

Local Churches Send Street Pastors to Tackle Neighbourhood Problems

A church-led community initiative, which saw 95% reductions in street crime when introduced in Camberwell, is launching in Tower Hamlets this month.

Residents in Tower Hamlets from the church community have come together in response to some of the problems the community is facing on its streets. The Street Pastor's make themselves available to care, listen, support and help vulnerable people, especially young individuals, to move into positive activities.

The national scheme already has a proven track record with street crime figures dramatically falling in areas where the Street Pastors operate:

- 30% reduction in Lewisham within the first 13 weeks
- 95% reduction in Camberwell
- 74% reduction in Peckham

Playing on the traditional concept of the Trinity, the Street Pastors look to create a new "Urban Trinity" working closely together with the local Authority and the Police (as well as other community agencies) to make a positive difference in the community.

The Rev Georgina Stride has been working on this initiative, jointly with the Ascension Trust and many others in Tower Hamlets, for over two years. Last June they successfully set up a Management Committee and since then, the project has grown from strength to strength; with many churches in the community signing up to be part of this exciting initiative.

"What I find very attractive about this project is that it is firstly, drawing together the Christian community from different denominations, and secondly, it is releasing ordinary men and women from our churches into the streets to serve our community; this is at the heart of the Gospel". (Rev G. Stride)

Who and how can one become a Street Pastor?

In March 2010 the first 12 Street Pastors began their training. They came from a wide range of churches in Tower Hamlets. As the motto goes, 'it takes 12 Street Pastors to commit to 12 days of training and to be prepared to go on the streets for 12 nights (between the hours of 10 pm – 4 am, either a Friday or Saturday) over a period of 12 months', however, you can do more!

If you would like to know more about how to become a Street Pastor, how to partner with them, or you would like a visit, please do contact them on the following:

Email: towerhamlets@streetpastors.org.uk

Mobile: 0781 251 5252

Website: www.streetpastors.org.uk