



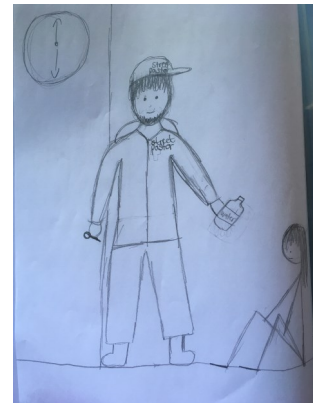
# Being the Face of Jesus in Leicester

## Outreach work

In order to raise the profile of the Street Pastor initiative in Leicester we have been doing some outreach work in schools. We were able to meet some Year 11 students in Birstall doing 4 sessions over 2 months. These sessions allowed us to explain what a Street Pastor does and why they do it. It was, also, an opportunity to share with young people the issues they may face when they go out into the city. In groups they worked on typically scenarios that Street Pastors encounter and to think how a street pastor could make a difference. The sessions were really well received with students asking challenging questions as well as expressing their admiration for the work being done on a voluntary basis. Bearing in mind these would be the young people we will be meeting in the next couple of years it was great to be able to highlight what we do and how we could help.

In the new year we completed 2 "Viewpoint" days at a college in the city. It was challenging to repeat the same session 5 times in one day but the students were engaging and fascinated by the role of spirituality in the "real" world.

Interestingly the students were not aware of spirituality in action in their day to day lives. The surprise came when students explained that they did not really watch television. Their viewing habits were focused on playing games and choosing recognisable things from Youtube. The challenge was set by us to try and watch something out of their comfort zone. The students were also invited to draw what they thought a street pastor might be doing and below is an example of their work.



### The Work we have done in January and February

**January** was a difficult month as the weather is becoming colder. We handed out several hats, gloves and socks to those who are on the streets. Several people were in great distress this month and we were called by the police to support.

- We had **96** conversations/interactions
- Supported **3** vulnerable people
- Explained to **12** individuals our role
- Helped **38** people in a practical way
- Gave **79.5** volunteer hours

**February** ended up being an exceptional month. We completed our usual business throughout the month as noted in the next column.

However, the explosion on Hinckley Road led to a number of

**Street Pastors helping out at the Emergency Centre.**

- Had **134** conversations/interactions
- Supported **8** vulnerable people
- Explained to **14** individuals our role
- Helped **93** people in a practical way
- Gave **100.75** volunteer hours

## The story of Leicester

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Street Pastors have had a busy start to the year. In January we supported a collective meeting hosted by the Diocese which explored the issues of homelessness in the city. It was an opportunity to meet the wide range of people who are involved in trying to assist those who find themselves with no permanent place to live. The meeting was held at St Martins House and this neutral place allowed people

the chance to consider new and vibrant ways of tackling the issue as well as expressing their experiences.

January, also saw the commissioning of a trained Street Pastor. The team were warmly welcomed by Mary De Castro and Russ led a thoughtful service on what it means to have a ministry that leads the Street

Pastors to be out on a Friday/ Saturday night.



## Responding to an Emergency

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On Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February I received a call from Leicester City Resilience Team asking whether we could support people after the devastating explosion on Hinckley Road. The leader of the Resilience Team went on to explain they wanted 3 pastors every 6 hours the first shift starting at 6am the next day. She then went onto say she expected the requirement to continue until the end of the week.

I began contacting the local members and they were brilliant!!! Several of them made their way over to the site as they had had emergency training from the City team; many arriving after work to complete the 6pm – midnight shift. I also contacted the Ascension Trust. Mary Bridget got back to me first thing Wednesday morning and put out a call for Response Pastors. By 8pm Wednesday night a team of 4 Response Pastors had arrived in Leicester from all over the country- Portsmouth, Bristol!! Fantastic dedication as despite their journeys they began supporting immediately!! Thank you to Russ and Julie who offered hospitality to these Pastors!

Today we have been informed that the support being offered will begin to scale down and so the teams are being stood down. I cannot express my thankfulness and amazement at the persistence and care offered by this dedicated group of volunteers.

**Thank you**