



HOPE ON THE STREETS

Oxford City Action Pack

May 3-5th 08

Each hour we give to serve others is an hour where we are worshipping God by following the example Jesus set for us in being the gospel as well as talking about it...

Whatever you do, the aim is that relationships are built, people's needs are met and the church is engaged with its community.

Dan Etheridge – Soul Survivor and Soul Action

Welcome to the Oxford City **Hope on the Streets** Action Pack ☺ These pages are designed for both church leaders and all church members besides, young and old. The aim is that:

1. You will capture the incredible value of several types of community action project.
2. You will see something that makes you think:

“That sounds great! It won’t be easy, but I have faith in God that my friends and I can do this.”

3. You will have a good idea what is involved & know what needs to happen next...

Choosing a Project

There are loads of things to choose from, try to have your friendship group/housegroup/team in mind as you dream. This action pack is aimed towards the following:

1. Friends in Need
2. Local Environment
3. Community Event



Friends in need: There are many people around us for whom ‘I’m fine’ is rarely true. How life changing even a simple act of service can be! A newly decorated kitchen or a flourishing garden that will remind them every day of God’s love expressed to them through people! Either serve someone you know, or be introduced to someone who will be delighted to meet you.

Local environment: To look after the Garden of Eden was a privilege and a joyful responsibility for Adam and Eve. We can have the same attitude towards even our imperfect world if we so choose, where can you think of that has become an unpleasant place to be or to walk? How much might it influence the local community to see this transformed??

Community event: These bring the local community together in all its diversity and lay a foundation to help multiply much needed social interactions. At its heart, it has 2 or 3 friendship/home groups working together to invite others to find their role in building a hope-filled Kingdom for tomorrow.

A quick warning: This is a great opportunity to get to know God together as a friendship/house group and to get to know each other at the same time. Please do ensure you are communicating properly and meeting each fortnight (or so) to pray and coordinate with one another. **HOWEVER**, please don’t allow this to take over all the other ways you meet!

Finally, enjoy yourselves! It’s our prayer that this would do you good as well as your communities, and that you’d be inspired to serve in big and small ways for the years to come.

Hope 08 Oxford Team ☺

FRIENDS IN NEED

Transform households and gardens with no hidden catch!

Happy is the person who has eyes to see how wonderful love is. Rich, generous, overflowing love. When we act in this love, in ways that people can't even repay, we give the Holy Spirit a unique opportunity to open people's eyes in a way they've never known before.

Mike Hallard – Besom Oxford

There are many people across Oxford who have found themselves unable to look after their house or garden properly and in some cases it is an ongoing source of anxiety and ill-health. The free offer of transformation in this area is enough to brighten up the daily life of such people for the whole coming year!



When you think of people you know who have difficulties with mobility, family responsibilities or serious lack of motivation in their lives, do consider the amount of help they currently get at home and whether it would be valuable for you and your friends to help. An excellent way of connecting with people across Oxford in very difficult situations like these is through Besom, a Christian charity that exists for this very purpose (besominoxford@yahoo.co.uk).

Some ideas for transformation:

- House clearance
 - Painting & decorating
 - Tending to overgrown gardens
 - DIY-related help

Getting started:

- With a church house group or friendship group, either ask people you know if they would like help at home, or contact Besom (besominoxford@yahoo.co.uk) to meet someone in great difficulty and who probably doesn't know God in their lives. Please note that Besom appreciate 3 weeks notice so do aim to be in touch by Friday 11th April.
- Choose a team leader.
- Begin to plan the specific ways in which you will serve them.

The next steps:

- Get in touch with the Hope 08 team (hope08oxford@gmail.com) so that we can let you know of other groups working in a similar location or connect you to people who are happy to help if you meet with difficulty,
- Arrange for a couple of you to visit your recipient soon to work out the time and resources you'll need and to develop your relationship.
- Choose a date - May 3-5th is great to demonstrate unity with Christians across Oxford but it might not be the best weekend for the person you'd like to serve!
- Gather and buy the necessary equipment.
- Plan a meeting to occur after the work is done, maybe arrange for the person you're serving to join you all for an evening meal and suggest they invite some friends!

LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

Seriously change the atmosphere of your neighbourhood

Hope 08 provides both a unique and truly significant opportunity to work alongside neighbourhood police officers in improving the quality of life in all our communities.

If churches thank and encourage local officers in their day-to-day work and get involved practically in tackling neighbourhood concerns, then the impact could be truly immense.

Chief Constable Matt Baggot – ACPO Head of Neighbourhood Policing

Every city has areas that have suffered the consequences of neglect. Unfortunately it is a self-perpetuating cycle that, when we are somewhere that feels unpleasant, we will often have no problem with leaving it or even making it worse. But if the good news works for our souls then it works in every aspect of life. It will take a people of love to intervene and turn things around!

Have a think about different areas that you and your friendship group/house group could change in one or more ways. **Some ideas for your neighbourhood:**

- Tidying parks
 - Clearing alleyways & paths
 - Painting fences/gates
 - Removing unwanted graffiti

We are fortunate to have a very active council, though this does mean it is vital that you hold your ideas lightly, as the council may already be planning to do some of them! It is much easier to coordinate with local authorities than many people realise however... try to contact each of the following by the start of April:

The council will be delighted to hear from you on

01865 249811 or www.oxford.gov.uk/online/contact.cfm

Police Community Support Officers also love hearing of people wanting to contribute to the neighbourhood and are some of the best informed people about their local area. Find the PCSOs for the area you want to serve using the following website:

08458 505 505 or www.OxfordHope.org.uk/LocalAuthorities

Not only will you chat to some friendly people but they will:

- Help you decide which ideas will work best,
- Be able to give you some more ideas where useful,
- Help you to work out who else would be useful to contact.

Small groups from other local churches - this is both a great witness of unity and will make your activity “multi-church”, which will often win great favour with many important people!

The Hope 08 team (hope08oxford@gmail.com). When you get in touch with us, we will:

- Let you know of other groups with similar ideas or working in a similar location,
- Connect you to people who are happy to help if you meet with difficulty,
- Include your activity in radio and newspaper releases!

On top of all this, **the Hope 08 website** (www.OxfordHope.org.uk) has further help with:

Finding finance Poster templates Ticklists Timelines And much more...

With a bit of planning, gossiping and a bunch of posters etc. it's possible to gather a sizeable crowd to change a large area. Why not put up “open invitation” posters a month in advance welcoming local residents to join you? It could also be a great chance to fundraise for a local charity... loads of great possibilities!



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Open up the riches of fun, friendship and love

Our number one recommendation for community events is the local neighbourhood funday. Three hours one afternoon where many can celebrate their community together and catch a glimpse of Heaven; experiencing love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness and self-control.

Daniel Evenhuis – Fusion Youth and Community

A current cry of our local communities is the cry of isolation and lack of purpose or hope for the future. Helping to bring our neighbourhoods together and connecting individuals in a supportive network is one of the most productive ways the local church can serve these communities. The funday is a great way for the local churches to connect with the broader community and building bridges into existing networks such as kids clubs, parenting support, toddler groups, youth groups, and programmes for the elderly or other initiatives.

At these festivals, it is better that a Gospel message isn't presented from the front of stage, but rather through the lives of the volunteers, especially the welcome team – whom it is well worth training to share their faith in a festival context.

Some ideas for a Funday:

Hospitality:

Café Tent

Prayer Tent

Barbecue

Cakes Counter

Activities:

Balloon Modelling

Bubble Blowing

Juggling

Stilts, quad skis

Giant lawn games

Wind Tunnel

Bouncy Castle

Bucking Bronco

Plaster Paris models

Beat the buzzer

Splat the Rat

Junk Modelling

Tug O War

Karaoke

Coconut Shy

Face Painting

Sports/Competitions:

Football Tournament

Welly wanging

Basketball Competition

X-factor!

Other people who would be delighted to get involved:

Local Scouts/Guides

Fire Brigade

Primary School

Local Butcher for BBQ

Other events to consider:

- 5-a-Side competition (teams made up from different streets in your community)
 - Dinner and social evening for elderly people or vulnerable adults
 - DJ/Dance/Performing Arts workshop
 - Kids event (with cafe for parents!)
 - Talent night

Getting started:

- Attracting a large crowd is not as hard as you'd imagine! For example, a 500 person funday would need a core team of 3-5 dedicated people (beginning mid-March), around 35 volunteers and £500. There are several short and clear guides for each of these aspects on the following website: www.OxfordHope.org.uk.
- Sort out safety, insurance and general support through a group such as Fusion Youth and Community. Fusion YAC have loads of experience in community fundays and can actively support you as you put on this event: office@fusionyac.org / 01844 299 329.
- Read the information from activity 2. "Local Environment", this will help you make vital early contact with local authorities, newspapers, radio and other local churches.
- Book a venue. We recommend using school grounds where possible - they have kitchens, electricity, playing equipment, Basketball courts, Football pitches...!