

Stockton Town Pastors
NEWSLETTER



Website: www.stocktontownpastors.co.uk

Hi, and welcome to the first edition of the Stockton Town Pastors newsletter. These will be published on a regular basis in order to keep both volunteers and members of the public informed of our activities. I anticipate that features will include key diary dates, STP developments and any news stories that volunteers would like to raise – I'm sure there is plenty of good news you would like to share openly.

I do hope that the presentation style will improve also, but I don't have a great deal of artistic flair and hope someone might come to the rescue!

With this being the first issue, and pre-launch – **WE START OUR PATROLS ON FRIDAY 4TH DECEMBER 2009** – the news is currently very much restricted to volunteers, and this might be an opportunity to let everyone know how things are progressing:

Training:

This has included an introduction to and explanation of the volunteer handbook – including its policies and procedures; visits to Stockton Security Centre and Cleveland Police Control Room; Taxi and Door Registration scheme licensing etc. However, the most important in terms of personal safety and public liability has been the input by Cleveland Police on conflict management and resolution. This matter is of such significance that our Steering Group have decided that only those who have received this training should be allowed to patrol as a volunteer. If you missed this session, however, don't despair as there are two solutions:

- a) A further conflict management session has been arranged for 6.30pm on Monday 30th November 2009, at Cleveland Police HQ, Ladgate Lane, Middlesbrough. This will last for no more than two hours, but you must be there for the start-time. I am unable to arrange any further sessions for the next few months, so it would be really helpful if you could be there.
- b) Those lacking this input can always go on patrol as 'observers' alongside trained volunteers, with notice. However, these slots are very few. It does mean, however, that you can get a 'taste' for patrols.

An ongoing training package is being planned, and will include talks from other voluntary agencies and public services whose roles we need to understand if we are to 'signpost' the vulnerable and needy.

Teams:

As you will now be aware, we will patrol in teams of three (extended to four if it includes an 'observer').

A Team Leader will be responsible for key decision making and will advise others in the team where appropriate. Responsibility for the safety and use of the radio will also be theirs.

Another team member who is trained in First Aid will be responsible for checking and signing out a first aid pouch, and for administering or advising in first aid matters, should the need arise. The third team member will act as 'Note Taker', recording details of any incident involving or witnessed by STP volunteers and transferring them onto the Incident Register back at base. An observer has no specific role but must remain with the team and under the supervision of the Team Leader.

All volunteers will wear the reflective jackets provided whilst on patrol, and these should be returned after each tour of duty for use by others as required.

Brian Sets The Standard!

Brian Jones has worked hard to get our stock of reflective jackets, and is keen to promote his individual range of 'accessories' (hats and sunglasses are available in other colours) – see Brian if you want to place an order.



Café:

Stockton Parish Church Hall will be open to volunteers from 8pm onwards every Friday night, in preparation for teams going out on patrol at 9pm. The café will be staffed by at least three people for safety, and will have a radio for their use if needed. If the number of people in the premises falls below three, the facility will be closed and the door locked until there is sufficient staff to cover it.

Tea, Coffee, soft drinks and biscuits will be available free of charge to volunteers and to any members of the public. These will be provided from a money 'float' managed by the coordinator. Volunteers staffing the café will not be expected to go out on patrol, but if they wish to do so they can go out either as an observer or (if fully trained) do a 'swap' for a time with an existing team member.

Volunteer Duty Times:

Our tour of duty as a group is from 9pm to 3am each Friday evening. We hope to extend this to each Saturday early in 2010, once we have a sufficient number of trained staff. Although there will be some who want to work every weekend, there will be others who can only manage one night per month – and that is fine. We should not over-burden our personal lives by committing more time than we can realistically afford, and each of us has differing personal and work commitments.

It is necessary for me to know in advance, however, who is available each weekend so that we can make sure we have sufficient cover. You can let me know your availability at any time and I will try my best to accommodate you and make sure that everyone has a fair opportunity.

Six hours is a long time to be on duty, especially if it follows a day at work or you have plans for the following day. Again, some will be prepared to work from 9pm to 3am whilst others will only be able to stay for two or three hours and others may not wish to start patrols until midnight or beyond.

Obviously there needs to be great flexibility around individual start and finish times, and this

needs to be balanced against the need for us to have volunteers out on the streets from midnight to 3am especially, as the experience of others tells us these are the times of greatest need. Therefore, although we may start with three defined teams at 9pm these are likely to change as the night goes on, with individuals coming on or going off duty at varying times (although we must always maintain a team which has a Leader, First Aider and Note Taker). It will be my duty to manage this process, and I (or Brian Jones) will be present at all times to make sure this happens seamlessly.

This same process applies equally to the café staff.



Halifax Street Angels

Paul Blakey and Stefan tuck into a fish supper on their visit to our training session on 20th November; whilst Daniel is somewhat overwhelmed by his order of 'skate and chips'



Public & Personal Liability Insurance:

Derek Rosamond and Peter Chapman have both been working hard to ensure that, both as a group and individually, we are covered against all reasonable risk. Cover will be in place in time for our launch date. As soon as the fine detail is known, I will let you know.

Odds & Ends:

Inspector Andy Fox from Cleveland Police has sourced a large quantity of bottled water, lolly pops and 'flip-flops' for our use (do try and save a few to give away to the 'punters' though).

Please take time to read through Version 1 of the Volunteer Handbook – available either on the website or from me directly – you will need to sign to say you have received a copy and agree to its guidance before going out on patrol (incidentally, we have been complemented by Cleveland Police for its high professional standards and it meets all current legislative requirements).

First Aid sessions are still available 4th & 5th January; and 12th & 19th January (two 3-hour sessions for the full course – contact me to get your name on the list.

And Finally.....

Media Launch of Stockton Town Pastors

Derek Rosamond is arranging a publicity launch for 3pm on Stockton High Street this coming Thursday 26th November 2009, to be followed by a number of volunteers (only those who are fully trained in this instance please) mixing with the residents of Stockton during the official lighting up of the Christmas decorations, which starts at 4.30pm. Names of those interested in taking part to me, please, a.s.a.p.

Keep praying, don't worry about what the future holds as it is in His hands, and be glad that we are able to be a part of this work.

Kind regards,

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