

Town Pastors for Newmarket

Newmarket has a very busy nightlife with clubs and pubs concentrated in a small area attracting clubbers and revellers from a wide area. This results in large numbers of people out on the streets of Newmarket late at night and in the early hours. At Churches Together in Newmarket & District (CTND) we believe there is a need for a Christian presence on our streets at these times to offer support to vulnerable people, help to defuse potentially-difficult situations, and work with other agencies in the town, providing a positive influence in the town backed by prayer. Our vision for Newmarket is to provide this presence along the lines of a "Town Pastor" scheme similar to those running other Suffolk towns.

The aims of a Town Pastor scheme are to look out for and support vulnerable people, giving assistance where appropriate. Being on the street to provide a presence of friendliness and care so that people can enjoy their night out, defusing any potentially aggressive situations. Town Pastors are available to people as listeners, encouraging safe behaviour for all, and fostering good relationships between the public, the police, the local authorities and voluntary agencies.

The Ipswich Town Pastor scheme started in 2006 and is the model being followed by other Suffolk Christian communities. Bury St Edmunds churches "went live" with a Town Pastor scheme in May this year. Other Suffolk towns, along with Newmarket, are also considering a Town Pastor scheme.

If you are interested in finding out what's being proposed; you are invited to an open information meeting at All Saints Church Newmarket, on Thursday 16th October 2008 at 8pm.

In the meantime if you want more information about Town Pastors look at the Ipswich website, www.townpastors.org.uk.

Churches Together Newmarket and District Town Pastor Working Party

John Borda (Our Lady and St Etheldreda Catholic Church)

Tracy Dove (St Martins Exning)

Robin Hardy (All Saints Newmarket)

Tony Hodge (Newmarket Community Church)

www.newmarkettownpastors.org