

# SUFFOLK TOWN PASTORS

## PCC BUSINESS CASE 2014



### Introduction and Background to scheme

The Town Pastor scheme began in Suffolk in June 2006 with a launch in Ipswich with 20 volunteers. Since then the Ipswich scheme has gone from strength to strength and now eight years later they have a team of 172 volunteers - 75 Town Pastors who patrol the streets of Ipswich and 97 who make up the prayer base team. Two years later, in 2008, Bury St Edmunds launched its scheme, followed by Newmarket, Woodbridge, Sudbury and Stowmarket in 2009, Lowestoft and Felixstowe in 2010 and Haverhill in 2011; a total of 9 schemes countywide.

To date approximately 579 volunteers are involved in the schemes across the county of Suffolk – 240 Town Pastors patrol the streets and are backed up with prayer teams of approximately 339 people. All of these volunteers are Christians from all Church denominations, giving their time willingly and in most instances freely.

### Cost

Each scheme has its own budget and operating costs associated with it as detailed in the table below. Four out of the nine schemes have co-ordinators who are paid (max 20 hours a week).

\* indicates those who have co-ordinators

Town	Budget £s 2014/15
Ipswich*	24000
Sudbury	2600
Lowestoft*	15990
Woodbridge	4500
Felixstowe *	15000
Stowmarket	4000
Newmarket	4500
Bury*	17000
Haverhill	4500
County Core Costs	10000
Latitude	18000

**Total** **120090**

## **What is the role of a Town Pastor?**

Town Pastors have a concern for their community, and particularly for young people, the poor and the vulnerable. Town Pastors are willing to engage with people where they are; both in terms of their immediate practical needs and their values and world-view.

The core role of a Town Pastor is not evangelistic, but is rather about listening, caring for and helping people. It is about showing concern and offering assistance where appropriate, in a non-judgmental and unconditional way. Town Pastors seek to be a positive presence on the streets, available to offer support to vulnerable people, where appropriate to de-escalate potential trouble and generally to assist the police and other agencies.

Town Pastors are better placed to assist and potentially alleviate and defuse tense situations. They are a stress calming influence and not affiliated to the police, who can be regarded as authority figures. Town Pastors are independent volunteers, they are not authority figures or seen as a threat of enforcement, they operate as capable guardians looking out for vulnerable people, reducing risk of sexual crime, tending to those who are unwell and drunk and providing a pastoral ear to many different people, often in the streets and areas that the police do not routinely patrol.

Nearly all Town Pastors who are out on patrol and those back at prayer base, have access to a radio which is a vital and essential piece of equipment to enable good communication between teams and the prayer base. For the majority of the schemes this is the most expensive equipment expenditure. Throughout the patrol close radio contact is maintained with local borough and district council CCTV operators and through them with police and door staff. This two-way radio contact with CCTV operators is vital as it allows Town Pastors to be directed to certain areas where an incident is occurring and where their assistance is required. Pastors also report any incidents they encounter to the Operations Room.

Each scheme has one, two, or in the case of Ipswich three pairs of Town Pastors who patrol the nightclub, bar, and fast food outlet areas of town centres (from 10pm to 4am in some schemes). At the start of the shift the police may attend to give the Town Pastors a briefing of what's happening in the town. Before they go out on patrol, and at the end of each shift, prayers are said. At the end of the patrol shift log reports are completed and collated by the Team leader.

The Co-ordinator of each scheme is responsible for preparing the rotas for Town Pastors, Home and Base Prayer teams and overseeing that the reports are written up and submitted regularly.

All Pastors are trained volunteers who:

- Look out for and support vulnerable people, providing assistance where appropriate.
- Provide a presence of friendliness and care so people can enjoy their night out.
- Defuse potentially aggressive situations.
- Are available to people as listeners.
- Encourage safe behaviour for all.
- Foster good relationships between the public, the police, taxi drivers, door staff, other voluntary agencies and Local Authorities who are involved in managing the night time economy.

## **Town Pastors Crime and Disorder**

The Town Pastors are working in nearly every major night time economy (NTE) across the county. When we consider how the Town Pastors have had an effect on crime and disorder we can say that in real terms this is difficult to measure. What we do know however, is that the types of crime and disorder the Town Pastors will influence in their role, has fallen consistently across the county.

The types of incidents the Town Pastors are likely to influence are related to public disorder and anti-social behaviour (ASB). In general terms public order offences in the NTE's across Suffolk are mostly 'Public fear, alarm or distress ', around 70% of all public order incidents.

The Town Pastors have undoubtedly had a positive effect on the safety of people within the NTEs. Looking more closely at the cost of crime to individual agencies (police, Criminal Justice system, NHS) one incident of 'violence against the person' is estimated to cost approximately £10,400, a 'serious wounding' incident is estimated to cost around £21,422, a wounding (serious and slight) approximately £8,850 and a serious sexual offence can cost £31,438. If the Town Pastors help prevent just one of each of these crimes they would of saved £72,110. From research and interviews with professionals dealing with NTE offences, it is estimated that in one year (2012) one scheme, Town Pastors may have prevented 254 incidents which were reported under Preventing/Reducing Crime, Personal Safety & Wellbeing and Medical Assistance.

Another example, using April 2010/2011 statistics another scheme had 22 'Preventing / Reducing Crime' incidents, and 85 'Calming Situation Down' situations reported. If out of these 107 examples, 10 crimes were prevented, and it cost approximately £120K to put someone through the justice system / cost of medical care for minor assault / police time related to the whole process, then a saving of £1.2M would be made by the Town Pastor intervention in just one area.

Town Pastors have supported the Latitude festival since 2011. Prior to the Town Pastors involvement with the event in 2010 ten serious crimes were reported. In 2011 three alleged sexual crimes took place in a staff area where the Town Pastors were not allowed to patrol. In 2012 and 2013 no serious crimes were reported.

### **At Latitude 2013**

80 Town Pastors were present over the festival period of Thursday to Sunday (however not all covered all days).

Their main roles were:

- On arrival day they were at gates giving out safety leaflets and generally
- guiding people (including helping to pitch tents)
- Patrolling the camping areas chatting with people giving safety advice
- Patrolling the raves in wood until the early hours with many under-aged festival goers
- Praying in the prayer tent
- Helping with refreshments

## **Town Pastor County Structure**

A new Town Pastor charitable company limited by guarantee is being created that will manage the joint operation of the schemes in Suffolk and is expected to be in place by July 2014. It is designed to support county wide issues and fundraising. It will also control the franchise of the Town Pastor model across the county. Each scheme will remain independent but will send their quarterly statistics and fund raising needs through the county structure where necessary and appropriate.

Funds allocated by the PCC to the Town Pastors schemes will be distributed through the county structure.

## **Statistics**

The quarterly statistics will be made available to the PCC office and a representative of the county structure will attend the PCC's accountability panel three times a year to report on the schemes and the use of PCC's money.

The current forms (attached) are now used by all the schemes and were developed in collaboration with the Police. The forms will be reviewed where possible to improve the quality of the data collected whilst trying to keep them as simple as possible for the volunteer Town Pastors. Each scheme also records qualitative data about incidents which can be accessed if necessary.

## **Current situation with Night-time Economy**

Over the eight years that the Town Pastor scheme have been running there has been a general reduction in overall trade within the night time economy, certainly in the major centres. Policing is more limited to a static presence outside major premises, which means that Town Pastors encounter issues and potential incidences in the streets and alleyways away from the centres. They can often be the first on the scene of major incidents or else by their presence prevent those incidents.

The relationship with the trade and enforcement bodies has improved over the last eight years. The general public who use the night time economy now know and respect the Town Pastors. As a result they have a good overall feel of the night time activity.

Whilst overall demand is down the need is still very apparent. And if there is to be a recovery of the night time economy, there needs to be a continual improvement in the offer (all the businesses and agencies working positively together for a better experience by the users of the NTE), and Town Pastors are a core part of that in providing care and safety within the Night Time Economy.

# Town Pastors' Stats Categories



Stats show Town Pastor activities.

## 1. Personal Safety/Wellbeing

Examples: Escort people to taxi/bus etc. Reunite individuals with friends/family.  
Observe/monitor a situation - a lone female, a potentially aggressive situation etc.

## 2. Pastoral Care and Mental Health Issues

Examples: Any situation where a person wants to discuss problems they are facing in their lives -marriage/relationship issues, drug issues etc. or you have dealt with a person who has/or is suspected of having mental health issues, such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (Soldiers), depression etc.

## 3. Drunk and Incapable

Example: Providing care and support to anyone incapable of looking after themselves due to excessive alcohol consumption.

## 4. Medical Assistance/Welfare

Example: Providing medical or welfare assistance to any person (includes calling an ambulance)

## 5. Providing Water/Refreshment

Example: Providing water or chocolate to any person.

## 6. Juveniles

Example: Any person you engage with who is/or appears to be under 18.

## 7. Homeless (or presenting as homeless)

Example: This should be a record of the number of people presenting as homeless seen on the streets during the shift; people should be counted whether or not you had any interaction with them. The Team Leader should ensure that the same people aren't counted twice.

## 8. Domestic Tension or Violence – reporting or seeking to calm an incident

Example: Any incident between a couple that could become or has become violent where TP intervention takes place or the situation is referred to Police or CCTV.

## 9. Racial Tension – reporting or seeking to calm an incident

Example: Any incident of violence, abuse or threatening behaviour (verbal or physical) on the basis of an individual's race or ethnic background where TP's witness, intervene or report.

## 10. Preventing/Reducing Crime - Calming Aggressive Situations

Examples: Using communication skills to defuse or prevent an incident/situation escalating and requiring Police intervention. Calming/assisting bystanders or those involved in fight/incident.

## 11. Alerting Police/CCTV

Examples: Alerting Police/CCTV to intervene at an incident/situation where 'Calming Aggressive Situation' was not appropriate or safe for Town Pastors to do so.  
Making CCTV and other radio users aware of incident/situation or persons of note.

## 12. Dangerous Items Removed (potential weapons)

Example: Safe removal/disposal of any item that could cause injury/harm or damage (includes bottles/glasses).

## 13. Alcohol Removed

Example: Safe removal/disposal of alcohol.

## 14. Drugs Related Incidents

Example: Safe removal of drugs (includes prescription or over the counter medicines) or drug related paraphernalia.  
Engaging with person(s) who has (or appears to have) taken drugs.

## 15. Non-Categorised Incidents

Example: Any incident you have dealt with that does not come within the above categories or descriptions, such as; taking a found bicycle to the Police Station. Finding a lost dog!