

Courageous Churches Conference | Bodmin 3 & 4 March 2026

Hosted by Bodmin Way and HeartEdge

To book in for the conference, please click on the following link:

<https://tickets.myiknowchurch.co.uk/gb/MzQ5NC03/t>

Day 1: Implementing Neighbourhood Health: What role can faith communities play in partnership with the NHS?

The Neighbourhood Health initiative was launched by the government in September 2025 as a key pillar of the NHS 10-year plan. The voluntary and faith sectors are expected to play an important role in bringing care closer to the people. Experience in Bodmin reveals how this can be done, particularly with the most vulnerable communities.

National and international experts will share learning and experience. The rationale and value for bringing faith communities into health strategies will be interrogated. The conference will offer leaders and policy makers an opportunity for dialogue to explore how neighbourhood health might benefit from the engagement of churches. Workshops will provide practical insight into how this works on the ground.

Draft Programme

8.45am Arrival and refreshments

9.15am Welcome and introductions. Revd Paul Holley, chair of Bodmin Way social enterprise.

9.30am Keynote 1: Health systems, communities and faith, Dr Ian Smith.

10am Keynote 2 : Evidence and learning from faith-based health initiatives, Dr Sally Smith.

10.30am Questions to Ian and Sally

11am Short break

11.15am Keynote 3: Presenting the Bodmin Way health and wellbeing initiatives

- Bodmin Way staff will share insights, data and stories about the work of parish nurses, community health and wellbeing workers and health coaches.
- Michelle Pratley, Bosvena Health practice manager.
- Julie Pollard, Volunteer Cornwall's operational team manager for Cornwall's community health and wellbeing workers programme
- Jen Campbell, Volunteer Cornwall's programme team lead for North and East
- Dr. Neil Walden MBE, a director of the Cornwall Integrated Care Board

12.30pm Lunch

1.15pm Keynote: Why is the mission of the church concerned with people's health and wellbeing?

- Bishop David Williams and Revd Dr. Sam Wells, chaired by Revd Jeff James

2pm Workshops

2.45pm Short break

3pm Workshops

3.45pm Short break

4pm Keynote 4: Vulnerable communities. How might neighbourhood health initiatives tailor their support?

- Dr. Sarah Bromley will outline the dilemmas for health services serving those in contact with the criminal justice system and propose some ways forward.
- Dr. Ross Bryson will present the work of Karis Neighbour Scheme in Edgbaston. *Who is my neighbour? 30 years of partnerships in health creation.*

5pm Depart

Keynote speakers

Dr Ian Smith previously served as Executive Director of the Office of the Director-General and Advisor to the three Director-Generals, of the World Health Organization, Dr Margaret Chan and Dr Lee Jong-wook; and the current Director-General, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. He was also head of the secretariat of the Global Preparedness Board, jointly formed by WHO and the World Bank.

Dr Sally Smith is an independent consultant working as a senior adviser to the World Health Organisation and visiting lecturer at Leeds School of Medicine, Leeds Institute of Health Sciences. She previously worked for 14 years at the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS as Senior Adviser for community engagement on HIV with focus on faith-based organisations. In 2018 she graduated from Glasgow University with a Doctorate in Practical Theology. She is Coordinator of the Anglican Health and Community Network.

Dr. Neil Walden has enjoyed a long career as a GP in Cornwall, working as a partner in Marazion Surgery until his retirement from practice in 2019. He has been a member of NHS Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Integrated Care Board since 1 July 2022. He is a passionate advocate of working in partnership with people, and listening to their experiences of care, understanding what's important to them to solve problems and create solutions. This has included bringing together the NHS, providers, patients, and the voluntary sector to co-design an integrated community health and care service in west Penwith.

Neil has previously been a Clinical Leader of NHS Cornwall and Isles of Scilly's west integrated care area, and a member of the west Cornwall integrated care board. He was a Locality Lead GP and Clinical Director of Penwith's primary care network and is a member of the Penwith Integrated Care Forum.

Revd Dr. Sam Wells has served as a parish priest for 27 years – 10 of those in urban priority areas. He also spent 7 years in North Carolina, where he was Dean of Duke University Chapel. He is a widely known preacher, writer, broadcaster, institutional leader and lecturer. Sam is also Visiting Professor of Christian Ethics at King's College. He is a regular contributor to Thought for the Day on BBC Radio 4's Today programme. He has published 50 books, including works on Christian ethics, mission, ministry, scripture, liturgy, and preaching.

The Rt Revd David Williams was consecrated in 2014. Prior to coming to Truro, David was the Bishop of Basingstoke from 2014 – 2025. Ordained in 1989, David began his ministry as a curate in Ecclesall, Sheffield Diocese. He was a priest in Dore before being appointed Rural Dean of Ecclesall in 1997. In 2002 he became the vicar of Christ Church in Winchester and was made an honorary canon of Winchester Cathedral in 2012.

Revd Jeff James has been involved in the NHS as a senior manager and as non-executive since 1980. He worked as a Director and as Chief Executive in organisations in Wales and the West of England, including from 1991 to 1996 as a Director for Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Health Authority and from 2014 to 2017 as a Non-Executive Director of the Kernow Commissioning Group. Jeff was ordained in 2001 and worked for 12 years as a self supporting minister in Gloucester Diocese. He served for 7 years as Priest in Charge at Mylor and is currently the Senior Non-Executive Member of the Truro Cathedral Chapter.

Dr. Sarah Bromley has been a GP since 1995. Her first 10 years were spent in Bradford where she developed interests in mental health and substance misuse. She also began her leadership career there, as clinical lead for mental health for North Bradford PCT. In 2005 she joined the healthcare team in HMP Isle of Wight, and then joined CareUK in June 2013 as National Medical Director for Health in Justice (HiJ). Now known as Practice Plus Group, it is the largest provider of healthcare services in prisons and other places of detention (including Immigration Removal Centres) across England as well as integrated non-custodial services. Sarah is now Director of Strategy for PPG's HiJ service line.

Dr. Ross Bryson has worked in primary healthcare development in a resource poor country and as a GP in a multicultural urban context for over 35 years. He has seen both the range of human need and the potential to meet that need through a compassionate and integrated primary healthcare team. Nevertheless, many needs exist which impact the health and wellbeing of patients which can't be met by the NHS. It is also true that there are resources within communities which could address patients' needs. Ross set up a charity nearly 30 years ago which enables connections between those needs and these resources and is also a trustee of other charities which enable spiritual care to be provided in the primary healthcare context.

Liz Bryson has a background in education and a keen interest in the spiritual dimensions of whole person care. For over 10 years, she has worked as part of the chaplaincy team at the Birmingham Women's and Children's Hospital and has recently [published](#) her research into the spiritual needs of children and young people with cancer. She has worked with Ross in developing Chaplaincy in General practise, jointly writing the [Association of Chaplaincy in General Practise Handbook](#) and establishing and leading its accreditation process.

Revd Paul Holley has been team rector of the Bodmin Team Ministry since 2016 and chairs Bodmin Way social enterprise. As local vicar, he chaired the development of The Angel healthy living centre in Salford in the late 1990s. Working as minister amidst the international community in Geneva from 2003 he was a member of the Anglican representation to the United Nations, where he also led a group of consultants that brought together studies of faith-based health initiatives for the World Health Organization. In 2009 he founded the Anglican Health Network to create a means of support to the wide array of hospitals and health initiatives operated by the churches of the Anglican Communion.

Workshops

The nature and impact of Parish Nursing

- Revd Geraldine Ashton, lead parish nurse for Bodmin Way

Community health and wellbeing worker projects in Cornwall

- Julie Pollard and Jen Campbell, Volunteer Cornwall
- Bodmin Way's community health and wellbeing workers

Coaching for health

- Bodmin Way health coaches with the community larder and community cook-up teams
- Gareth Walsh and colleagues from Cornwall Council Community Wellbeing Directorate

Chaplaincy in General Practice

- Ross and Liz Bryson

Background information

To understand more about neighbourhood health, take a look at this recent webinar:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HkQxZqcxAE4>

Day 2 - Abundance in Action – Growing Courageous Churches

March 4th 9.30am for 10am until 4pm

This transformative day of resourcing and exploration offers a unique opportunity to discover practical tools and fresh perspectives to invigorate your parishes' mission and ministry in both rural and urban contexts. Through workshops, theological insights, and moments of worship, we aim to equip your church to flourish in compassion, creativity, and community engagement. As Sam Wells writes in *Living God's Future Now*, "We are called to live as if God's future has already arrived, nurturing the signs of that future in the present and sharing them with the world." This day of inspiration and renewal will include...

Theological Input from **Sam Wells**, vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields, London and David Williams, Bishop of Truro. Grounding the day in rich theological reflection.

HeartEdge : Practical workshops exploring the 4 Cs (Compassion, Commerce, Culture, and Congregation) for creating flourishing churches. When scarcity could so easily dictate our thinking, instead we shift to an abundance mindset, and a belief that God provides more than we need.

Great Sacred Music : Great Sacred Music is a 35-minute sequence of words and music which explores through song and readings the great classical music of our religious heritage. . It is a model that can be replicated and it has successfully engaged a wide spectrum of attendees.

Growing The Gospel Together offers resources for worship including a weekly reflection linked to the lectionary readings and a set of open questions for small groups to explore the scripture passages

Other Workshops will include

- Preaching in challenging times
- Developing community for children and families
- Parish Nursing
- Commerce and Churches

Conference hosts

Bodmin Way is hosting the conference. It is a social enterprise established by the 5 churches of the Bodmin Team Ministry. Focusing on the support of the most vulnerable, it benefits from an extensive network of relationships and trust. In partnership with local GP practice Bosvena Health, the voluntary sector and the integrated care board, it is now a leading delivery partner for health and wellbeing services in Bodmin. For more information about the programmes of Bodmin Way check out the website: www.bodminway.org

HeartEdge is a movement that helps people discover what God is doing in their local church and community; equipping them to develop plans to be a transforming presence for God. It is currently led by Sian and Andrew Yates who between have over 50 years of ministry within Cornwall with experience in rural and urban settings and areas of education, young people and families and social responsibility.