

## Antrim Newtownabbey Street Pastors Board of Trustees

### 2023/24 Chair report for AGM

Current Trustees include: Alan Strong, Betty Morris, David Mairs, Janette Allen, Jim Sands, Jonny Campbell-Smith, Lex McVicker, Brian Johnston, Mark Welsh and Peter McKinstry.

Through the year I have had the privilege of Chairing both Board of Trustees and on an interim basis Chairing the Operations Team. The commitment to the work and expertise that everyone brings to the meetings is second to none.

Although we have seen a slight drop in our numbers the quality of each of our Street and Prayer Pastors is second to none. These last few years we have seen a real reduction in anti-social behaviour and until the last few weeks we did not see the numbers of young people on the streets that had been seen in the past. This is due to the partnership working we have in our area between the Council, Police, other agencies and ourselves. This is what I witnessed just last week. As you know over the last few weeks we have seen a dramatic increase in young people in the parks and on a few occasions there has been drinking leading to some anti-social behaviour. On Friday there were about 50 young people in Glengormley Park, 20 in Rathcoole and 25 in Mossley, however they were all in good form and happy to talk with us. There were 4 police in the area engaging with the young people and we also meet and chatted with Bytes, Heads Up and the Park Wardens were about. They were happy to chat and take our sweets.

Now more than ever we need the Church out on the streets, but how do we respond. I am reminded in Mark 9 starting verse 14 when the young possessed man was brought to the disciples and they couldn't heal him, the father brought him to Jesus and he was healed, when the disciples asked why couldn't we do anything Jesus said this kind can only come out with prayer. We are not going on the streets in our own strength to sort out these hard issues, we are going to listen, care, help with we can and then pray that the spirit will come to convict and heal. We make the difference when as Street and Prayer pastors we bring Christ into every situation.

As a Board of Trustees, we continue meet on a quarterly basis receiving reports from the Operations team activities, training, finance, access NI and any pastoral care issues, we are impressed on how they have responded to the issues that are raised. This year we have been involved in the appointment of

Lauren who has taken on an administrative role and has added so much to the running of the Operations Team. The annual service in Glengormley Methodist was also a great success and we would like to thank everyone who was involved in organising the night.

Our Operations Team continues to do a brilliant job meeting monthly. A special thanks this year has to go to both our Secretary and Treasurer. Bob who not only continues as secretary but as our main point of contact with Council and the Police ensures we are visible in our community and Jeanette who along with being our Treasurer also makes sure we have everything reported and claimed for our Council funding, thank you both.

The quality of our Street and Prayer Pastors is second to none, the commitment to the community is impressive and we would like to encourage everyone to keep going. The partnership with the Council members, PCSP and Police continues to be strong and we hope these will go continue to grow. As I said earlier we can see the difference that the partnership between Churches and Community makes to our streets and young people in our community.

We as a Board would thank everyone for another year of doing God`s work in our community and wish everyone Gods richest blessings in the incoming year.

Mark Welsh

Chair of The Board of Trustees