

**BCAN**  
**Homeless Forum**  
City Road Baptist Church  
18 July 2002

## **Introduction**

Paul Hazelden chaired the meeting. Clive Richards opened the meeting with prayer, and then Paul welcomed everyone.

## ***Those Present***

Pippa Chappell (elim@bristol), Paul Hazelden (Crisis Centre Ministries), Medina Johnson (Caring at Christmas), John Knuckey (Carmel Christian Centre), Val Moore (Christchurch, Clifton), Denise Neale-Gordon (elim@bristol), Ruth Rey (Christchurch), Clive Richards (Trinity Tabernacle), Martin Spink (Bristol Soup Run Trust) and Graham Wheeler (Bristol Soup Run Trust).

## ***Apologies Received***

Apologies had been received from Steve Abbott (BCAN), Janet Bryant (Easton Salvation Army), Richard Reddrop (Emmaus Bristol), Dorothy Richie (Christchurch Breakfast Run) and Paul Tipler (Aspire).

## ***Previous Meeting***

There were no corrections to the notes of the previous meeting. Paul apologised for the late production of the notes.

## ***Matters Arising***

Neither Medina Johnson nor Richard Reddrop were able to attend the Supported Housing Forum on 9 July. Medina will make the minutes available when they are distributed.

Paul has been unable to update the Shared Guidelines on Outreach Work, as the copy that he made his notes on cannot be found.

## **Information Share**

Medina reported that Rob who manages the Hub has received some money to recruit and train volunteers. She has a meeting with him soon, and will report back.

Medina also mentioned the forms produced by Caring at Christmas to help them understand who they are helping. These forms would need a little modification to make them applicable to other situations, but may provide a useful starting point for other groups.

Paul talked about the Crisis Centre Open Day and the new name for their Coffee Shop: no longer the Missing Peace, but now the Wild Goose. Chris Vacher, who opened the event, is interested in hearing about people who are recovering from a drug addiction but who came

from a 'good' background and managed to maintain a normal life for some time after they became addicted. In other words, people who did not fit the usual image of a drug addict. The idea is to run a news story that alerts viewers to the possibility that people around them, living an apparently normal life, could be addicted. To be useful here, a recovering addict would have to be reasonably articulate and willing to talk about their previous life in front of a television camera. If anyone knows of such an individual, please contact Paul.

## ***Homeless Count***

The issue of the number of homeless people continues to rumble on. Clive reported that some new government figures are due to be released early in August. Ian Turner, a reporter with the Bristol Evening Post, will probably do a follow-up story when they appear. Clive served 73 breakfasts and over 100 lunches this week. The methodology used for the official count of homeless people was discussed again. Paul will try to put together a fact-sheet on the subject.

## ***Survival Guide***

Medina introduced the Bristol Survival Guide. The formal launch will be on Wednesday 31 July from 2:00-3:00pm at the Night Shelter. The plan is to update it every year, and there are already sufficient funds to do a revised edition next year.

## **Outreach Work**

There was a time of discussion about outreach work and the guidelines we have drawn up.

A question was asked about people under 18 helping with outreach. One group present allows 16-17 year olds to be involved after 2 reference checks have been carried out, and after making sure the parents understand what is involved.

It was suggested that TB is only on the increase among refugees, and not among homeless people in general, so an inoculation for TB is not very important for us at present. Can anyone come up with medical evidence one way or another on this point?

Still with inoculations: we can't make people have them, but we need to make sure that they know they should, so it will be helpful if new volunteers sign an agreement to say they have received the necessary information and the basic training.

For all this (necessary) emphasis on health and safety, we don't want to give people the impression that what we are doing is dangerous. The reality is that dangerous incidents are rare. Some people do get discouraged by low levels of violence – soup being thrown at them, for example. It may be worth asking whether these volunteers understand the problems we are seeking to address, and whether they feel the people being helped should be grateful to those who help.

The point was made that a qualified First Aider should be present on each soup run team, especially if young people are present.

Please, will churches and other organisations let us know when they have adopted the outreach guidelines? Knowing others have done so strengthens the hands of those in organisations that are a bit slower. To date, we know that CCM has adopted them, along with

the Bristol Soup Run Trust, and the Methodist Church in Nailsea.

## **Training**

Paul presented his paper on training volunteers. He was not asking whether a training course should be run, as he needs to provide training for the CCM volunteers. But since a course is to be run, he sees no point in limiting it only to CCM volunteers if others would also benefit.

In the session on drugs, we need to make sure we help people recognise them and their symptoms. There is a helpful Health Education Council poster on this subject.

The issue of 'challenging behaviour' will be covered in different ways during the first three sessions.

Paul will ensure that a register of attendees is maintained, so organisations know which of their volunteers have attended which sessions. People will be free to attend only the sessions they expect to be of value, although some organisations may wish to advise their volunteers to make a point of attending some particular sessions, or even to attend all of them.

Paul asked if people would let him have details of the number of people attending by the Wednesday of the previous week if possible. This is not essential but it helps to know numbers for the refreshments and handouts.

Paul will provide a map showing how to get to Trinity Tabernacle.

The point was made that it is cheaper to run First Aid in-house than to send your people on an externally run course. This is a possible addition to the programme

With these points noted, it was agreed to proceed with the training programme as proposed. If the BCAN steering group are happy with the idea, it will be presented as a BCAN training course, in the expectation that this will enable more people to benefit from it.

## ***Insurance***

Nick Ball (the BSRT Treasurer) has negotiated insurance cover for volunteers. Paul will circulate details of the insurance cover.

The question of 'Needlestick Injury' was discussed. It is possible to buy a service from the BRI to cover this risk.

It is important that any incidents are properly recorded and monitored, both from the Health and Safety perspective and for insurance purposes.

## **Other Business**

### ***Future Meetings***

There was a general agreement that meeting every two months was about right. Some people would prefer more frequent opportunities to meet and develop relationships, but the training events will also provide an opportunity to do this.

It was agreed to aim to meet on the Thursday evening following the second Saturday of

every other month, starting in September. On this basis, the next few meetings will be 19 September, 14 November and 16 January.

### ***Shared Documents***

Some policy and other documents were made available for people to pick up. These included:

- Training Opportunities
- Shared Guidelines – Outreach Work
- Shared Guidelines – Bristol Soup Run Trust Code of Practice
- Shared Guidelines – Cold Weather Group Volunteer Handbook extracts
- VOSCUR membership Form
- Client details (CaC)
- Feedback form (CaC)
- Accommodation in Bristol for Homeless People
- Food in Bristol for Homeless People

If anyone would like a copy of one or more of these documents, they are available from the Crisis Centre office, and will shortly all be on the Crisis Centre web site.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting has been arranged for Thursday 19 September 2002, 7.30 pm, City Road Baptist Church (side entrance). After receiving feedback from the training session the previous Saturday, the main focus will be on recruitment of volunteers.