

Running Growing Leaders in Bradley Stoke, Bristol

The vision for Growing Leaders in '5 Stokes and Patchway' arose from my own experience of the Arrow Leadership Programme. Having benefitted massively from the Arrow experience, my heart began to beat more strongly to see others growing and realising more of their God-given leadership potential. Having talked with colleagues in the area, it became clear that we all shared similar concerns, and whilst wanting to invest in people often found that other things crowded in on us. Running *Growing Leaders* would give us an opportunity to intentionally invest in people and develop stronger links within our mission partnership.

A core team was established and we soon set about obtaining top quality speakers, venues for residentials and members for the course. 20 people from across the 4 churches completed the programme, ranging from home group leaders to church wardens, coffee shop staff to youth work volunteers, and it was a real joy to hear them sharing the benefits derived from the course at our final meeting. New found confidence, a clearer sense of God's call and the benefits of the mentoring system were recurring themes. For some it had been a painful and soul-searching experience, but eminently worthwhile. The Bishop of Bristol kindly agreed to speak at a commissioning service in July, where certificates were presented and leaders prayed for. Already in our own church I'm seeing 2 people putting their learning into practice and stepping out in new ways in their service of God. *Growing Leaders* works and I recommend it to anyone with a vision for seeing people grow in leadership.

Rev Paul Peterson
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