

# Lollipops

Out & about «

# & flipflops



Ever been worse for wear out on the town of an evening? Then you might have come across Wallingford Street Pastors – saviours of the drunk and downtrodden

Friday nights, between 10pm and the early hours as the pubs spill out, can be peak ‘trouble time’.

That’s why, for the last three years, a team of four Wallingford Street Pastors have been on the beat, soaking up some of those drink-related incidents.

And, primarily, they do this armed with flip-flops, lollipops and good humour.

The dedicated volunteers, from a pool of 20, patrol from The Boathouse to the Cross Keys and the Green Tree. Why? Neville Burt, chairman of the Wallingford Street Pastors, explains: “We do it because we are Christians and because we want Wallingford to be a safe place. “We want to be a calming influence when things get a bit tense. We want those who have had rather too much to drink to get home safely. We want to contribute to a pleasant atmosphere in the town.”

This calming influence is especially useful when tempers flare. Neville adds: “Lollipops serve two purposes: they

say ‘we are here as your friends’ and sugar reduces the effects of excessive alcohol.

“The flip-flops are for girls (mainly!) who have gone out in high heels but are struggling to balance after a few drinks.”

The team also carry thermal blankets, bottles of water, tissues and mobile phones.

“We are not another branch of the police,” adds Neville, “although we do have a good working relationship with them and call them for serious incidents.”

Mostly, the pastors reduce tension with a friendly chat, but also pick up glasses and bottles and sweep up broken glass.

Volunteers must undergo several training sessions, spread over a year or more, before they are approved and allowed to wear the uniform and join the patrols.

So, if you see them, be nice!

To find out more, email [Wallingford@StreetPastors.org.uk](mailto:Wallingford@StreetPastors.org.uk) The patrol hotline is **07927 188 636**.



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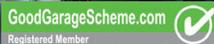
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