

OXFORD STREET PASTORS

Listening, Caring, Helping

Volunteer Special

What do we do?

Street Pastors are out in Oxford most weekends, bringing practical help, smiling faces and some loving kindness to the people we meet. We go out in all weather. As most of us volunteer for a shift every 3-4 weeks, it means that we can always look forward to a change of season by the next time we go out!

We are appreciated by the managers of the nightclubs and pubs and feel an important part of the NightSafe partnership in the City. They call us on the radio if they need our help and we also meet and greet the police, taxi marshalls and kebab sellers as we walk around.

We play an important part in keeping women safe. There have been concerns about the extent of sexual harassment and assault against women. We always check when we see a woman on her own, keep a look out for those receiving unwanted attention and intervene when we need to - in our friendly but firm way.

We also help people to find their friends after they have left clubs at different times, give practical help to those feeling sick, walk with women on their own to help them get to their bus stop safely and listen to others who are feeling sad and alone. We sometimes have to call for an ambulance or ask the CCTV operators or police for their help.



What is it really like to be a Street Pastor?

Alice's Story

"I was waiting for the night bus to take me home after a concert. While standing in the cold at the bus stop on Queen Street, three young women came rocking down the street on impossibly high heels and short, tight dresses – yelling, swearing, swerving to the right and left, once tripping on a kerb and getting dangerously close to a passing taxi. As I watched, they dipped into a vacant doorway, and then two faced outward while the third pulled up her skirt and squatted to relieve herself.

Others at the bus stop managed to express their disapproval, and whilst I suppose I disapproved too, I was primarily feeling love and pity for the girls, remembering my own excesses when I was young, being embarrassed for them and also wishing that I could go over there and give them a hug."

Oxford Street Pastors

Oxford Street Pastors is a registered charity (Charity number 1155694)

How can you volunteer?

If you are interested in finding out more, then please get in touch. Email streetpastorsoxford@gmail.com

1. You can chat to a current Street Pastor to find out what it is really like.
2. You can come out on a shift as an observer with no obligation at all.
3. Find out from our Coordinator what the training involves. Costs are covered by the organisation.
4. Talk to your minister/vicar and get a referenced to go with your application form.

Once you decide to go ahead, you can take part in training:

1. Completing the Roles and Responsibilities training day is the first step. Courses are run in the area every few months and this one is face to face.
2. Get into uniform and get going! Once you have done the training day then you will be able to go out on shift as a part of the team.
3. Other training modules can be completed when you have time. They include courses on mental health, alcohol and drugs and youth culture. We also learn about the local NightSafe partnership and our role in preventing violence against women and girls.
4. Once you have completed the courses, you can be commissioned as a fully trained street pastor.



Alice's Story continued...

“Now that I'm a Street Pastor, I have almost unlimited opportunities to reach out to young people like those girls in positive, non-judgemental ways. We are well-known for giving out lollipops and flip-flops, but we also give affirmation, words of encouragement, and a listening ear. Does that sound very serious and worthy? It's not! Mostly it's just a lot of fun being out on a Saturday night with my mates - my fellow Pastors - on the streets of Oxford, talking to people, joking around and getting all sorts of thanks for what we do, including plenty of hugs.”



How to get involved

Please pray

- For more volunteers to join our work. Currently we can only cover about 50-60% of the shifts we would like to do. Please pray about whether this is something you could get involved with.
- Join us in giving thanks for an improved financial position following a fall in our reserves after the pandemic.
- For the Street Pastor teams who go out on Friday or Saturday nights from 10:30 pm - 3:30 am.
- For everyone working in the night time economy in Oxford - the club managers and staff, door supervisors, taxi marshalls, City Angels, police, paramedics and ambulance crew and taxi drivers.
- For our Coordinator, Petra, who sets up our rotas, training, communications, partnerships and meetings.

Oxford Street Pastors

Oxford Street Pastors is a registered charity (Charity number 1155694)