

57 WEST, SOUTHEND



Planting an emerging missional church among those beyond the church in Southend

Dan Pratt was sent to church plant in September 2013. Dan comes to work in the Eastern Baptist Association (EBA) from six years working with BMS in Africa and he previously served with Youth with a Mission. He has been working on the church plant for 26 months. Trained at Regent's Park College, he was ordained in June 2014, and is now a newly accredited minister.

With the help of a team of volunteers the 57 West premises have been renovated from an old Barber's shop, to a drop-in coffee/wi-fi hub.

From the start we put energy in to mission among young adults. Despite trying hard we were discouraged after months of fruitless slog. But Christmas 2013 felt like a real turning point with rapid and exciting developments.

A Christmas afternoon playing pool with rough sleepers led to deepening relationships with young adults who could be characterised as the 'poor' of the town: homeless, family-less and with substance addictions. At the same time relationships were now forming with older people of similar backgrounds.



God was leading us into the work by his route a work with people not commonly found in church.



Today 57 West is a thriving community of people exploring faith, supporting each other in their significant needs. Since the beginning of the year we have welcomed 1,500 people through the door, some people multiple times. We give thanks for this exciting breakthrough after a tough year of mission in 2013.



Find out more about how Home Mission is enabling Baptist churches to make Jesus known in their communities, see www.baptist.org.uk/hmstories

Make a gift to Home Mission through your Church Treasurer, or online at www.justgiving.com/baptistuniongb

Saturday Church

We started Saturday Church at the beginning of January 2014. It is church with a difference. We have two 30 minutes sessions of discussions, prayer, laughter, tears, worship, communion and testimonies - there is a 15 minute break in the middle for those craving coffee or a cigarette.

One recent series focused on Jesus' death and resurrection, which led on to exploring what the early Church was like. Despite people sometimes coming drunk or high, it has been inspiring to see people grow in their understanding of Jesus and worshipping together. The lively, open and honest discussions about life and faith have been challenging and refreshing. The day is completed with 10-30 people sharing in a meal.

Drop in/Community hub

The hub is currently open on four days per week for a total of 15 hours. We see around 10-30 people drop-in each day with, on average, 70 different people coming during the week.

This means that over 1600 people have walked through 57 West's door since opening! We provide toast and hot drinks throughout week and a community meal on Saturdays (when no other meals are available for rough sleepers).

We currently have eight part-time volunteers, and are grateful for the support given by volunteers from other local churches.

Hi I'm Lisa and I got involved when I was homeless. It was winter and cold outside and a friend told me a place where we could get a coffee and some toast so we went along and were welcomed. I was soon volunteering and now I help cook the community meal at Saturday Church. Since joining I have been baptised along with Dave and I'm continuing my walk with the Lord.



Hi, I'm Els. I started coming to 57 West and helping out which helped me get closer to God. It was the right time to get baptised. Now I can see the Holy Spirit is speaking as I live God's plan for me.

We've also hosted workshops from HARP (a local homeless charity) in health, and a police pop-up station supporting police and victims after a serious crime amongst the vulnerable on the streets.

57 West provides support, benefit help, housing advice, signposting and provision for some of the most vulnerable people in our area. We've also held social events including a Christmas outing, Open Mic night, Ladies' and Men's Nights, camping trip, craft workshops, discussion groups, movie evenings and beach trips.



The need for a Home Mission Grant

The minister of the church plant, Dan Pratt began church planting on a faith-funded basis while undertaking ministerial training Regent's Park College and completing a doctorate in theology. The Home Mission grant which came into effect towards the end of his training has been essential in supporting the work of this emerging church. Now that Dan has been ordained, the grant enables Dan to work part-time as a newly accredited minister.

57 West is grateful for God's provision through Home Mission funding.

Dan Pratt
57 West

Please pray:

- » For Dan and the volunteers who run 57 West as they seek God for more of the rough sleepers and addicts to find freedom and salvation
- » For those who have made decisions to follow Christ to grow into mature Christians
- » Give thanks for baptisms and for 57 West being welcomed in to Eastern Baptist Association as a new church
- » That other churches will regularly support the team
- » For external financial support which is vital to sustain and develop this work