



Eastleigh

Newsletter

Edition 29

July 2024

E-mail: Eastleigh@streetpastors.org.uk
www.eastleigh.streetpastors.org.uk

Welcome!

...to the twenty ninth Eastleigh Street Pastors' newsletter.

The first thing I want to do is thank our band of volunteers who faithfully go out each week onto the streets of Eastleigh. Since we returned to the streets after the pandemic we have not had a Friday shift missed because we could not get a team out (there has always been the odd Friday such as between Christmas and New Year when we chose not to have a patrol).

You'll find in this edition our stats for 2023. Our more recent times on the streets has been characterised by an increasing number of regular homeless, as well as helping those out in the night time economy. There is no denying that the night time economy is generally less busy than before the pandemic - but there is always a reason we are there each time we are out. Do pray for our businesses in Eastleigh. It is great to see the Chalet reopen. We have found the burden of patrolling easier with the Station returning to a 2am close rather than the 3am prior to the pandemic.

With only one trainee last year we really are in need of a few more people to step forward and get involved. In particular 5 of our last 7 recruits have been male and so we really could do with a few more female recruits so we can keep teams balanced. It is much more difficult for an all male team to deal with a distressed, possibly scantily clad intoxicated female.

You will find our usual stories from the streets, which give a flavour of what happens on the Streets and a feature on the Isle of Wight Festival by Darren Holt. Could you be part of making new stories of God's love being shown to Eastleigh and beyond?

Blessings,

Steve Smallwood, Coordinator
Eastleigh Street Pastors



Street Pastors stewarding the Churches Together in Eastleigh Good Friday service this year.

Stories from the Street

The following are some situations that Street Pastors in Eastleigh have recorded between October 2022 and March 2023. They are selected from the weekly reports that we keep. We report mainly on older stories to reduce risk of disclosure.



Two young men came over to us. One quoted many texts from the Bible and asked if we could pray for him, his gran had died very recently. We prayed for him, and we were asked to pray for the other man, who described himself as Hindu.



We stopped with a young lady for a while; she mentioned a friend of hers had committed suicide a couple of years ago and she was still disturbed by this. Her mum came to pick her up after a short while.



We then bumped into a middle-aged male who had been thrown out of The Station pub. He was complaining and threatening to ring the police... we listened to him for about 5 or 10 minutes and he seem to calm down and eventually went on his way.



A lad thanked us for helping him when he was about ten!



Outside the kebab shop there were two young men in drink, one feeling ill and his friend asked for a bottle of water which we gladly gave out.



Saw a lone girl walk by and caught up with her by the bus station. She seemed a little nervous but said she would be okay walking home. We offered to walk with her, but she declined. Watched her walk off as some lads came by, we stopped to make sure they were not following her.



Spoke to a couple of girls, one talked to us at length, she said, don't ever stop doing what you are doing. She went on to describe how a Street Pastor elsewhere had helped her to change her life ten years ago when she was around 13 or 14. She is now a changed woman.



We then followed a young adult male who was staggering in the road and was heading towards Bishopstoke. He collapsed on the bridge, Shortly after he came round and we propped him up, He would not tell us where he lived but we did manage to get his name .He said that life was not worth living which we took seriously given he's state of mind. It appeared that he was single and living with a parent. After 10 mins he got up and started walking in middle of road with traffic having to slow down and swerve to avoid him. At this point we decided to call in situation so that the police could be informed as he was a danger not only to himself but other road users. Police car turned up approx. 5 mins later but when they approached him he decided to run off in a very controlled manner . We came to the conclusion that he knew where he was going and the 45

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mins or so we had spent with him he became more focused. The Police decided to follow him and we returned to base.



At the train station we spotted a middle-aged man at the far (southern) end of platform 1 staggering about and was concerned he might fall off the platform. Two went to talk to him rather than all four of us. We did all go to him after the initial contact. He connected and shared with one of the team. He had been drinking but also said he had had a couple of “fits” earlier and wanted to be seen by medics as he had various health issues. He chose to phone 999 on his own mobile and wanted us to speak on his behalf to get an ambulance to come and check him over. The 999 call handler spoke with us and after some checks said an ambulance would be about 20 minutes unless redirected. We had agreed to stay with him while waiting and at one point he wanted to go walkabout again so we made sure he kept away from the platform edge. The ambulance arrived about 20 minutes later and two paramedics were good with him and took him off to Winchester.

We prayed briefly as they went, both for him and the paramedics.



At the start of our patrol, it was on the

radio that there was an incident in the Station and that Police were required. On hearing this we approached with caution, but it was then on the radio that the participants had been ejected and that Police were no longer required. As we passed the Station it was calm and seemed under control, so we carried on our Patrol.



We were approached by a man who was seemed rather anxious and vocal about his current personal situation. He explained that he had ongoing issues with regards to his housing situation and his dealings with the police. He explained that he had been in police custody till the early hours of the morning (same day). We listened and offered prayer. He was very grateful and he went on his way a lot less anxious and more relaxed.



At Wells Place Centre (WPC) we saw a male in a doorway. He was in drink, very cold, and struggling to stay awake. Not good signs as the temperature was very cold. We chatted to him, and it was his first night on the streets, He had heard about us but did not believe we were real. Earlier we had found a bag clearly left out as a gift for a homeless person. This not only had additional warm clothes for him and a blanket, it also had a hot water bottle in, which we filled. We also gave him some hot food and hot drinks and heat packs. He was in tears at our help. We left him awake in better spirits and advised him to visit WPC in the morning for some advice.

We continue to give thanks to God for the people we meet and the way He uses us.



****NEW Training course****

What kind of training do street pastors get?

Our training programme equips you for everything you need to join one of our patrols, and aims to set the tone for continued learning while you are out on the streets. We hope it will also equip you to be a more aware and informed citizen the rest of the time! The training takes place alongside volunteers from other areas in the South—so a great opportunity for fellowship and to meet new people.

Examples of topics covered: Loving like Jesus; Roles and responsibilities of street pastors; Skills - listening, caring and helping;

Street craft - observation, assessment and intervention; Police and CCTV; Homelessness; Drugs and alcohol; Youth and Community

To gain an insight into what it is to be a street pastor why not come on an observation with a patrol. To book up a convenient date just contact the email below.

When does the next training take place?

Friday eve 7pm – 9.30pm, Sat all day 9.30am-4.30pm,

Sunday all day 9.30am-4.30pm

All timings and subjects still provisional

- **Fri eve 4th, Sat 5th and Sun 6th October 2024**
- **Fri eve 18th, Sat 19th and Sun 20th October 2024**
- **Fri eve 1st, Sat 2nd and Sun 3rd November 2024**

Email eastleigh@streetpastors.org.uk for an application form and for more information.

Applications by end of Sunday 15th September 2024

If you can't make the above, provisional training dates for Spring 2025:

14-16 March, 28-30 March, 11-13 April

The Management Committee

Chair: Martin Ward (St Mary's Bishopstoke CoE)

Vice Chair: To be appointed

Secretary: Heather Beavis (Eastleigh Baptist church)

Treasurer: Martin Lloyd (Thrive church)

Other committee members:

Dave Savage (All Saints, CoE)

Eric Hyom (Holy Cross RC Church)

Alan Saunders (Eastleigh Baptist Church)

In addition the following roles are not part of the management committee but attend all meetings.

Prayer Pastor Coordinator: Vacant

Street Pastor Coordinator: Steve Smallwood

Others serving:

Uniform monitor: Jeanne Donohoe



Prayer Pastors - Who are we and what do we do?

Prayer pastors are people from the local churches who pray for our Street

Pastors while they are on patrol. Ideally prayer would normally takes place at Wells Place Centre on a Friday night from around 8pm, although in current circumstances we have been experimenting with zoom prayer groups.

The prayer pastors pray with the Street Pastors before they go out and may be contacted during a shift if there is something immediate to pray for. If we are able to have teams at Wells Place prayer pastors will often make refreshments for Street Pastors. The Street Pastors will probably share something of any encounters or incidents while out. This information is CONFIDENTIAL so you are not allowed to discuss with others outside

the prayer team.

At the moment we have one church with a small group who regularly pray. In the past another church has used their small group network . All who have been involved say it has been encouraging for those that have taken part. They feel blessed to help provide prayer cover for our Street Pastors.

We have a need for someone to coordinate this ministry. Ideally someone who could set up and manage a WhatsApp group and can use zoom.

It would be a great encouragement to have more people and more churches involved in the prayer support. Ideally the commitment is to pray once every four weeks, but the coordinator would need to check weekly for prayer cover and manage any electronic groups.






















Please contact us via

eastleigh@streetpastors.org.uk

2023 On the Streets

The statistics here were presented at our recent Annual General Meeting on 23rd April 2024.

2023 saw some extra Saturday patrols for the first time. Overall there was some evidence that later patrols were a little busier than the previous year. Anti-social incidents were back to previous levels after the relative tranquillity of 2022. The lack of measurable prayer support during patrols is concerning. We appreciate many pray for us but it would be great to have more active involvement.

 EASTLEIGH	2022	2023	
 Friday nights on the street (out of 52, did not patrol 29/12/23)	52	51	
 Extra patrols (2023 inc 3 Saturdays)	1	4	
 Person hours on the streets	655	660	
 Person hours of prayer while SPs on the street	66	11	
 Contacts	1206	1227	
 Average contacts per shift - Early	24.4	22.1	
 Average contacts per shift - Late	14.5	19.5	
 Pairs of flip-flops	10	10	
 Bottles removed	247	249	
 People helped	19	19	
Anti-social incidents	13	20	

Street Pastors Rock!

In my younger days I never had the opportunity to attend a weekend music festival so when a call to help out at the Isle of Wight Festival was made I thought 'this is my time'. After a few emails, my camping was arranged (in the one of the organiser's gardens), ferry booked and eventually backpack and tent prepared. I had booked to travel over Friday morning, returning on Sunday not really knowing what to expect. It was God's calling and it felt right so had had no doubt that everything would be fine, probably with a few bumps along the way.

I was on my own but that didn't concern me. Maggie was also looking to go but sadly she couldn't go for the weekend so she had arranged to go over Sunday/Monday. Sometime later I was approached by 'young at heart' David from my Friday night team..... he was interested but wasn't sure but it didn't take long before he was emailing the organiser, booking to camp at the same place, on the same ferry etc.... We were now ready for our 'Jolly Boys' weekend not really knowing what to expect.... Now I not only had God looking after me but I also had a friend to share in this amazing journey. Friday morning came, 7.30am train from Eastleigh, 8.15am Red Funnel Bus, 9am Ferry etc. with backpack and tents we were ready for our adventure arriving at our camping site about 11am. We had previously been offered beds but decided that to truly experience the event we wanted to camp (well I did so I guess David had no choice). By 11.30am our tents were up and we were ready and kindly offered a lift to the 'Church on the Roundabout' which was the Street Pastor base for the



duration of the event. It was the Hub for all activity, communication and prayer yet more importantly for festival goers it was a point for all to charge their phones, bottled water and a toilet break.... This was a great opportunity if only for a minute or two of their time to share God's love and explain what we do and why we do it, allowing them to take away a little something away with them that might just flourish with time.

Our shift started at 1pm so we had a little time to get to know some of the Isle of Wight Street Pastors and also those that had also travelled from the mainland (or North Island as they would call it). Our fellow Street Pastors were from Southampton, Winchester, Oxford, Reading and London to name a few, all of them receiving the call and most not really knowing what to expect. We had signed up to a double shift on the Friday, we were blessed with amazing weather so with sun-cream applied we set off to patrol the outside of festival on the opposite side of the Medina river. You could hear the music quite clearly and whilst it wasn't that busy we had some amazing conversations, our Team Leader wasn't from the Island so we got a little lost along the way which added to the experience.

No sooner had Friday afternoon's shift finished we were off again this time to patrol inside the festival. And what an eye-opener it was... with over fifty thousand people attending the festival it sure was busy. We were there to share God's love so when we came across a group dancing to S-Club of course we had to join them, some of the team doing a much better job than me with David filming. We were now engaging with many more festival goers and more importantly the support staff.

With such a large event like the Isle of Wight festival everyone has to play their part. We were engaging with security & gate staff, first aiders, the police ensuring that they were being looked after offering water,



sweets and conversation. Time sure flies when you are having fun and it wasn't just the music but to see so many people enjoying the event made our aching feet seem insignificant. Of course there were a number of serious incidents that needed our help and with immense support from the Prayer Team we were able to confidently navigate these challenges.

I can't remember what time we got back to our tents Friday night but it was a very long walk putting one foot in-front of the other knowing that we have been a part of something special and made some amazing new friends.

It rained overnight and my pop-up tent which I had borrow from my children didn't seem to be waterproof, but luckily the morning sun was early to rise and it was again forecast to be a glorious day. We were offered Sausage & Bacon Barmcakes (I think you call them Baps or Rolls) for breakfast along with coffee and juice which was very welcomed. A few stretches, quick wash etc. and we were ready to go again.. As you can appreciate we were a little tired but our motivation was knowing that we were playing our part and looking forward to the opportunity to care and share.

Out Saturday afternoon shift was to patrol Fairlee road which runs adjacent to the festival entrances. We got to say hello and engage with several hundred festival goers, giving out lots of sweets and water. Love and happiness is infectious and it was in abundance, groups, couples and families all in good spirit. At Eastleigh we are very competitive when it comes to

collecting and disposing of glass bottles and there was no shortage here. David would have won hands down..... With the sun at its highest and the amount of alcohol likely to be drunk we knew that it would be a challenging evening and prayed that God would support all those involved throughout the evening.

Saturday evening was our time to relax and explore the festival site, Mick from Southampton had joined us from the earlier shift so we found a quieter area sat down for a coffee and conversation, we could still hear the music but it wasn't too loud so we could hear ourselves think... After watching the Streets, a long couple of days ended with the Pet Shop Boys on the main stage. After their second song we decided to make our way back to our tents, a 2 mile walk re-living our younger days listening to the classics from the Pet Shop Boys, they were still going as we arrived back at our tents. We were on the mid-day ferry back to Southampton so packed up, enjoyed a Sausage and Bacon Barmcake and said our fond farewells to our hosts and fellow campers... We were returning before the festival had finished so it was a little quiet giving us time to reflect on our amazing time, thanking God for looking over us... many fond memories, friendships and conversations sharing the love that brought us all together, already looking forward to next year!

God Bless to everyone involved. If this is something you would like to get involved in them I would highly recommend it for 2025.

By Darren Holt

What is Eastleigh Street Pastors?

Eastleigh Street Pastors is an unincorporated association of the Ascension Trust. This means that the project is an entity in its own right. However, it is not recognised as a `legal body` so cannot take on contracts in the name of the Ascension Trust. A constitution was adopted on 20th March 2009. A copy of the constitution is available from the coordinator Steve Smallwood. Membership of Eastleigh Street Pastors is free, although members must be members of a church and either live in; Eastleigh; an adjacent borough; or work in the town. Volunteers and prayer pastors are automatically members. The last Annual general meeting was on 23rd April 2024 on zoom, and the next will be in April 2025. If you would like to volunteer, become a member, or just want to know more, please fill in the form below or email eastleigh@streetpastors.org.uk.



Get involved!

Please complete the Slip below and return it to:
 Eastleigh Street Pastors
 c/o Wells Place Centre



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 Please tick all that apply

- I would like to train to be a Street Pastor
- I would like to be a Prayer Pastor
- I would like to be a member of Eastleigh Street Pastors
- I would like to receive occasional news and updates by e-mail

Name

Address

Postcode

E-mail

Phone

I agree to my details being held on the PCs of the Eastleigh Street Pastors Coordinator