of one free ticket added when ten are bought together.

Tickets (£4) for two drama theatre workshops with Roughshod can also be purchased from the website. [www.networknorwich.co.uk/celebratemyouth](http://www.networknorwich.co.uk/celebratemyouth)

## Churches work together on May Day event

■ An annual May Day Event organised by churches near to Norwich's Heigham Park will take place on Bank Holiday Monday, May 7 from 11am to 4pm.

Organised by local churches for the past 25 years, the event, on The Avenues, has become something of a local tradition.

It gives families a fun day out while raising money for many charities with local craftspeople providing a wide variety of stalls and games.

Admission is free and a rolling programme of entertainment has been arranged from 11am to 3pm, provided by local

churches and other groups.

Punch and Judy, fairground rides, face-painting, donkey rides and the park playground keep children and families busy. A refreshment tent plus a barbecue, doughnuts and candyfloss are on sale and many families bring their own picnic.

One of the organisers, Margaret Culley from St Peter's Park Lane Methodist Church, said: "Started in a simple way by one church, the event has grown over the years through different denominations working and praying together and has encouraged us to work more closely with each other on other events through the year."

## Walk to reveal church history

■ A guided history walk, to celebrate the diverse expressions of Christianity in Norwich, is set to be one of the new elements of the popular Celebrate Norwich and Norfolk event in June, with a limited number of tickets now available.

The walk, will be led by church historian Dr Nicholas Groves, author of the best-selling *The Medieval Churches of the City of Norwich*. It will include many of the astonishing variety of places of Christian worship within the city centre – mediaeval churches, monastic houses, dissenting chapels and others.

The walk will be held on Saturday June 9 and start from in front of the Forum, where the Celebrate event will be taking place. It will begin at 2pm and last until 4.30pm. It is designed to take about two-and-a-half hours and includes refreshments in the price of £10.

Tickets from [www.networknorwich.co.uk/shop](http://www.networknorwich.co.uk/shop)

**YMCA NORFOLK**  
Belong | Contribute | Thrive

**We need your help to raise £1m**

towards a new £4.4m development of 40 move-on accommodation units for homeless young people.

## Brick Appeal

Its estimated we need 70,000 bricks to complete this building & just £1 will cover the cost of one brick, the mortar and labour.



**YMCA NORFOLK Brick Appeal**

I enclose a cheque for £ \_\_\_\_\_ to purchase \_\_\_\_\_ Bricks

Please make cheques payable to "YMCA Norfolk"

☐ As a taxpayer I would like you to reclaim Gift Aid on my donation (tick)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If representing a church/voluntary organisation/company or charity, what is its name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to: Susie Knights at YMCA Norfolk, The Street, Trowse, Norwich, NR14 8SP. Registered Charity Number 801606



# Sky's the limit for life-saving couple

By SANDIE SHIRLEY

**A**iling health meant Norman Illsley took early retirement when he was just 51. He had spent 36 years working for the same company as an electrician since he was 15.

"It was as if the world at large did not want to know but I knew God still had a purpose for my life," said the member of Hope Community Church, Wymondham.

Since then there's been a dramatic turn-around. Now the sky's the limit as, with wife Helen, he helps to raise some of the £300,000 a month needed to help the East Anglian Air Ambulance charity save lives. Together, the couple have put their faith and heart on the line to be God's fund-raising ambassadors for two emergency helicopters.

The helicopters provide a fast ride to hospital for those who would otherwise be stranded after road traffic accidents, beach incidents and horse-riding accidents for example, explains Helen. "It can mean the difference between life and death and save people from permanent injury," continues Norman.

In a few short years the couple have helped raise awareness for the charity and provide a vital £10,000 injection with numerous tribute concerts and events countywide that are booked a year in advance.

They have also encouraged front-line rescuers, met those snatched from danger and death and forged friendships with countless supporters from all walks of life who attend the events.

"God has been with us in every way, opening so many doors where we have met so many people. It has been an incredible, privileged journey," explains Norman.

It began with a few simple coffee mornings but has mushroomed into a major enterprise that has showcased some of the legendary greats from the swinging sixties this year. The Honeycombs and Vanity Fair have rocked around the clock at various Norfolk venues to keep the yellow helicopters airborne across Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire and help provide night flights and a medic for every trip.

When the couple moved to Norfolk six years ago they were seasoned charity workers looking for a new community investment for their faith and time. They helped launch the



Norman and Helen Illsley with an East Anglian Air Ambulance. Picture courtesy of Julian Claxton.

Wymondham Helicopter Group and have seen purpose, enjoyment and an opportunity to share their beliefs. "With a free hand on the arrangements we also make the rules," says Norman as the couple rule out swearing and smuttiness in a bid to be true to their faith.

Norman's new purpose began to unfold with Helen while at their former Essex church. Besides becoming ardent fundraisers for a local cancer charity they hosted events for Christian

celebrities to share their life-changing faith stories which they have also done at Hope Community Church.

The couple moved to Wymondham in 2004. "We looked around the county for a place to live and discovered Wymondham. We had never been here before but when we arrived at the market cross we looked up to heaven and knew God wanted us here," says Norman.

For information: [helen.norman.i@uwclub.net](mailto:helen.norman.i@uwclub.net).

## Olympian faith story

■ **NORWICH:** Chariot....the Eric Liddell Story, is being brought to Norwich Playhouse by the Searchlight Theatre Company on July 2, 7.30pm.

Made famous by the multi award-winning film Chariots of Fire, this brand new dramatisation, brings to life on stage the incredibly inspiring life and faith story of Eric Liddell.

Tickets are £10 (concessions £8), available online through Norwich Theatre Royal Box Office or at Norwich Playhouse (01603) 598598. [www.searchlighttheatre.org](http://www.searchlighttheatre.org)

**hebron trust**  
Respect Choice Safety

### 'The path to recovery...'

Can you help women with serious drug and alcohol addiction to find their way to a new life?

**Could you:**  
**Become a volunteer?**  
**Support us in prayer?**  
**Consider giving a donation or regular contribution?**  
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To find out more about our work, or to offer help in any of the above ways, please contact us at: 10-12 Stanley Avenue, Norwich, NR7 0BE

Tel: 01603 439905

Email:

[info@hebrontrust.org.uk](mailto:info@hebrontrust.org.uk)

[www.hebrontrust.org.uk](http://www.hebrontrust.org.uk)

**hebron trust**  
Respect Choice Safety

**YMCA**  
**NORFOLK**

**Belong | Contribute | Thrive**

### Supported Lodgings Scheme

Do you have a heart for young people?  
Do you have a spare room in your house?  
Are you willing to support YMCA Norfolk in transforming young lives?

We are looking for fantastic people to help and equip young people to grow in confidence and gain the skills to take on their own tenancy and live an independent life.

You might be an owner occupier, council tenant or renting privately and are prepared to offer a temporary home to a young person across Norfolk.

For supporting young people in this amazing work, you will receive a weekly payment of approx £80 tax free, training and regular support from the YMCA Norfolk team.

If you would like to find out more please contact:  
Rachel Scott: YMCA Norfolk Housing and Community Manager  
Tel: 07912309815

[rachel.scott@ymca-norfolk.org.uk](mailto:rachel.scott@ymca-norfolk.org.uk)

[www.ymca-norfolk.org.uk](http://www.ymca-norfolk.org.uk)

## Christian Resource Centre faces closure threat

■ **NORWICH:** The Norwich Christian Resource Centre has warned that it faces possible closure because of a trading deficit and has issued an urgent plea for support.

The Centre, based at St Michael-At-Plea in the city centre, and the Forget-me-Not Cafe have recently suffered a severe trading deficit, with turnover for February and March between 11% and 21% down on the same months a year ago.

Shop manager, Steve Foyster said: "If this continues even in the short term, it is almost inevitable that the centre will close. All the paid staff are braced for another cut in hours and we have been destocking books and CDs by up to 40% via our sale and returning to suppliers."

The ecumenical Christian resource centre,

offers a bookshop, an online shop, a meeting place, a platform for stimulating debate and a welcoming refuge for refreshment. But all this is threatened by continuing poor trading conditions.

Issuing a plea for support, Steve said that there are several ways that people can help.

"Although we do realise these are difficult times for all, come to Norwich Christian Resources first for your requirements rather than visiting online, so that we can continue to keep a broad range of titles. We can often offer a discount.

"Donate second hand books, which still are so well received that we are increasing the shelf space. We are often willing to collect from you.

"Hire our cafe free of charge for an evening or late afternoon meeting (after 3.30pm). We can

offer refreshments at very reasonable rates and tell friends and fellow churchgoers where we are and what we offer – so many people are still unaware that we exist," said Steve.

The Centre runs a series of free and paid for events and more details can be found on the Network Norfolk website, including the Hope for a Broken World series.

There is an invitation to join in a sponsored three-mile April Amble on Sunday April 29 around Norwich city centre and parts of the river, ending at the Forget-me-not-Cafe for a free tea, with all monies raised going to the centre.

Finally, said Steve: "Please pray for the future of the centre, its staff, volunteers and trustees."

[www.norwichcrc.co.uk](http://www.norwichcrc.co.uk)