



ified more than 1,000 people over 80 to be vaccinated with the Covid-

The Revd Andy Dovey, Lead for Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care at Croydon Health Services NHS Trust in south London, reached out to churches and faith groups in the area to raise awareness of the availability of the vaccine.

It came as NHS teams across the country booked appointments for the most vulnerable people in our society, including those over 80 who were already coming in to hospital for outpatient appointments,

“The response has been amazing,” he said.

“I am really grateful to the community of churches that have pulled together to support our congregations in these difficult times.”

To ensure all of the vaccine was used for the benefit of those prioritised by the Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), churches from across Croydon contacted people in their congregations and the wider community who were over 80.

They asked if they wanted the vaccine and, if they did, obtained permission to forward their details to Andy who sent them on to the hospital's Covid-19 vaccination team to book appointments, bolstering their efforts in the initial days of the vaccine roll out.

“We have been able to reach not only the church, but the wider community and other faiths,” said Andy.



The Bishop of Croydon, The Rt Revd Jonathan Clark, (pictured, above) said: “I am delighted that we have been able to mobilise the churches in this way. Many of our parishioners are over 80 and vulnerable. This vaccine will make a huge difference in their lives.”

The Government started rolling out the vaccine on Tuesday 8 December. Health staff, care home residents and the over-80s are the first to receive it.

Andy puts this success down to the excellent partnership enjoyed by all the churches in the area through the ecumenical group Churches Together in Croydon and strong interfaith relations.

“The Church is much more than just church attendance, it is about being disciples in the community and providing God’s grace to people in their hour of most desperate need,” he said.

With the vaccination programme now in full swing, the NHS is contacting people systematically to invite them in for a COVID-19 vaccine. Individuals can be reassured that the NHS will be in touch with them directly as soon as it is their time to be vaccinated.

Source URL: <https://www.churchofengland.org/news-and-media/stories-and-features/chaplain-mobilises-churches-and-community-identify-more-1000>