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My night as a Street Angel

Jun-04-2014 by Carl Sykes

As part of National Volunteer Week, ever fancied giving something back but not sure how? Street Angels might be for you...



Huddersfield Street Angels signpost people to safety on Saturday nights if they are seeming vulnerable after the indulgence of too much partying.

I was invited to join the Huddersfield Street Angels as an Observer, one hot Saturday night in May and I Tweeted about my experience. I thought better of taking any photo's on the night but I did get a shot of my Observer jacket.

Led by Team Leader, Diane and a team of Christian volunteers, we met at 10:00pm at the Huddersfield Methodist Mission.

The Angels stocked up on water, biscuits and towling slippers. Curious? Yes I was too.

The shift was from 10:00pm until 2:00am with a break in between and what I found was quite enlightening. First of all, being a sober observer of Saturday nightlife, instead of a participant was an eye opener.

Secondly, there were more girls than boys who needed the support of the street angels. But thankfully the girls I saw that night had the rallying support of their friends to guide them home safely. In these cases, the Street Angels simply offered free water and moved on.

Diane was experienced and knew which dark corners of Huddersfield to inspect to ensure people were safe. She also knew where to find the homeless and offer them an ear and a few token refreshments. When asked about safety, Diane said that there was probably a small risk but they had radio links with the police and only patrolled the CCTV areas of the Town centre.

Of the whole experience, what was most encouraging was the respect that some young people had for the work of the Street Angels. Most had been responsible in enjoying their night out and many had thanked the Angels for being there and expressed their gratitude.

And so the towling slippers? They were in high demand by girls whose stillhetto heels had ground their feet so sore that they had to walk barefoot. Until that night I had never seen someone get in a taxi in white towling slippers.

If you want to learn more about becoming a Street Angel, you can contact dianne.hughes@virgin.net in the first instance. You can also follow her on Twitter at @Diannehughes18

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