



# STREET PASTORS

*Caring, Listening and Helping*





**STREET PASTORS** is an Interdenominational Church response to neighbourhood problems; engaging with people on the streets and in night-time venues to care, listen, dialogue and offer practical help.

AN INITIATIVE SPEARHEADED  
BY ASCENSION TRUST

## THE CHALLENGE

The 21st century has thrown up a challenge both to the church and to society, with a growth in anti-social behaviour at a local level, city wide and nationally.

The biggest challenge and surprise is how young some of the culprits are that are committing these crimes. Some of the contributing factors are poverty, the breakdown of the family, the increasing number of children growing up without both parents, the increased number of children excluded from school, the lack of provision for young people and the lack of quality time given to those at high risk.

*"Gun crimes have increased in London during the past year and there has been a rapid increase in teenagers purchasing guns, such that they appear to have become a fashion accessory.... Young men bond with the gun and gang as a means of finding material, social and emotional satisfaction. This culture has become their form of identity and self worth.... the gun brings them respect."*

*"The message is loud and clear, gun crime is a very real problem for all London boroughs" (Chair of the Metropolitan Police). "Guns are spreading across the country, whereas until recently, they were confined to a handful of London Boroughs" (Sir John Stevens).*







**caregiving**



**LISTENING**



**Helping**





## LESSON LEARNT

Revd Les Isaac visited Jamaica to see and to find out how the church was tackling, or seeking to engage the challenges of criminal behaviour; it was during an encounter with Revd Bobby Wilmot, Lorna Stanley and later Revd Bruce Fletcher, that key insights were gained. We need to:

1. Understand the problems (social analysis)
2. Have a long term strategy (10-15 years)
3. Develop grass roots educational programmes
4. Provide relevant training
5. Prioritise employment
7. Engage people in their social context

He was informed by them, that society, on the whole had ignored the problem of the inner cities. Subsequently, a giant had developed, and they said, "we have not yet been able to slay the giant".

**Taking this as both a warning and an example, Ascension Trust Launched a 2002 "Guns on our Streets Tour", to:**

- Raise Church awareness of the threat of gun crimes and a gun culture.
- Think about practical solutions and seek to empower the Church to be a vehicle, along with other community agencies, to stem the tide of UK violence, before it reaches epidemic proportions.

**Two urgent messages had to be communicated:**

- We serve a living God who is able to intervene in people's lives
- The importance of churches engaging, in unity, with other community groups to work together and effect change.

**Issues to Address:**

- Share the vision of community transformation with pastors in troubled communities
- The local Church should assess the critical needs of the young people and the cultural norms of their locality
- Keep before the nation the critical need to address the urgency of the gun culture issues and knives
- Mobilise the Church to pray for the nation as a whole



## "...THE URBAN TRINITY

We hear much about gangs from the media but three of the biggest gangs in any city are 'the Church', local government and the police. They all have the power, the influence and to some extent the resources to make a difference for the good of the city.

THE **CHURCH** has thousands of members that could be harnessed and challenged to contribute for the better good of the community.

LOCAL **GOVERNMENT** has the resource to mobilise and help people who are vulnerable i.e. social services, housing, education etc.

As the church goes out, it is able to direct, encourage and challenge more people in their personal development.

THE **POLICE** are not only here to arrest people who have offended, but to help prevent people from committing crime. More importantly, they aim to work with the Church and community to ensure peace and stability.

*The urban trinity is about working together for the betterment of the community.*



We need to  
**ENGAGE NOW...**



*Working together in partnership*

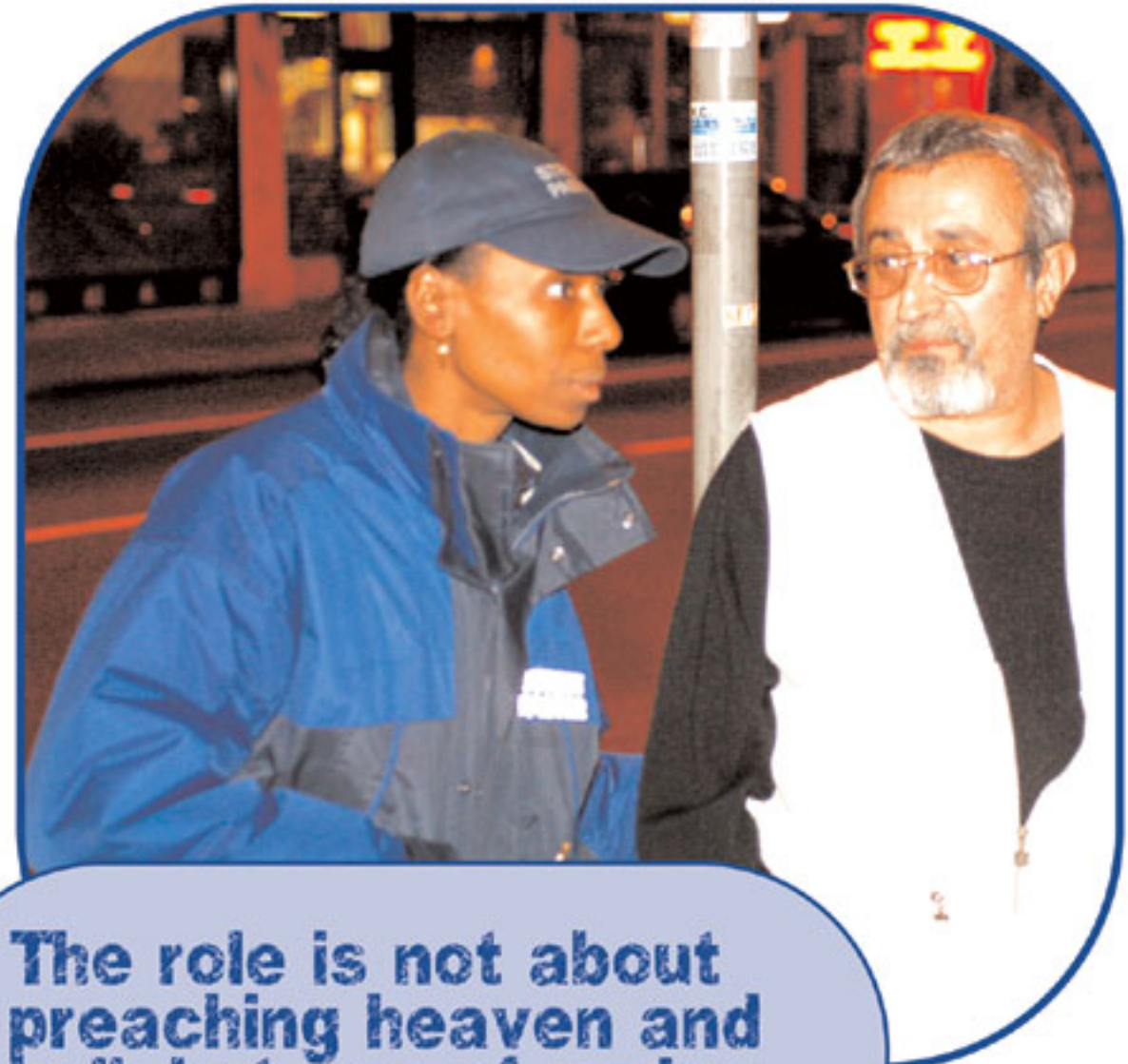


## WHAT IS A STREET PASTOR?

A STREET PASTOR IS A CHURCH LEADER/MINISTER OR MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION WHO SHARES A CONCERN FOR SOCIETY

- particularly young people who have found themselves disenfranchised and/or marginalised from society and who are willing to engage people where they are, in terms of their thinking (i.e. their perspective of life) and location (i.e. where they hang out - be it on the streets, in the pubs and clubs or at parties etc.)

The Street Pastor is there to get to know people in the community and to build relationships with them to find out their needs and what can be done to help them.



**The role is not about preaching heaven and hell, but one of caring, listening and helping.**

Street Pastors must gain the credibility of the community, so that the community knows that the Church has come to them.





A STREET PASTOR'S main role is to make themselves available to care, to listen, support and help people, especially young people, to move into positive endeavours.

#### TO DO THIS:

1. Applicants must attend the Street Pastors Training Course, run across 12 Saturdays from 9:30am - 3pm over a period of 7 months.
2. After attendance on the first, introductory part of the course (comprising the first four Saturdays), Street Pastors will be grouped and roles established, for weekend work, Friday or Saturday nights, 10pm - 4am each night. If sufficient Street Pastors are recruited in a locality, a mid-week team will also be considered.
3. Street Pastors will work in teams of 12, divided into three groups of four.
4. Each Street Pastors group of four will be expected to work from 10pm - 4am once per month
5. Street Pastors will be issued with a coat, shirt and cap, which have "Street Pastor" written on them and should only be worn by a Street Pastor when they are on duty. Street Pastors will also be given an introduction card and a Bible.

**6.** Each on-duty Street Pastors team will patrol the streets and visit local pubs, night clubs and parties in their locality and seek to build a relationship with everyone, e.g.: shop keepers, local schools, businesses, families, local police, youth clubs and their leaders etc. Street Patrol is about talking to people, dialoguing with them, listening and gaining knowledge of what is happening locally.

### THE STREET PASTOR CO-ORDINATION TEAM

Churches in a locality should work together to co-ordinate their local Street Pastor initiative. Together they should provide or find a base for the Street Pastors to meet and pray in and work out of in the evenings. The same venue should ideally also be the local contact point people can phone to make enquiries - the phone number being given on a Street Pastor's introduction card.

Ideally this phone number should be a free phone number with an answering service when no one is available to answer it in person.

### WHO CAN BE A STREET PASTOR?

Street Pastors come from right across the Christian community and can be anyone who:

- Is 18 years old or over
- Has been committed to a Christian Fellowship for more than a year
- Obtains a positive reference from their Church Leader/Minister



- Has completed the 12 day Street Pastors Training Course

The commitment of men will be central to the success of the SPI, given the lack of positive role models and mentors for young men from an early age.

#### FIVE CORE VALUES:

- THE SACREDNESS AND SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE
- VALUING AND HONOURING THE COMMUNITY
- BEING A PERSON OF INTEGRITY
- TAKING PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY
- THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL TO THEIR FULLEST POTENTIAL.

**These values not only underpin many community organisations, they are intrinsic to a range of cultures and are intuitively known by them. Combined with pragmatic action, they therefore create a platform and a gateway through which the Church can engage in dialogue and work for the betterment of the community.**



**YES!** We have seen a reduction in street crime in areas where street pastors operate.

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

This pattern is reflected across the country, wherever partnership and prayer result in the presence of Street Pastors

#### Regional

Street Pastors are in a third of all London boroughs and are continuing to grow. Our vision is for London to have Street Pastors in all 33 boroughs.

#### National

We are currently in London, Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, Leicester, Southend, Wrexham and poised for other major cities up and down the United Kingdom.

#### International

We have received enquiries from Pakistan, Guyana, United States and Africa. January 2006 saw the launch of Street Pastors in Antigua and Barbuda.



## SETTING UP STREET PASTORS IN YOUR AREA:



## PROCESS

- VISIT AND TALK WITH ASCENSION TRUST
- ASCENSION TRUST WILL VISIT THE AREA, TO TALK WITH CHURCH LEADERS.
- COMMUNICATION WITH CHURCH LEADERS WITH YOUR AREA.

- MEETING THE POLICE, LOCAL GOVERNMENT
- APPOINTMENT OF A CO-ORDINATOR
- A CIVIC RECEPTION TO LAUNCH THE SPI
- DELIVERING THE TRAINING
- OUT ON THE STREETS

This process must be adhered to



**ASCENSION TRUST** was established in 1993.  
It has a desire to see Christians working effectively  
with their local churches, community and society.

#### The Trust

- Has links with many churches across the UK
- Runs short term missions that include teaching, team building and social action in the community
- Has links with churches in Germany, Norway, and France
- Has working relationships with churches, communities and non-government organisations in Guyana, Jamaica and the USA
- Has an office in Ghana, West Africa, opened in 2001, to facilitate its social action programme in the area of education training and community work

The Trust believes that **THE CHURCH BRINGS HONOUR** to the Lord Jesus Christ by preaching the Gospel, caring for the poor and empowering individuals by assisting them to develop new and existing skills and enabling them to live life to their fullest potential.

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# TO APPLY ...

**TO APPLY TO BECOME A STREET PASTOR,  
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