

BCAN
Homeless Forum
City Road Baptist Church
13 March 2003

Introduction

Steve Abbott welcomed everyone, and Richard Reddrop opened in prayer.

Those Present

Steve Abbott (BCAN), Richard Barrett (Bristol Methodist Centre), Pippa Chappell (elim@bristol), Paul Hazelden (Crisis Centre Ministries), John Knuckey (Carmel Christian Centre), Ailsa McWilliam (Caring at Christmas), Val Moore (Christchurch, Clifton), Richard Reddrop (Emmaus Bristol), Clive Richards (Trinity Tabernacle), Martin Spink (Bristol Soup Run Trust), Mark Stonham (Redland Parish Church), Paul Tipler (Aspire), Betty Wear (Saint Nicholas of Tolentino) and Graham Wheeler (Bristol Soup Run Trust).

Ailsa is replacing Medina Johnson, for whom this was her last day at Caring at Christmas. Two others were present for the last time: Richard Reddrop (for whom it was also his last day), and Richard Barrett, who will be replaced by Rev. Barry Penn. Richard Reddrop will ask Mark Stonham to replace him.

Apologies Received

Apologies had been received from Anni Davey (Crisis Centre Ministries).

Previous Meeting

The notes of the previous meeting were approved without change.

Matters Arising

Richard Reddrop is moving to Lockleaze as Community Development Worker. The post is funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal New Opportunities Fund. They have now received 24 applications for the post of project co-ordinator, who should be in post June or July.

Emmaus: the project is currently on course to open in September, initially with 9 companions, some of whom will move from other Emmaus communities. The number will eventually increase to 18.

Information Share

St Nicholas: Richard MacKay is holding a service for Homeless people this Sunday, starting at 3 pm.

Aspire: they are recruiting at present with the aim to start distributing catalogues on Tuesday 18 March. They aim to employ 4 people and have just employed a part time support worker, but also need a full time support worker. Things are improving financially, and the

Council has given them 100% relief on their rates.

Training

Volunteer Training

The Volunteer Training continues to go well with encouraging feedback from those taking part but comparatively low numbers attending. It would be good to get feedback from those who are not attending, to find out why. The most common reasons given are other commitments and simply forgetting, so a more systematic plan for reminding people would be helpful.

First Aid Training

The change of date to 7 June was confirmed. Paul H will produce a draft booking form and check it with Val Moore.

We need to know the numbers in order to ensure the right student ratio, so we will ask for money up front with the booking form. It was pointed out that the students don't actually need a course book for the Lifesaver course, but they do need workbooks. The course book and the workbooks are also used for the Lifesaver Plus course we hope to run in the Autumn.

Local Issues

The Compact

This is the agreement which the Council needs to make with local voluntary sector organisations like us. Paul H encouraged people to get a copy and respond.

Homelessness Strategy

The deadline has now passed for contributing to the Council's Homelessness Strategy. In summary, the strategy seems to be a good document, but it is all about centralized services and activities. Nothing seems to be expected from the people of Bristol, and they are offered no incentive to help and get involved. The expectation in the strategy is that the homeless people who have been helped will go on to make a contribution to society, which seems to be very optimistic given the current success rate.

Steve A will invite Martin Painter's boss and Graham Simms to the next meeting, so we can talk with them about the Council's strategy, what they are doing and how we fit into that picture.

Publicity

Paul H & Mark did meet, and had a fairly brief conversation about the newsletter: it still seems like a good idea, but we don't have the time and energy to pursue it at present. Caring at Christmas are planning to set up a web site to help people working with the homeless, and are talking with the people who designed the Survival Guide.

We have a more urgent need for good publicity when promoting the Volunteer Training on

Saturday mornings. We need to produce something that will encourage people to find out more and get involved with helping homeless people. The current sheet was considered to be quite good – it contains all the necessary information – but we need to put it in front of people more regularly, and find someone who has design skills to help us format the Volunteer Training leaflet nicely for next year.

Other Business

BCAN

Steve A briefly described BCAN and outlined some of the plans for developing its work. He has been interviewing church leaders across Bristol, and is thrilled by the number of churches involved in social action and practical activity.

BCAN has been organising lunchtime meetings for several years, and the steering group are asking if we should be planning that some of these meetings be held on an evening or at a weekend, to make it easier for people other than Pastors and professional workers to attend.

The BCAN steering group are currently drawing up plans to employ a development worker to encourage and support churches and Christian organisations in social action projects. They are inviting the church leaders Steve has interviewed to a meeting about this.

Shared Documents

CCM has produced a paper describing how the official count of homeless people is undertaken, and what this means for the way we understand the official figures for homelessness in Bristol.

This was made available alongside the other documents we provide for people to pick up:

- [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
- Official Numbers of Homeless People in Bristol – 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.

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 15 May, 17 July and 18 September: all at City Road Baptist Church between 7:30 and 9:00 pm.