

TALKING POINT: Robert Thomas, Lead Executive Officer of Herefordshire Vennture



5 Jan 2017 / **Jessica Phillips**, Senior reporter

'Industry' and 'Enterprise' are words more linked to business than charity yet they are founding principles we inherited from Vennture's founder – John Venn. Charity can be hard work and loving people can be even harder. Think about Hereford's Street Pastors.

Giving flip-flops to party-goers is easy. It's fun joining in people's celebrations and sharing happy moments. The warm greetings, hugs and 'thank-yous' inspire! It's often much harder to help when the party's over.

How often the teams listen when someone's relationship has ended abruptly, or care when someone's world seems to have ended or help someone in a state that they never planned for when they put on their party clothes. Our Street Pastor volunteers are there to 'Love people better' and true love never gives up, puts up with anything and always looks for the best.

Loving people can be hard work and - like John Venn - our volunteers are inspired to show 'The Power of Jesus' Love in practice.

When the baby Jesus grew up to be a man, His love for people showed itself in hard work, grit and determination. Jesus didn't judge people. He reached out to individuals who were alone and He extended kindness to those who were misunderstood. To those treated harshly, He showed gentleness and to anyone lost in guilt and shame Jesus brought forgiveness. Jesus went the extra mile, toiled and often suffered for it.

This kind of real love is not often found on a Hollywood screen or fantasy novel. It is not about emotion and feelings alone. It is about a conscious choice of will. It does not give up, it just keeps going and going to the very end. This kind of love is not sappy or sentimental, it involves Industry and Enterprise.

What reason could anyone have not to desire to be loved in this way?