

## **Chesterfield ROC initiatives and Chesterfield Street Pastors – Executive Summary**

### **Chesterfield Urban Trinity (Local Authority, Police and Christians Together for Chesterfield)**

Created Chesterfield Street Pastors in August 2011

Patrol late night entertainment area of Chesterfield between 10pm and 4am each Saturday night with at least one team of four persons.

Positive benefits have been observed including fewer incidents of anti-social behaviour and reduction in violent crime.

Patrol Friday nights between 7.30pm and 9.30pm in conjunction with Chesterfield ROC Café (drop-in centre at Grace Chapel) with a view to helping vulnerable young people who use “legal highs” around the bus station. Working with other statutory agencies some positive behaviour changes have been observed.

Chesterfield School Pastors created at Parkside School in February 2014. Seven School Pastors perform regular duties on Friday afternoons. Excellent relationships have been formed with children with special needs and with the school staff team, resulting in the team being invited to take part in the school carol concert Christmas 2014.

### **Redeeming Our Communities (ROC) – Chesterfield Initiatives**

#### **Community Young Stars**

Delivered a six week summer holiday play scheme (Community Young Stars) in 2012 and 2013 based at Queen’s Park Annexe. A total of 160 volunteers delivered over 2000 hours of volunteer activity with a total of 246 children registered (2012).

During the 2013 summer holidays the play scheme was repeated with the addition of a mobile activity centre, using a hired van to take volunteers and play equipment to local public parks. Similar statistics of volunteers and children were recorded.

Lack of availability of Queen’s Park Annexe or similar facilities resulted in a scaled down version of Community Young Stars for the summer play scheme 2014, which was held at Church in the Peak, New Street, Chesterfield. Play

scheme operated for 5 – 11 year olds between 10am and 12nn each day. Typical attendance 16 – 20 children and 8 to 10 volunteers.

Community Young Stars now held during all school breaks and also delivers a regular evening session.

**Chesterfield ROC Café (Drop-in Centre at Grace Chapel, Markham Road, Chesterfield)**

Opened in the spring of 2013 in response to problems of young people taking “legal highs” around Chesterfield bus station. Is run in conjunction with a Street Pastor patrol of the bus station and market areas (in the summer Queen’s Park and the Skate Park).

Typically around twenty teenagers attend the ROC Café where they are provided with free food and drink and play pool, table tennis and other games as well as making music. Between six and ten volunteers assist at the ROC Café in addition to the four or five Street Pastors

Police Community Support Officers attend almost every week and local authority youth workers visit regularly.

## **Chesterfield ROC initiatives and Chesterfield Street Pastors**

### **A summary of initiatives involving the Urban Trinity in Chesterfield (Local Authority, Police and Church)**

#### **History of developments**

Churches in Chesterfield have engaged in community development activities in the town over a period in excess of 100 years; the historic Ragged School providing a good example of education provision for the poor, prior to the development of universal free education through local authorities.

In more recent times a national programme under the banner “Hope 2008” provided the impetus for the formation of Christians Together for Chesterfield (CTfC), bringing together church leaders from a wide variety of backgrounds who were intent on serving the needs of the local community.

Discussions took place amongst what is known as the Urban Trinity (Local Authority, Police and Churches) with a view to developing Chesterfield Street Pastors. Operating under the authority of a London based Christian charity Ascension Trust, Street Pastors now operate in excess of 300 towns and cities across the UK and have proved how effective appropriately recruited and trained volunteers can be in supporting the statutory agencies and reducing crime and anti-social behaviour.

The first group of twelve Street Pastors were commissioned during a service at The Church of St Mary’s and All Saints (The Crooked Spire) on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2011 and thereafter commenced a regular patrol of the “Night Time Economy” area of the town centre. Since that time with just two exceptions Street Pastors have mounted the patrol every Saturday between the hours of 10pm and 4am and on other occasions such as Christmas and New Year’s Eve etc.

The Street Pastors have become an accepted and valued part of the late night economy provision in Chesterfield Town Centre, with reductions in violent assaults and incidents of anti-social behaviour being recorded.

Chesterfield Street Pastors has benefited from financial support from Chesterfield Borough Council and the Chesterfield Divisional Police, but is also supported financially by churches and individual Christians.

As at December 2014 more than thirty volunteers have been trained and appointed each volunteer typically undertaking a Saturday patrol at least once a month.

### **Extract from Chesterfield Street Pastors Annual Report for 2013**

Our volunteers are currently drawn from **18** different churches. We have **18 women** and **14 men** totalling a fantastic **32 volunteers** in total.

Our annual report to Ascension Trust based on our weekly reports show that in 2013 **we helped 899 people** and attended **154 anti-social incidents**.

In 2013 we put out a patrol on **57 nights** (missing just one Saturday night when heavy snow made travelling too hazardous). Our late night street pastor teams gave **1,363 volunteer hours** over that period.

### **Chesterfield School Pastors – Parkside School**

We are a few weeks away from celebrating our first year of operation as Chesterfield School Pastors. We began on the last Friday in February 2014 in Parkside School. Our team of seven are volunteers from local churches who commit to being in school one afternoon a week, 3 weeks out every 4 in term time. In reality the pastors enjoy being in school and often come in on the weeks when they should be off duty!

We began by supervising a table tennis session at lunch times for a few weeks but quickly gravitated towards the students in the SDC (Student Development Centre). Our host school has a higher than average percentage of children with special needs and children who are experiencing challenging situations at home. There are many children who are not “statemented” and therefore not entitled to educational support but who really benefit from some extra support in the classroom. We are sometimes approached by the children themselves and also directed by the head of SDC to identify those who would benefit from our help.

One female volunteer has been an invaluable help with a cookery class, and her husband who is also a volunteer now supports and mentors a child with behavioural problems. We regularly support pupils in English, take on a mentoring role and support a group of special needs children in science. We were delighted this Christmas to be included in the School Christmas Carols Concert as part of the 'school family'.

## **Redeeming Our Communities (ROC)**

The good relationships created through the successes of Chesterfield Street Pastors resulted in discussions about other ways in which CTfC could partner with the local authority and the police to bring about community transformation. At the same time relationships were being established with Redeeming Our Communities (ROC) and a local church leader; Simon Robinson had been appointed as an ambassador for the organisation.

ROC is a Manchester based Christian charity working with people of all faiths and no faith to bring about community transformation. The organisation is supported by senior police officers, politicians and community leaders and has a good track record of working within deprived communities to bring about improved community cohesion and involvement.

The Chesterfield Community Safety Officer, the Chesterfield Town Police Inspector and the Street Pastor Coordinator visited a ROC project in North Manchester with a view to establishing whether a ROC project could work in Chesterfield.

We visited a ROC Centre based in premises built by the local authority as a facility for young people but which had become unviable under the control of the local authority. ROC had re-established the premises involving the young people from the local challenging community and bringing about a massive improvement with substantial reductions in crime and anti-social behaviour.

On our return to Chesterfield we identified the Chesterfield South areas of Bidholme, Boythorpe and Grangewood as possible targets for a ROC initiative. There was an attempt to identify some redundant and semi-redundant local authority buildings that might offer the opportunity to replicate some of the interventions we had observed in North Manchester.

## **Community Young Stars – Summer Holiday Play Scheme – Queen’s Park Annexe, Chesterfield 2012**

It was as a result of the visits to the ROC Centre that Community Young Stars was developed as a Summer Holiday Play Scheme. The Chesterfield

Community Safety Partnership had for a number of years provided some activities for children and young people during the summer holidays. Experience shows that engaging them in positive activities such as sport keeps them off the street where they may otherwise resort to anti-social behaviour and crime, but these activities were relatively isolated filling just a few periods each week.

It was considered that a much more comprehensive intervention through a summer holiday play scheme may offer a more effective activity and that such a scheme might be possible through funding from official sources but with the churches providing volunteer helpers.

A successful competitive bid was made for grant funding from Derbyshire's Children's and Young People's Trust (£3000 awarded 23<sup>rd</sup> May) and additional funds were made available from Chesterfield Divisional Police and via the Chesterfield Community Safety Partnership.

The Community Young Stars title came from a programme which is run in some of the schools in the vicinity of QPA by Mike Dalby a Christian pastor who specialises in children's work and which is known to many parents in the area as having a positive impact on improving child behaviour.

Using the existing contacts of the Police and the Community Safety Partnership a sports based programme was organised using qualified sports coaches from Chesterfield FC, Sportscool and Sporting Futures. Alongside the sports programme volunteers from local churches were organised to deliver arts, crafts, games and skills.

The aim was to provide activities and pastimes with a wide enough range to appeal to all preferences, not just those interested in sport.

## **Volunteers**

Volunteers were recruited from local churches with five churches acting as leaders each of one week's worth of volunteers from the first to the fifth week. The volunteers for the final week being augmented from all the churches involved in the project.

Volunteers were required to complete a volunteer registration form which required the support of their host church leader. All volunteers were required to have enhanced CRB clearance.

A total of 160 volunteers worked on the scheme delivering over 2000 hours of volunteer work.

Many of the volunteers were professionally qualified teachers and classroom assistants. They also included social workers, youth workers, nurses and even a paediatrician. Where the volunteer had no qualification they usually had many years of experience in working with children and young people.

## **The Children**

A total of 246 children were registered with Community Young Stars with typical attendances in the morning and afternoon sessions totalling between 20 and 30 children, for each session. Over 60 percent of the children registered came from the target catchment areas of Birdholme, Boythorpe and Grangewood.

A substantial proportion of the children attending were listed by their parents as having special needs, with a history of behavioural problems.

Surveys of satisfaction completed by children and parent/carers indicated a high level of satisfaction with the activities provided.

Police statistics for the school holiday period supported the view that our interventions had made a positive impact in the target geographical area.

## **Community Young Stars – continued activity**

Throughout the remainder of 2012 and through 2013, Community Young Stars continued during school holidays and the Summer Holiday Play Scheme was repeated in 2013. The summer holiday play scheme included many of the activities of the previous year but with the addition of a portable play scheme

which visited local parks on a rota. A hired van was used to convey volunteers and play equipment to the parks.

During our time at Queen's Park Annexe during the summer of 2013, site exploration had already commenced for the building of the proposed new Chesterfield Leisure Centre and it became clear that it would be impractical to continue to use the facility.

A scaled down version of Community Young Stars has continued during school holidays based at Church in the Peak, New Street, Chesterfield from autumn 2013 through to the end of 2014.

Our play schemes are currently limited to children between 5 and 11 years and occupy the weekday period from 10am to 12 noon. Typically we have between 15 and 20 children attending who are supported by between 8 and 12 volunteers.

Feedback from children and parents continue to be very positive and we now have a regular group of mothers/careers who stay with us for the entire session.

Regularly weekly evening sessions have also been introduced where similar activities are undertaken.

### **ROC Café/Street Pastor Community Patrol**

During the spring of 2013, concern was being expressed about the problems associated with young people using so-called "legal highs" in the vicinity of Chesterfield bus station. Various attempts had been made by the police and other agencies to deal with the problem and the management group of Chesterfield Street Pastors were asked if we could assist.

The pastor and members of Grace Chapel, Markham Road, Chesterfield very helpfully offered the use of their premises as a drop-in centre for young people on Friday evenings between 7.30pm and 9.30pm and a team of Street Pastors agreed to patrol the bus station and market place areas with a view to assisting the young people and inviting them into the ROC café where they would not be so vulnerable as on the street.

The Street Pastor patrol team unlike the Saturday late night sessions where there is a different team each week uses the same core group of Street Pastors each week, so that long term relationships can be formed with the young people without which they would be unlikely to accept our invitations. We also



provided ourselves with litter picking equipment and tidy up the areas we patrol.

Where we patrol and the numbers we engage with depends very much upon the time of the year and the weather. For example; during the evenings when it is still light we patrol Queen's Park and the Skate Park, but in the winter we concentrate on the bus station and market place.

When we first mounted this patrol we would regularly encounter groups of twelve or more youngsters who were clearly under the influence of drugs. We would regular provide first aid and often they would accompany us back to Grace Chapel where our volunteer helpers could care for them until they ceased to be vulnerable and could look after themselves.

During the nearly two years that we have been operating the Friday night patrol and ROC Café we have taken on a variety of challenges. When we first started visiting the Skate Park we would regularly pick up four or five large bags full of litter, but at least some of the young people now follow our example and place their litter in the bin provided.

The numbers visiting the ROC Café varies greatly, just occasionally no one turns up, but most of the time we average about twenty youngsters who vary in age from 14 years to the early twenties. We have occasionally had more than 40 attend. The youngsters are provided with free food and drink and they play pool, table tennis and various board games. Some make music along with the Grace Chapel musicians.

We have visits from Police Community Support Officers nearly every week and local authority youth workers regularly call in to see us.

Over the nearly two years we have been operating we have been encouraged to see some of the regular substance abusers give up the habit and return to a much healthier lifestyle. We are also aware that some of the youngsters who are viewed as the most challenging for the police and statutory agencies do spend time with us when then their behaviour is acceptable and we are happy to try to build helping relationships with us.

On a typical Friday night we will have used a team of at least four Street Pastors to patrol and a team of at least six volunteers at the ROC Café.

## **Funding for Chesterfield Street Pastors and Chesterfield ROC Café/Centre**

### **Chesterfield Street Pastors**

Chesterfield Street Pastors has attracted funding from Chesterfield Borough Council, Chesterfield Divisional Police and churches and individuals.

For the first year of operation (2012) Chesterfield Street Pastors had a total income of £14,999.18 of which £6,000 was provided by the statutory authorities.

For the second year of operation (2013) Chesterfield Street Pastors had a total income of £9082.15 of which £5250 was provided by the statutory authorities.

### **Chesterfield ROC Centre and Community Young Stars**

Nearly all of the funding for Community Young Stars 2012 came from the statutory authorities (£3000 from DCC and £10000 from police/local authority. The churches provided the volunteers and the management of the project. The actual cost of employing people to undertake the work even at the minimum statutory rate would be prohibitive proving the value of volunteer helpers.

A balance of £4,699.82 was carried forward to help fund the 2013 summer holiday play scheme which was added to by a further contribution of £3000 from the local authority/police.

### **Summer Holiday Play Scheme – expenditure**

	2012	2013
CRB Checks	£823.36	£126.00
Activity providers	£3852.73	£1670.00
Equipment/materials	£876.37	£451.88
T-shirts	£836.00	£400.17
Leaders fees	£1108.00	£1825.00
Catering	£863.34	£448.96
Craft materials		£527.42
Miscellaneous	£222.38	£145.01
Vehicle hire/fuel		£929.61
Total	£8582.18	£6524.05

## **Chesterfield ROC Café**

Grace Chapel has provided the equipment which is used for the ROC Café and they also provide sandwiches and hot drinks each week. Chesterfield Street Pastors also contribute to the provision of food and drink on a regular basis. Church records show that the cost of the provision of facilities and services by Grace Chapel to date amounts to £2241 excluding any allowance for heating and lighting and use of the building.

## **ROC Developments**

Discussions are currently ongoing in connection with a number of possible initiatives operating under the ROC banner. These include;

ROC Care – a project to support elderly people

ROC Restore – a restorative justice project

Discussions are also taking place with a local Christian business man who is willing to invest a substantial amount of money in a social enterprise organisation the aim of which would be to fund initiatives using the surpluses created from the social enterprise.

## **Conclusions**

Christians Together for Chesterfield is proud to have partnered with the Chesterfield Community Safety Partnership in giving birth to a number of organisations and initiatives which are having a positive impact in the Chesterfield area.