

COMPASS

NEWSLETTER OF COMMUNITY PASTORS

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Saffron Walden CPs set benchmark

Saffron Walden Community Pastors have been hobnobbing with football royalty recently.

They had a great night out supporting "Legend on the Bench" Fundraising Dinner alongside Tottenham Hotspur legends Osvaldo Ardiles, Graham Roberts, Gary Mabbutt, Mark Falco, Micky Hazard, David Howells and Clive Allen.

Legend-on-the-Bench is a non-profit making charity set up by Micky Hazard and his sister Michelle following the tragic death of her son Jason Lee Mead, with the aim of reducing the number of such tragedies recorded each year due to mental health issues or suicides. To do this they aspire to place Suicide Prevention Benches in every local park in the UK. These will have contact telephone numbers and QR codes that will take anyone requiring support directly to a website offering vital help.

We had significant conversations with Micky and

Michelle who were very supportive and encouraging, wanting to know who we are and what we do. So much so that we were invited to the launch of two new benches on Saffron Walden Common and Saffron Walden Town Football Club (above).

Saffron Walden Community Pastors celebrated their first year since being commissioned in November 2024, and they are certainly making an impact.

The operation goes from strength to strength, and their growing reputation has been recognised by being included in the town's carnival parade on 5th July, a first for us.

There are frequent patrols in the town's 'nighttime economy', visiting prime spots such as the Temeraire where they can enjoy catching up with regulars and listening to their concerns.

They continue to support Saffron Walden Town FC home matches, and launched a Saturday Morning Link outreach where they are a designated Safe Space for domestic abuse charity J9.

You'll often find them active in Café Clare at St Clare Hospice on Thursday mornings too. In fact, we've run out of room to tell you everything they get up to!



Work begins at the end of the line

Don't worry, we're not announcing the latest round of weekend engineering works! An exciting new opportunity has opened up with Community Pastors now visiting Liverpool Street.

Our rail patrols teams have been working hard on eastern and western branches of the Greater Anglia network, and in July - with the support of Greater Anglia, Land Sheriffs and other authorities - we explored a new area of service where lines meet at the busy London terminal.

Community Pastors bring a distinctly Christian flavour to a rail patrol and one thing they do is to pray a prayer of peace and blessing over the thousands of

commuters who pass through our stations (see photo above).

It's been a difficult Autumn with several fatalities on the rail network. Teams based in Billericay, Clacton and Saffron Walden have responded by visiting stations where incidents occurred, speaking with those affected, both travellers and staff. Volunteers recorded several significant conversations. We're grateful for the willingness of our volunteers to put themselves on the spot, offer comfort and a listening ear, engaging with often very difficult conversations.

We were also able to visit Southend Airport Station following the tragic plane crash at the airport on 24 July.



Community Pastors in Saffron Walden were delighted to meet up with actor Cliff Parisi, who plays Fred Buckle in BBC TV's *Call the Midwife*. Midwifery skills are not a module on our training programme, but we've no doubt our North Essex team can 'deliver' an excellent service.



Pastors are positive presence in park!

Community Pastors were once again in Lake Meadows, Billericay for the excellent Firework Display, supporting organisers by running the lost child prevention scheme.

We've taken our service to a new level this year with new pop-up banners clearly labelling the Lost Child Collection Point (right) and sky-blue wristbands carrying the Community Pastors logo. A team of 13 was on hand to

encourage parents and carers to use the wristbands which carry their mobile number, enabling authorities to contact them should they become separated from their little one. We are happy to report just one lost child, happily reunited.

We also launched our new balloons carrying the 'I love Community Pastors' message. Appearing on Gateway 97.8 Phil Norton noted that our balloons

COMMUNITY PASTORS
Lost Child Collection Point
 Pick up your free wristband here
 Just write your mobile number *only* on the band - *not* your child's name or any other detail - and authorities will be able to call you should your little one become separated

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had gone down very well, but was corrected by 'sidekick' Andy Robb: Our balloons had, in fact, stayed *up* very well, no doubt due to the efforts of our professional party expert and her electronic inflater, ensuring a sea of sky blue in Lake Meadows.



We do like to be beside...

...the seaside. And, on 31st October, Community Pastors did just that with a new venture in Clacton-on-Sea.

The trip up the A12 was to support churches working together in Clacton and their Light Event initiative. Whilst we hosted our gazebo, based at Trinity Methodist Church, volunteer teams went out on the streets to present a Christian alternative to the darker themes of Halloween.

We hope it will be the start of new partnerships in the Tendring district. Anyone fancy being a Pier Pastor?

CP van features at car show!

Community Pastors were delighted to support Billericay Baptist Church's WheelFest car and bike show in September.

Our Ford Transit was making its first appearance after being fitted with a new livery, pitched in a prime spot alongside some beautiful custom hot rods.

WheelFest was designed as a community outreach project with the emphasis on family fun,

connecting the church with the public in a friendly, low key way.

The show attracted an eclectic mix of around 35 classic, sports and track cars, but wasn't just about the 'rides', with demos, Lego, Scalextric, simulators, karts and a free barbecue.

Our van wasn't the most exotic vehicle on display, but we suspect it was the only one that served a decent coffee!



OBITUARY



We are saddened to report the passing of Community Pastor Jonathan Morley who died suddenly in September from a heart attack. Jonathan had a particular love for our rail operations and was often seen on patrol on the Greater Anglia network. He had also served previously as a Street Pastor and was an active member of Emmanuel church.

He features in our corporate brochure where his photo will always be a reminder to us of the dedication he brought to his volunteer role. Our love and condolences go out to his wife Christine, also a Community Pastor.



And finally...

Our Chair of Trustees Phil Norton was a finalist for the Volunteer Of The Year award as part of the Billericay Community Awards 2025. Phil missed out on the 'big one' on this occasion, but huge congratulations to winner Stuart Gibbs (Food Bank) and David Randall (Rotary Club/Christmas Market) for runner-up.

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