



'Spotlight on...' equality, diversity and inclusion

Creating a more Diverse and Inclusive Workforce by Regular Visits from a Chaplain

Ensuring Diversity and Inclusion in the workplace is not just a matter of having a diverse workforce, it is about individuals and companies' wellbeing. Over a decade ago Canary Wharf made a decision to engage with a chaplain to be based full time on the estate.

At the time Canary Wharf had over 100,000 people working within Canary Wharf, which has significantly grown over the last decade. The chaplaincy is key to ensure the pastoral needs of workforce, which includes a number of construction projects. Furthermore, they are instrumental in creating a culture where everyone, whatever, their background, race, religion, gender, sexuality etc is accepted and valued and nobody stands out as 'different'. It is about people being able to bring their whole self to the construction projects.



The chaplain visits the projects regularly and is able to engage with the workforce. In the past it has been a cause of bemusement or sometimes amazement of why they are there. But now the workforce are now familiar with seeing the chaplain walking around the site. They add value to the projects, focusing on the wellbeing of the operatives who often discuss those things that matter most to the individual and seeking advice on spiritual or general life matters.

The Project's Chaplain said:

"The very first time i was on site, I was asked who had died? I replied no one, that I come to see the living! In recent years i have begun to see more female construction workers, indeed recently I saw a group of four construction workers and three were women.

As a chaplain I find it is not just about creating an inclusive culture and ticking the box, it is more than that it is about creating a culture where people can be themselves and talk freely about those things that matter, whether it's their recent divorce, or a daughter telling his dad he is gay, or a son telling his religious dad that he no longer believes in God. Inclusion is also about being able to hold differences and disagreements without them becoming barriers between colleagues or friends and souring the working culture. It might a political disagreement, or one about religion and sexuality for example. As a chaplain I can hold that space between people and help them to respect and work effectively together with one another even if in the end there still agree to disagree. "

Case Study: Canary Wharf Contractors