

# The Anglican Chaplaincy of Saint Andrew, Costa del Sol East, Spain



## CHAPLAINCY PROFILE

### 1. LIVING IN SPAIN

#### 1.1 Location

Located in southern Spain, within the Region of Andalusia, in the Province of Malaga is the Anglican Chaplaincy of Saint Andrew - centred in the resort town of Fuengirola, extending west to the area of Calahonda in Mijas Costa, east to the area of Benalmadena and inland, to the town and surrounding areas of Alhaurin el Grande. Gibraltar is an hour's drive westwards and the city of Malaga, including the Airport, is a thirty-minute drive eastwards.

There are regular flights to most UK airports, with a flight time of around two and half hours. There are also flights to many other destinations, making Malaga one of the most accessible destinations in Europe.

The Costa del Sol benefits from excellent transport links connecting each area, with a dual carriageway along the coast and a toll-road motorway between Malaga and Gibraltar, encompassing all the major

towns enroute. The distance between Fuengirola and Alhaurin el Grande is approximately twenty-one kilometres, a forty-minute drive inland. The distance between Calahonda and Benalmadena is approximately twenty-one kilometres, a twenty-minute drive along the coast.

A local and efficient rail service links Fuengirola with Malaga, where inter-city connections can be made to the rest of Spain. Bus services are frequent and inexpensive, with a bus terminus situated in the centre of Fuengirola.

In addition to the public transport available, the Chaplain is provided with a car.

The Church of St. Andrew and the Chaplaincy House are located in the suburb of Los Boliches (Fuengirola), within easy distance of the local railway station, bus stops, the motorway, local shops and the beach.



#### 1.2 Accommodation

Home for the Chaplain is a well situated, spacious, end of terrace town-house within a community.

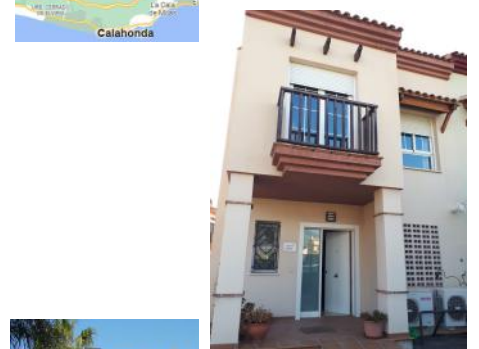
It has three bedrooms with two bathrooms, one of them en-suite. There is a ground floor living area, with a fully equipped kitchen, utility and guest toilet.

The house benefits from a third-floor extra living space, that can be utilised as a study, private living room or a further bedroom. The property is fully air-conditioned and has solar panels for water heating.

In addition to an underground car parking space, there is a hard standing area at the front of the house, should the Chaplain wish to park directly outside.

The property is further complimented by two areas of outside space in the form of a small, low-maintenance garden and a terrace leading off the third floor living area. There is also a larger, communal garden and an outdoor swimming pool.

Whilst the Chaplain may choose to set up office in their home, there is also office space available in the Church building.



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## 1.3 Demographics

The English-speaking community of this area of the Costa del Sol, consists mainly of Northern Europeans from Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark and the United Kingdom.

The majority are retired and have lived in the area in excess of twenty years. Most are full-time residents, with this being their only and main home, however some live here part of the year, retaining their

main residence in their country of origin.

The favourable location attracts holiday-makers all year round and the Chaplaincy benefits from these visitors during their time in the area.

Winter visitors are usually retired and stay for two or three months; summer visitors include families with children, staying for a few weeks holiday.



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## 1.4 Social Activities

As well as the Christian community, the area boasts a very active, social community.

Fuengirola is home to the Salon Varieties Theatre, a local amateur dramatic group, with a full programme of events all year. The Arts Society hosts regular lectures and events of cultural and social interest. U3A provide the opportunity of learning for pleasure for the mature mind.

There are several local choirs and orchestral groups, for the musically gifted. Bridge clubs, photographic societies, astronomy and painting groups are all well established.

Local sport activities include golf, padel tennis, tennis, basketball, football, cricket and a variety of spas, gyms and

swimming pools are all within easy access.

Malaga city, within easy distance by train, is a cultural hub of museums, art galleries, music venues and the wonderful Cervantes Theatre.

The wider region of Andalucia offers further opportunity for nature tourism, which can be experienced through the many local groups of walking clubs, birdwatching societies, classic car clubs or travel groups.

There are more than one hundred clubs and societies on the Costa del Sol, so whether your preference is to go it alone or enjoy the area with like-minded people, the opportunities are on hand for you to experience



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## 1.5 Local Schools

There is a selection of local Spanish schools in the area.

In addition, there are several

International, fee paying schools which cater for children aged three to eighteen, providing education up to IGCSE, A levels or International Baccalaureate.

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## 1.6 Post-Brexit Spain

Like all other European Chaplaincies, St. Andrew's Costa del Sol East, has seen the regular number of 'Swallows' change their visiting patterns to accommodate the post-Brexit restrictions on the number of days allowed to be spent in Europe.

This has a knock-on effect on regular

church attendance, participation in chaplaincy life and also giving.

Brexit has also had a detrimental impact on the number of younger families moving permanently to this area of Spain, thus causing challenges in attracting a more youthful congregation.



*Stock photographs*



# 2. ABOUT THE CHAPLAINCY

## 2.1 History

The Chaplaincy celebrated its 50th Anniversary in 2018, having been founded in February 1968 by the Reverend Arnold Hellicar, Chaplain of St. George's Church, Malaga. The Chaplaincy was originally based in the Fuengirola suburb of Torreblanca, approximately one kilometre from the current Church in Los Boliches.

In 1990, following a successful fundraising campaign, the property in Los Boliches was purchased. St. Andrew's Church, was consecrated on February 2nd 1990 by the Right Reverend John Satterthwaite, Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe. The resident Chaplain at the time, Reverend Ronald S. Matheson received a Canonry of Gibraltar Cathedral in recognition of his work.

During the first fifty years, the Chaplaincy had been led by eight Chaplains, covering various Worship Centres in six locations including Torremolinos, Benalmadena, Fuengirola, Calahonda, Coin and Alhaurin el Grande. Today, the Chaplaincy celebrates weekly in three locations – Alhaurin el Grande, Calahonda and Fuengirola (Los Boliches).

## 2.2 Worship Centres

The Chaplaincy consists of congregations at three Worship Centres with weekly services held in each location.

Alhaurin el Grande : Cemetery Chapel. A municipal chapel which is used in return for a donation.

Calahonda : San Miguel. The local Roman Catholic parish church which is

rented for Sunday Services. This church is also rented to other denominations.

Fuengirola (Los Boliches) : St. Andrew's Church. This is owned by the Chaplaincy. It is situated on the ground floor of an apartment block and is a multi-purpose hall with the facility to screen-off the Chancel; thus permitting secular use of the remaining hall.



*Alhaurin el Grande*

## 2.3 St. Andrew's Church Hall & Office

During the COVID 19 pandemic, whilst the building remained empty and Services were regularly held on Zoom, the Chaplaincy took the opportunity to upgrade the Church Hall.

A "Renovations and Renewal" project was created, with funds generously donated from the Congregation. The level of financial support was overwhelming, with funds received from the overseas "Swallows" community, as well as the Spain-based members.

This project was not just about the building, it was about rejuvenating, rebuilding and growing the ministry and outreach as a Chaplaincy after the prolonged period of lockdown.

A new kitchen was installed; the toilets upgraded to facilitate disability access; a new access ramp to make entry into Church easier and safer and the improvement of air conditioning units.

Since the return to in-person Church, the improvements have been welcomed by the chaplaincy family as well as the wider community.

The multi-purpose element of the church building, facilitates letting the hall to other organisations, thus providing an essential source of income. The renovations have therefore helped to attract new clients. The hall is also used for the weekly Chaplaincy Coffee Morning and many other fundraising events which, as well as generating income, provide social interaction for our chaplaincy family and the wider community.

The Chaplaincy Office, also owned by the Chaplaincy, is separate from, but adjacent to the Church. The office area consists of an inner office for the Chaplain and an outer office for use by the Administrator/ Church Wardens. There is a dividing wall between the two office areas, which can be opened up to form one large meeting room.



*Calahonda*



*Los Boliches*



*Los Boliches refurbishment*

## 2.4 People/Congregation

There is one electoral roll for the Chaplaincy, which includes all the Worship Centres. The figures at April over a period of eight years are shown below:

Year	Electoral Roll
2014	85
2016	126
2018	142
2020	92
2022	70

The regular worshippers are mainly, but not exclusively, the resident retired expats. They are supplemented by residential tourists, known affectionately as 'Swallows', due to their regular return every winter. The average age of the congregation is heavily biased to the over seventies.

In the coastal congregations the numbers are more static with growth tending to be in the inland areas. The worship centre at Alhaurin el Grande is the newest of the congregations, having been formed in 2008, in recognition of the fact that property prices are more economical inland, attracting younger, working families or the more recent retirees to Spain. This inland congregation has grown steadily since its formation and the Chaplaincy is held in high regard in the area.

Whilst the Electoral Roll figures see a steady decline due to natural change and the implementation of Spanish residency controls as a result of Brexit, it is worth noting that some worshippers choose not to be included on the Electoral Roll because of Brexit and the associated regulations.

The Chaplaincy is blessed with willing volunteers, a Chaplaincy Council and the Ministry team comprising of a Licensed Reader, a retired clergy with PTO and a Congregational Worship Leader. The Chaplaincy is further blessed with an Assistant Curate shared with St. George's, Malaga.



*Congregation members enjoying a social get together following a service*



# 3. WHAT WE DO

## 3.1 Worship

The current standard pattern of worship incorporates a weekly service in each of the three Worship Centres - two celebrate Holy Communion, and the other has Morning Prayer, alternating each week.

09:30 am at San Miguel, Calahonda  
11:30 am at St. Andrew's, Los Boliches  
11:30 am at Cemetery Chapel, Alhaurin el Grande

Wednesday at 10:30 am, Holy Communion is celebrated at St. Andrew's Church in Los Boliches.

Common Worship is used for all Communion Services. An order for Celtic Morning Prayer is used for Morning

Prayer Services.

As well as the regular services, the Chaplaincy celebrates the festivals throughout the year. Christmas and Easter are celebrated with extra services across the Chaplaincy. Praise services are held several times a year at times such as Harvest. A special service is held to celebrate our patronal festival on Saint Andrew's day. At All Souls, services are held at two of our centres and on Remembrance Sunday we are joined by the RBL. We are also involved in ecumenical services for the week of Prayer for Christian Unity and for the World Day of Prayer. In addition, we have started to explore holding services at a

local retirement complex and also our Assistant Curate is looking at linking with the Swedish Church.



*San Miguel, Calahonda*



*St Andrew's, Los Boliches*



*Cemetery Chapel, Alhaurin el Grande*

## 3.2 On-line Worship

During the COVID 19 pandemic, in line with the restrictions, all Services were held via Zoom.

This proved a huge success, not only in the coming together of the separate Worship Centres as one, but also in

maintaining links with the many 'Swallows' who reside, not only in the UK, but across Canada and the USA.

Since the return to in-person Church, the Chaplaincy maintains on-line worship through regular Bible Study sessions.



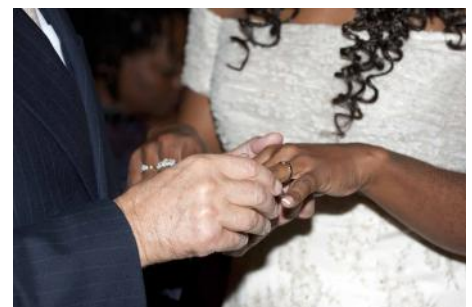
*Zoom service*

## 3.3 Baptisms, Confirmations, Marriages and Funerals

The demographics of the local English-speaking population dictates that funerals are more frequent than baptisms. However baptisms are a feature and are performed as an integral part of the Sunday morning worship. Due to the complexity of the paperwork, actual weddings are rare but wedding blessings are carried out.

Pre pandemic and Brexit the numbers were higher in each area, however during 2021 there was one Baptism, one wedding blessing, and seventeen funerals.

Whilst baptisms, confirmation and weddings can be planned for, funerals can not, which can bring scheduling challenges for the small Ministry Team, due to the local custom of funerals taking place within a short space of time. This different ministry means working rapidly with the family, often within one or two days before the funeral is conducted, with the aim to provide a liturgical and pastoral ministry to the grieving.



*Wedding Blessing*

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## 3.4 Children and Young People

Whilst the local international schools are populated by many English-speaking children, this is not reflected in the numbers of young people in our church. There is, therefore, an opportunity to redress this imbalance by working more closely with local schools and youth groups.

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## 3.5 Ecumenical Links

Spain is a constitutionally secular country although with a predominance of Catholics. It acknowledges the many different religions and denominations which derive from the high number of different nationalities living in the area. This is demonstrated by the local Roman Catholic churches who permit other denominations to use the church buildings for their own religious services.

There is a strong ecumenical movement on the Costa del Sol where many denominations and nationalities work together.

Lux Mundi Ecumenical Centre is a non-profit Christian foundation based in Fuengirola. It is led by the Ecumenical Officer of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Malaga and provides a meeting point for the many churches and Christian groups established in the Costa del Sol. Lux Mundi facilitates many activities including outreach into the community and assistance to the homeless. Several members of the Chaplaincy volunteer regularly at Lux Mundi and a good relationship exists between the Church and this Centre.

On Maundy Thursday Lux Mundi hosts the Agape Supper for the various local churches and denominations. Each are invited to participate so all the churches are actively involved as well as enjoying fellowship together.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity features a Service every day of the week in a different church and different language, culminating in a Service in the Roman Catholic Cathedral in Malaga.

The Chaplaincy of Saint Andrew regularly hosts the Women's World Day of Prayer, which is celebrated in St. Andrew's Church in Los Boliches and co-ordinated by our Licensed Reader. Ladies from many of the local churches and denominations are invited to participate in the theme chosen for that year. This year the Service was organised by Lux Mundi and hosted in the local Finnish Church.

The Chaplaincy engenders good relationships with its Christian neighbours and continues to nurture the ecumenical links that have been developed over the last fifty years.

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## 3.6 Mission and Outreach

Regular Coffee Mornings, held in each of the locations, provide an opportunity to attract non-church members into our midst. In particular, the weekly Coffee Morning in St. Andrew's Church is a hive of social activity, with the added bonus of raising funds for the Chaplaincy.

Each month a different charity is selected and the outward giving is focused on that "Charity of the Month". This helps to raise awareness of local charities within the community, as well as international charities, and to ensure they benefit financially from the Chaplaincy.

Chaplaincy members are not only generous with their time and financial contributions, but also with regular donations of much needed grocery items for the local homeless people. This is collected weekly and distributed via Caritas, a Roman Catholic Charity.

Bible Study and Themed Courses play a vital role in nurturing those who are open to learning and increasing their theological or liturgical understanding. During the last few years, stages of The Pilgrim Course have been taught and well received.



*Resources for children attending services at Alhaurin el Grande*



*Above and below:  
World Day of Prayer held at the Finnish Lutheran Church in Los Boliches, adapted by the team from Lux Mundi. A few of St Andrew's congregation had the pleasure of taking part in leading it.*





## 3.7 Chaplaincy Social

Social events play a vital role in the life of the Chaplaincy, not only for the very necessary funds that they generate, but also to provide social interaction across the Worship Centres and outside into the wider community.

The hall at St. Andrew's Church is a great asset as its use does not depend on others and there is no hire cost. Other venues are used, when appropriate, to host social events in the vicinity of the other Worship Centres, in an attempt to encourage those who are not able to travel far to attend.

Events in the past have included a Christmas Fayre, Burns Night complete with haggis and piper, Pancake Supper, Lenten Lunches, Spring Fayre, Tea & Cinema, Quiz Nights, Craft Group, Sunday Lunch Club, Coffee Morning, Fellowship Brunch/Lunch and a Saint Andrew's Day Dinner.

In addition, "Touch of Class", put on live musical performances, two or three times

a year to raise funds for the Chaplaincy. These themed and well-choreographed events always prove popular and attract people from the wider community.

Pre Covid, each congregation would meet for refreshment and fellowship after each Sunday Service, providing a great opportunity to make visitors welcome as well as enabling social time with the Chaplain and other Chaplaincy members. It would be a great opportunity for the new Chaplain to revive this tradition.



*Burns Night Fundraiser*



*Social get together and meal*



*Social get together following the St Andrew's Day service*



*Coffee morning at Los Boliches*

## 3.8 Communications

Chaplaincy news is communicated via an online newsletter, distributed via email. and also is displayed on the website: [www.st-andrews-cofe-spain.com](http://www.st-andrews-cofe-spain.com) and on our facebook page. It is also available to non-chaplaincy members, visitors from overseas and any interested parties who choose to receive it.

The Chaplaincy has a social media presence on Facebook, however there is more work to do in developing and maintaining a presence in today's online world.

A weekly Pew Sheet is produced, outlining the weekly Notices, the Collect and the Readings for that Sunday.



*Members of the Chaplaincy with the Right Reverend Dr Robert Innes, Diocesan Bishop, who receives our newsletter.*

Major events and activities are submitted to the local press for publication in order to maintain a presence in the wider community and attract new members to the congregation.

## 3.9 Safeguarding

With the aim of ensuring the basic human rights of individuals are protected, the Chaplaincy works to create a safe space for vulnerable adults, young adults and children, ensuring they have the best outcomes and are provided with safe and effective care.

The Chaplaincy Safeguarding Officer operates within the guidelines to ensure compliance with the necessary regulations. The Chaplaincy is also compliant with GDPR Legislation.

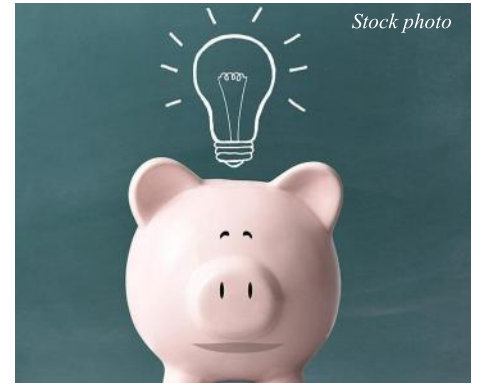
## 3.10 Finances

During the last few years, considerable effort has been made to ensure effective financial management of the funds and assets available. This has been demonstrated by paying off the mortgage on the Chaplaincy House and also by the recent 'Renewals and Renovations' project on the Church building.

The Chaplaincy is entirely self-supporting, therefore income is based on fund raising, freewill offering, stewardship and

donations. Additional sources of income are generated from funerals, wedding blessings and the hall hire at St. Andrew's Church.

The COVID 19 pandemic, the effects of Brexit and the ageing congregation, has had a detrimental impact on Chaplaincy funds. The need for careful financial management is ever present and this is reflected in the decision to recruit a part-time Chaplain.

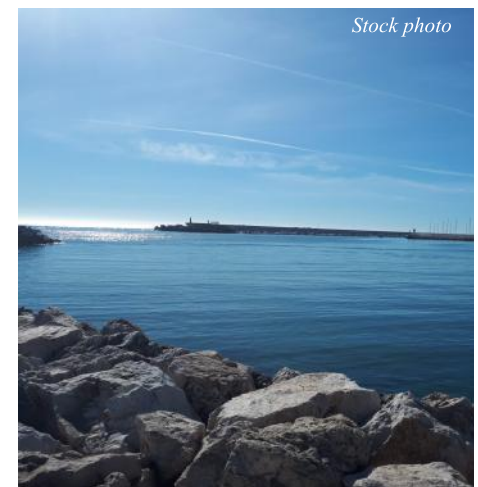


## 4. VISION

Whilst the Chaplaincy acknowledges and celebrates the past fifty-four years, the focus is now on the future. The image of looking out to sea encourages our key objectives of looking forward and looking outwards.

### **For the future we seek to:**

- encourage the faith and commitment of members of our church family so they grow and develop
- involve younger families and create a culture of encouragement;
- increase our visibility within the community and adopt an outward-looking approach;
- strengthen the impact of Christianity on the secular life through active ecumenical participation



## 5. MOVING FORWARD IN FAITH

The Chaplaincy of Saint Andrew has grown from humble beginnings to command a presence both inland and on the Coast in southern Spain. For over fifty years, challenges have been faced and overcome, opportunities have arisen and been taken, resulting in a Christian community that continues to evolve and grow in faith.

In the desire to build on this foundation, the Chaplaincy seeks a leader who, as well as being theologically qualified and experienced, is ready to rejuvenate a community post-Brexit, post-Covid and who will inspire, motivate, challenge and empower members of the Chaplaincy, individually and collectively, to achieve the Vision.

Within our Ministry Team and

Congregation we have people who are willing and have the skills to be involved in teaching and outreach but would benefit from a leader to guide and help us to reach out into the community.

A leader who will plan, organise and conduct a programme of teaching which supports the Chaplaincy, develop the faith and respond to the needs of different people; and finally, a leader to make full use of the opportunities for outreach and service to the community, so that assistance is provided to the community as effectively as possible.

With God's blessing, our aim is to move forward in faith, working with and being supportive of a Chaplain who has been called to lead the Anglican Chaplaincy of Saint Andrew, Costa del Sol East.

