

Cleveland Regional Street Angels Newsletter

March 2020



Welcome to the March 2020 newsletter from Cleveland's five 'Street Angels' projects. We work together to share training, resources and guidance so that we can reach out to help those in need within the night-time economy period by offering care, compassion and relevant practical and spiritual help. The five projects are:

- Hartlepool Town Pastors
- Stockton Town Pastors
- Boro Angels
- Redcar Beacons
- Guisborough NightLight

A message from David Gee, Chair of the CNI Regional Group

We continue to meet as a group of projects every quarter, exchanging ideas and practices and sharing resources, including training. Brian McCarthy from Cleveland Police has had to take a step away from his involvement in our training for the time being and it would be very remiss if I did not offer a huge thank you on behalf of the five projects and many volunteers who have learned so much from his training sessions over a number of years. It has certainly equipped us all well on the streets of Cleveland.

Following a successful joint team of Street Angels at the Take That concert at the Riverside Stadium in June last year, Middlesbrough Football Club have invited us to help at The Killers concert in June this year. When making the request their Head of Quality and Safeguarding, Brian Robinson, said last year's event would not have been so successful if it hadn't been for our presence, very kind of him to say so.

Could you help make your town a better place by becoming a Street Angel, contact a project near you or myself and I will happily put you in touch with the right person.

Boro Angels

As part of the 10th birthday celebrations, trustees and volunteers got together to review the 10 years, discuss what had been achieved, relationships with working partners, lessons learned and our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This review, expertly facilitated by Middlesbrough Voluntary Development Agency, will form the basis of developing our plans over the coming months. The day of the anniversary, 23 January 2020, was a little more relaxing with a meal in the town centre, with no street angels required to assist those attending afterwards!



Undeterred by storms Ciara and Dennis, our weekly patrols continued, and, for the first time, we had two teams patrolling on New Year's Eve. We can never tell what will confront our teams as they leave the base and the past three months have been no different. We have had people presenting as suicidal, one young man having deliberately taken an overdose of prescribed medication, all turned out well. We were alerted to a lone female walking the streets by door staff, she turned out to be a 16-year-old reported as missing and ended up safely in the hands of the police. Only the night before writing this report our two teams had a 3.00am finish, dealing with two unconscious males, an injured female and an injured 17-year-old male in quick succession outside one venue, two ambulances being dispatched.

All the hard work behind the scenes has paid off and our 6-month pilot in North Ormesby during the daytime started in earnest with the first weekly patrol on 14 January 2020. It's early days but we have engaged with many in the community and have worked closely with Middlesbrough Council's Selective Licensing team to identify vulnerable or isolated residents.

A Rough Sleepers' Action Group met for the first time in December, the agenda is just a list of specific individuals for discussion. We have been able to have significant input into the welfare of many of these rough sleepers and obtained useful information for when we encounter them on our weekend patrols. I am impressed by this approach.

I have recently given talks about Boro Angels to Nunthorpe Mothers' Union, Trimdon Ward Community Council, Middlesbrough Deanery Fellowship and Middlesbrough College. If a group, church or community organisation you are part of would welcome a presentation or talk, please do contact me, it would be great to meet you.



Boro Angels have now had five of the eight members of Middlesbrough Council's Executive out on patrol with our teams, including the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, and they have all been impressed and grateful for what we do to help keep Middlesbrough safe, unprecedented interest.

Our volunteers now number 24, with more waiting in the wings, and we regularly have two teams of four patrolling on Saturday evenings. If you are interested in volunteering or even if you would just like a trip out with one of our teams, even just for an hour, to see what we get up to please get in touch.

We aim to make a difference on the streets of Middlesbrough. Remember, "It's all about people."

David Gee
Boro Angels Chair
E: davidjee@hotmail.com, T: 07960 014683



Guisborough NightLight

A belated Happy New Year in this first 2020 Newsletter!

We're thankful that we did not have a lot to do over Christmas and New Year period, with the town very busy throughout the festive period.



Dry January and (very) wet February has been a bit of a challenge with very little to do except combat the elements! We've still managed to keep supplying hot chocolate drinks to those willing to brave the high winds and, at times, torrential rain!

We only have 10 volunteers at the moment but we are continuing to get a team out every Saturday night. Kind words from all those we come across keeps our morale high, so you are welcome to drop by for a hot chocolate or a chat.



Dai Bickham
Guisborough Bridge NightLight project coordinator

<http://www.guisborough-bridge.org.uk/projects/nightlight>

Hartlepool Town Pastors

It's been a fairly quiet time for Hartlepool Town Pastors. We have sadly lost a couple of volunteers who have moved on to new things in their lives. We give thanks to Barry and especially to Karen for all her help over the years setting rotas. Karen has agreed to join our trustee board so we are grateful for that continued wish to help in a less active role that doesn't hopefully involve loss of sleep.



We are now down to 9 volunteers so we're only able to put a team out three times a month. We are, of necessity, having to leave the middle of the month without cover. We are actively engaged in raising our profile and requesting volunteers. Our administrator, John, has shared a newsletter with Hartlepool Churches Together and has arranged with Hartlepool Foodbank to make use of their new town centre facility for some awareness raising. They now have an office unit on the gallery in Middleton Shopping Centre open on Wednesdays. They have generously offered HTP a space on March 18 to meet people interested to learn more about the street angels and the work they do. If you wish to drop in and meet us, we'll be there from 10am to 2pm that day.

We have been able to secure enough funding to ensure the future of HTP for at least the next two years based on current levels of spending. This has enabled the purchase of additional equipment such as new fleece jackets and first aid bags. It has also allowed us to expand our range of training. Most recently we were able to ask Ian Harrison from Hartlepool Borough Council's licencing team to take us through all the various aspects of taxi, takeaway and pub licensing in our town and further afield. It proved a real eye opener and certainly helped explain why we might all be seeing Wolverhampton badges on taxis in Middlesbrough and possibly other towns. Thanks also to Billy and Paul from Hartlepool Action Recovery Team (HART) for our training on the various drugs and alcohol issues. We've now also received training and equipment to deal with drug overdose using Naloxone so another tool in the bag for the night time teams. One big shock for me is that alcohol addiction requires full blown medical help to get you off unlike most other substances out there. It's worrying that this socially acceptable "drug" is one that needs the most help!

We've seen a jump in the numbers of people begging/possibly homeless in the night time economy and we are hoping we can arrange a session with the team from Hartlepool Borough Council that deals with this issue, We also took the opportunity to write formally to Hartlepool Borough Council to thank the CCTV team for all their help as we travel about the Hartlepool Night time scene. It's very reassuring to have someone from the team check in with you simply because they've seen that you've been standing for a while and might be dealing with something problematic.



Stockton Town Pastors

2020 is proving, so far a better year. The Driver's situation has improved by the fact, that Matthew West, our newest Driver, is willing to come out every week. We now have three active Drivers.



STOCKTON TOWN PASTORS

We have four Coordinators but it would be great to hold training for more. The good News is, there are some names of people wanting to volunteer with us sent via Facebook Messenger. I have followed this up and they will be coming out on Patrol. One is out on 22nd. Our Prayers are being answered. The next stage is to organize training for them.