



# Taunton Street Pastors

## *...the Word on the street*

Autumn 2015

**Welcome** to the second edition of

*...the Word on the street*, an occasional newsheet sent free to our supporters. We aim to share some of the exciting developments and inspirational stories that our Street Pastor teams are encountering in and around the Taunton area week by week.

The teams are grateful to the many church, civic and community groups that have contributed to the local Street Pastors' remarkable work. Particular tribute should be paid to those who have travelled with us since the very first conversation with the young people the initial patrol met on the night of Saturday 17 May 2008.

With Street and School Pastors trained and patrolling on weekdays in and around Taunton Academy, Halcon and Priorswood, as well as in the town centre every Saturday, we are at full stretch and hope to encourage many more local Church members to attend our next training programme starting in January 2016.

Team members are willing to speak to community groups to share details of what we do. We also welcome community leaders as observers of our patrols. If you would like to know more please contact our coordinator, Adrian Prior-Sankey, via [taunton@streetpastors.org.uk](mailto:taunton@streetpastors.org.uk) or **07773 038 622**



Halcon's Street Pastors participating in the community's monthly litter pick activity

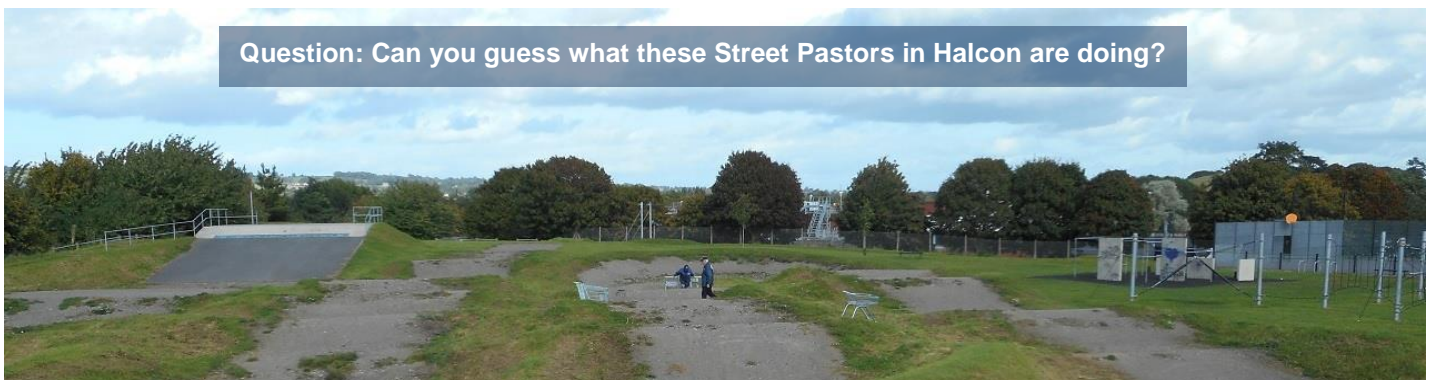
### **Street Pastors (and prayer) making a difference...**

A young man who encountered the Saturday night Street Pastor team this summer has had his life turned around as a result of the experience. Having spent time sleeping rough as a consequence of many problems, he was made welcome at the 'Safe Space' street café run by Taunton's Street Pastors. This in itself was remarkable on a night when team numbers were originally going to be so low that Safe Space would not have operated. The appearance of three dedicated prayer pastors at the last moment led to a change of plan. After a hot drink and a biscuit the young visitor fell into conversation with some of the team members and was invited to attend Chamberlains Vineyard's Sunday lunch the next day.

Shirley Brook organises the lunch and, tipped off by the street pastor team, she arrived early to look out some clothes for the anticipated visitor. Vince Carrington, minister of North Street Church, spoke to Shirley before the service began and told her that a young homeless man had come into the church upset and soaking wet. Shirley was able to greet him by name and exchanged fresh clothes for his old ones which she took home to wash.

Surprised and concerned that the chap did not appear for lunch after the church service, Shirley discovered that a church family had offered him home hospitality and subsequently been able to arrange accommodation and support to address his various issues. He is now worshipping in church on Sundays, helping provide food for the homeless and has been back to thank the street pastors for their help.

**Question: Can you guess what these Street Pastors in Halcon are doing?**



Answer:



Returning abandoned trolleys to ASDA provides a great conversation starter for our new Halcon Street Pastors

### Welcome to the blinking Street Pastors ...

Not in any profane sense, but recognising that we now have team members who patrol in daylight!

Throughout the summer months teams have been out and about meeting members of the community in Halcon one afternoon a week and supporting the monthly litter pick.

In Priorswood Street Pastors engage with young people who attend the weekly Drop In on a Wednesday evening. Local residents and shop keepers have expressed their pleasure at the reassuring sight of three friendly faces.

In both locations people have spontaneously opened up about the deeper issues of life and welcomed an offer of prayer.

The minimum commitment per volunteer is one patrol a month but some love it so much they do more!

### Read all about it...

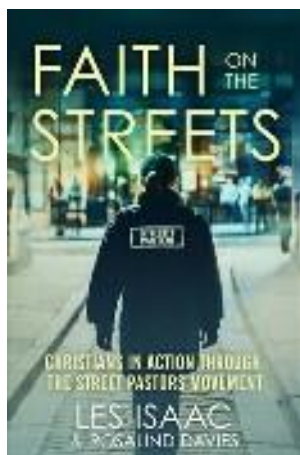
'Faith on the Streets' is the latest publication by Street Pastors Founder the Revd Les Isaac OBE.

The book includes some inspirational stories of people whose lives have been turned round following an encounter with Street Pastors.

Taunton's Street Pastor Team has several 'mentions in despatches'

For details of how to purchase the book visit the national web site:

[www.streetpastors.org](http://www.streetpastors.org)



### A breakdown of the services rendered by Taunton Street Pastors Jan-June 2015 ...

(2014 year totals in brackets)

- 115 (380) bare-footed people given free flip flops
- 46 (108) Faith-related conversations with individuals
- 60 (225) encounters with rough sleepers
- 10 (37) instances of aggression calmed
- 41 (155) vulnerable people supported
- 708 (1,970) bottles, glass or cans cleared
- 282 (683) drinks served
- 7 (67) provided with hot food
- 218 (633) sweets given away
- 6 (14) instances of First Aid being undertaken
- 13 (45) Foil blankets or hoodies given out
- 4 (33) calls made to the emergency services
- 153 (479) times 'Thank you' was said to the teams

...as well as meeting hen/stag parties (& usually posing for a photo), listening to military personnel home on leave, chatting with staff of pubs & clubs, taxi drivers and chip shops, receiving hugs and/or kisses, responding to requests for help from door supervisors, showing the local MP and other civic leaders what we do, praying for relationship issues, and responding to people wanting to commit suicide... involving 1,074 (3,120) hours of service by 61 (59) Street Pastors supported by praying friends.

### What they say about Street Pastors...

'I just wanted to drop you an e-mail to pass on my thanks to the Street Pastors for going above and beyond the call of duty on Saturday night' – a Taunton Night club manager

'...Street Pastors set up a gazebo at the Pride in Priorswood Community Day to let the community know a bit more about what they have been doing. The One Team were proud to present the volunteers to the visiting Police Crime Commissioner Sue Mountstevens and tell her all about their contribution in the community.' – One Team Coordinator

'It's made a big difference to us; life is much calmer now at nights' – a Taunton taxi driver

'My granddaughter would like to say a big "Thank you" ... as she received much help (and flip flops) on numerous occasions in the early hours in Taunton' – a local Parish Councillor



Priorswood's Street Pastors with young people from the Youth 'Drop In' activity