Street Pastors as Substitutes for Trust.

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Abstract

Street Pastors have appeared on the streets of Britain with virtually no public consultation or discussion. They are in many cases being integrated into the policymaking machinery of local government and policing which is of concern. An evaluation of their activities and of the public’s attitudes to their role is, therefore of great importance. Although the stated aims of the Street Pastors centre around crime reduction, reduction of fear of crime and offering a ‘listening ear’ to vulnerable people, there has been unsubstantiated evidence that many Street Pastors are using their position to engage in ‘preaching’ and evangelical work. In this research we explored this further and identified how far Street Pastors are associated with a religious role rather than a crime reduction, support or safety role. This enabled us to evaluate the role of the Street Pastors by collecting data on the perceptions and attitudes to their activities. It also enabled us to hypothesise about explicit linkages between religion and trust levels, and to compare levels of trust between different groups involved in the night time economy.

This research follows from previous research on Street Pastors (see Barton, Johns & Squire, 2009) and on trust and substitutes for trust (Barton & Johns, 2009; Johns & Green, 2009). It reports on the findings of an online survey of students in a major city in the south of England about their interactions with, and attitudes to the Street Pastors in that city. A number of studies place the church near the top of a list of most trusted institutions, and religious personnel as trustworthy on an individual basis (Ipsos Mori, 2008; Charity Awareness Monitor, 2008). The aims were to explore the perceived role of the Street Pastors by students; to compare the levels of trust students’ have in the various groups they interact with in the night time economy; and to develop further the notion of trust substitutes in the night time economy.
Introduction

This paper explores the role of Street Pastor schemes as a trust substitute. Explicitly it reports the findings of a survey of student attitudes to Street Pastors. The rationale for targeting students in particular was that in the City where the research took place, the Street Pastor scheme was set up to target the student population and the University campus. Thus, it made sense to target them as the primary ‘users’ of the Street Pastor ‘service’. This research developed from a previous evaluation of the same Street Pastor scheme. The first projects were jointly commissioned by the local police service, the local Community Safety Unit in the Local Authority and by a faith-based organisation with strategic responsibilities, this later study was totally independent.

Historical Development of Street Pastor Schemes

Christian churches have a historical legacy of delivering services, being formative influences and contributing physical and social resources to the collective welfare of their communities (Orton and Rowlingson, 2007). However, the centrality of religion to policy formulation and service delivery began to falter in the early-to-mid part of the twentieth century partly due to the growing secularisation of society, combined with the growth of the Welfare State and the influence of critical thinkers such as Marx and Freud (Moss and Thompson, 2006). The onset of the post-war welfare state meant there was less need for direct church involvement, this removed much of the reliance of communities on the church for welfare support. Additionally, there was a growing belief that religion had a history of intolerance and oppression that was not consistent with these new ideals of public welfare (Moss, 2005). However, the 1970s saw welfare reforms create a space, in terms of depth and scope of service provision, and this space has been filled by third sector agencies, some of which have been faith-based. Thus, we have seen a decline, and then a rebirth of religious involvement in social policy. The nature of this more recent involvement has been fundamentally different, however, than the original 19th Century Church welfare provision.
The Church’s participation in policy accelerated under the New Labour government from 1997-2010, which embraced the notion of the mixed economy of welfare, emphasising themes such as freedom of choice (Finlayson, 1999). The influence of Christian socialist beliefs have also played an important role in the governance of New Labour, especially when we consider the public affirmation of Prime Minister Blair’s Christianity (Chapman, 2008). As a result, organised religious groups have increasingly been seen by policy-makers as appropriate public service. As Lowndes and Chapman (2005) point out, engaging faith groups is part of a broader government strategy to mobilise the resources of civil society in pursuit of citizen well-being and better governance. But there is also an assumption that faith groups have special qualities that enable them to play a particular role in civil society. According to Lowndes and Chapman (2005) there are three main principle reasons which give legitimate church involvement in public policy, These are:

- a normative rationale which is linked to theology and presence in communities;
- a resource rationale, which is focused on organisational capacity – clearly churches have a large number of people and skills at their disposal, and the ability to reach socially excluded groups; and
- a governance rationale, which identifies the representative and leadership capacity within communities and broader networks.

These rationales, if Lowndes and Chapman (2005) are right, provide a template for the reintroduction of religious involvement in mainstream public policy in the UK.

The Street Pastors is a Christian organisation with its roots in the Caribbean, developed in the UK by Reverend Les Isaacs. They patrol the night-time economy (NTE), with a view to providing help and support to vulnerable people. The help is offered on a secular basis, and includes assistance for inebriated people to hail a taxi or to get home: passing out water to make sure those who are drinking remain hydrated, and distributing flip flops to (mainly) women who have either lost their shoes or have
problems walking in high heels. The national movement has its own mission statement, but the degree of flexibility offered to local groups is quite large. The initiative we observed set out its aims in the following way, to serve:

- “As a ‘presence’ ministry from the Christian churches (‘the church has left the building’);
- As a visible presence to reassure folk who may feel vulnerable;
- To help reduce the (alarming) fear of crime that far outweighs the actual reality of the situation;
- To be a listening ear to the lonely, the vulnerable, the frightened, the intimidated, the hurting....;
- And to offer genuine, non-judgemental pastoral support to those who request help.”

(see Johns et al., 2009a for a fuller discussion of this initiative).

Initially the wider organisation was set up to tackle gun, gang and drug crime in inner-city areas and was directed very much towards young black men. It was also intended to be multi-denominational, multi-faith and to include secular groups and people. Since its inception in 2003 it has expanded at a very impressive rate, extending right across the United Kingdom and has grown well beyond its urban, serious crime and minority ethnic roots. At the last count there were over 3,000 individual Street Pastors in the UK, working in more than 100 projects. These stretch right across the country from Aberdeen in Scotland to Camborne in the far south west of England (McGuinness, 2009: 20). It now incorporates any and every geographical area and regards its primary target as anti-social behaviour, hence its concentration on the NTE, and has no particular ethnic or other identity focus (except that in targeting vulnerable people for help, the label of vulnerability is predominantly attributed to young women).
The Research Project

In the first project our remit was to explore the training provided to individual Street Pastors, observe what they do when on patrol and gather the views of different groups working in the NTE (e.g. door staff and takeaway proprietors) about extending the patrol area to another – potentially more difficult part – of the NTE. Six months later we were charged with the task of investigating how the expansion was proceeding. While there had been concerns, almost universally, about the potential danger to the Pastors, there was overwhelming support for it, and in practice the reports were generally positive. Some door staff felt that there had been little impact, and others were not aware of how the Street Pastors could be reached in times of emergency – though they were connected to the CCTV police intercom system. According to the organisation’s own targets they were doing well, on things like picking up litter, engaging with people and distributing water, space blankets and flip flops. There had also been some very significant achievements, in one instance a man who had been beaten up and whose heart had stopped was saved by a Street Pastor trained in first aid.

However, the results of this first study raised some questions and concerns with us. Some of these we discuss in the paper ‘Street Pastors: from Crime Prevention to Re-Moralisation’ (Johns et al., 2009b). These concerns centred on the lack of inclusion of other non-Christian faith groups; the increasingly elastic remit for Street Pastor involvement; their lack of transparency and financial accountability; and the lack of evidence for their effectiveness at reducing crime.

When the national Street Pastor initiative was set up the intention was that it would include other faiths as well as secular interests. This has not happened. Not only have other faiths not been included, there has been no secular involvement at all, in fact evangelical Christians appear to have dominated the organisation. In addition, the involvement and support from the Methodist church in particular, with its views on alcohol consumption, may show a bias towards issues around drunkenness rather than crime prevention *per se*. 
The remit of the Street Pastors has an emphasis not on serious crime but on anti-social behaviour. This has enabled it to develop around binge-drinking in the NTE as one of its key concerns, a problem that has been identified almost universally across the UK; as a result Pastors have been able to justify their presence in very small rural environments just as readily as in large urban contexts. Furthermore, it has paved the way for a new initiative, the growth of Schools Pastors, whereby patrols operate outside school gates to befriend children and to provide a presence to discourage bullying and other anti-social activities. When we were conducting our research the aim of Schools Pastors was to get inside school gates and contribute to assemblies and other relevant activities, and this has occurred in some areas (McGuiness, 2009). Thus the justification for Street Pastor involvement is becoming blurred and is moving away from the crime prevention and reduction strategy originally conceived by Les Isaacs.

During the process of collecting and disseminating the results of the first project some of the evidence we collected gave us cause for concern, there were unsubstantiated reports about demands being made on local councils for funding and support, and issues of public transparency and accountability. It was suggested to us that the Police and local council did provide funding, but there were no formal accounts or evidence to substantiate this. Another area of conflicting evidence was the crime reduction impact of the initiative. It has been claimed that in certain areas the introduction of Street Pastor patrols has had a positive impact on crime levels. In one area a senior police officer has made very strong claims to this affect (Norfolk Street Pastors, 2009). However, the evidence for this link has been limited and as part of the research we carried out we were unable to establish any link, partly because the statistics collected by the police service would not enable that kind of association to be drawn. Respondents from the Community Safety Unit, when interviewed, were quite sceptical about such claims.

Accountability and transparency are particularly important for organisations which draw upon public resources for their activities. However, we found several discrepancies with the way the Street Pastors operated. The Street Pastors were not a part of the partnership framework in the City, although they were centrally involved in ‘policing’ the NTE, they had not joined the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. All of these
findings, combined with wider issues around equality and inclusion (Green et al, forthcoming), provided us with the motivation for this study of student perceptions and interaction. Before we describe that survey it is useful here to outline some of the theoretical material around trust and trust substitutes.

**Trust as a Concept and Trust Substitutes**

The concept of trust has its roots in philosophy, theology and ethics (Silver, 1985). However, we use a notion of trust that has been developed more recently in sociology and political thought during the past 30 years. There has been a resurgence of interest during this period in trust and how it relates to modern society because of the changing nature of society, and of the place of the individual within society. Many contemporary interpretations of trust relate very much to relationships between individuals, the division of labour and government. Modern society has become increasingly focussed on the individual and with information rather than manufacturing, meaning that it has become atomised and polarised (Giddens 2002). The nature of the relationship between individuals, identity, work and organisations has fundamentally changed over the past 50 years. What began to emerge in the late 20th century was a move away from meaning and identity being located in institutions and structures to one in which meaning and identity are seen in terms where the self becomes the primary agent. As a result, traditional certainties, and the trust in individuals, organisations and social roles generated by those certainties became more and more eroded to the point where much of the social glue created by tradition became unstuck (Johns et al., 2011).

Modern society is characterised by increasing complexity, uncertainty and risk. This is never more apparent as in these current times of economic recession. It is these factors that make the presence or absence of trust of crucial importance for social policy (Beck, 1992). The levels of trust we invest in other people or organisations is directly related to how well acquainted we are with them (Sztompka, 1999). There is also evidence that there is a direct relationship between levels of trust and shared, similar or salient values (Siegrist et al., 2000). Indeed we may invest trust in people or organisations with which
we believe we share common values, but have no direct knowledge of. We also trust in certain social roles and institutions and in processes and practices. This is what Sztompka terms ‘procedural trust’. So we may invest trust in the legal system and in the democratic election system for example. Additionally, we may invest trust in technological systems, such as electricity distribution, air traffic control systems etc. At the more intangible level we may also exhibit trust in notions such as ‘liberal democracy’ or ‘capitalism’.

However, we do not invest trust in all or any of the above in the same way. How we trust and how much we trust is dependent on the knowledge we have about the object of trust, how far our values are shared with that object and how far we judge the object to be a risky or safe bet in terms of the actions of the trust object (Johns et al., 2011).

Much of our assessment then of whether or not to trust an individual or group is based on expectations about their behaviour and actions. High levels of trust tend to be invested in individuals or groups which behave in a consistent and predictable way, because it enables us to make sense of an increasingly complex world. Clearly defined moral principles, which can be demonstrably turned into consistent action are therefore highly desirable in affording trust. If we look at evidence on levels of trust in different organisations we see that the Church (and its employees) score relatively highly in surveys on trust. At the very top of the list we see doctors, teachers and judges (Seldon, 2010).

The links between trust, social capital and the so called ‘Big Society’ are very strong. Often trust and social capital are conflated and treated as virtually the same thing (Halpern, 2005). This is because for social networks to form and social capital to be created, high levels of trust are required. Social Capital will indeed be limited by a lack of trust (Welch et al., 2000). Much of the rhetoric around the ‘Big Society’ is drawn from the theories and ideas around community and social capital, so the existence of trust is crucial to the development of ‘Big Society’. These are not new ideas however, the previous government drew upon similar notions. The difference was that they called the concept ‘citizenship’ and linked it very firmly to duty, responsibility and obligation to participate in the labour market under the ‘welfare to work’ schemes. Blair’s version of
citizenship also had echoes of Etzioni’s communitarianism within it, with its emphasis on stable social institutions like the family. The newly embodied ‘Big Society’ seems to be a muddier notion, which has budget savings, privatisation of welfare and individualism interwoven.

Trust Substitutes

Where there is a failure or breakdown of trust individuals react by replacing that trust with something else, these are termed ‘trust substitutes’. The first substitute is what Sztompka calls ‘providentialism’ (1999). This invokes religious or supernatural forces as a psychological mechanism to cope with situations over which they have no control or influence. The second strategy is ‘corruption’. The normal social bonds and the trust they depend upon are replaced by networks of favours and connections, which creates the scope for exploitation and the abuse of power. The third mechanism is ‘vigilance’. We see this where people lose faith in the police or security forces and take responsibility themselves for street patrols, neighbourhood watch, burglar alarms, gated communities etc. The Street Pastor scheme could fit into this category, if we saw people losing trust in regular police patrols, or in the event of police budget cuts meaning fewer patrols took place. Fourthly, people engage in ‘litigation’. Rather than relying on people’s word or a handshake they safeguard relationships formally, they draw up contracts, bank guarantees etc. This can clearly be observed in modern society with the growth of litigation, pre-nuptial agreements, and credit checks. The fifth strategy, ‘ghettoisation’ is often linked with ‘vigilism’. Here people close themselves off, which makes it a form of local tribalism, that can revolve around ethnic or family groups. By shutting out the external world they reduce risk and uncertainty. Gated communities are a classic example, but also the existence of housing estates which consist of groups of particular ethnic communities choosing to locate together. Many religious groups have an element to them which has just this characteristic. The sixth strategy Sztompka terms ‘paternalisation’. In the absence of trust people seek protection from a strong leader. The phenomena can be seen in practice where a country goes through a period of economic or political unrest and the populace elect very strong, charismatic, and
sometimes autocratic leaders. The last strategy exists when individuals externalise their trust on to other people or products. If they lose trust in local politicians or products, for example, they turn to foreign targets to instil a sense of trust.

The starting point for this research was to investigate whether trust in the police was being substituted by the Street Pastors in the night time economy (NTE). As public funds are cut by the current Coalition government, and as there is a move towards ‘Big Society’, or greater community participation, the Street Pastors could become a vital component of community safety strategy. Thus, we wanted to see what the levels of trust were in police officers and Street Pastors. We also wanted to investigate perceptions of Street Pastors and their role in the NTE.

**Student Perception’s and Interactions with Street Pastors**

The survey was conducted online, using the University’s student ‘portal’ inviting students to participate. A small incentive was offered, in the form of a prize draw for £50 worth of shopping vouchers. The survey took place during the first part of the Spring term during 2011 (January and February). There are currently almost 23,000 students studying at the City Centre site of the University, and we achieved 361 responses which is only 1.6%, thus the limitations of this study are obvious. Students were asked whether they had any knowledge of the Street Pastors, whether they had any ‘interactions’ with them and whether they were regular users of the NTE. Respondents were also asked about their gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity and ‘race’, religion and age. These questions were asked to gauge whether members of particular minority groups, who traditionally suffer different levels of fear of crime and bullying, had different attitudes towards the Street Pastors. Respondents were then asked to rate how far they found Street Pastors ‘trustworthy’, using a bipolar ‘very trustworthy’, very untrustworthy’ five point scale. This was compared to similar questions on the trustworthiness of other groups they may have encountered in the NTE, the police, door staff, taxi drivers, take away staff, friends and other ‘clubbers or revellers’.
There were a series of attitude statements relating to Street Pastors to which respondents were asked to respond using a five point, bipolar, agree strongly, disagree strongly scale:

**The Results**

Although 361 students responded, only 34 (9.4%), of these had had any actual interaction with the Street Pastors. However, nearly 50% (174) said that they would ask the Street Pastors for help, with 40% (146) responding that they ‘don’t know’ if they would ask for help.

**Perceived Role of the Street Pastors**

One of the criticisms that has been levelled at Street Pastors is that it focuses in particular on ‘vulnerable young women’, suggesting censorious views of the activities of women drinking in the NTE. However, when asked, respondents did not think that the Street Pastors were providing a service mainly for women (1.9%). Overwhelmingly they responded that the Street Pastors were ‘there to help everyone (64.3%, 232), or ‘mainly for students (15.2%, 55), see below:

![Figure 1: ‘Provision for different Groups’](image-url)
This raises a set of issues for further study, in that this perception, if widely held, is seemingly at odds with how the Street Pastors articulate their objectives. Does this mean that they need to work harder to accurately sell their services, or, that this objective is not actually publicised at all?

One of the other areas of concern was around the purpose of the Street Pastor patrols. There is conflicting evidence around their efficacy as a crime reduction mechanism, there is some anecdotal evidence that they are using their position to ‘preach’ and there is the fear that they are being used as a substitute for regular policing activities.

More than half (57.9%) of respondents judged that the role of the Street Pastors was to ensure people’s safety. This firmly links Street Pastors with crime prevention and safety. Interestingly though only 2.8% thought that their main role was to ‘support the police’. Thus the service they are providing is probably not seen as an extension or replacement for traditional policing. Perhaps worryingly for the Street Pastors, nearly a
quarter of respondents replied that they ‘don’t know’ what the Street Pastors’ main role is. Only 10.8% said that they had a mainly religious role, perhaps questioning how far the initiative is using the scheme to evangelise and preach about their religious beliefs.

**Trustworthiness**

Respondents were asked to rate whether the various people they might encounter in the NTE were ‘very trustworthy’, ‘trustworthy’, ‘neither trustworthy not untrustworthy’, ‘untrustworthy’ or ‘very untrustworthy’. We considered providing a definition of trust and some examples, but decided not to in the interests of neutrality and keeping the survey as short and as quick to complete as possible.

![Figure 3. Percentage responses to trustworthiness of different groups](image)

As we expected, friends were rated highly in terms of trust. We were surprised however, that the police were rated as highly as they were. We had expected that the student protests at the time and outrage at the ‘kettling’ of protestors would result in some negativity toward the police. However, the police were the second most trusted group overall. The Street Pastors closely followed the police with 70% of respondents considering them either ‘trustworthy’ or ‘very trustworthy’. Indeed only 3% considered them to be in any way untrustworthy. This confirms previous polls on religious groups and the church, which places them very highly in terms of trust (Seldon, 2010). This
also seems to give legitimacy to their activities, combined with the above findings that respondents thought they were providing a universal service.

Although only 32 people had any contact with the Street Pastors, they were statistically more likely to rate them as trustworthy or very trustworthy, than those who had not. This trend is also apparent when we consider whether respondents had seen the Street Pastors patrolling. Only 97 respondents had seen them patrolling, compared to 246 who had not, but they were more likely to rate them as trustworthy if they had seen them patrolling. There was, however, no difference between respondents who used the NTE a lot and those who only went out at night occasionally or never.

Respondents give Street Pastors very similar trust rankings to the police. Indeed there is a significant positive correlation between rankings given to the police and those given to the Street Pastors. This suggests that respondents perceive Street Pastors and the Police as similar organisations. Respondents perceived the role of the Street Pastors mainly to be protecting the public and ensuring safety, suggesting that they could indeed become a very reliable substitute for policing in the NTE. The advantage that the Street Pastors have, is that they have high levels of trust, but are not seen as part of the 'establishment', a very viable trust substitute. We will return to this point in more detail in the section on the nature of trust, where we will investigate this further.

Given that one of the concerns was that Street Pastors were targeting ‘vulnerable women’ particularly for their attention, and given that men and women do have difference levels of fear of crime, we had expected that gender would be an important variable in trust levels. Indeed females were more likely to rate them as trustworthy. Age however was not a significant variable. There was not enough data on sexual orientation to draw any meaningful conclusions. Disability was an interesting variable. Although only 26 respondents declared a disability, and we have no details on the nature of those disabilities, those people declaring a disability were more likely to consider the Street Pastors as untrustworthy. In the literature religion has been seen by many as part of the framework that supports the medical model of disability, that
impairments are deserved for previous sins or that they are merely personal flaws to be rectified (Oliver, 1990; Barnes and Mercer, 2003). Others see the medical model, negative though it may be as an advance on Christian views of disability in particular (Bragg, 1997). However, still others see religion as much more neutral, encouraging also positive attitudes better reflecting something akin to the social model (Yamey and Greenwood, 2004). Nevertheless, as a complex social grouping (Lloyd, 2001) subject to specific forms of discrimination and disadvantage this is an important finding and worthy of further research.

**The Attitude Statements**

Respondents tended to agree that the Street Pastors made the City safer, with 42.6% (154) responding agree or strongly agree. There were small differences between males and females with females tending to use ‘strongly agree’ and males ‘agree’, but no discernible difference. Overall respondents exhibited either positive attitudes to the work of the Street Pastors, or ambivalence. Negative attitudes, even for those questions implying potential misuse of their position to espouse religious values, were not very prevalent. This suggests that the Street Pastors could be operating as a trust substitute for regular police patrols. Respondents tended to feel that the Street Pastors made the City safer, offered a valuable service, were independent of the police and had a positive moral impact on society.
Interestingly, there was no significant difference between males and females in whether the Street Pastors should patrol more frequently, nor were there any large gender differences in the other attitude statements.

Figure 4. Percentage agree/disagree to attitude statements
The Nature of Trust in Street Pastors

When correlation coefficients were carried out, it was observed that there was a significant, positive correlation between levels of trust in Street Pastors and levels of trust in the Police (.339). This led to us initially hypothesizing that perhaps respondents viewed Street Pastors and Police as similar types of organisations, even though they were regarded as ‘independent’. We thought that Street Pastors were seen in some way as ‘figures of authority’ in a similar way to the police. In order to investigate the inter-correlation further we ran a factor analysis to investigate the patterns in the data.

Factor analysis is useful in identifying patterns in data, and exploring relationships between variables and identifying over-arching concepts. The results of this analysis were very interesting, and we provide a brief overview here.

The variables included in the analysis were as follows:
- Levels of trust in Police Officer, Friends, Street Pastors, Taxi drivers, Takeaway staff, Door staff, Other clubbers, Bar Staff.
- Attitude Statements: the Street Pastors Make the City safer; the Street Pastors provide a valuable service; the Street Pastors do not talk about religion unless asked; the Street Pastors should patrol more of the City; the Street Pastors should patrol more often; the Street Pastors are good because of their religion; a non-religious patrol would be preferable; the Street Pastors should receive public funding; the Street Pastors are independent of the police; plans to expand the Street Pastors should be a matter for public consultation; the Street Pastors have a positive moral impact on society; Street Pastors have no legitimate role in patrolling the City.

All of these variables have a high level of inter-correlation between them (an essential requirement of factor analysis). The first factor extracted in factor analysis is the most important, and accounts for the most inter-correlation, the last factor is the least important. The rotated factor solution (using varimax), resulted in five factors being extracted:

**Factor One**
Level of trust in Street Pastors and most of the attitude statements relating to Street Pastors.
**Factor Two**
Levels of trust in taxi drivers, takeaway staff, bar staff, other clubbers.

**Factor Three**
Levels of trust in police officers, door staff.

**Factor Four**
‘A non religious patrol would be preferable’ and ‘Plans to expand the Street Pastors should be a matter for public consultation’.

**Factor Five**
Levels of trust in friends (-ve), The Street Pastors are good because of their religion’ and ‘Street Pastors have no legitimate role in patrolling the City’.

Clearly the first factor is concerned directly with levels of trust in the Street Pastor scheme. What is interesting is that levels of trust in Police Officers do not appear in this factor, suggesting that the trust invested in these two groups is not the same, they are distinctive and different. What is also interesting is that trust in police officers appears in the same factor as levels of trust in door staff. Perhaps both these groups are seen as having a legitimate and similar role in the NTE. So door staff are a closer substitute for police officers than Street Pastors.

**Conclusions**
When we commenced this research we had a number of pre-conceptions and expected certain results. These have been shown to be ill founded. We had thought that Street Pastors may be operating as a trust substitute for police officers in the NTE. With the student protests against changes in HE funding we thought trust in police officers might be reduced. This was not found. We thought that there might be a relationship between trust in police officers and trust in Street Pastors, indicating that they could be a substitute. Even though there was a significant correlation between trust in these two groups, when we dug deeper, using factor analysis, they emerged in different factors. This indicates that they are perceived as different.
Indeed, the responses to the attitude statements indicated that the Street Pastors are seen as ‘independent’ of police officers.

Previous research had raised concerns about the Street Pastors using their role to ‘preach’ and publicise their religious views. The respondents did not indicate that this was a problem. The links between Street Pastors and crime reduction are not clear, however, respondents agreed that the Street Pastors did contribute to safety in the City. The perceived ‘fear of crime’ is often as important as actual crime rates and thus this cannot be dismissed as insignificant.

Overwhelmingly respondents were either positive or completely ambivalent about the Street Pastors. There were very few negative responses and the fears we had expressed prior to the survey were unfounded, although whether this would reflect attitudes more generally with a bigger, more representative sample outside the boundaries of higher education, is something we intend to investigate more fully at a later date. Another area we would like to pursue was the attitudes displayed by disabled respondents. This group displayed low levels of trust in Street Pastors and this is worth investigating further in the wider context we hope to explore.
References


