



STREETSIDE

Minehead Street Pastors

Why do Street Pastors bother?

‘Why do you bother with st like us?’**

A question asked by a drunken young reveller, his face pressed just a little too closely to mine for comfort. There was no aggression there, but a bemused insistence for an answer. OK, alcohol probably exaggerated his feelings of worthlessness, but I know what he meant, and he wasn't the first person to have asked me that question.

Now there's the long answer, I thought, starting with, "God so loved the world..." and there's the short answer, but at 2.50 on a Sunday morning surrounded by hyped up youngsters unwilling or unable to go home, I wasn't sure if either of us could cope with the

long one. "Because God loves you," I said. I could have added, "but because like you, he's legless at the moment, he sent me to tell you," but I didn't.

He looked at me straight, focusing as best he could. "You people are ****ing amazing," he said, slowly shaking his head. He turned away and made off, I hoped, for home. I wasn't sure if he would remember the encounter in the morning, but I hoped that he would, and that the knowledge would make him feel just a little more valuable.

**Alan Dean
Minehead Street Pastor**



Alan chatting to a young man in Minehead

“Preach the gospel wherever possible. Use words when necessary” – St Francis of Assisi



Mary out and about

Street Pastors play a part at Watchet Music Festival

It was a delight to be invited to Watchet Live Music Festival in August. We had two teams out on the Friday and Saturday evenings, as well as our usual Minehead Saturday night patrol. The weekend was cool, wet and blustery and yes, there was MUD. However, there was also much mixing with crowds

and plenty of good conversation, including some important faith contacts. Street Pastors verdict: music was too LOUD, cups of tea were VITAL amidst all the beer tents and feet were definitely ACHING by the end of the night! We also had a nice thank you from PCSO Rachel Cutler on behalf of the Watchet Neighbourhood

Beat Team 'to express thanks and gratitude to your SPs to assist us with patrolling the site. I know the festival organisers will also wish their thanks to be passed on and will invite the SPs next year. It was lovely to be able to work alongside the SPs in Watchet, and we will bear in mind for future events."

Making a difference...

Prayer Pastors

'It is the greatest privilege to be a part of the Prayer Pastor team. I always hoped that I could be a part of the prayer and find that it has exceeded my expectations.

Although I am not often able to be on duty, the 'excuse' to pray for hours with others is gift in itself and some real friendships are emerging as a result and my prayer life is growing.

I have to say that the novelty of setting out from home [such a long journey for me!] at the time I might normally be going to bed has worn off, but the pleasure of meeting old friends and spending quality prayer time with them overcomes any reservations. The social evenings are total bonus.

I should like to thank everyone for their commitment, their encouragement and their faithfulness'
Margaret Morris

To date we have:

- **Engaged with 100s of people**
- **Removed 265 + glass bottles**
- **Assisted 29 vulnerable people**
- **Rescued 85 pairs of sore feet with flip flops**
- **Had 31 significant conversations about Jesus**

Over the last few months I have seen Street Pastors blossom. The pleasure I get when I go onto the street and people call out and say hallo or see you later, shake our hand and put their arms around us is immense. They are beginning to look upon as a blessing not a pain, they make a point of coming

over and speaking and are beginning to understand where we are coming from I feel it is a privilege to be a Street Pastor. *Rosemary.*

It is one o'clock on a Sunday morning, and I am standing in Wellington Square. Two young people approach and start to talk. Both of them are happy, but not "over the top". After the usual questions about what Street Pastors do, the girl tells me that she works in a Taunton residential home, and that this is her first week-end off in months. She shows me a mark on her arm where she was bitten by one of her residents, but she loves her job and hopes to eventually qualify has a psychiatric nurse. The boy comes from the Dulverton

area, where he was in a part time dead end job. He has now moved to the Minehead area, found a flat, and is working in a local factory. He works 12 hour shifts, 4 days on and then 4 nights on, with a break between. Both these 18/19 year olds impressed me with their commitment to hard work, and their delight in sharing their stories with me. They were a real answer to some of the negative generalisations you hear about young people. It was the Street pastor uniform that encouraged them to approach in the first place, and it made for a very memorable evening for me.

Wendy.



The Church has left the building!

Street Pastoring, to me is being a loving, caring presence on the street. Having the uniform - which is becoming increasingly recognised - gives confidence to approach those who look sad - or who appear to be in need. We can offer help - knowing it will most likely be accepted - or at least refused politely. We are constantly surprised and encouraged in our encounters. We come alongside, supply a comforting shoulder; we provide tissues to dry tears; wet wipes to clean away the effects of too much alcohol; we never judge; we never laugh at - only with; we speak into the situation of emotional distress words that the Spirit of God gives us to speak and we expect the seeds that are sown through these actions to grow. It is the most wonderful privilege and honour to move amongst the young people of our town. Not only are we sharing the Gospel in a practical sense, we are also breaking the boundaries of age; we are learning to appreciate each other and love each other because of our interaction. *Caroline*



We need YOU!

We hope that you are as excited by Minehead Street Pastors as we are. However, we need your support to help us continue to work together to make a difference:

- **ESPECIALLY Street Pastors who actually patrol the streets**
- **Prayer Team members to look after the spiritual and physical needs of SPs whilst they work**
- **If you are interested in receiving a short talk or presentation for your school, church or organization, please email or phone Barbara**

For more information please contact our Coordinator, Barbara Tunngley:
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