



Wantage and Grove STREET PASTORS

Quarterly News

JAN
2020



Dave Coombs, Chair

Welcome to the new Wantage and Grove Street Pastors Quarterly News! As we start our second decade as Christians serving our local community together, we wanted to find a fresh way to update you on what happens when a bunch of ordinary people, with extraordinary love and commitment, make themselves available to care for, listen to and help young people, those who become vulnerable and those who work in our night time economy. The work of Street Pastors is not only appreciated by those we help but also by their friends and families as well as by the police, businesses and community leaders. Indeed, Wantage Mayor, Major Jim Sibbald, has recently nominated us for the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. From the very first patrol in 2009, we have been impacting individuals and the local area for the better; sometimes with life changing or life saving impacts. Thank you for reading this update and for your support through volunteering, prayer or finance. We look forward to this next phase and sharing what happens through future editions of Quarterly News!

Celebrating 10 Years

What a joy to mark a decade of Wantage & Grove Street Pastors on 5th October 2019. We started with a 'thank you' tea for all who have been involved as Street Pastors and Prayer Support Volunteers and Eustace & Sharon Constance from Ascension Trust, who ran our first training sessions, presented us with a beautiful Glass Plaque commemorating our 10 years of ministry. This was followed by a celebration service with guest speaker Rev Jonathan Aitken, now a prison chaplain at Pentonville prison, speaking from Matthew 25 v 31-46. His humorous, yet thought provoking talk shared his heart for the vulnerable and encouraged us to appreciate our opportunities. We were blessed to be joined by local church leaders and members, police (past and present), local government officials and many friends and supporters of Street Pastors. Truly a time of blessing and encouragement for us all.



How we helped on the streets

We met a man who had spent all his money and his phone battery had run down so was facing a long walk home. We carry a mobile power supply which helps us power up phones, so we plugged it in to boost his battery for a while and later asked some passers-by if he could share their taxi home – we were so grateful that they were very happy to help out.

One lady who we met had no coat or bag and was waiting outside, on a very cold night, for friends to join her. We offered her a space blanket to help keep her warm and, being a cold night, she accepted. After about half an hour, a friend arrived and asked

us to go in to a nearby venue to find the lady's coat and bag. We did this and offered to walk the ladies home, however, as we were chatting, another friend came by and took them home by car.

A young man told us that he had found a lady lying in the middle of the road and had helped get her up and move her to some nearby steps. We went immediately and found the lady, who had had too much to drink, sitting on the steps. She was quite vulnerable but said that she had a room booked at The Bear Hotel. We escorted her to the hotel and, with the help of hotel staff, took her to her room.

One of our teams patrolled on what is sometimes described as 'Black Friday' – the last Friday before Christmas, when many people have finished work and are looking forward to some time off. We gave flip-flops and a bottle of water to a young man who had taken his shoes off after twisting his ankle. He was very grateful and later on was able to put his shoes back on.

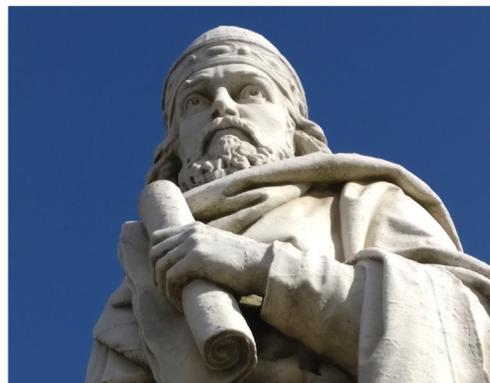
We also patrolled on New Year's Eve; mostly a fun evening seeing in the new year with lots of people around King Alfred's statue. We were very grateful to the police who were on hand to deal with a fight that broke out between some young people.

**For more information on how we helped, check out our Reports page on our website:
www.wantageandgrove.streetpastors.org.uk**

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Afternoon patrols

Following a request from King Alfred's Academy, we are making progress towards starting some afternoon patrols. At the end of the school day, hundreds of pupils make their way through Wantage on their way home, on foot or by bike, and we aim to be there to do what we do best - care, listen and help. This is a significant extension of our ministry and we would value your support, through prayer and, if you're able, by joining as a Street Pastor or Prayer Support Volunteer - it's not too late to be part of the story. We are looking forward to getting to know and serving the young people of Grove and Wantage. It's another great opportunity to bring peace, prayer, and the love of Christ to our streets. If you could be available for 2 hours a couple of Friday afternoons a month and would like more information, please contact us on 07554 655 594 or email us at wantageandgrove@streetpastors.org.uk. Thank you!



How we helped on the streets

Street Pastors patrolled 5 times in October, 4 in November and 5 times in December, including a patrol on New Year's Eve. Fourteen patrols providing 70 hours of cover. Flip-flops that we provide to those that have given up on their shoes not only make the journey home more comfortable but help prevent people from stepping in broken glass, which can be quite a hazard in the early hours of the night - it's really not very easy to see and stepping in it can result in an early-hours hospital visit!

	OCT 19	NOV 19	DEC 19
Flip-flops	6	2	3
Water	23	9	12
Space Blankets	1	0	0
Lollies	350	230	200
Litter	19	26	59

Well done and thank you



We are so grateful for the faithful service of so many of our members - not least of all, David Law. David has served as a trustee since our inception, he was our first Coordinator, which he did as a volunteer, and has been a Senior Street Pastor from the beginning. On top of that, David has taken on different roles on the Management Committee as the need has arisen. He was Chair from April to October 2012 and April 2013 to October 2014, Secretary from October 2014 to July 2017 and Treasurer from July 2017 to October 2019. On top of that, he is currently our Safeguarding Officer. David stepped down as a trustee in October 2019 after more than a decade of faithful service. Well done David, you have been *faithful in much*. We really do appreciate all that you've done for us... and you've definitely earned all your badges, so to speak! :-)

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Street Pastors is an initiative of Ascension Trust, a Christian, inter-denominational organisation with a passion to empower individuals to work together within their local community and nation.