

# Wantage and Grove STREET PASTORS

Registered Charity 1134429



## Annual report 2019-20

May 2020

*This annual report is based on a financial year rather than calendar year and covers the period April 2019 to March 2020.*

### Thanks to . . .

**. . . our members** All members of Wantage and Grove Street Pastors;  
members who are SPs (trained or training Street Pastors)  
or PSVs (Prayer/Support Volunteers).  
or who pray at other times and places;  
members who make occasional or regular donations;  
members who help with events;  
members who are our representatives in our partner churches;  
members who are trustees.

Thank you once again to all those volunteers for your ongoing hard work, flexibility and perseverance whether on the streets, at the base, on the committee, in churches, in prayer at the base or at home and in many other ways. Thank you!

**. . . our participating churches** Providing people, premises, prayer and financial support are:

Ss Peter and Paul Wantage;  
Holy Trinity Charlton;  
St John Vianney;  
Wantage Baptist Church;  
Wantage Christian Fellowship;  
Wantage Methodist Church;  
Wantage Community Church;  
St John Baptist Grove;  
Grove Methodist Church;  
Vale Elim Church;  
Grove Free Evangelical Church;  
St Mary's Uffington; and

**. . . other organisations** Also supporting us with grants and donations were:

Oxfordshire County Council,  
TVP Property Act Fund,  
Penuel Trust,  
Wantage & Grove Lions Club  
Grove Village Hall Afternoon Teas

# What we achieved

## Caring Listening Helping

We have now been operating on the streets of Wantage and Grove for 10½ years. We have continued to meet often needy and vulnerable people on the streets and offered the love of Jesus through practical help and prayer.

Throughout 2019-20 we patrolled on two Friday nights and three Saturday nights each month.

We made contact with over 480 people. We were able to calm 11 potentially aggressive situations and support 52 vulnerable people (see the table "*On the streets in numbers*", page 5).

We continue to have the respect and support of the police, who consider our presence invaluable.

## Highlights

One evening we met a couple and asked if they were okay as the woman was injured. They said they were fine, so we left them but made sure to go back that way soon after. When we went back, the lady confirmed that she was fine and safe. We later saw the couple trying to get a taxi and they were happy for us to help. The man stopped a passing car and got the lady in it and he walked off. We spoke to the driver and, realising that he was not a registered taxi, we got the lady out and found a genuine taxi for her. It turned out that she knew the driver, which we were all very glad about.

A young man told us that he had found a lady lying in the middle of the road and had picked her up and moved her to some nearby steps. We went immediately and found the lady, who had had too much to drink. She was quite vulnerable but said that she had a room booked at The Bear Hotel. We escorted her to the hotel and with the help of hotel staff took her to her room.

We found a drunken young man lying in the street in Wantage so we moved him to a nearby bench and stayed with him for a while. He was sick a number of times and did revive a little, but not enough to be left to make his own way home. Using our mobile power supply, we powered up his phone, got his friend's number and arranged to take him to their house. We walked the man to his friend's house to ensure his safety and that he would be well cared for.

One of our teams offered help to an older man who was staggering about in town with the aid of a walking stick. Our help was declined, but we ran to his aid after he fell while standing in a doorway - having let go of his walking stick. Thinking that he had probably relieved himself, our team (now wearing gloves) got the man to his feet and bravely assisted with doing his belt up. Unfortunately, it took two more falls and two more attempts at getting the belt buckle in the right hole before the man's trousers were adequately secured and he was able to make his way home in moderate safety.

We received thanks from a parent who had found a pair of our flip-flops at home after her daughter had been out for the evening in Wantage. The mum was so grateful to know that her daughter had been cared for by us, and that we were there to support anyone in need.

At the end of a long night we met a man, sitting on the kerb, who seemed angry and was waiting for his girlfriend to pick him up - she had gone in to a pub to find his jacket and keys. We got chatting to him and being a Scot, he was delighted to hear several Scottish accents on the Street Pastor team - he was so pleased he gave us hugs before his girlfriend took him home.

Mayor of Wantage, Major Jim Sibbald, joined a Street Pastor patrol as an observer in July. Jim had been at our launch nearly 10 years previously and was keen to join a team to see the on-going effect of our work on the town. It was King Alfred's Academy Prom night and we chatted to pupils as they made their way home, spending some time with a young girl who was waiting on her own for her father to collect her. Jim was very impressed with our work and the genuinely enthusiastic response we get from people on the streets. Jim was concerned that our uniform is very dark and difficult to see at night, which is potentially hazardous. This is something we have wanted to address for some time and so we have added reflective material to the straps of our shoulder bags and purchased reflective arm bands for our jackets.

## Award Nomination

As Mayor of Wantage, Major Jim Sibblad nominated us for the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service (QAVS). This is the highest award given to local volunteer groups across the UK to recognise outstanding work done in their own communities. It was created in 2002 to celebrate the anniversary of The Queen's coronation.

As part of the nomination, Deputy Lieutenants Jane Cranston and Marion Stevenson visited us in Wantage in October to audit our work to ensure that we are well run and carry out excellent work. At the end of the audit they informed us that they would be recommending our nomination to the Independent National Assessment Committee, whose job it is to assess all the nominations and provide a shortlist that will go before the Queen for approval. We will have to wait until June 2020 to find out who has won the award.

## What changed from the previous year?

**Seasonal patrols** In August we moved one of our Saturday patrols to the Sunday night of the Bank Holiday weekend. With many people off work on the Monday, we usually find the Sunday night to be the busiest of the weekend. In December we moved one of our patrols to, what is sometimes known as 'Black Friday'; the last working day before Christmas. We also added a patrol on New Year's Eve, which passed without major incident.

**Numbers available** Numbers of available Street Pastors and Prayer Support Volunteers is broadly in line with 2018/19. Visiting partner churches throughout the year has raised our profile and led to one or two recruits. We will need to continue to recruit Street Pastors and Prayer Support Volunteers throughout 2020/21 to maintain our current level of patrols. Numbers are such that we do not patrol every weekend each month. We would like to get back to having patrols out every weekend.

**Coronavirus** The Management Committee met on 17 March 2020 and decided to suspend patrols until further notice with the aim of protecting our volunteers and preventing the spread of Coronavirus.

## Afternoon Patrols

In response to a request from King Alfred's Academy, we are exploring the possibility of expanding to include an afternoon patrol on one or two afternoons each week during term time.

At the end of the school day, hundreds of pupils leave King Alfred's on foot or on bike and make their way through the town on their way home. Managing this mass exodus is no small task and King Alfred's has asked for some help from us, especially with regard to road safety, reinforcing KA's values and working with shopkeepers and members of the public who may find groups of young people a little unsettling.

Sadly, young people leaving school can be a target for criminal gangs who travel across county lines to access vulnerable young people. Having extra eyes and ears in town at this time will do lots to help protect our young people.

Currently nine people have expressed an interest in the SP role and two people in the PSV role. We are now looking for those interested to complete an application form.

If you are available for up to 2 hours on a Friday afternoon, monthly, fortnightly or whenever you are able, and are interested in either of these roles, please do contact us.

## Who we are

**Teams:  
SPs and PSVs** We have 16 Street Pastors (10 female, 6 male) who regularly patrol in five teams of mostly three Street Pastors. In addition, two Street Pastors act as reserves and can be called on when a team member is unavailable.

We have 13 PSVs (Prayer/Support Volunteers) who mostly work in teams sharing shift times with a Street Pastor team. In addition, a few members have committed to pray for the teams from home and at other times.

**Coordinator and  
Prayer Coordinator** Nigel Watt is our part-time Coordinator. He manages the rota for patrols, arranges training, liaises with key stakeholders and other organisations, attends to most of our communications with Ascension Trust and with other Street Pastor initiatives in the area. He also writes reports and deals with much of our administration.

We continue to look for someone to take on the role of Senior Prayer Partner. If you are passionate about prayer and would like more information about the role, please do contact us.

**Trustees** The trustees (seven at present) meet with the Coordinator monthly as the Management Committee for the work.

More about the trustees later in relation to the charity, on page 6.

## Contact and connect

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E: [wantageandgrove@streetpastors.org.uk](mailto:wantageandgrove@streetpastors.org.uk)

W: [wantageandgrove.streetpastors.org.uk](http://wantageandgrove.streetpastors.org.uk)

F: [facebook.com/wantageandgrovestreetpastors](https://facebook.com/wantageandgrovestreetpastors)

# On the streets in numbers

Who and when		2019-20				[2018-19]
<b>Street Pastors</b>	16	6 male, 10 female				18
<b>PSVs</b>	13				19	
<b>Monthly patrols</b>	53	One early Friday patrol (8 pm – midnight) One late Friday patrol (10.30 pm – 2.30 am) Three late Saturday patrols (11:30 pm to 3.30 am)			62	
<b>Other patrols</b>	1	Sunday on a Bank Holiday weekend			1	
	1	New Year's Eve				
<b>Nights out</b>	55	23 Fridays, 30 Saturdays, 1 Sunday and 1 Tuesday			63	
<b>Street Pastor hours</b>	836				1,069	
Types of encounter			Male	Female	Total	[2018-19]
		under 13 years	0	0	0	
<b>Significant conversations (from a few minutes to an hour or more)</b>		13 - 17 years	68	31	99	
		18 - 25 years	138	87	225	
		over 25 years	118	47	165	
		<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>489</b>	521
<b>Incidents classed as “supporting vulnerable people”</b>					52	66
— direct assistance given to vulnerable people						
<b>Incidents classed as “calming aggressive situations”</b>					11	6
— eg defusing potential fights						
<b>Flip-flops (pairs)</b>	46				71	
<b>Lollipops</b>	3,215	(estimated)			3,230	

## The charity

**Members** Wantage and Grove Street Pastors is a member organisation; all our regular volunteers are members of the charity, and there are other members who help, donate or take an interest in other ways; at present 151 in all. One of the privileges and duties of the members generally is to attend the AGM and elect the trustees.

**Trustees** At least three of our members must be voluntary trustees, and we aim for the most allowed which is seven. At present the seven trustees are:

Dave Coombs, Wantage Community Church (Chair)  
Michael Elliott, Wantage Community Church (Treasurer)  
Marj Lunn, Wantage Baptist Church (Secretary)  
Helen Carter, Wantage Methodist Church  
Stephen West, Wantage Parish Church  
Hilary Moore, Wantage Baptist Church  
Sarah Goodall, Vale Elim Church

The trustees meet monthly, mostly with the Coordinator and as the Management Committee, normally with the leader of one of the participating church communities and three times a year with as many of the church reps as are able to attend.

Trustees are elected or re-elected at the AGM, and may also be appointed by the existing trustees at any other time.

## What changed from the previous year?

**Movements** David Law resigned as Treasurer and as a Trustee in October and Michael Elliott was elected as a Trustee and appointed as Treasurer at the AGM in October.

**Quarterly News** In January 2020 we published our first edition of Quarterly News, an A4 colour news sheet. This is something we have wanted to do for some time to bridge the gap between our monthly and annual reports and to help communicate all the good things going on in Wantage and Grove Street Pastors to a slightly broader audience.

## Trustee responsibilities

As well as Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, trustees take on different roles and responsibilities within the Management Committee. These include: grant applications, fundraising, event management, health & safety, safeguarding, recruitment, publicity & social media and liaison with other organisations, among other things.

## Events

### 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



What a joy to mark a decade of Wantage & Grove Street Pastors on 5th October 2019. We started with a 'thank you' tea for all who have been involved as Street Pastors and Prayer Support Volunteers. Eustace & Sharon Constance from Ascension Trust, who ran our first training sessions, presented us with a beautiful Glass Plaque commemorating our 10 years of ministry. This was followed by a celebration service with guest speaker Rev Jonathan Aitken, now a prison chaplain at Pentonville prison, speaking from Matthew 25 v 31-46. His humorous, yet thought provoking talk shared his heart for the vulnerable and encouraged us to appreciate our opportunities. We were blessed to be joined by local church leaders and members, police (past and present), local government officials and many friends and supporters of Street Pastors. Truly a time of blessing and encouragement for us all.

**AGM** We held our AGM at *Cornerstone*, local Christian Coffee Shop on the Wednesday (9th October), following our 10th Anniversary Celebrations. We had 22 members attend and, after addressing the official business, we finished off the celebration cake. We also took the opportunity to thank David Law, who stood down as a Trustee after serving in several roles since the very first meeting. We noted that God had been gracious in answering our prayers regarding finances with grant funding from the Police Property Fund and Oxfordshire County Council. We asked for continued prayer for new volunteers for Street Pastor and Prayer Support roles in existing shifts as well as meeting the need for afternoon patrols.

**Fundraising** The following events helped raise funds and our profile in the community:  
 An Impossible God – The Passion Play (April)  
 Grove & Wantage Extravaganza (June);  
 Quiz & Curry Night (September);  
 Christmas Tree Festival at Wantage Dickensian Evening (December);  
 and carol singing in Wantage (December)  
 Thank you to everyone involved in these events.

**Street Pastor Sundays** Street Pastor Sundays are a really exciting way we have of engaging with the local churches that partner with us, and we like to visit each of the churches once every year. Coming from a variety of Christian traditions, we are very content to fit in with whatever suits the church we are visiting; for some this will be a 5-minute talk while for others we are invited to lead the whole service. As well as thanking God for his faithfulness to us and sharing stories of all the good work that is going on, we bring fresh vision for the work and are able to share the needs of the charity. We also bring a display with more information and resources, and where many interesting conversations occur after the service.

It is through these events that new members join the charity, volunteers are recruited and prayer and financial support is pledged.

## Community involvement

**Community Alcohol Partnership** Wantage & Grove Street Pastors is a member of the Wantage & Grove Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP), which seeks to reduce underage drinking and the anti-social behaviour that so often goes with it. Our coordinator is chair of the local group meetings. The CAP met in March after a long period of inactivity, to discuss the future scope of the project and to re-envision members.



**Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG)** Wantage and Grove Street Pastors is a member of the local Neighbourhood Action Group, a multi-agency, problem-solving group that includes local partner agencies, key stakeholders and, most importantly, members of the local community.



**Missing People** From time to time we receive information about missing people who may be in our area. We also receive advice and support both for us, in the event that we meet a missing person, and for those missing individuals. Among others, we were asked to look out for people missing from Abingdon, Bampton and Oxford. As well as keeping an eye out, we also uphold these people in prayer.



**Friend of Sweatbox** Our early evening patrol visits Sweatbox, Wantage's youth club on Fridays and spends time with the young people and staff. We are a 'Friend of Sweatbox' and attend Friends of Sweatbox meetings, which are held every four months.



**Friend of YoCO**

We were delighted to be invited to the launch of the Wantage branch of Youth Challenge Oxfordshire (YoCO) in January. YoCO is a charity that supports young people, aged 14 to 21, enabling them to overcome challenges in their lives by developing resilience, confidence and mental well-being. Street Pastors often get to know young people in our community and we are able to refer anyone that might benefit from this service. For more information, visit the YoCO website at [www.yoco.online](http://www.yoco.online)

**PubWatch**

Thames Valley Police requested that we attend PubWatch meetings and so we attended our first PubWatch meeting in November and our second in March. PubWatch meets quarterly and it has been invaluable in getting to know local landlords and understanding some of the issues they face, especially with respect to antisocial behaviour and damage to property.

**Other Street Pastor Initiatives**

Street Pastor initiatives in our region share training events, best practice and resources. Coordinators meet together twice a year to organise a training programme, share news from our areas and to support and encourage each other. The group includes, Abingdon, Banbury, Bicester, Burghfield Common (School Pastors), Newbury, Oxford, Reading, Wallingford, Wantage and Grove, and Witney.

**OX12 Health Care Planning**

Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group invited us to participate in the OX12 Health Care Solutions Building event, held at the Beacon in September. The event brought together patients, carers and representatives from many stakeholder organisations to ensure public views and experiences are taken into account in the implementation of health and care needs in OX12. For more information, visit the NHS Oxfordshire website: [www.oxfordshireccg.nhs.uk](http://www.oxfordshireccg.nhs.uk)

**Tackling Violent Crime**

South & Vale District Councils invited us to participate in a Tackling Violent Crime Workshop, *Breaking the Cycle*, held at The Beacon in February. The event sought to raise awareness of violent crime and what is already being done to tackle it and to identify shortcomings particularly in the areas of prevention, early intervention, well-being and support.

**Wantage & District Business Breakfast**

A number of our Trustees are regular attenders of the Wantage & District Business Breakfast, which meets monthly for networking, friendship, support - and for breakfast, of course! In September, our Coordinator was invited to speak about our work. For more information, visit the Wantage & District Business Breakfast website: [www.wantagebreakfast.co.uk](http://www.wantagebreakfast.co.uk)

**Volunteer Receptions**

We are very grateful to have been invited to send representatives to attend Volunteer Receptions held by Grove Parish Council (in October) and Wantage Town Council (in February).

## Looking ahead

**Goals for 2020** Each year our Management Committee sets goals to help focus our efforts and to ensure that we continue to serve our community well. Our 2020/21 goals are centred around delivering patrols, finances and relationships, as well as returning to operations following the Covid-19 lockdown.

Volunteers are at the heart of everything we do; we would not exist without all those who so generously give their time to serve. We would love to have more volunteers to build resilience within our teams and to extend how we serve the community. King Alfred's Academy has asked us to be a presence in the town when children and young people finish their day, as some youngsters can be most vulnerable outside of the formal school day. Efforts to start some afternoon patrols have yet to come to fruition - we don't quite have enough volunteers to make it happen. We do need people to join as Street Pastors and Prayer Support Volunteers to maintain our level of service in Wantage and Grove, to improve what we are already doing and to branch out into new opportunities.

Finances are needed to run any charity and we need about £15k per year. God has been faithful in providing what we need, and we are very thankful for individuals and churches who regularly contribute. More support in this way would be welcome as we know that the few grants we receive may not be sustainable in the future.

Our member churches are our core community of support, so we endeavour to hold a Street Pastor Sunday in each church this year. By this, Christians in our community can hear first-hand what God is doing in our town and the difference it makes to have people gathering to pray over the area while others are out on patrol. We also plan to hold other events this year, which seek to increase support in prayer, volunteering and finance.

**Recruitment** Having been founded by the churches of Wantage and Grove, our volunteers are the Christian community that worship locally. Over recent years we have sought to engage with the local churches and hold Street Pastor Sundays when we are able to share some of the stories of how Street Pastors have helped vulnerable people and to encourage individuals to support our work by volunteering, praying or giving.

These *Street Pastor Sundays* and other events arranged to raise WGSP profile are the main means of recruiting volunteers.

During the year we have gained 13 new members, 2 of whom have applied to be Street Pastors and a further 3 people who would like to become Street Pastors and are in the process of applying. We didn't recruit any Prayer Support Volunteers during 2019/20.

**Other churches** We will continue to arrange for some of the village church communities of the area to participate on the same basis as those actually in Wantage or Grove; that is, for people of those communities to become members and volunteers.

**Friends** We wish to create a new way for people to connect with us; for anyone that supports what we do and wants to be updated regularly on our work. This could be for individuals or organisations for whom membership is not appropriate. We would call these people *friends*. Friends would not have any voting privileges nor be able to volunteer as Street Pastors or Prayer Support Volunteers, but could be encouraged to support in other practical and/or financial ways.

We propose that anyone that has moved out of the area or who no longer meets the criteria for membership, be transferred from being a member to being a friend.

This matter will be formally proposed and dealt with at the 2020 AGM in October.

# Finances

## Income and expenditure

We ended the 2019-20 financial year with a surplus of £3,329 compared with a surplus of £2,990 in the previous financial year.

The table on the following page summarises our income and expenditure.

## Grant income

Our income from grants rose dramatically. The grant of £3,000 from the Police Property fund and the grant of £4,500 from Oxfordshire County Council were higher than last year's awards. We also received some smaller but welcome grants from other supporters of WGSP.

## Donation income

Individual donations increased by £600 with the number of supporters giving by standing order being 18 at the end of the financial year.

Income from collection boxes and fundraising events was the same as the previous year. Collection box locations around Wantage and Grove include:

*Cornerstone, Grove                      The King's Centre, Wantage  
Grove & Wantage Extravaganza      Wantage Presents  
The Swan, The Blue Boar and The Kings Arms public houses*



We are grateful for the support that we receive from members, the public and charitable bodies. Our work continues to be recognised and valued at all levels within the community. Thank you!

## Financial overview

Income		2019-20	2018-19
<b>SP training contributions</b>	Uniform and training fees from new Street Pastors	0	0
<b>Church support</b>	GFEC, St Johns CE Grove, Grove Methodist, Wantage Methodist	2,637	4,185
<b>Grants</b>	Oxfordshire County Council, TVPA Property Act Fund, Penuel Trust, Wantage & Grove Lions,	8,090	5,360
<b>From individuals</b>	18 standing orders, and one-off donations	4,118	3,519
<b>Events</b>	"Impossible God" concert, 10 <sup>th</sup> year anniversary, Quiz & Curry evening, Dickensian evening and carol singing.	2,191	762
<b>Collecting boxes</b>	Cornerstone, Kings Centre and various pubs	276	274
<b>Gift aid recovery</b>		521	1263
<b>Miscellaneous</b>		0	0
<b>Total income</b>		<b>£17,833</b>	<b>£15,364</b>
Expenditure		2019-20	2018-19
<b>Staff costs</b>	Salary and related	9,305	9,118
<b>Cost of fundraising</b>	Costs relating to Events above	962	0
<b>Training and safeguarding</b>	SP training and safeguarding checks, AT Conference	310	116
<b>Operating costs</b>	Flip flops and lollipops; refreshments for those on duty; kit, mobile phone top-ups; printing etc.	1,410	1,545
<b>Ascension Trust fee</b>	15% of income (except OCC grant) paid to Ascension Trust	2,456	1457
<b>Bank charges</b>	Bank charges £5 per month	60	60
<b>Insurance</b>	Additional premium for SP's over 80 years of age	0	78
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>£14,503</b>	<b>£12,373</b>
<b>Closing bank balance</b>		<b>£17,225</b>	<b>£13,895</b>

**Note:** To maintain reserves of half our annual cost of operations.  
**Reserves policy**