

20<sup>th</sup> July 2012

23 JUL 2012

18 Larkspur Court  
Galashiels  
TD1 2LZ

To: Licensing Forum, Galashiels

ADMIN &amp; LEGAL

STREET PASTORS

ITEM NO 9

Dear Licensing Forum Members,

For some time now, the Galashiels Fellowship of Churches has been investigating a project called Street Pastors. Street Pastors originally started in London in 2003 and has spread rapidly throughout the United Kingdom, with many projects now well established in Scotland.

The main role of a Street Pastor is to make themselves available to care, listen & support vulnerable people on the streets on a Friday or Saturday night. Those taking part in the project undergo some twelve months of training to ensure their safety and competence. A Team consists of three members, although in larger towns and cities there can be two or three teams out on a given night.

Results have been truly remarkable. By bringing a calming influence to the streets, crime rates have dropped dramatically during the times that Street Pastors are out on the streets. In Dunfermline for example, violent crime dropped by 50% from 40 (year up to April 2007) to 20 (year to April 2010). Over the same period of time, anti-social behaviour crime, including vandalism, dropped from 599 to 374, dishonesty fell from 596 to 424 and other offences, including drug and offensive weapons dropped from 169 to 96. In 2010, nearly 3000 bottles and glasses were lifted and disposed of, some 2000 pairs of flip flops were given out (for young females who were unsteady on their feet and were unable to walk in high heels), 275 foil blankets issued and some 500 spikies given out (spikies are small plastic 'bungs' which fit into a bottle top, leaving a small hole for a straw but ensuring that the drink isn't 'spiked' with drugs).

In towns smaller and larger, the percentage drop in street crime has been similar, indeed in some areas, the cost savings through crime reduction have been so great that police have been using some of the savings to help finance Street Pastors.

The Fellowship of Churches recognises that crime rates in the Scottish Borders are generally lower than that of major towns and cities. However, having been out on the streets of a large town to see Street Pastors in action (Perth) and also observing Galashiels in the early hours of a Sunday morning, the problems and issues, whilst obviously smaller in number, are very similar.

The Fellowship envisages that, in the longer term, the project could be run in a similar model to that of a rural area in England, not too dissimilar to the Scottish Borders. There, the police let Street Pastors know if a particular town has a special event on where it would be helpful if Street Pastors were in attendance. This may be during one of the annual festivals, or when a major sporting event is taking place. As well as being out in Galashiels on a normal Saturday night, available Street Pastors would also go to whatever town had been identified by the police. We are currently making contact with Churches in other towns to gauge their feelings.

Street Pastors works in partnership with the local authority and the police. It is also of great importance to the project to liaise with other bodies such as the Licensing Board, Community Safety Forum, Community Council etc. I enclose various pieces of information about Street Pastors, including a DVD about the Aberdeen project, which although much larger, gives a feel about what the project involves. I hope that these will be of use in giving you a picture of how Street Pastors works.

We would welcome the Licensing Board's views on our proposals. Should you wish, we are also available to meet with you, to give clarification on any points or concerns.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely