

# Bristol Homeless Forum

## 12 May 2016

### ***People***

Present: Jonny Angell (Crisis Centre Ministries Wild Goose), Richard Drake (Julian Trust, Rough Sleeper Task Group), Gill Gunn (Spring of Hope, Soup Run), Laurie Guy (Pip'n'Jay Breakfast Run and Soup Run), Paul Hazelden (Christian Action Bristol), Sue Hazelden (One25, minutes), Steve Jones (Bristol Soup Run Trust), Val Moore (St John's Ambulance, Churches Together in Clifton and Redland), Vic Stephens (Clinical Psychologist with interest in community psychology), Val Thompson (Crisis Centre Ministries Spring of Hope).

Apologies: Lindsey Jones (Caring in Bristol) and Di Noon (Christ Church Breakfast Run).

### ***Previous Meeting Notes***

- Val M is working towards introducing some homelessness content into the Lent conversations next year.
- Tyrrell is a Nightstop worker alongside Mat

### ***Matters arising***

- The missing Sleepout payments had gone to CCM not BCAN, all sorted now.
- Paul has tried to contact the unrecognised groups at the Sleepout (*Kids in Blankets* and *R-Tak*): no progress so far.
- Recruiting volunteers for the Emergency Overnight Accommodation: we had identified this as something we wanted to do and therefore keep raising at meetings.
- Proposed 'Homes' board: uncertain whether this would go ahead, as it was something our previous mayor George Ferguson wanted to see if re-elected. However, the Rough Sleeper Task Group hopes it will continue. Richard reported that they were already looking at prevention, pathways out of hospital, shelter provision (in a range of places), and trying to get all parts of the community (police, the general public, shopkeepers, business owners, etc.) to share a similar vision of what homelessness is, as opposed to what Anti-Social Behaviour is. A vision and stream of work had been agreed, so that should all continue.
- Helping the Faith Communities reflect on their housing choices – it was agreed we should work on this idea (using reflection, stories, etc.) so it is not lost. Richard recommended a Guardian article on friends renting to friends and the implications this has. [[http://www.theguardian.com/cities/2016/apr/30/generation-rent-can-your-landlord-be-your-friend?CMP=share\\_btn\\_tw](http://www.theguardian.com/cities/2016/apr/30/generation-rent-can-your-landlord-be-your-friend?CMP=share_btn_tw) ]

### ***Notified business***

Homeless Forum

- Emails are likely to move to Mailchimp so future mailings may look different.

- Other people / groups to invite: what sort of organisation do we want the Homeless Forum to be? Originally the forum enabled smaller organisations to ‘belong’ to something larger. But through organising the Sleepout and Homelessness Awareness Week we’ve started to interact with larger organisations, eg Emmaus, Shelter, Big Issue, Mungos. So do we want to be bigger or remain a small support organisation?
- Worth noting that we have a website which has the potential, independent of any organisation, to be the single point of reference eg for media. To be really useful, it needs to be the ‘go-to’ place for information about homelessness. We also need to use twitter etc.
- Face to face or online meetings: with increased use of the website, we could then focus on proper networking meetings, say quarterly events, get other agencies to attend, with something of interest for everyone. Jonnie commented that last time he attended BHF more agencies were present – was that because they wanted to share information, or what? Richard felt it was because of HAW. So quarterly meetings could build on that. Caring in Bristol has already organised similar events. We agreed that this made sense, and it sounded like a good way to go. We don’t want to lose what is useful, but we could and would like to do much more, eg by getting everyone sharing on BHF website as well as their own. We needed a steering / planning group / core team to make these things happen. Paul, Richard and Lindsey were happy to be such a planning group – did anyone else want to join?
- Meeting times: survey sent out just before this meeting: 5 responses so far, more needed! Most say earlier meetings are better than later, 6 / 6.30 is probably best.

### Sleepout

- Date for next year: other groups, eg Soul Survivor, do sleepouts at that time of year, we need to avoid clashes, and also avoid half term (10-20 February in Bristol). Friday 24 February 2017 looks good. **Action:** please can everyone check this date and let us know any problem with it as soon as possible. Richard will invite Marvin Rees, recently elected mayor, to attend as soon as possible.
- The current ‘final’ estimate of the sponsorship amount raised in 2016 is £45,000.
- Anything else? We need to improve communication with participating organisations; Richard would like each organisation to be more responsible for its own groups and participants; we need a better system for knowing who needs to park; no tents next year.
- Jonnie asked about using other sleepout venues as we were so close to capacity. Some groups could organise themselves elsewhere and take responsibility themselves. It could become a bigger event by using different venues, and be opened to younger groups in more secure venues. We would need to put together guidance for groups sleeping out in different place, eg identified responsible person, Risk Assessment and First Aid, and Val M could put them in touch with First Aiders. Also need to make clear that the ‘main’ venue was where the media should go, even if we also said “and 100 other people are sleeping out in different venues across the city” or similar. Noted that if appropriate other groups could use tents, or a church hall (and any church group using their hall would identify a good potential night shelter!)

### Homelessness Awareness Week

- Date: agreed it would be good to run this again as it increases the impact of the Sleepout, so we plan to run it in the week leading up to 24 February.
- All year round awareness raising. Richard reported that the Rough Sleeping

Partnership has a work plan which includes the aim that “The wider Bristol Public/Community is involved in understanding and reducing rough sleeping” and will establish a Communication Group to work on a programme of education, media activity, etc. that engages the public. The Homeless Forum and its members will have a part to play in publicising that work but is not expected to take a lead in it.

- Crisis has a document ‘No-one turned away’ which focuses on prevention, helps people before they are homeless, aimed at local authorities. Worth reading. [<http://www.crisis.org.uk/publications-search.php?fullitem=493>]

#### Social Justice and Social Engagement project

- Vic shared what she is hoping to achieve, working with a colleague, in finding out what’s going on to support homeless people, why people want to help, what help is offered, what encouragement they might be able to offer. It would definitely be worth her arranging to visit various projects. In most cases she would need to make an appointment but would be very welcome at all the projects represented at the meeting.

## **Information Share**

#### Previously circulated details

- ‘Let’s work together’: manifesto for the mayoral election, intended to be used as a working document for the future. Ask if you want any copies, feedback to Paul.
- Paul had done some work around issues facing young people.
- Caring in Bristol reported on three new projects.
- CCM had advertised new opening hours for Wild Goose and changed meal times.

#### Other details

- Compass Centre – changes to Outreach and opening times: there are more drop-in opportunities but they are not doing food. Some clients still have issues accessing Compass Centre.
- Julian Trust hopes to sign contract for their building work in next 2 weeks, would then be closed from mid July for six weeks, still provisional. The intention is to get more proactive Outreach in the period leading up to the closure to reduce need. They are not seeking to set up alternative shelters to cover this period.
- Soup Run are having problems with wasted food because ‘Dean’ is turning up with a shopping trolley full of hot food in take away cartons, 2-3 people with him. He has no organisation behind him, says he’s been doing it for 2-3 years, and has people all over Bristol cooking food. He starts at the Salvation Army and then moves on. He says he will be at Soup Run every Friday, Saturday and Sunday with 100 meals. Issues of hygiene, and food storage leading to possible food poisoning, people leaving with bags of food, unsuitable containers (foil), insurance liabilities. Various suggestions were made for dealing with this, including asking Bristol City Council Environmental Health staff to attend. Soup Run intends to give out less food, but what if he doesn’t turn up? This has created a lot of work for the Soup Run Trust, and all their policy documents were being reviewed as a result.
- Breakfast run and monthly lunch run are continuing; it is better in the new venue of St James’s Park than in the Bearpit; Jenny’s Kitchen turns up at the same time but that’s not a problem.
- Christchurch had a ‘random’ call from Monica at the Compass Centre, asking what

they did to help homeless people at their church. When Val M rang back they wouldn't disclose who works there, so not helpful. Steve reported that someone from St Mungo's rang Soup Run to check times in the Survival Handbook were still correct, so possibly related to that.

- Christchurch also had a call from Rachael Bee at Bristol Hospitality Network asking if they can give £40 per week towards supplying meat for their clients as a lack of it is causing problems. Val M had not heard of them but others had: they help house asylum seekers, many of whom are accustomed to eating a lot of meat.
- Spring of Hope had been very busy, full every night for the last 3 weeks. Getting referrals from BHN and Red Cross, there are more asylum seekers and failed asylum seekers with no recourse to public funds.
- Breakfast run: Laurie reported they had some lonely people coming, she'd like to see Pip'n'Jay opened for them, but this is not possible without a whole load of safety and planning issues being dealt with. Where can they send people? Especially those who just need space. Several suggested that the new Methodist Centre was a good place with various activities including gardening and art. Laurie should go and see what they do, how they do it, and talk to Elaine Brightwell, the Centre Manager
- One25 [information not shared in the meeting due to lack of time]: latest stats show some encouraging progress with eg women not working for 12 months plus. Numbers accessing the van remain low-ish but they understand some of the reasons for this, including changes to the way police are dealing with street offences. They are working towards setting up a PAUSE project if funding can be obtained: it enables intensive work with women who have had two or more children taken into care, and who agree to use long-term contraception.

## ***Close***

No other business.

No updates to the shared documents, no new documents to share.

Next meeting

- Julian House, Thursday 14 July, 6.30 – 8 pm.

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