

**BCAN**  
**Homeless Forum**  
City Road Baptist Church  
14 November 2002

## **Introduction**

Steve Abbott chaired the meeting, opened with prayer, and then welcomed everyone.

## ***Those Present***

Steve Abbott (BCAN), Ann Banks (BCF), Richard Barrett (Bristol Methodist Centre), Pippa Chappell (elim@bristol), Emma Dobson (NCH Bristol Nightstop), Paul Hazelden (Crisis Centre Ministries), Medina Johnson (Caring at Christmas), John Knuckey (Carmel Christian Centre), Val Moore (Christchurch, Clifton), Richard Reddrop (Emmaus Bristol), Dorothy Richie (Christchurch Breakfast Run) and Graham Wheeler (Bristol Soup Run Trust).

## ***Apologies Received***

Apologies had been received from Anni Davey (Crisis Centre Ministries) and Clive Richards (Trinity Tabernacle).

## ***Previous Meeting***

Two corrections to the notes from the previous meeting were identified. Paul Hazelden apologised to **Malcolm Southgate**, who has been incorrectly recorded as Martin. The second concerned the **Survival Guide**: only 1,000 copies of the Survival Guide had been distributed initially; another 2,000 were being printed, making 3,000 in all.

## ***Matters Arising***

**Insurance Cover:** Richard Reddrop has talked with his broker, who does a soup run. Ansvar (a subsidiary of Ecclesiastical) offer cover for Public Liability and Personal Accident from £200 a year. For more information, contact Chris Chapman at WRS Ltd., Colchester (01206 760780).

**Third Sector:** subscribing to this magazine is a good way to keep up to date with the voluntary/charitable sector. A one-year subscription costs £67.50 for a registered charity and £90 for anyone else in the UK. They offer a free sample copy: write to Third Sector, PO Box 270, SOUTHALL UB1 2WF or visit the web site at [www.thirdsector.co.uk](http://www.thirdsector.co.uk). If you become a member of the Institute of Fundraising (<http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/>) you get a free subscription to Third Sector.

In this context, it was noted that two other web sites help people keep up to date with developments in the voluntary sector: Society Guardian (<http://society.guardian.co.uk> – note no “www”) and NCVO (<http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/>).

**University:** BCAN were not asked to provide a stall after all. No feedback has been received from Paul Tipler on how useful the Aspire stall was.

**Criminal Records Bureau:** there was a substantial discussion of the Criminal Records Bureau and the extent to which it is relevant to the work we do. In summary, it seems clear there is a need to do checks on volunteers who work with children or vulnerable adults, especially if they may be unsupervised at times.

In principle, having a system like this is a good idea, but the present system is inefficient and the current guidelines generate too much paperwork (because each group needs to request its own check, no matter how recently a check has already been carried out), and are inadequate (because you are only expected to check each person once, no matter how long they may stay with you).

## Information Share

**Cribbs Causeway:** the Caring at Christmas stand at Cribbs Causeway was not a great success. Too much detail was provided, when what was needed was something big and eye-catching. They collected a bit of money, which was not the purpose, but did not recruit volunteers. Cribbs allows charity collections in the Mall between January and October each year, with individual charities allowed a stall every other year. These stalls are located outside Boots, near the stairs.

**The Galleries:** the Supported Housing Forum publicise their work one week each year, and one day of that week they have a display in The Galleries. This could be more useful than the Mall at Cribbs Causeway for contacting people who are concerned about homelessness in Bristol, but Richard Reddrop warned that it is not easy to comply with the conditions imposed by the management of The Galleries. Medina will contact The Galleries and ask them about the possibility of some publicity there – perhaps one or two organisations, or maybe a joint BCAN stall.

**Shepherds Tent:** Steve Abbot informed the meeting about Shepherds Tent, a new group providing food for homeless people, who are based at the Elmgrove Centre but operate independently of Fellowship of the King. Paul Hazelden said that they have been added to the current ‘Food in Bristol’ sheet and invited to the BCAN meetings.

**Publicity:** Richard Reddrop noted that Peter Halsey runs the International Christian Chamber of Commerce, and will talk to Peter about whether the ICCC or its members could help resource or promote the work we do.

## Nightstop

Emma Dobson told the meeting about this project, the full name of which is the ‘NCH Bristol Nightstop.’ She pointed out that the name of the parent organisation is now ‘NCH’ which is no longer an abbreviation for ‘National Children’s Home.’

The project provides accommodation for young people between 16 and 25 years old, for up to 3 nights, and is funded by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (‘ODPM’). It is not appropriate for chaotic drug users, as young people get put into the homes of host families, so a careful risk assessment must be undertaken first.

Once the risk assessment is completed, the young person is taken to the host family. This usually happens late afternoon, but sometimes varies to suit the family. The young person is provided with food and washing facilities, but has to leave in the morning. If they are

allowed to stay another night, they will usually be placed with a different family.

Young people are referred to the scheme from a variety of places, and the biggest need at present is for more host families to take part. They try to avoid using Bed & Breakfast accommodation, but in emergency will do so. Since September, two of the people they have helped have been found permanent accommodation.

## **First Aid**

Various options for the First Aid training were discussed. One decision was straightforward: of the two standard 'levels' of First Aid training, the one-day or the four-day programme, it was agreed that we should run a one-day course.

The main question was whether to run the training as a purely in-house course, or whether a recognised certificate should be awarded. The course will cost more if a certificate is awarded, in part because a stricter teacher-pupil ration would be enforced. In the end, it was decided to aim for a certificated course as this was thought to be of greater benefit to those taking part. To ensure the correct ratio is maintained, people will have to sign up in advance.

17 May 2003 was agreed as the provisional date for the First Aid training. The date will be confirmed and more details made available early in the new year.

## **Publicity**

Following the lengthy discussion at our previous meeting, concerning a possible 'Multi-Organisational Newsletter' a smaller group came together last Tuesday to talk through the issues in more detail. The outcome of that meeting was described as follows.

A number of publicity and communication needs were identified, with several target audiences. While the public needs to be reminded of the needs of homeless people and the general background, and to be told about developments in this area, the meeting felt it was more important that the professionals and people who are already interested and active are kept informed. The most important gap that needs to be addressed is to provide a resource for people working for organisations in the area concerning homelessness and related issues.

The current plan, as agreed last Tuesday, is to establish a web site on which relevant news can be posted. Everyone involved will send information and contact details to a central person who will make sure it is published. The information collected in this way can then be included in each organisation's own newsletter as required.

The response of this meeting was mixed: a central resource as described would certainly be of value, but a number of people still felt that a newsletter would also provide an important and valuable contribution, especially as some of the groups represented did not distribute their own newsletter at present. The majority of people felt that a joint newsletter produced twice a year, which enabled our supporters to see something of the variety of the needs we address and the work we do, would be worth contributing to and paying for.

In the light of this discussion, it was agreed to pursue the question of publicity and newsletters at the next meeting.

## **Other Business**

### ***Training***

The Volunteer Training is continuing to go well: the people who attend are very happy with the content and find the experience valuable. However, many people find they have difficulty in remembering the dates of the sessions, and a number have reported that they intended to come but simply forgot on the day.

It was suggested that we should write to the people who have attended earlier session, to remind them of the later ones, but Paul Hazelden explained that we have a record of names and the organisations people 'represent', but not their addresses. We had not anticipated this need at the outset. It was agreed to ask people for their addresses at future training sessions, to make reminding them easier.

Paul asked the organisations present to remind their members about the next training session on January 11: this was particularly important, as there is no session in December, so there will then have been a two-month break since the previous session. People should also be reminded that the Introductory session would be run again at 1:15 in the afternoon on the same day, so anyone who missed the first session can catch up. Anyone who stays on from the morning session should bring a packed lunch.

### ***Future Meetings***

As we have agreed to meet on the Thursday evening following the second Saturday of every other month, the next few meetings will be 16 January, 13 March and 15 May.

### ***Shared Documents***

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

- [Volunteer Training 2002-2003](#) – BCAN and CCM
- [Outreach Work](#) – Shared Guidelines
- [Bristol Soup Run Trust Code of Practice](#) – Shared Guidelines
- [Cold Weather Group Volunteer Handbook extracts](#) – Shared Guidelines
- [Client Details](#) – Caring at Christmas
- [Feedback Form](#) – Caring at Christmas
- [Membership Form](#) – Voscur
- [Accommodation in Bristol for Homeless People](#) – CCM
- [Food in Bristol for Homeless People](#) – CCM
- [Confidentiality Policy](#) – CCM

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

### ***Next Meeting***

The next meeting has been arranged for Thursday 16 January 2003, 7.30 pm, City Road Baptist Church (side entrance). It was agreed to look at the subjects of publicity and newsletters in more detail.